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II - Semester

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TAMIL CIVILIZATION AND CULTURE FROM 1336 TO 1947 A.D.

Author

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Units (1-14)

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INTRODUCTION

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Archaeological records tell us that the region known as Tamil Nadu has been continuously inhabited since the Upper Palaeolithic age. In its recorded history, Tamil Nadu was home to three ancient dynasties, that is, the Chera, the Chola and the Pandya. By the end of the 13th century, rapid changes in the political situation in northern India arising out of Islamic invasions from Central Asia, led to a decline of these ancient dynasties. The region of Tamil Nadu became a part of the Vijaynagara Empire in the 14th century. Vijaynagara rule continued until the arrival of British merchants in the 17th century. Like in the rest of the country, the British slowly established their stranglehold over the region. British rule and the arrival of the missionaries led to numerous changes in the socio-economic life of the Tamil people. Many reform movements were initiated, the most important of which was Periyar's self-respect movement and the Dravidian movement. This book, *Tamil Civilization and Culture From 1336 to 1947 A.D.*, will examine these issues in detail.

This book has been designed keeping in mind the self-instruction mode (SIM) format and follows a simple pattern, wherein each unit of the book begins with the Introduction followed by the Objectives for the topic. The content is then presented in a simple and easy-to-understand manner, and is interspersed with Check Your Progress questions to reinforce the student's understanding of the topic. A list of Self-Assessment Questions and Exercises is also provided at the end of each unit. The Summary and Key Words further act as useful tools for students and are meant for effective recapitulation of the text.

BLOCK - I
SOURCES OF TAMIL CIVILISATION

Literary Sources

UNIT 1 LITERARY SOURCES

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the examination of the past, historians primarily examine two categories of historical sources. These are primary and secondary sources of history. A primary source of history is something that originates from the past. It can be a chronicle, a piece of pottery or coin found in an archaeological site, and so on. On the other hand, a secondary source of history is a work that comments on the past. Typically, this is a recently written book that describes past events, often written by a historian or trained scholar familiar about the time period and civilization in question. This unit will examine the secondary sources of Tamil history in detail. It will begin with a discussion on Sanskrit and Telugu works and end with government orders and diaries.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the secondary sources of Tamil civilisation
- Discuss the Sanskrit and Telugu works that describe the Tamil civilisation
- Describe the importance of foreign accounts, diaries, etc.

1.2 SOURCES FOR ESTABLISHING THE HISTORICAL FACTS

NOTES

The sources of history are the focus of the discussion in this Unit. It relates to 'Historical Sources' that reveal and link historical facts for us for a concise comprehension of the historical happenings during any period of time. Sources are the edifices upon which theories are built up by the historians. Facts are corroborated with the proof of evidences. Literature is compared to take cognizance of the discovered tools/weapons/utility items, etc. Sources lead to the logical arranging of the events in the chronological order and line up the historical facts and flow of events by rearranging them chronologically to formulate a conclusive observation on an era. History gets updated and the scope of study enhances as the additional sources are researched by the ongoing research works of the historians. We have abundant sources that have supported the study of Tamil Nadu history, classified into different portfolios of study as:

- Sanskrit and Telugu works
- Tamil works
- Foreign accounts
- Government orders
- Diaries

1.2.1 Literary Sources

Literature is the main source reflecting the societal development due to literacy supported by the other developments in culture and economic conditions provided by the political will and strength. Besides, literary sources provide a vivid description of the status of the lifestyle; the internal and external cultural norms, taboos, social divisions, casteism, economic activity, poverty, primary vocation etc., Literature with wider ramifications covered not only the King's courts but also the real life structures existed outside the palaces. Learning history and its flow of events are made easy by literary sources with its record of chronological events from various sources of literary contributions such as poems, writings, stories, drama etc.,

Literary sources of evidence for historians are divided into three major classifications:

- (a) **Inland literary sources:** Literature born from the Indian laureates.
- (b) **Foreign literary sources:** Literature born in foreign lands with a mention of the South Indian Kingdoms and the occurrences.
- (c) **Foreigner's diary:** It happens to be a special mention, noting, or travelogue of foreign visitors, scholars, and emissaries.

1.3 SANSKRIT AND TELUGU WORKS

In addition to the numerous literature found in Tamil Language, Tamil history has been discussed in the literature of other languages also with the same authenticity.

- *Arthasastra* written by Kautilya, written in Sanskrit make references to Madurai City and the pearl produced in the Pandya Country.
- Dandin's *Avanisundara Kathachara* refers to Pallava Era History.
- Mahendravarman's *Maththa Vilasa Prakachanam* enables us to understand the history of Pallava Era.
- Literature such as *Chola Vamsa Charithai*, *Kongudesa Rasaakkal Savisthara Charithai*, written in Sanskrit brings a lot of historical evidences and references of the era.
- Ganga Devi's *Madura Vijayam*, written in Sanskrit makes a mention about the Invasions on Madurai by Kumara Kampana of Vijayanagar. This also describes the Victory over the Madurai Sultanate by Kumara Kampana, deployed by the Delhi Sultanate of Tughlaq.

Both internal and external sources of literature served as an evidence of the Vijayanagara Empire. They shared valuable information about the activities of the Vijayanagara Empire in Tamil Nadu. The rulers encouraged both Sanskrit and Telugu languages. This period witnessed the development of Sanskrit and Telugu literary works. Hence, the scholars consider this period as Augustus Period of Telugu literature.

- Telugu poem, *Jaimini Bharatamu*, throws light on that period.
- *Parijatapaharanamu* and *Yarahapuranam* was part of the Telugu literature
- *Rayavachakamu* and *Krishnaraya Vijayam* glorified the achievements of Krishnadevaraya.
- Krishnadevaraya's literary work, *Amukthaalyada* in Telugu and *Jambavali Kalyanam* in Sanskrit were noteworthy.
- *Madurai Tala Varalaru* and *Sriranga Koil oluku* were important chronicles of the period.
- The *Tanjavur Andhra Rajulu Charitra* in Telugu dealt with Vijayanagara Rulers and Nayakars of Tanjore.

1.4 TAMIL WORKS

Let us now look at Tamil literary sources.

1. **Sangam Period:** The golden era of Tamil Nadu has a rich literature to describe the values of Sangam Period. Though many are lined up as Sangam

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Period literature, only two are recognized to be Sangam period literature: (1) Ettuthogai and (2) Pathupaattu.

- Apart from these two major authentic literature of sangam period, Agathiyam, (2) Tolkappiyam (3) Pathinenkizkanakku (4) Silappadigaaram (5) Manimekalai (6) Valaiyapathi (7) Kundalakesi (8) Seevaga-chinthamani and (9) Thirukkural literature explain the social, religious status and values and also the superior culture of the Tamils who are also called Dravidians.
- Puranaanooru is a composition of poems that admires and showcases the capacity of the rulers of the small kingdoms and also the Kings ruling the country.
- Pathithupatru portrays the Chera Kings' qualities for peace, art, and war tactics.

All these literature speak volumes about Sangam Period Tamils' hospitality, love life, courage and benevolence.

2. **Kalabhras Age literary evidences:** Though there are no noteworthy mention of any literature that brings sufficient evidence on the rule of Kalabhras, which is considered as the dark age of the Tamil History for nearly three centuries, three important literary works with religious bent do mention on the Kalabhras rule.

- (a) Tamil Navalur Sarithai
- (b) Periya Puranam
- (c) Yaapperungalam

3. **On Pallavas:** There are many references available from the literature on the Pallavas Era.

- (a) *Thevaram* written by Appar, Sundarar and Gnana Sambandar, gives a glimpse of Pallavas' social, economic, and religious history.
- (b) *Nalaayira Divyaprabandam* narrates on the Pallava Chalukya relationship.
- (c) Nandivarman's *Nandikalambakam* is a literature that gives a detailed account of the political life and history in Pallava Kingdom.
- (d) Perundevanaar composed a book named *Bharata Venba*. This collection describes on the political life of the Pallavas.
- (e) Dandin's Periya Puraanam, Paandikkovai literary sources provide information on Pallavas' rule and its achievements.

4. **The early Pandyas:** Pandikovai, Periya Puranam, Divya Sucharitha, Guru Paramparai literature of the era gives details on the history of early Pandya's rule. Besides, several Vaishnava literature and Tiruvilayadal written by Paranjothi mirror the history of this age.

5. **The later Cholas:** There are several works of literature that describe the rule of later Chola dynasty starting with King Vijayalayan. Seevaga

Chinthamani, Valayapathi, and Kundalakesi describes the Jain and Buddha's religious status under the Chola Rule.

- (a) *Veera Choliyam* written by Buddha Mithirar and Kamba Ramayanam provides the sources to understand the Chola History.
- (b) *Kalingathu parani*, an epic, written by Jayangondaar, gives a vivid description of the Kalinga War carried out by Karunakara Thondaiman, the General of Kulothunga Cholan I. This literature discusses in detail the time zone and events of the Chola rule chronologically.
- (c) *Moovarula* written by Otta Koother shares the information on the three Chola Kings namely, Vikrama Cholan, Kulothungan II, and Rajarajan II.

Literary Sources

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1.5 FOREIGN ACCOUNTS

There are many literary works of foreign origin that give authentic information on the history of ancient Tamil Nadu.

- *Indica* written by Megasthenes ranks as the best literature giving out a number of historical evidences of the past of Tamil Nadu. There are several mentions on the Pandya Kingdom. There is a mention about the houses created for the governance of the country. One can also get information on the social, political and commerce status of the society.
- *Persian Wars* written by Heratodus give information on the Overseas Trade by Tamil Nadu and also the various Port Towns of Tamil Nadu.
- Dalami's work called *Global Map* also mentions on the overseas trade and the port towns of Tamil Nadu.
- Strabo's notes reveal the trade relationship between the Pandya Country and the Rome. This literature also provides information on the political social and economic status of Tamil Nadu under Pandyas.
- Pilini's literary work named as Natural History gives an account of the Western Ports of Tamil Nadu.
- Ceylon's Literature, Mahavamsam and Deepavamsam written in Pali Language provide an authentic description of King Chera Senguttuvan.

1.5.1 Government Orders (GOs)

Some of the historical events were sourced through the government orders and the government gazettes. Government in India recorded the events and the historic linkages systematically. Unlike the Kings' rule, the historical evidences were not rare, but abundant. While the government orders acted as sources of confirmation of specific governmental approvals or schemes, the government gazette acted as a news chronicle of the various events of that particular period. The gazette is considered as the official version of the government on policies or issues. The

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government of India has established the system of publishing the gazette in various states of Indian union.

During the British period, systematic preservation of various government records commenced. In 1836, Queen Victoria passed an act in the British parliament to preserve the records in India. Based on this, Lord William Bentinck founded an archive in Tamil Nadu. In 1805, Fort St. George was selected for the preservation of the Archives in Madras. This contains records of various languages. The native records prior to 1639 and English records from 1670 were preserved in these archives. It also covered pre and post mutiny records. Records are available from 1777 to 1845 in nine bundles and 219 volumes. Additionally, records related to political department, factory records, country correspondence, special correspondence, minutes, special consultations, reports, negotiations with foreign powers, treaties, petitions and memorials were also kept here. The archives library contains about 6 lakh books and publications.

1.5.2 Diaries

Foreign visitors' accounts in the form of diary notings also contributes to the sources of evidence to the History of Tamil Nadu.

- Chinese Traveller Pahiyan visited during the rule of Gupta King Chandragupta Maurya II has left many observations in the form of Diary.
- Another Chinese Traveller Hieun Tsang has left a large number descriptive notes on the Tamil Nadu, during his visit to India in 7th Century AD.
- Benjamin and Marco Polo give a detailed description of the Social Status and Social Life in Tamil Nadu. Marco Polo visited Tamil Nadu in 13th Century AD.

Check Your Progress

1. Define inland literary sources.
2. What was *Arthasastra* by Kautilya all about?
3. Mention the three important literary works with a religious bent on the Kalabhras rule.
4. Which place was elected for the preservation of the Archives in Madras?

1.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Inland literary sources are the literature born from the Indian laureates.
2. *Arthasastra* by Kautilya, written in Sanskrit, make references to Madurai City and the pearl produced in the Pandya Country.

3. The three important literary works with a religious bent about Kalabhras rule are:
 - (a) *Tamil Navalar Sarithai*
 - (b) *Periya Puranam*
 - (c) *Yaapperungalam*
4. In 1805, Fort St. George was selected for the preservation of the Archives in Madras.

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1.7 SUMMARY

- Sources are the edifices upon which theories are built up by the historians. Facts are corroborated with the proof of evidences. Literature is compared to take cognizance of the discovered tools/weapons/utility items, etc.
- Literature is the main source reflecting the societal development due to literacy supported by the other developments in culture and economic conditions provided by the political will and strength.
- In addition to the numerous literature found in Tamil Language, Tamil history has been discussed in the literature of other languages also with the same authenticity.
- Sangam Period considered to be the golden era of Tamil Nadu has a rich literature to describe the values of Sangam Period.
- There are many literary works of foreign origin give authentic information on the history of ancient Tamil Nadu.
- Some of the historical events were sourced through the government orders and the government gazettes. Government in India recorded the events and the historic linkages systematically.
- Foreign Visitors' accounts in the form of diary notings also contributes to the sources of evidence to the History of Tamil Nadu.

1.8 KEY WORDS

- **Sangam Period:** The period of history of ancient Tamil Nadu and Kerala (known as Tamilakam) spanning from 5th century BCE to 3rd century CE.
- **Emissaries:** Persons sent as diplomatic representatives on special missions are known as emissaries.
- **Inscriptions:** Writings carved into something made of stone or metal.

1.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

NOTES

Short Answer Questions

1. How can literary sources of history be classified?
2. Why are the sources of history important?

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the Sanskrit, Telugu, and Tamil works relating to Tamil history.
2. Describe the foreign accounts in the context of Tamil history.

1.10 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 2 TAMIL CULTURE UNDER VIJAYANAGARA

NOTES

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- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Rise and Fall of Vijayanagara Empire
- 2.3 Tamil Nadu under Vijayanagara Empire
- 2.4 Restoration of Hindu Temples and Temple Administration
 - 2.4.1 Talikota War
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- 2.5 Social, Economic and Religious Status during Vijayanagara Empire Rule
- 2.6 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 2.7 Summary
- 2.8 Key Words
- 2.9 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 2.10 Further Readings

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Vijayanagara Empire's rise is a very important historical occurrence in the 14th century which is known as the mid-period of the Indian history. The empire established a strong Hindu empire in South India and helped protect the ancient heritage of the region from Tughluq rule. It is interesting to note that the Vijayanagar Empire dawned due to the signs of extinction of Delhi Sultanate. Vijayanagar Empire is said to have 'held the key to the solutions for the mixed political situations prevalent in India when the the Delhi Sultanate got itself entangled with disintegration and revolts from within and from others.'

In this unit, you will study about the emergence, rise and fall of the Vijayanagara Empire in Tamil Nadu. The unit also throws light on the restoration of the Hindu temples and temple administration. The unit goes on to discuss about the various rulers of that time and their contribution towards the society. In addition to this, you will also learn about the social, economic, culture and religious status of the state during the Vijayanagara Empire rule.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the emergence and spread of Vijayanagara Empire in Tamil Nadu
- Discuss the restoration of the Hindu temples and temple administration

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- Describe the administration under the Vijayanagara rulers
- Understand the contribution of various Vijayanagara rulers
- Evaluate the social, economic and religious status of the state during the Vijayanagara Empire rule

2.2 RISE AND FALL OF VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE

The Empire blessed by Vidyanaya enabled the Renaissance of the Hindu's political and religious pursuits which were denied during the Muslim rule in the South. This Vijayanagar Empire lasted for almost 300 years.

Birth of the Empire

Different views are held by the historians on the birth of the Vijayanagara Empire and also the causes of the emergence of the empire. The formative stages of the Empire are still under dark and are under research and discussions.

However, the following views are the views that are relevant for our discussions:

- (a) Rev Father Heras opines that Hoysala King Veera Ballal III and the close relative, the Territorial Chieftain Hariharar of 'AANEKUNDI' territory on the West Coast assisted the formation of the Vijayanagara Empire at Anekundi.
- (b) Another historian opines that formation and strengthening of a city later on referred to as Vijayanagaram (Victory City) is an evidence of bravery of Hoysala King Veera Ballal III.
- (c) The Vijayanagara Empire served a high historical purpose by acting as a champion of Hindu religion and culture against the aggressions of Islamic kingdoms in Southern India.
- (d) According to Dr. V.S. Smith, 'There is however no doubt that the new power was the outcome of the efforts made by two brothers, sons of Sangama to stay the tide of Muslim invasion and preserve the Hindu Dharma in the peninsula'.
- (e) Rober Sewell, a historian in his book, '*Forgotten Empire*', gives an explanation on the sources of Vijayanagara Empire:
 - Sangama's two brilliant sons out of the five, Hariharar and Bukkar, were employed as Treasury Officials of the Kakatiya King Prathap Rudran II, at Warrangal. In the year 1323, when the city was attacked by the Sultan, these brothers escaped to Kampili in Karnataka and started serving the Territorial Chieftain of Kampili. In the year 1332, when this city was also attacked by the Sultan, both were taken as prisoners to Delhi and got compulsorily converted as Muslims.

- When the Karnataka Muslim Administrator Malik Nayib could not continue his administration, Hariharar and Bukkar were sent to take charge of the rule there. Once they reached their native land, the prevalent situation of struggle for the rights triggered their inner religious sentiments. Under the influence of Madhava Vidhyaranyar and famous literary genius Sayanar, Hariharar and Bukkar again converted themselves into Hinduism.
- With a renewed enthusiasm and dedication, Hariharar and Bukkar chose to establish an Empire on the Southern Banks of Thungabadra River, falling opposite to Aanagundi Fort situated on the Northern Bank of the River.

This view of Mr Rober Sewel is accepted as a generalistic and acceptable version of the formation of the Vijayanagara Empire at Aanegundi.

- As per the heritage information, when Hariharar and Bukkar went for hunting on the Banks of Thungabadra River, they happened to witness a strange event of a rabbit chasing a hunter dog. When this was discussed with Vidhyaranyar, he considered the place as the place of bravery and the most suitable for establishing a capital city. Vijayanagara City was established in this fashion and four dynasties ruled from there.

Apart from above, on account of its efficient administration, prosperous economy, diplomatic polity, liberal religious policy, Vijayanagara Empire lasted from 1336 to 1562 as an unchallenged super power in South India. During this entire duration, Tamil Nadu remained under the Vijayanagara Empire. Kings who ruled Tamil Nadu after 1565 too remained as representatives of the Vijayanagara King and were called the Nayakkars. From 1565 onwards, the empire just remained in existence and without any achievement till 1614. Its defeat at the hands of the erstwhile Bhamni rulers in 1565 gave it a crushing blow. The 16 rulers of the empire were from the four dynasties;

- (a) The Sangma Dynasty (1336 to 1486),
- (b) The Chaluva Dynasty (1486 to 1509),
- (c) The Taluva Dynasty (1510 to 1570) and
- (d) The Arvinda Dynasty (1570-1616)

The historical evidences of this age are available through stone inscriptions and also literary evidences. These are books written by the authors lived in that age and also compilations by historians on Vijayanagara Empire.

- Kumara Kempana's wife Gangadevi wrote a literary work called *Madura Vijayam*
- RajaNatha Thindimar wrote a work called *Claluvaapyudham*
- Professor S. Krishnaswamy's compilations

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- Professor Neelakanta Sastry's compilations
- Professor Venkataramanaiah's compilations

Spread of Vijayanagara Empire in Tamil Nadu

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The First Dynasty of Vijayanagara Empire named as Sangama Dynasty had its first king as Hariharar. At the time of establishing the Vijayanagar at Aanegundi at Thungabadra Riverside, Tamil Nadu had two different rulers:

- (a) Sambuvaraya Empire spread over parts of Chithoor District, Chingelput, North and South Arcot districts.
- (b) Madurai Sultanate's rule was spread over areas beginning from the banks of Coleron (kollidam) river to Rameswaram on the Southern end.

2.3 TAMIL NADU UNDER VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE

According to Professor S. Krishnaswamy, the invasion by Vijayanagar is estimated to have happened during 1344 to 1356. During the rule of Hariharar I, Vijayanagara established its authority over Tamil Nadu. Hariharar's brother Bukkar invaded Madurai and turned victorious. After this victory, Hariharar released the Komal artifact, which was recovered from Mayuram Taluk. According to Prof Neelakanta Sastri, Hariharar focused on the administration. He revamped the village administration by inhabiting Brahmins in the place of peasants and goldsmiths. When Bosala King Vallalan III died in 1341, Hariharar captured that kingdom also.

1. Vijayanagara invasion on Rajagambeeram Kingdom: A kingdom named Rajagambeeram covered the locations of Chingleput, North and South Arcot Districts in the then Tamil Nadu. The Kingdom was ruled by Sambuvaraiyar Dynasty under the Chola country. When Muslims invaded Tamil Nadu, the Sambuvaraiyar declared themselves as an independent kingdom.

- (i) In 1363-64 Kumara Kampanar's army led by its loyal generals Gopna and Chaluvamangu captured Kanchi and defeated Rajanarayana Sambuvarayar of the Rajagambeeram Kingdom.
- (ii) It is disputed that Rajanarayana Sambuvarayar was killed in the battle of Kanchi, as some inscriptions indicate that he accepted the suzerainty of the Vijayanagara Empire.
- (iii) During this war, the Thondai Mandalam Area of Tamil Nadu came under the Vijayanagara Rule. Maarappa Nayakar supported Kumara Kampanar in winning this war.
- (iv) After this war, Kongu Nadu and the areas around the Thiruvannamalai hills, were brought under the rule of Vijayanagara Empire.

2. Madurai Invasion by Kumara Kampanar in 1371-1373: Eight years after annexing the Thondai Mandalam area and Kongu Nadu, Kumara Kampanar attacked Madurai. It is learnt that the Madurai Sultanate Rule was at its peak under Mubarak Shah with all atrocities against the Hindu Religion and the Hindus taking place; many Masjids were built by destroying Hindu Temples at Madurai and Hindus were tortured and killed mercilessly. At this juncture, Kumara Kampanar was deputed by the Vijayanagara Kingdom to save Madurai and Hinduism from Islamic rule and also to put an end to the Madurai Sultanate. A sword is said to have been obtained from the Sage Agastya by a godly angel primarily to safeguard Madurai from the outsiders, was handed over to Kumara Kampanar as a blessing to win the war.

- (i) Kumara Kampanar alongwith his Generals Gopnar and Chaluva Mangu captured Kannanur Kuppam and defeated the Sultan in a fierce war that was fought between Tiruchi and Madurai. In this war, Mubarak Shah was killed. Sikkandar Shah, a relative of Mubarak Shah went into exile.
- (ii) Madurai came under Vijayanagara Rule and the entire South upto Rameswaram became a part of the Vijayanagara Kingdom. Kumara Kampanar ruled from Madurai. Kanchi became Second Capital of the Vijayanagaram Empire in Tamil Nadu.

Check Your Progress

1. What was the name of four dynasties of the Vijaynagar Empire?
2. Name the locations covered under Rajagambeeram Kingdom.
3. How was Rajanarayana Sambuvarayar of the Rajagambeeram Kingdom defeated?
4. How was Madurai Sultanate Rule under Mubarak Shah?

2.4 RESTORATION OF THE HINDU TEMPLES AND TEMPLE ADMINISTRATION

Kumara Kampanar's first task was to open up the closed Hindu Temples and also to rebuild the destroyed ones and to build new ones. He donated a huge fund to the Brahmins and temples to take up the renovations. New employees were put in charge of the administration of temples. They were called 'Kaikolar'.

Kumara Kampanar died in 1374 and his glorious rule came to an end.

Harihara II: Year 1378 saw Bukkar II invading Madurai and completely eradicating the Muslim Rule by defeating Sultan Alauddin Sikkandar. Hariharar II ruled Tamil Nadu between 1377 and 1404. During this time, the Kingdom expanded

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in its territories. Four new territories were named in Velur, Gingy, Thanjore and Madurai. Virupatchi Udayar was appointed as the Supreme Chief of all the four mandals.

Devarayar II: Historian Nunis observes that Devarayar II, in his regime, established victory in Tamil Nadu, Ceylon, Kerala and North India. While Madurai and Thanjavur were under the two administrators namely Lakkana Nayakkar in Madurai and Madana Nayakkar at Thanjavur, Devarayar captured Kollam. Historian Abdul Razak observes that Lakkana Nayakkar assisted the Ceylon Invasion and the capture. Devarayar II had in his command Ceylon to Gulbarga from South to North and Bengal to Malabar from East to West.

Mallikarjunan: After the death of Devarayar II in 1446, Mallikarjunan became the King of Vijayanagara Empire. Kapileswara Gajapathy, who was ruling Odissa invaded and captured Kanchi, in 1463 through his son Kumara Hamveera. He destroyed Hindu Temples and looted the wealth. Historically, this loot is called as 'Oddiyan kalavai'. After the brutal killing of Mallikarjunan, Virupaksha II became the Administrator.

Chaluva Narasimhan: Between 1452 and 1485, the Royal Representative of Vijayanagara in the North of Tamil Nadu was Chaluva Narasimhan. He captured power at Vijayanagara and ruled from 1456 to 1491. He protected Tamil Nadu from external aggression and internal commotions.

Chaluva Narasimhan recaptured Tamil Nadu from the oddas (Odiyans). He contained the invasions of Banas, Muslims and also Oddas. Chaluva Narasimhan brought the fame of Vijayanagara rule during his period. He died in 1491.

Narasa Nayakar: After Chaluva Narasimhan, Narasa Nayakar elevated himself as the Regent. He conducted Digvijaya and also brought the entire Tamil Nadu under the Vijayanagara Rule by defeating the Banas, Chola and Pandya rulers.

Krishnadevarayar: After the death of Narasa Nayakar in 1503, Veera Narasimhan established the Thuluva Dynasty in Vijayanagara Empire. After him, the younger brother, Krishnadevarayar succeeded in 1509. Krishnadevarayar is considered the most popular king of the Vijayanagara Empire. During his regime, he appointed Veera Narasimha Nayakkar as the Supreme Mandal Chief of Tamil Nadu in 1510. Krishnadevarayar's administration, political outlook and stable rule and warfare are considered the best by the historians. A literature named 'Karnataka Rasargal Savusuttaara saritham' describes the victory of Krishnadevaraya in Tamil Nadu. During his rule, the Vaishnava Cult was flourishing. He constructed the Northern Gopura of Chidambaram Temple and gained a lot of popularity for the same.

Achutharayar: After the death of Krishnadevarayar in 1529, Ramarayar tried to succeed him. However, Krishnadevarayar's brother Achutharayar assumed power in 1530. He had to face political revolutions and also the civil disturbances. Nagama Nayakar who stood with Achutharayar in containing the disturbances was rewarded

with the Tamil Nadu rule from Madurai from 1533 till 1542. Achutharayar died in 1542.

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Sadasivarayar: Though Sadasivarayar took the reigns of Vijayanagara Empire, Ramarayar was the de-facto ruler of Vijayanagara Empire. Nayakars took advantage of the political changes in the Empire and declared themselves as independent. In the meantime, the Portuguese invasions in the south was also emerging. They were defeated at Punnakayal and Suchindram and Kottar were captured. However, Tiruvidangur got liberated from Vijayanagara Empire when General Viththilarayar was killed in the war with the Thiruvudangur forces.

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2.4.1 Talikota War

Downfall of the Vijayanagara Empire commenced with the war of Talikota. Two Muslim generals serving Ramarayar joined hands with the Sultans and prepared 80,000 soldiers of the Vijayanagara Empire, to defect to the Sultan's Army. In 1565, in the fierce battle between the forces of Vijayanagar Empire and the Sultans of Bijapur, Golkonda, Birar, Bidar and Ahmednagar, Ramarayar was killed and about a lakh of soldiers were also killed. The Vijayanagar city was torched and destroyed by the sultans. With that the rich and magnificent heritage, culture, social status and wealth of Vijayanagara City went into the pages of history for ever and even today the remains of the Vijayanagara City at Karnataka reveal untold stories of the Empire and its legacy.

Aftermath of Talikota: It was the turn of Thirumala, brother of Ramarayar, to integrate the Vijayanagara Empire with the remaining territories. He changed the capital to Penukonda, then to Chandragiri and thereafter to Vellore. After 1565, Tamil Nadu became an important territory of Vijayanagara Empire. With this the new Arvinda Dynasty began. During the rule of Srinrangar I and Venkatar I, the empire got rejuvenated. However, in 1616, the Toppur War permanently closed the chapters of the Vijayanagar Empire, in the annals of the history.

2.4.2 Toppur War

Toppur war took place in 1616 near Tiruchirappalli. This succession war was strong and decisive to seal the fate of the Vijayanagara Empire forever in the history of the country.

- During Venkatar I, Revolt by the Nayakars started against the Empire
- After Venkatar I, the succession war also started
- Thiruvudangur King, Madurai Muthu Veerappa Nayakar and Thirunelveli Pandiyar supported the faction of Jakka Devarayar.
- Yachama Nayakar, supported by Tanjore Nayakar defeated and killed Jakka Devarayar in Thoppur War.
- Sultans of Bijapur and Golkonda invaded the provinces of Vijayanagar Empire during the rule of Venkatar III. Venkatar III ran into exile to the Forests.

- Srirangar III the last king of Vijayanagar Empire, was defeated at Vellore and he ran into the Mysore Forests. It is believed that he died in 1762. With him the chapter of Vijayanagar Empire closed for ever.

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Administration under the Vijayanagara Rulers

Domingo Paes and Fernao Nuniz have narrated the administrative system in the Empire, through their various notes.

The King and his advisers:

- King was the Centre of the Power structure. Established systems and procedures were followed and there were no autocracy.
- As there were frequent threats from the Sultans, the Empire had to depend on a huge military force.
- King's major concerns were to protect the country from external aggression; to redress the complaints of the subjects; to ensure economic growth and development.
- There was an Advisory Committee consisting of ministers to guide the king in taking appropriate decisions
- Apart from a Secretariat to carry out the administrative functions, there were many offices working under the secretariat.
- Chief Minister, Treasury Officer, Accountant, Palace Security, General were the most sensitive positions in the King's Office.
- 'Rayasam' was an authority to write and execute the King's Orders.
- At the King's capital Nayakar had his two representatives to participate in the King's Court proceedings. The first one was military agent to look after military-related instructions and duties. The second one was Stanathipathi responsible for all non-military functions of the Nayakar's state. Both these persons acted as a bridge for an efficient Centre State Relationship and Administration.

1. State Governments: The vast Empire was divided into various States or Mandals. Tamil Nadu was divided into five Mandals, namely Vellore, Gingee, Tanjore, Madurai, and Thiruvadigai.

Each Mandal was administered by a Supreme Mandal Chief (Maha Mandaladhipathi). These appointments were made by the King and the persons belonged to the royal family. There were other officials to assist him. These mandals were independently functioning in respect of Civil, Military and Judicial matters. They were contributing to the centre a share of their revenue. Military support was sought by centre when needed, in terms of the ratios as fixed by the king himself.

2. The Local Government: Concept of Chola Empire was sidelined and there was a system of Ayakar. A group consisting of 12 members represented the State

Government. But they remained as lower level functionaries. This group carried out the most critical functioning of the village and town level requirements.

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Nayangara System:

1. The meaning of Nayangara System originates from the European system of Land Grant System to the Lords. In this system, Nayakar was the Military Administrator of a province. He was given the lands by the King, to yield a perennial income to him. This is based on the principle that all the lands are owned by the King and he has the rights to distribute to his dependents.
2. Amara Nayangara System is designed to have the following rules:
 - (a) Revenue sharing by the Nayakar based on the land grants
 - (b) Military assistance (number of soldiers) to be provided as per the limits fixed by the King himself
 - (c) Nayakars were permitted to build their own fortresses
 - (d) They had full freedom to take decisions on their Internal Administrative matters.
3. According to Nuniz, Vijayanagara Empire was divided into 200 parts to be ruled by 200 Nayakars, under this Nayangara System.
4. During the royal festivities, Nayakars were expected to send costly gifts to the King and also the food items such as wheat and meat.
5. Law and Order was prime obligation of the Nayakars.
6. Agricultural production was to be increased in their lands. They were taking back 9/10 portion of the produce as their shares.
7. 50 percent of the total revenue was shared by Nayakar with the king, in addition to the other obligations such as military and other event management.
8. Some Nayakars were removed from their positions and were also punished. Their lands were retrieved by the King.

Difference between Maha Mandaleswarar and Nayakar:

1. Nayakar was permanent residents of the mandal responsible for revenue and military supplies to the centre.
2. Maha Mandaleswarar was a transferable Viceroy with no obligations for revenue or military sharing. He was the only royal representative.
3. Maha Mandaleswarar was to supervise the Nayakar's loyalty and his revenue and military sharing promptness. Peer reports were also shared with the King by the Maha Mandaleswarar.
4. Though this Nayangara System is considered similar to the Land Grant system of Europe, Nayakars did not get the political importance that the Lords in the European System enjoyed. Nayakars were treated only as Military Generals. They would be removed any time by the King.

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5. Defects of the Nayangara system was mainly due to the introduction of Palayagara system by Nayakars. Palayakaras were created by Nayakars acted more loyal to the Nayakars than to the King.
6. The centre did not have direct and uniform control on the provinces ruled by them as each Nayakar had his own method of administration independently with no interference by the centre.

Check Your Progress

5. Who were 'Kaikolars'?
6. How long did Harihara II rule Tamil Nadu and what were his achievements?
7. What did Chaluva Narasimhan do for Tamil Nadu?
8. When did the downfall of the Vijayanagara Empire commence?
9. What is the Nayangata System?

2.5 SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS STATUS DURING VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE RULE

Let us discuss the society under the Vijayanagara Empire.

Social Status

1. Society (Villages and Towns): South India consisted more of villages and more people living in villages. Over a period of time, the growth of towns and cities emerged. The growth of economy, trade and commerce necessitated development of villages into tiny towns. Some kings themselves created new towns and townships, in commemoration of their victory or to improve the status of the segment. In Tamil Nadu the following towns were growing prominently:

- (i) Kancheepuram
- (ii) Nagapattinam
- (iii) Thanjavur
- (iv) Srirangam
- (v) Madurai
- (vi) Srivilliputtur
- (vii) Thirunelveli
- (viii) Rameswaram

2. Social Divisions: Caste system was very much spelt during the Vijayanagaram Regime. The Kings were following the Varnashrama system and they were encouraging the caste distinctions.

- (a) **Brahmins:** Brahmins, in the words of Foreign traveller Barbosa, 'were found happy eating the food and were not found getting involved in physical labour.'

Brahmins enjoyed the top notch concessions and respect from the Kings. They were given valuable grants and positions including special privileges. Some functioned as Adviser to the Kings and some were in Agriculture and also in Commerce.

- (b) **Kammalas:** These subjects formed the second layer in the society. Five types of kammalas were found: (i) Kammar (Iron Smith) (ii) Por kollar (Gold Smith) (iii) Pithalaikkalam maker (Brass Vessel makers) (iv) Carpenters (v) Sculptor (Artists making Statues and Sculptures). They were called 'panchalogar'. They were found demanding special privileges all through.
- (c) **Kaikolargal:** This strata was found working in the temples and very powerful with status. They lived around the temples. They had privileges to serve the Army. They were engaged in Weaving. Due to the nearness to the Kingdom they enjoyed various privileges.
- (d) **Islamiyar (Muslims):** Due to the Islamic invasions, the Muslim inhabitants increased. They were by and large engaged in trade and commerce. Those who lived on the sea shore and engaged in trade and commerce were addressed as Tamil Maraikairs. It is observed that they blended with the other community and lived peacefully.
- (e) **Other Castes:** Many migrants from Deccan Region, Gujarat (sowrashtra) were found to occupy reasonable social status. There were many caste-based on the avocation of the people. Untouchability and inequalities based on caste system were prevalent and many social movements emerged. Disturbances and caste struggles were found to be more.

3. Status of Women: Women enjoyed highest status in the society. Women were educated and some were found to occupy many positions in the King's court. Women followed superstitious practices. They believed in older systems and orthodox practices. Women were also found to be contributing to the literature. Kumara Kampana's wife Gangadevi authored a book called Madura Vijayam. Thirumaalambaal a poetess, authored a book called Varadambika Parinayam.

Marriages were different from caste to caste. However, Kannikadhana system was followed as a traditional system. Child marriages and also dowry system was prevalent. Higher caste men were found to follow the polygamy system.

Sati system was prevalent. Prostitution was legalized in those days. Some women sold themselves to the temples and were called as Devadasis.

4. Food and Dressing Systems: Brahmins were consuming vegetarian food. Generally people took fruits, vegetables, rice, fish, oil in addition to goats, deer, rabbits, cats, and some birds that were considered as food items.

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Costly and designed silk dress and ornaments were mostly used by the royal family members and high caste people. Ordinary subjects were wearing clothes only below their waists. High caste people were using footwear while all others were found bare foot.

People took interest in entertainments and sports. There were festivals and cultural activities to involve more people. Horse racing, playing cards, hunting, fist fights were the best means of entertainments that the public were interested in. Special dances and music events were conducted. Kolattam and Kummi (special ethnic dances of Tamil Nadu) occupied as important events.

Economic Status

Temples were considered the centres of economic activities, in the Vijayanagara Empire. Due to the Trade and Commerce activities of the Portuguese, Dutch, and the English, a lot of Economic Changes took place in the Empire that also benefited the Tamil Nadu Segments.

Agriculture: Villages were considered the backbones of the economic growth. Many depended on Agriculture for their livelihood. The Administrators focused on Agricultural Development and constructed Dams and Canals. Animal Husbandry was also encouraged. Milk production was encouraged. Lands were divided into Nansei and Punsei lands (based on their irrigation qualities and soil qualities). Two Season Cultivations were carried out every year. The Empire made preparations to face the famine conditions also.

Industry: Both agro-based and metal-based Industries came up in the economy. Sugar and jaggery were produced out of sugarcane production. Oil was extracted from coconut, til seeds. Mudpots were produced by the potters and lime production was increasing. Cotton was considered as an important industry during this regime. Cotton growth was encouraged and weaving industry flourished.

Trade and Commerce: There was a bilateral trade relationship between Tamil Nadu and other countries such as Ceylon, Arabia, Persia, Ormes, Java and China.

Imports: Elephants and Horses were purchased from the foreign countries; Camphor and Drug substances were imported.

Exports: Rice, Sugar, Jaggery, Chilly, Coconut etc. were exported. Besides, food items, incenses, herbs, metals were also exported.

Portuguese and the English were leading in the trade and commerce activities. Both the traders were involving the local traders named Chettiar. Mylapore and Santhome in Chennaiattinam were considered as trade centres.

Vijayanagara Empire depended on the land revenue model. Besides, salt industry, dyeing industry, fishing, pottery were also taxed.

Coins were minted at Tiruchi and Thanjavur. Pagoda was the prime coin. Panam and Kaasu were also in circulation. Besides, the Tamil Nadu coins named Kulilai, Iraegai, Sakkaram and Madam were also in circulation. The coins carry

images of Rama, Sita, Hanuman and also the images of animals such as Bullock, Pig, Elephant.

Trade Guilds formed by the various traders were found in the Vijayanagara Empire. They enjoyed a variety of privileges from the King and also the Officials as their extent was all over the empire. They were found critical part of the economic growth and activity.

Religious Status

Although Vijayanagara Empire took shape to protect the Hindus and Hinduism and to save Tamil Nadu from the Muslim Mis-rule and also to stall the frequent invasions on Tamil Nadu by the Sultan, all Religions were supported. On the basis of Religion, no one was ill treated. Besides, the other Religions were neither controlled nor eliminated. Hindu Religion grew rapidly with the active support of the King through protection of the temples and donations for enlarging the Hindu religion, tradition and the philosophy to reach a larger population.

(a) **Saiva Religion:** Kings believed in Varnashram Culture of the Saiva Philosophy. They believed that they were the representatives of Lord Virupaksha. They worshipped Ganapathy, Shiva, Ambigai, Vishnu and Sun God. Many sub-sects were also emerging such as Pasupathar, (were most popular in North Tamil Nadu) Veera Saivar (who worshipped only the Lord Shiva)

- (i) During this regime, the Saiva Siddantham authored by Meikanda Devar was published.
- (ii) Siddar concepts were widely accepted in Tamil Nadu during Vijayanagara Empire Rule.
- (iii) Siddantha Saivam Movement promoted more of Bhakti than Rituals that were being practiced.

(b) **Vaishnava Religion:** Vijayanagara Rule was the golden period for the Vaishnava religion. Many kings followed Vaishnavism and encouraged the Vaishnava cult. During this process, the new Vadakalai and Thenkalai divisions emerged in Vaishnavism.

- (i) **Vadakalai:** Vedantha Desikar (Venkitanathar from Kancheepuram) was responsible for Vada Kalai sect in the Vaishnavism. Vadakalai had its base at Kancheepuram. Vadakalai believed in Varnashrama System and also followed the Sanskrit scriptures for worship. They believed in rituals including Yagnas and sacrifices.
- (ii) **Thenkalai:** Manavaala Mahamuni (Alwar Thirunagar) was responsible for the birth of Thenkalai sect. Thenkalai took Srirangam as its base. Thenkalai was not accepting the Varnashrama System and believed in Tamil-based worship. They did not believe in rituals such as yagnas and sacrifices.

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(iii) **Other Religions:** Other Religions grew without any hindrance during this regime.

Jain habitats were found. Jain Temples in Kondamalai, Karanthai, Nagercoil Buddha temples were found at Kumbakonam, Thiruvanchi, and Patteeswaram. Nagercoil and Kancheepuram were the centres for Buddhism.

Christianity spread in Tamil Nadu during the Vijayanagara Empire. In 1545, Francis Xavier arrived at India. Tamil Nadu found the spread of Christianity on the arrival of Xavier. Once Portuguese entered India, coastal population was converted into Christianity. Robert-De-Nobili who arrived at Madurai in 1606, spread Christianity syndicating with some local Tamilians.

Vijayanagara Kings with their religious tolerance, encouraged Muslims to build Masjids at several locations. They were also employed in key positions of the Kingdom. Nagoor Dargah is a monumental piece of Muslims in Tamil Nadu.

Education and Literature

Education was given importance. Kings respected the educated and also the learned individuals. Foreign visitors have made a mention of the education system in Vijayanagara Empire.

(a) **Education:** In the village level, the traditional educational system prevailed. Primary Education was taken up by 'Vaathi' (Teacher). They were paid money and also the foodgrains. Temples, Choultries and also tree shades were used as class rooms. Teaching was through oral methodology. Religious Teachings were carried out from temples. Vedas were also taught by the Brahmins. Madurai was the centre of such education. Missionary Schools were also commenced at Madurai and Chennai.

(b) **Literature:** Vijayanagara Kings did not show any passion to promote Tamil Literature. At the same time, they did not deter the growth of the Tamil Literature also. During this period, due to the renaissance of the Bhakti Movement, Tamil Literature grew on its own. Most of these are Sangam Period Literature.

(i) Vedanta Desigar is the Disciple of Ramanujar. He is believed to have authored 25 Tamil books. The compilation is called Desiga Prabantham.

(ii) Srivilliputhurar's literature is on Vyasa's Mahabaratha, in Tamil. It is considered a valuable literature of this time.

(iii) Arunagirinathar who lived during Devarayar II, authored Thiruppugaz on Lord Murugan.

(iv) During Krishnadevarayar's Rule, Harinathar authored a book on saiva and vaishnava cults titled as 'iru samaya vilakkam'. kachiyappa

sivachariyaar wrote Kanda Puranam on Lord Subramanya. Thirumalainathar wrote Sokkanathar Ula and Sithampara Puranam. His son Paranjothiyaar wrote Thiruvilaiyaadalpuranam and Chithamparap paattiyal.

- (v) Nirambavalagiya desigar wrote Sethu Puranam. A Territorial Chief Athiveeraraama Pandiyan wrote Nidatham, Kaasi, Kandam, koorma puranam Linga puranam. Vamana pichchaariyar wrote Merumanthirapuranam.
- (vi) Kaalamegam was a notable poet in Vijayanagara Empire. He was a Tamil Laurate and he wrote 'Thiruvanaikka Ula'.
- (vii) Two poets IlamSooriyan and MuthuSuriyan (one was blind and the other was lame). They composed Ekambaranathar Ula and also two Kalambam literature.

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Art and Architecture

Many temples were rebuilt and renovated during this regime. They also built new temples with a unique architectural value and also the artistic minute designs and decorations. Their temples with the Mandapam and sculptures speak volumes of artistic nature of the Vijayanagara architectural and building technology.

1. Mantapams (Temple Halls): Vijayanagara Empire's artistic value is displayed by the various monuments that they have left behind for the posterity in the form of temples, mantaps, sculptures and artifact.

- (a) Thiruvannamalai Temple Mantap
- (b) Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple Mantap
- (c) Vellore Jalagandeswarar Temple Mantap
- (d) Varadaraja Perumal Temple, Kancheepuram –Sculptures and Stone Chains

2. Gopuras (Temple Tower):

- (a) Kancheepuram Ekambaranatheswara Temple
- (b) Thiruvannamalai Arunachaleswarar Temple
- (c) Chidambaram Nataraja Temple North Tower
- (d) Kalahasthi Temple

Speciality: Vijayanagar Style Gopuras are made with the base of Rock Stones and above them is built up with the Bricks sporting many small sculptures and art works. At the entrance we may also observe the Flag Girls. On the ceiling also we find a few sculptures which are artistic and beautiful.

3. Sculptures: During this reign, the art of sculpture also developed. Many styles and dimensions have been followed. We may observe real size soldier sculptures as well as the speeding war horse making people admire. Besides,

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we also find many temples sport Kings and Queens Images beautifully installed. Bronze metal works are also found in the art gallery of Tanjore. All these establish the artistic excellence of Vijayanagara Empires' artists and the kings who supported the art and architecture.

4. Arts: Paintings are also well appreciated during this Vijayanagara Regime. Many types of paintings are art works are found in and around the Temples as powerful interiors revealing the Purana Stories. They are looking colourful and also simple with the white lime mixed in colour, revealing the ethnic culture and heritage at that time.

- (a) Thiruparuthikunram (Kancheepuram)- Mahaveera's Life History – Pictures
- (b) Thiruvellarai- Thirumaal's Dasavathaaram; Ramayana Scenes and other exciting and enchanting pictures from the Epic Ramayana
- (c) Srirangam Sri Ranganathar Temple- Lord Krishna dancing scene, surrounded by the cattle and also the young gopikas
- (d) Thiruvannamalai- Lord Shiva appearing as Kalyanasundarar
- (e) Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple-Madurai- paintings
- (f) Alagarkovil Outer Mantap – paintings

5. Other Arts: Apart from these, dance and music was considered the best during the Vijayanagara Regime. Festivals were celebrated with dances. Besides, the ethnic dances with hand sticks (kolattam) and Bommalattam (dances with dolls) were very enchanting and also popular. The Kings used to honour the artists with Grants and Prizes.

Thus Vijayanagara Empire developed Art and Culture at Tamil Nadu during their rule. The Social and Economic Development is a reflection of a stable and judicious Rule with an abundant Religious tolerance and human values.

Check Your Progress

10. Name the towns in Tamil Nadu which grew prominently during Vijayanagara rule.
11. What was the status of Brahmins during the Vijayanagara Regime?
12. What was the status of trade and commerce during the regime?
13. List the variety of coins used during the Empire of Vijayanagara.

2.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The four dynasties of the Vijaynagar Empire are as follows:
 - (a) The Sangma Dynasty (1336 to 1486),

- (b) The Chaluva Dynasty (1486 to 1509),
 - (c) The Taluva Dynasty (1510 to 1570) and
 - (d) The Arvinda Dynasty (1570-1616)
2. A kingdom named Rajagambeeram covered the locations of Chingleput, North and South Arcot Districts in the then Tamil Nadu.
 3. In 1363-64 Kumara Kampanar's Army led by its loyal generals Gopna and Chaluvamangu captured Kanchi and defeated Rajanarayana Sambuvarayar of the Rajagambeeram Kingdom.
 4. Madurai Sultanate Rule was at its peak under Mubarak Shah with numerous atrocities against the Hindu Religion and the Hindus taking place; many Masjids were built by destroying Hindu Temples at Madurai and Hindus were tortured and killed mercilessly.
 5. When Madurai came under Vijayanagara Rule, it was ruled by Kumara Kampanar and he decided to open up the closed Hindu Temples and also to build new ones. He donated a huge fund to the Brahmins and temples to take up the renovations. New employees were put in charge of the administration of temples. They were called 'Kaikolar'.
 6. Hariharar II ruled Tamil Nadu between 1377 and 1404. During this time, the Kingdom expanded in its territories. Four new territories were named in Velur, Gingy, Thanjore and Madurai. Virupatchi Udayar was appointed as the Supreme Chief of all the four mandals.
 7. Chaluva Narasimhan was the Royal Representative of Vijayanagara in the North of Tamil Nadu between 1452 and 1485. He captured power at Vijayanagara and ruled from 1456 to 1491. He protected Tamil Nadu from external aggression and internal commotions. Chaluva Narasimhan recaptured Tamil Nadu from the oddas (Odiyans). He contained the invasions of Banas, Muslims and also Oddas. Chaluva Narasimhan brought the fame of Vijayanagara rule during his period. He died in 1491.
 8. The downfall of the Vijayanagara Empire started with the war of Talikota.
 9. The meaning of Nayangara System originates from the European system of Land Grant System to the Lords. In this system, Nayakar was the Military Administrator of a province. He was given the lands by the King, to yield a perennial income to him. This is based on the principle that all the lands are owned by the King and he has the rights to distribute to his dependents.
 10. The towns in Tamil Nadu which grew prominently during Vijayanagara rule were Kancheepuram, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Srirangam, Madurai, Srivilliputtur, Thirunelveli, and Rameswaram.
 11. Brahmins, in the words of Foreign traveller Barbosa, 'were found happy eating the food and were not found getting involved in physical labour.' Brahmins enjoyed the top notch concessions and respect from the Kings. They were given valuable grants and positions including special privileges.

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12. There was a bilateral trade relationship between Tamil Nadu and other countries such as Ceylon, Arabia, Persia, Ormes, Java and China.
13. Pagoda was the prime coin of the time. Panam and Kaasu were also in circulation. Besides, the Tamil Nadu coins named Kulilai, Iraegai, Sakkaram and Madam were also in circulation. The coins carry images of Rama, Sita, Hanuman and also the images of animals such as Bullock, Pig, Elephant. These coins were minted at Tiruchi and Thanjavur.

2.7 SUMMARY

- Vijayanagara Empire's rise is a very important historical happening in the 14th century which is known as the mid-period of the Indian history. The objectives in establishing a strong Hindu rule in South India and to retrieve and protect the ancient culture and heritage as well as to protect them from Tughluq rule in the Deccan.
- On account of its efficient administration, prosperous economy, diplomatic polity, liberal religious policy, Vijayanagara Empire lasted from 1336 to 1562 as an unchallenged super power. During this entire duration, Tamil Nadu remained under the Vijayanagara Empire. Kings who ruled Tamil Nadu after 1565 too remained as representatives of the Vijayanagara King and were called the Nayakkars.
- From 1565 onwards, the empire just remained in existence and without any achievement till 1614. Its defeat at the hands of the erstwhile Bhamni rulers in 1565 gave it a crushing blow. The 16 rulers of the empire were from the four dynasties; the Sangam Dynasty, the Chaluva Dynasty, the Taluva Dynasty, and the Arvinda Dynasty.
- The First Dynasty of Vijayanagar Empire named as Sangama Dynasty had its first king as Hariharar. At the time of establishing the Vijayanagar at Aanegundi at Thungabadra Riverside, Tamil Nadu had two different rules: Sambuvaraya Empire and Madurai Sultanate's rule.
- A kingdom named Rajagambeeram covered the locations of Chingleput, North and South Arcot Districts in the then Tamil Nadu. The Kingdom was ruled by Sambuvaraiyar Dynasty under the Chola country. When Muslims invaded Tamil Nadu, the Sambuvaraiyar declared themselves as independent kingdom.
- The Madurai Sultanate Rule under Mubarak Shah was at its peak with all atrocities against the Hindu Religion and the Hindus; many Masjids were built by destroying Hindu Temples at Madurai and Hindus were tortured and killed mercilessly. At this juncture, Kumara Kampanar was deputed by the Vijayanagara Kingdom to save Madurai and Hinduism from the Muslim Rule and also to put an end to the Muslim Rule and the Madurai Sultanate.

- Kumara Kampanar's first task was to open up the closed Hindu Temples and also to rebuild the destroyed ones and to build new ones. He donated a huge fund to the Brahmins and temples to take up the renovations. New employees were put in charge of the administration of temples. They were called 'Kaikolar'.
- Downfall of the Vijayanagara Empire commenced with the war of Talikota. Two Muslim generals serving Ramarayar joined hands with the Sultans and prepared 80,000 soldiers of the Vijayanagara Empire, to defect to Sultan's Army.
- In 1565, in the fierce battle between the forces of Vijayanagar Empire and the Sultans of Bijapur, Golkonda, Birar, Bidar and Ahmednagar, Ramarayar was killed and about a lakh of soldiers were also killed.
- The meaning of Nayangara System originates from the European system of Land Grant System to the Lords. In this system, Nayakar was the Military Administrator of a province. He was given the lands by the King, to yield a perennial income to him. This is based on the principle that all the lands are owned by the King and he has the rights to distribute to his dependents.
- The formation of Vijayanagara Empire in 1336, was intended to save the South India from the frequent attacks of the Muslim Sultans and also to save Hindus from the torture and murder by Muslim anarchism.
- Caste system was very much spelt during the Vijayanagaram Regime. The Kings were following the Varnashrama system and they were encouraging the caste distinctions.
- Sati system was prevalent. Prostitution was legalized in those days. Some women sold themselves to the temples and were called as Devadasis.
- Temples were considered the centres of Economic Activities, in the Vijayanagara Empire. Due to the Trade and Commerce activities of the Portuguese, Dutch, and the English, a lot of Economic Changes took place in the Empire that also benefited the Tamil Nadu Segments.
- There was a bilateral trade relationship between Tamil Nadu and other countries such as Ceylon, Arabia, Persia, Ormes, Java and China.
- Although Vijayanagara Empire took shape to protect the Hindus and Hinduism and to save Tamil Nadu from the Muslim Mis-rule and also to stall the frequent invasions on Tamil Nadu by the Sultan, all Religions were supported.

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2.8 KEY WORDS

- **Suzerainty:** It refers to a relationship in which one region or nation controls the foreign policy and relations of a tributary state, while allowing the tributary nation to have internal autonomy.

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- **De-facto Ruler:** It refers to someone who acts as the leader of the group, without having any votes to assign them to that position. They are the ones who keep the group together and makes all the difficult decisions.
- **Mandal:** It refers to a subdistrict, an administrative division of some countries of South Asia.
- **Polygamy:** It refers to the practice or custom of having more than one wife or husband at the same time.

2.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. List the names of few books written by authors and historians on Vijayanagara Empire.
2. Write a note on the spread of Vijayanagara Empire in Tamil Nadu.
3. How did Madhurai became a part of Vijayanagara Empire?
4. Whose victory is describe in the literature named '*Karnataka Rasargal Savusuttaara saritham*'?
5. Write a note on Talikota War.
6. Differentiate between Maha Mandaleswarar and Nayakar.
7. Give an overview of social divisions during the Vijayanagaram regime.
8. Write a short note on the status of women during Vijayanagaram rule.
9. Briefly mention the art and architecture during the regime.

Long Answer Questions

1. How did Domingo Paes and Fernao Nuniz narrate the administration under Vijayanagara rulers?
2. Discuss the contribution of Amara Nayangara in the administration of Vijayanagara Empire.
3. Analyse the hierarchy of social divisions during the Vijayanagara Regime.
4. Which industries flourished under the Vijayanagara Empire? Discuss.
5. Explain the religious status during the Empire of Vijayanagara.
6. Throw a detailed light on the status of literature and education system during the Vijayanagara Empire.

2.10 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 3 DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CONDITIONS

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Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 Emergence of Bhakti Movement
- 3.3 Saivism
- 3.4 Vaishnavism
- 3.5 Vira Shaivism
- 3.6 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 3.7 Summary
- 3.8 Key Words
- 3.9 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 3.10 Further Readings

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Hinduism is not a single religion but it comprises of many traditions. The traditions that run in Hinduism may go back several thousand years. In this unit, you will study about the emergence of Bhakti Movement amid different worship patterns prevalent in south India. You will also get to know about the principles and significance of Saivism and Vaishnavism. Besides, the unit also focuses on the doctrines of Vira Shaivism together with the significance of Vadakalai and Thenkalai sects.

3.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the emergence of Bhakti Movement amid different worship patterns prevalent in South India
- Discuss the beginning and principles of Saivism
- Analyse the introduction and popularity of Vaishnavism in the south
- Describe the essentialities and doctrines of Vira Shaivism
- Examine the significance of Vadakalai and Thenkalai sects

3.2 EMERGENCE OF BHAKTI MOVEMENT

Prior to the mix of Tamil with other races of India, religious beliefs started with the worship of the dead and also the worship of Snakes and Linga. During the Sangam Period each region had a different worship pattern as well as God/Godess.

1. Kurinji races were worshipping Murugan
2. Mullai races were worshipping Maayon
3. Marutham races were worshipping Indra
4. Neithal races were worshipping the Sea
5. Paalai races were worshipping Kali

In due course, due to the educational development and the growth of literature coupled with the evolution of refined culture and beliefs, people started realizing the eternal power. As the Pandits and Sanskrit scholars entered Tamil Nadu during various rules, the worship patterns got changed and the North Indian beliefs and practices were partially or fully accepted in Tamil Nadu. The epics and the stories about Gods and Avatars were also wide spread and they have found a place in the Sangam Literature.

1. From the stage of superstitions the Bhakti concept brought into a streamlined devotion and surrender to the God for attaining salvation. Bhakti became a path of life intertwined with the day to day life, during the Bhakti movement.
2. A movement necessarily has more participation by the implementer and also the user. For the first time in South India, based on religious equality and broad-based social participation, the Bhakti movement entered the society as a validation programme. Many scholars rank this as a revolution, while few others limit the movement as a renaissance.
3. The movement which was spearheaded by popular poet-saints reached its zenith in the 10th century after which it began to decline.

Buddhism and Jainism entered Tamil Nadu along with the patterns of educational institutions that imparted religion-based education to the select sect of students.

During the peak of Bhakti Movement, that stormed North India in 300-600 AD, practices of worships and festive celebrations, dancing and Pujas, music and other rituals got popularized in the country. Some of these practices and rituals entered Tamil Nadu. There is however, a controversy still remaining unresolved. Whether Bhakti Movement travelled from North to South or South to North.

The Bhakti movement refers to the theistic devotional trend that emerged in medieval Hinduism and later revolutionized in Sikhism. It originated in eighth-century

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in South India (now Tamil Nadu and Kerala), and spread northwards. It swept over east and north India from the 15th century onwards, reaching its zenith between the 15th and 17th century CE.

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The Bhakti movement regionally developed around different gods and goddesses, and some sub-religions were Vaishnavism (Vishnu), Shaivism (Shiva), Shaktism (Shakti goddesses), and Smartism. The movement was inspired by many poet-saints, who championed a wide range of philosophical positions ranging from theistic dualism of Dvaita to absolute monism of Advaita Vedanta.

The movement has traditionally been considered as an influential social reformation in Hinduism, and provided an individual-focused alternative path to spirituality regardless of one's caste of birth or gender. Postmodern scholars question this traditional view and whether the Bhakti movement ever was a reform or rebellion of any kind. They suggest Bhakti movement was a revival, reworking and recontextualisation of ancient Vedic traditions. Scriptures of the Bhakti movement include the Bhagavad Gita, Bhagavata Purana and Padma Purana.

The movement started with the Saiva Nayanars and the Vaisnava Alvars, who lived between 5th and 9th century AD. Their efforts ultimately helped spread bhakti poetry and ideas throughout India by the 12th–18th century.

The Alvars, which literally means 'those immersed in God', were Vaishnava poet-saints who sang praises of Vishnu as they travelled from one place to another. They established temple sites such as Srirangam, and spread ideas about Vaishnavism. Their poems, compiled as Alvar Arulicheyalgal or Divya Prabhandham, developed into an influential scripture for the Vaishnavas. The Bhagavata Purana's references to the South Indian Alvar saints, along with its emphasis on bhakti, have led many scholars to give it South Indian origins, though some scholars question whether this evidence excludes the possibility that bhakti movement had parallel developments in other parts of India.

Like the Alvars, the Saiva Nayanar poets were influential. The Tirumurai, a compilation of hymns on Shiva by sixty-three Nayanar poet-saints, developed into an influential scripture in Shaivism. The poets' itinerant lifestyle helped create temple and pilgrimage sites and spread spiritual ideas built around Shiva. Early Tamil-Siva bhakti poets influenced Hindu texts that came to be revered all over India.

Some scholars state that the Bhakti movement's rapid spread in India in the 2nd millennium, was in part a response to the arrival of Islam and subsequent Islamic rule in India and Hindu-Muslim conflicts. This view is contested by some scholars, with Rekha Pande stating that singing ecstatic bhakti hymns in local language was a tradition in south India before Muhammad was born. According to Pande, the psychological impact of Muslim conquest may have initially contributed to community-style bhakti by Hindus. Yet other scholars

state that Muslim invasions, their conquering of Hindu Bhakti temples in south India and seizure/melting of musical instruments from local people, was in part responsible for the later relocation or demise of singing Bhakti traditions in the 18th century.

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3.3 SAIIVISM

Those who worshipped Lord Shiva were named as Saivites. Saivite saints were also called poet-saints as they also composed poems in praise of the God and spread the message through these poems as a module to develop followers in smaller groups to take the cult forward. Their basic teachings supported the people living in their own domains without making a penance and taking sanyasa (relinquishment). To prove this, these poet-saints lived amidst the people and followed a lifestyle combined with worship and prayers. In addition, they were also composing poems and visiting and guiding Kings on Religion and other matters. Their teachings centred-around the principle of realizing the God in every thought, deed and speech, without discrimination and inequalities. As they moved with the people, they imbibed the habit of following ethical and moral values as well as speaking truth and following pure thoughts and righteous actions. This attracted many and the Bhakti concept became prominent in the society and their social customs. Religion became a determining factor of social customs, prayer methods, building temples, worship in temples, singing hymns in the praise of the God. Worship in Temples and visiting Temples and Kshetras became a part of the Bhakti expression. Festivals of temples and standard rituals for the temples were redefined as a part of the Bhakti movement. Temples regained their supremacy and turned into a point of convergence. The Alvar and Nayanmar saints used the Tamil language and not Sanskrit for preaching and composing devotional songs. Thus the movement could acquire a popular base and akin to one's own ethnic sentiment of expression.

Nayanmar (Nayanar)

The Nayanmars were a group of 63 saints or saint poets who were devoted to the Hindu God Shiva in Tamil Nadu. In Saivism, the history of 63 Nayanmars is very notable one. They followed the rituals and the scriptures set out for the Siva Worship.

Complete List of Nayanmars (Nayanars):

1. Sundaramurthi Nayanar
2. Tiru Neelakanta Nayanar
3. Iyarpahai Nayanar
4. Ilayankudi Mara Nayanar
5. Maiporul Nayanar

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6. Viralminda Nayanar
7. Amaraneedi Nayanar
8. Eripatha Nayanar
9. Enadinatha Nayanar
10. Kannappa Nayanar
11. Kungiliya Kalaya Nayanar
12. Manakanchara Nayanar
13. Arivattaya Nayanar
14. Anaya Nayanar
15. Murthi Nayanar
16. Muruga Nayanar
17. Rudra Pasupathi Nayanar
18. Tiru Nalai Povar Nayanar
19. Tiru Kurippu Thonda Nayanar
20. Chandesvara Nayanar
21. Tiru-Navukkarasar Nayanar
22. Kulacchirai Nayanar
23. Perumizhalai Kurumba Nayanar
24. Karaikal Ammaiyar
25. Appuddi Nayanar
26. Tiruneelanakka Nayanar
27. Nami Nandi Adigal
28. Tiru Gnana Sambandar
29. Eyarkon Kalikama Nayanar
30. Tiru Mula Nayanar
31. Dandi Adigal Nayanar
32. Murkha Nayanar
33. Somasira Nayanar
34. Sakkiya Nayanar
35. Sirappuli Nayanar
36. Siruthonda Nayanar
37. Cheraman Perumal Nayanar
38. Gananatha Nayanar

39. Kootruva Nayanar
40. Pugal Chola Nayanar
41. Narasinga Muniyaraiyar
42. Adipattha Nayanar
43. Kalikamba Nayanar
44. Kalia Nayanar
45. Satti Nayanar
46. Aiyadigal Kadavarkon Nayanar
47. Kanampulla Nayanar
48. Kari Nayanar
49. Ninra Seer Nedumara Nayanar
50. Mangayarkarasiyar
51. Vayilar Nayanar
52. Munaiyaduvvar Nayanar
53. Kazharsinga Nayanar
54. Seruthunai Nayanar
55. Idangazhi Nayanar
56. Pugazh Tunai Nayanar
57. Kotpuli Nayanar
58. Pusalar Nayanar
59. Nesa Nayanar
60. Kochengat Chola Nayanar
61. Tiru Neelakanta Yazhpanar
62. Sadaya Nayanar
63. Isajnanaiyar

It is important to be noted that Manickavachagar is not counted as a Nayanar but he is considered as one of the four Tamil Samaya Kuravas (Teachers). Of the 63 Nayanmars that are listed, only four of them are popular and at the same time important from the angle of their contributions to the Bhakti Movement and its Renaissance. They are:

1. Thirunavukkarasar (Called as Appar adigal)
2. Thirugnana Sambandar (Sambandar)
3. Sundarar and
4. Manickavachagar

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These four Nayanars are considered as Tamil Samaya Acharyas (four Tamil religious Teachers) whose hymns are authentic hymns that pleased Lord Siva himself. In a few cases, the Lord himself has commenced the stanzas and lines.

They brought out Thevaram and Thiruvagasam which are the only Tamil prayer songs that are recited in all the Siva Temples, in Tamil Nadu even today. As against Sanskrit Slokas, these hymns have attained supremacy all over Tamil Nadu as an official worship adapted by the Shivites in Tamil Nadu. Though Sanskrit slokas as chanted in Siva Temples, Tevaram and Tiruvagasam are given the prime position in Tamil Nadu temples. In other words, Saiva faith clings on to these two compilations, without which Siva Worship is incomplete.

A brief coverage of their contributions will portray the total magnitude of the contributions made by the Nayanmars (Nayanar) in taking forward the Bhakti Movement all through the ages. The foundation made by the Nayanmars formed the basis of the future growth of Saivism in Tamil Nadu and the temples of South India still chant the hymns composed by the Nayanmars and also the practices that were established by the Nayanmars.

Thirumurai is one of the first works in Saivism, one sect of the Hindu religions. It reflects important core values and preserves them literally as well as grammatically. The hymns (songs) contain all the information found in the Vedas. These holy hymns have been sung by Saivite Saints, poets, in a great spiritual wisdom and in seeking only the truth, having seen the God himself. They have numerous healing powers that make wonders, having staged many miracles such as restructuring bones into a woman and making a dumb person speak.

Panniru Thirumurai (12 thirumuraikal) is a collection of 12 holy scriptures sung by 27 devotees in Tamil (from Thirugnanasambandar to Chekkizar) most of whom lived in different times. The songs reflect and teach the ways of present life, after-life and the path to salvation. They help to live life and experience it to its fullest with happiness and prosperity. They are considered panacea with indiscriminate approach to the masses and the elite alike and apply to all in various states and conditions.

One of the Panniru Thirumurai, is Thevaram. Thevaram is a compilation of the hymns on Lord Siva sung by Sundarar, Appar or Tirunavakkarasu, and Tirugnana Sambandar. These hymns are accepted as the prayer songs in praise of the Lord Siva who is pleased by its praise and melody.

Of the Panniru Thirumurai, Thevaram is considered as the most important. Thevaram refers to songs (pamaalai) sung in the praise of God.

Thiruvagasam in Tamil means 'Sacred Utterances'. This is a compilation of the Tamil Hymns in the praise of Lord Siva by poet Manickavachagar, who is considered as one of the four Saiva Samaya Kuravas (Teachers).

One of the Panniru Thirumurai, is Thiruvagasam. Thiruvagasam is a compilation of the hymns on Lord Siva sung by Manickavachagar. These hymns are accepted as the prayer songs in the praise of the Lord Siva who is pleased by its praise and melody. This was composed in 9th century. It contains 51 compositions and constitutes the 8th volume of the Thirumurai (of the 12 Thirumurai).

Thiruvagasam is believed to have been originated from Tirupperunturai also known as Avudayar Koil, Shiva temple where Manikkavasagar is said to have converted the king to Shaivism and built the temple with money that had been intended for war-horses. Thiruvagasam is considered as a sacred anthology of Tamil Saiva Siddantha. Thiruvagasam is recited in the Tamil Saiva Temples along with Thevaram.

As a result, the Bhakti Movement of the south in the long run strengthened that hierarchical system rather than weakening it. Ultimately after the movement reached its zenith in the 10th century, it was gradually incorporated by the traditional Brahmanical religion. Despite these constraints, the South Indian Bhakti Movement in its shiny days succeeded in championing the cause of religious equality and consequently, the Brahmins had to accept the right of the low caste to preach, to have access to bhakti as a mode of worship and to have access even to the Vedas.

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Check Your Progress

1. What were the religious beliefs before the mix of Tamils with other races of India?
2. How did Buddhism and Jainism enter Tamil Nadu?
3. What do you mean by the Bhakti Movement?
4. Who were Saivite saints?
5. How many Nayanmars were there and whom do they worship?

3.4 VAISHNAVISM

Vaishnavism is another major tradition of Hinduism like Saivism. The tradition flourished under the Pallavas Regime and Lord Vishnu was worshipped as the presiding deity by the Vaishnavites. Vaishnavite Sages were called as Alwars. These Alwars were dedicated to the cult and they mingled with the devotees and ensured that the faith was growing and the rituals were carried out in a systematic way. They also ensured that they highlighted the supremacy of vaishnavism over all other faiths inclusive of Shaivism. However the arguments amongst the Shiva and Vaishnava cults are co existing.

Twelve Alvars

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The alvars, also spelt as alvars are immersed in god'. Tamil poet-saints of South India who espoused bhakti (devotion) to the Hindu god Vishnu or his avatar Krishna in their songs of longing, ecstasy and service. They are venerated especially in Vaishnavism, which regards Vishnu or Krishna as the Supreme Being.

According to many modern academics, the Alvars belong to the time bucket of 5th century to 10th century CE, however traditionally the Alvars are considered to have lived between 4200 BCE - 2700 BCE. As per orthodoxy, the number of alvars are ten, though there are other references that include Andal and Madhurakavi Alvar, making the number twelve. Andal is the only female saint-poet in the 12 Alvars.

Together with the contemporary sixty three Shaiva Nayanars, 12 Alvars representing the Vishnu Cult spread the Bhakti Movement in the Era and they are among the most important saints from Tamil Nadu.

The devotional outpourings of Alvars, composed during the early medieval period of Tamil history, helped revive the Bhakti Movement, through their hymns of worship to Vishnu and his avatars. They praised the Divya Desams, 108 'abodes' (temples) of these Vaishnava deities. The poetry of the Alvars echoes bhakti to God through love, and in the ecstasy of such devotions they sang hundreds of songs which embodied both depth of feeling and felicity of expressions. The collection of their hymns is known as 4000 Divya Prabandham. The Bhakti literature that sprang from Alvars has contributed to the establishment and sustenance of a culture that broke away from the ritual-oriented Vedic religion and rooted itself in devotion as the only path for salvation. In addition they helped to make the Tamil religious life independent of a knowledge of Sanskrit. As part of the legacy of the Alvars, five Vaishnava philosophical traditions (sampradayas) have developed at the later stages.

Twelve Alvars:

1. Poigai Alwar
2. Bhoothatalwar
3. Peyalwar
4. Thirumozhisai Alwar
5. Aandal
6. Nammalwar
7. Kulasekara Alwar
8. Thiruppanaalvar
9. Thirumangai Alwar
10. Madura Kavi Alwar

11. Periyalwar

12. Thondaradi podi alwar

Alvars are considered the twelve supreme devotees of Vishnu, who were instrumental in popularising Vaishnavism in the Tamil-speaking regions. The alvars were influential in promoting the Bhagavata cult and the two Hindu epics, namely, Ramayana and Mahabaratha.

The first three Alvars Poigai, Bhoothath and Pey belonged to the 7th century; while Nammalvar and Madhurakavi belonged to the 10th century; while rest of them lived in the 9th century.

Traditionally the Alvars are considered to have lived between 4200 BCE - 2700 BCE. Traditional dates take them to the age of Shuka from the period of the *Bhagavata Purana*, many are from Dwaparayuga, while Nammalwar belongs to the early part of Kaliyuga.

According to the poem the symbolic undertone behind Andal's entreaty to her friends to wake up and seek Krishna subsumes the essence of the three basic mantras in the Vaishnava tradition—the:

1. Tirumantram,
2. Dvayam and
3. Charama Sloka that signify the truth of the paramatma or the Supreme being who dwells in everything

Tiruppavai is said to be the seed of the vedam. As the entire tree and the trees coming from it are hidden in the subtle seed, so is the entire essence of vedam hidden in Tiruppavai which can be revealed only under the guidance of an acharya or a guru who is well versed in vedic scriptures.

This entire hidden essence is mentioned in the Andal's verses in the form of poetry.

Thus, Thiruppavai poems became meaningful and popular such that even today in any Vaishnava Temple, especially in the month of Dhanur Month, Thiruppavai is recited early in the morning i.e., Brahma Muhurtham.

Alvars were equally attacking the Jainism and its Philosophy, as was done by the Shaivites i.e., the 63 Nayanmars (Nayanars). Bhakti Movement touched its renaissance through the unstinted efforts and spread of messages by Alvars and Nayanmars. This alone placed them at the Pinnacle of glory resulting in the revival of the Hinduism with a greater push.

Veerashaiva

Veerashaivism is a sub-tradition within Shaivism. According to tradition, it was transmitted by five Panchacharayas, five acharya Renukacharya, Darukacharya, Ekorama, Panditharadhya, and Vishweswara, and first taught by Renukacharya

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to Agastya, a Vedic seer. The preachings of Jagadguru Renukacharya Bhagavadpada to rishi Agastya is recorded in the form of a book, which is named as 'Shri Siddhantha Shikamani'.

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Pancharayyas

According to tradition, the Panchacharyas arose out of five great Sthavaralingas located in Balehonnur in Karnataka, Ujjini in Karnataka, Kedar in Uttarakhand, Srisailam in Andhra Pradesh, and Kashi or Banaras in Uttar Pradesh under different names in different Yugas. The Panchacharyas established five peethas, which play an important role in Veerashaiva:

- Veerasimhasana of Rambhapuri in Balehonnuru (Karnataka)
- Saddharma Shimhasana of Ujjaini (Karnataka)
- Vairagya Shimhasana of Kedar (Uttarakhand)
- Surya Shimhasana of Shrishaila (Andhra Pradesh) and
- Jnana Shimhasana of Kashi (Uttar Pradesh)

Peethas

Veerashaivism is continued to this day and is preserved and transmitted by five peethas (Rambhapuri, Ujjaini, Kedar, Shreeshail, Kashi), who play an essential role in the Veerashaiva tradition.

Philosophy

The philosophy of Veerashaivism is explained in Siddhanta Shikhamani. While the Veerashaiva-tradition incorporates Vedic elements, the origin of panchacharyas has been explained in Sivagamas, especially in Svayambhuva Agama, Suprabhedagama and Viragama. The earlier portions of Agama literature are the fundamental source of Saiva religion, while the latter portions are of special importance to Veerashaivism.

Vadakalai and Thenkalai

VadaKalai and Thenkalai are the two different streams of worship carved out in the Vaishnava tradition. The Vadakalai followers observe traditions in a significant way different from the Thenkalai Tradition and even wearing the Forehead symbols are distinct. However, the ultimate worship is towards Lord Vishnu and the methodologies are well defined and traditional based on the Vedas and Upanishads.

3.5 VIRA SHAIVISM

Vira Shaivism is a firm Shivite faith, prominent in its homeland—Karnataka. It was made popular by the Sri Basaveshvara (1105-67). The movement championed

the cause of the downtrodden and evolved as a revolt against a system which fostered social inequality. Going against the way of the times, it rejected ritualistic caste-based supremacy. It also rejected the system of four stages of life, and also the numerous multiplicity of gods and goddesses; the concepts of karmic destiny, existence of inner worlds, and the duality of Paramathma and Jeevathma. Temple worship, ritualistic priest-craft, animal sacrifice, and the traditions of ritual purity-pollution were all rejected by this sect of believers.

Shiva is the Supreme God, and he is to be worshiped through the Linga not as an image but Shiva himself. Shiva is the linga and the jiva is the anga (part); and the main purpose of this worship is the search for and realization of the devotee's divine oneness with Shiva through the linga. This is technically called the internal penetration into Shiva through the worship and contemplation of the linga. To facilitate this union with and final absorption into the Deity, the devotee takes recourse to 'eight aids to faith', and the practice of the Sat-sthala Siddhanta philosophy.

Diksha which opens the door and admits a person into the fold of Virasaivism, is considered essential and compulsory for attaining the final goal. It is simultaneous with wearing of the linga. Hence they are also called Lingayats (bearers of the linga).

Shiva resides in the disciple in the form of consciousness. It is believed that during the initiation Chaithanya, existing in the body of the pupil is extracted by the Guru's spiritual powers and gets placed on the consecrated linga. The linga is worn encased in a pendant around the neck and worshiped throughout life. The linga must on no account be separated from the body, since such separation is equivalent to spiritual death.

This cult strongly condemns worship of Shiva in any other form than the istalinga (the personal linga). There are eight aids to spiritual life of the disciple by the Guru:

1. obedience to the guru,
2. worship of the linga,
3. reverence for the jangama teachers,
4. wearing of the sacred rudrâksa (rosary),
5. use of the holy ash sacred to Shiva,
6. partaking of the guru's prasad,
7. purification through holy water called tîrtha, and
8. repetition of the six-lettered mantra Om Namah Úivâyâ, meaning '*Obeisance to Shiva*'.

This mantra is to the Shaivas what Gayatri is to the Brahmanas. The Virashaivas do not accept any other mantra.

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The philosophy of the Virashaivas is called the Six-Stage Philosophy. Its essence is the acceptance of the six-stage path of devotion and surrender, as the best means of achieving union with Shiva. Beginning with the acute realization of separation from God, the devotee passes through the stages of

- (i) bhakta-sthala (devotion)
- (ii) mahesa-sthala (selfless service)
- (iii) prasadi-sthala (earnestly seeking Shiva's grace)
- (iv) pranalingi-sthala (experience of all as Shiva),
- (v) sarana-sthala (egoless refuge in Shiva), and
- (vi) aikya-sthala (oneness with Shiva).

Each phase brings the seeker and Shiva closer, until they blend together in a final state of perpetual Shiva-consciousness, as rivers merging in the ocean. It is insisted that in all these stages the istalinga must be worshiped, and that the istalinga must always serve as the basis of contemplation.

Stage I: In the bhakta-sthala stage, the individual is offered the istalinga by his guru, who instructs him about the goal and the method of attaining it. The goal is unity with the Deity, which implies that the seeker is also akin to the Deity. Great emphasis is placed on devotional and ethical practices, which purify the soul of the impurities of egoism, passions, and destructive emotions.

Stage II: The devotee then rises to the mahesa-sthala, where he is in a joyful mood and is intent on serving others. The stage lays stress on firmness, courage, and staunch adherence to the Virasaiva Philosophy. Observance of vows (vrata), regulations (niyama), and moral precepts (sila); pure devotion, and freedom from desires enhance the purity of the soul.

Stage III: The devotee thus ascends to the prasadi-sthala, where the favour or grace (prasada) of Shiva is bestowed upon him. He is now a prasadin and looks upon all objects as Shiva's prasada. Kriya in the form of worship and jnana are blended together from the beginning to the end.

However, in the first three stages, worship gets an upper hand, and the distinction between the Deity and the devotee is maintained.

In the next three stages, jnana predominates, and the distinction between Deity and devotee gradually decreases. In its place, the idea of the identity of the soul with the Deity emerges and becomes brighter.

Stage IV: Through meditation, the devotee ascends to the pranalingi-sthala, where he realizes the Atman, the internal illuminating light of Consciousness (prana means Atman here, and not vital force). The soul feels sure of its identity with the Deity, but due to the residual impressions of duality the identity is not complete.

Stage V: In the next stage, sarana-sthala, there is complete self-surrender to Shiva. The soul is in communion with the Deity, but duality still exists, though markedly attenuated.

Stage VI: In the final stage, aikya-sthala, there is complete unity, and the soul ceases to exist as distinct from the Deity.

Virasaiva saints say that this final attainment is beyond what can be humanly expressed. It is only to be felt and experienced. The saint Renukacharya said, 'Like water poured in water, fire placed in fire, the soul that becomes mingled in the Supreme Shiva is not seen as distinct,

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Virashaivism: Doctrines	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Virashaivas, heroic Shaivas, worship Shiva in the form of the linga.2. The Kannada vacanas, religious lyrics in free verse, are the most important texts of Virashaivism.3. Human form of Men and Women are temples of the god and thus all are equal, so Virashaivism attempted to abolish caste.4. The supremacy of the brahmins is not recognised. <p>Other reforms were</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a) the prohibition of child-marriage,b) allowing widows to remarry,c) burial instead of cremation, andd) the abolition of the chief Hindu rites for the removal of ceremonial impurity. <p>Each family has its own guru or spiritual guide for the astavarna, eightfold sacrament, which is the most important ceremony.</p> <p>At the heart of Virashaivism is the opposition between movable and immovable. The divinity of the Jangama is reflected in many narrative stories in the Basava Purana and other collections, and in which the Jangama is actually Shiva. There are five founding Jangama preceptors, the panchacharya, who emerged from the five heads of Shiva before Brahma started to populate the world. Ahimsa, non-violence, and vegetarianism are followed, showing Jain influence.</p>
History:	<p>The early history of the movement is unclear but it is clear that the Virashaivas appeared as a reformist Shaiva sect in the middle or end of the twelfth century on the borders of Maharashtra and Karnataka.</p> <p>This sect may have been a retort of the Dravidians on Brahmanic domination. The Shaiva movement is very ancient and existed centuries before Basava was born. The Basava Purana and other books clearly describe Basava, incarnated as Nandikesvara, coming into the world to save the persecuted devotees of Shiva. Basava is more correctly termed the leader of the Virashaivas, but there was another important reformer named Ekanta Ramayya, of whom little remained known when the history of Virashaivism was written, except the miracle of the heads in the Basava Purana. Both leaders were involved in persecuting the Jains, but Jain influence persists in the Virashaiva emphasis on non-violence and vegetarianism.</p>

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Five pontifical seats, or mutts, of the five founders, the pancacarya, were established close to one or other of the twelve Jyotilingas, self-emanated lingas, of India. A hierarchy of mutts descend from these five main mutt down to the small village mutt, or hiremutt.

Then with devotion and austerity any novice can attain to become a jangama by initiation.. The ShivayogaMandira, a central training establishment, was set up to meet the demand for virakta ascetics. A war of pamphlets, processions, and conferences between the Virakta Party and the Pancacarya Party resulted in the success of the Virakta Movement.

The complementary opposition of the renouncer ascetic and the Virashaiva community, between man-outside-of-the-world and man-in-the-world, has survived historical pressures and the ascetic renouncer continues to play an important role as catalyst and agent of transformation in Virashaiva society.

Symbols:

Of vital importance is the linga, a form of Shiva, worn around the neck or on the upper arm in a silver casket. Traditionally the linga is a small stone from Patalaganga, a tributary of the Krishna River below Srisailam, and now flooded by a reservoir. Patalaganga is the river of the underworld in Hindu mythology. The linga is invested soon after birth at the astavarna, eightfold sacrament, ceremony which has **eight rites**, each of important symbolism.

The guru performs it in a simple manner. After this, at the age of eight or ten, the child is given the next stage of attainment and the blend with the God. The two big toes of the Jangama are adorned with vibhuti and patri leaves, and are worshipped with incense. Water or coconut milk is poured over the toes and collected underneath as karunaprasada, 'consecrated offering of compassion,' which the Jangama and the devotee drink.

The Jangama and devotee then worship the istalinga. Though the istalinga is for sole worship and symbolically represents the devotee's personal purification and ultimate union with Shiva, it needs the Jangama to give it life, for he is a living Shiva. In the initiation rite of Jangama boys and in the marriage rite of all Virashaivas, the five pancacaryapitha, pontifical seats, are symbolized by five metal pots filled with water and betel leaves, linked together and tied to the main participants of the ritual by a thread. The pattadevaru Jangamas sit on a throne and wear gold, whereas the ascetic Jangamas sit on the skin of a wild tiger. On the prakara (outer) wall of Srisailam Temple we can see many carvings of Jangamas and some sit on living tigers. Basava and his deified form of Nandikesvara is an important symbol, especially with the viraktamatha. He too is to be found on the Srisailam.Prakara. The Mallikarjuna Temple at Srisailam is one of the five centres of the panchacharya and here are to be found not only the Jyotilinga but many forms of Shiva, and many Gods and Goddesses, especially on the prakara.

Check Your Progress

6. What does Vaishnavism mean?
7. Who were Alvars?
8. What do you understand by Veerashaiva?
9. What is meant by Vira Shaivism?

3.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Prior to the mix of Tamil with other races of India, religious beliefs started with the worship of the dead and also the worship of Snakes and Linga. During the Sangam Period each region had a different worship pattern as well as God/Godess.
2. Buddhism and Jainism entered Tamil Nadu along with the patterns of educational institutions that imparted religion-based education to the select sect of students.
3. The Bhakti movement refers to the theistic devotional trend that emerged in medieval Hinduism and later revolutionized in Sikhism. It originated in eighth-century in South India (now Tamil Nadu and Kerala), and spread northwards. It swept over east and north India from the 15th century onwards, reaching its zenith between the 15th and 17th century CE. The Bhakti movement regionally developed around different gods and goddesses, and some sub-religions were Vaishnavism (Vishnu), Shaivism (Shiva), Shaktism (Shakti goddesses), and Smartism.
4. Those who worshipped Lord Shiva were named as Saivites. Saivite saints were also called poet-saints as they also composed poems in praise of the God and spread the message through these poems as a module to develop followers in smaller groups to take the cult forward.
5. The Nayanmars were a group of 63 saints or saint poets who were devoted to the Hindu God Shiva in Tamil Nadu.
6. Vaishnavism is another major tradition of Hinduism like Saivism. The tradition flourished under the Pallavas Regime and Lord Vishnu was worshipped as the presiding deity by the Vaishnavites.
7. Vaishnavite Sages were called Alwars. These Alwars were dedicated to the cult and they mingled with the devotees and ensured that the faith was growing and the rituals were carried out in a systematic way.
8. Veerashaivism is a sub-tradition within Shaivism. According to tradition, it was transmitted by five Panchacharayas, five acharya Renukacharya, Darukacharya, Ekorama, Panditharadhya, and Vishweswara, and first taught by Renukacharya to Agastya, a Vedic seer. The preachings of Jagadguru Renukacharya Bhagavadpada to rishi Agastya is recorded in the form of a book, which is named as 'Shri Siddhantha Shikamani'.
9. Vira Shaivism is a firm Shivite faith, prominent in its homeland—Karnataka. It was made popular by the Sri Basaveshvara (1105-67). The movement championed the cause of the downtrodden and evolved as a revolt against a system which fostered social inequality.

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3.7 SUMMARY

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- During the Sangam Period each location had a different worship pattern and the God/Godess.
- Buddhism and Jainism entered Tamil Nadu along with the patterns of educational institutions that imparted religion-based education to the select sect of students.
- During the peak of Bhakti Movement, that stormed North India in 300-600 AD, practices of worships and festive celebrations, dancing and Pujas, music and other rituals got popularized in the country.
- The Bhakti movement refers to the theistic devotional trend that emerged in medieval Hinduism and later revolutionized in Sikhism. It originated in eighth-century in South India (now Tamil Nadu and Kerala), and spread northwards. It swept over east and north India from the 15th century onwards, reaching its zenith between the 15th and 17th century CE.
- The Bhakti movement regionally developed around different gods and goddesses, and some sub-religions were Vaishnavism (Vishnu), Shaivism (Shiva), Shaktism (Shakti goddesses), and Smartism.
- The movement has traditionally been considered as an influential social reformation in Hinduism, and provided an individual-focused alternative path to spirituality regardless of one's caste of birth or gender.
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- Those who worshipped Lord Shiva were named as Saivites. Saivite saints were also called poet-saints as they also composed poems in praise of the God and spread the message through these poems as a module to develop followers in smaller groups to take the cult forward.
- In Saivism, the history of 63 Nayanmars is very notable one. They worshipped Lord Shiva as their Principal Deity. They followed the rituals and the scriptures set out for the Siva Worship.
- The four Nayanars, namely Thirunavukkarasar, Thirugnana Sambandar, Sundarar and Manickavachagar are considered as Tamil Samaya Acharyas (four Tamil religious Teachers) whose hymns are authentic hymns that pleased Lord Siva himself. In a few cases, the Lord himself has commenced the stanzas and lines.
- Vaishnavism under the Pallavas Regime was spreading and Lord Vishnu was worshipped as the presiding deity by the Vaishnavites. Vaishnavite Sages were called as Alwars. These Alwars were dedicated to the cult and they

mingled with the devotees and ensured that the faith was growing and the rituals were carried out in a systematic way.

- Twelve alvars, also spelt as alvars are immersed in god'. Tamil poet-saints of South India who espoused bhakti (devotion) to the Hindu god Vishnu or his avatar Krishna in their songs of longing, ecstasy and service. They are venerated especially in Vaishnavism, which regards Vishnu or Krishna as the Supreme Being.
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- The Panchacharyas arose out of five great Sthavaralingas located in Balehonnur in Karnataka, Ujjini in Karnataka, Kedar in Uttarakhand, Srisailam in Andhra Pradesh, and Kashi or Banaras in Uttar Pradesh under different names in different Yugas.
- Vira Shaivism is a firm Shivite faith, prominent in its homeland—Karnataka. It was made popular by the Sri Basaveshvara (1105-67). The movement championed the cause of the downtrodden and evolved as a revolt against a system which fostered social inequality.
- Shiva is the Supreme God, and he is to be worshiped through the Linga not as an image but Shiva himself. Shiva is the linga and the jiva is the anga (part); and the main purpose of this worship is the search for and realization of the devotee's divine oneness with Shiva through the linga.

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- The early history of Virashaivism movement is unclear but it is clear that the Virashaiwas appeared as a reformist Shaiva sect in the middle or end of the twelfth century on the borders of Maharashtra and Karnataka.

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3.8 KEY WORDS

- **Bhakti Movement:** It refers to the theistic devotional trend that emerged in medieval Hinduism and later revolutionised in Sikhism. It originated in eighth-century south India, and spread northwards.
- **Alvars:** It refers to the Tamil poet-saints of South India who espoused bhakti (devotion) to the Hindu god Vishnu or his avatar Krishna in their songs of longing, ecstasy and service.
- **Saivite:** It refers to a member of one of the main branches of modern Hinduism, devoted to the worship of the god Shiva as the Supreme Being.
- **Lingam:** It refers to a symbol of divine generative energy, especially a phallus or phallic object as a symbol of Shiva.

3.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. List the different God/Godesses worshiped during the Sangam Period.
2. What were the main characteristics of Saivism?
3. Who were Tamil Samaya Acharyas and why were they popular?
4. What are the three basic mantras in the Vaishnava tradition?
5. Name the five peethas in Veerashaiva.
6. Briefly mention about Vadakalai and Thenkalai.
7. What is the six-stage philosophy of the Virashaiwas?

Long Answer Questions

1. Describe the emergence of Bhakti Movement in South India in detail.
2. Discuss the main features and importance of the Thirumurai.
3. Write a detailed note on the Twelve Alvars.
4. Analyse the main characteristics of Vira Shaivism.

3.10 FURTHER READINGS

*Different Religious Beliefs
and Conditions*

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UNIT 4 NAYAKS RULE IN TAMIL NADU

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Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 Nayankara System
- 4.3 Madurai Nayaks
- 4.4 Thanjavur/Tanjore Nayaks
- 4.5 Senji/Gingee Nayaks (1526-1648)
- 4.6 Administration
- 4.7 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 4.8 Summary
- 4.9 Key Words
- 4.10 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 4.11 Further Readings

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The Vijayanagara Empire was established in the Deccan Plateau region in South India. Harihara I and his brother Bukka Raya I of Sangama Dynasty were the first to establish it in 1336. The empire was basically the result of struggle against Islamic invasion. The empire takes its name from its capital city, Vijayanagara. It lasted until 1646, but still managed to make a lasting influence. In this unit, we will discuss the rule and administration of Nayaks' rule in Tamil Nadu, under the Nayankara system, introduced under the Vijayanagara Empire.

4.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the Nayaks' rule in Tamil Nadu
- Discuss the Madurai, Thanjavur, and Senji Nayaks
- Describe the administration of Nayaks in Tamil Nadu

4.2 NAYANKARA SYSTEM

In 1336 A.D., the Vijayanagara Empire was established. The Empire and its Emperors brought many provinces under their rule including Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Andhra. During their rule, the Vijayanagara Emperors created a system of

Nayankara (Nayakkar), whereby the vast Empire was divided into various states or mandals and Nayaks (lords) were placed in charge of the provinces. Tamil Nadu was divided into five mandals:

- Vellore
- Gingee
- Tanjore
- Madurai
- Thiruvadigai

Each Mandal was administered by a Supreme Mandal Chief (Maha Mandaladhipathi). These appointments were made by the King and the persons belonging to the royal family. There were other officials to assist him. These mandals were independently functioning with respect to civil, military, and judicial matters. They were contributing to the centre a share of their revenue. Military support was sought by centre when needed, in terms of the ratios as fixed by the King himself. Other characteristics of the system were: The meaning of Nayankara system originates from the European system of Land Grant System. In this system, Nayak was the Military Administrator of a province. He was given the lands by the King, to provide a perennial income to him. This is based on the principle that all the lands are owned by the King and he has the rights to distribute it to his dependants.

- Amara Nayankara system is designed to have the following rules:
 - o Revenue sharing by the Nayak was based on the land grants
 - o Military assistance (number of soldiers) to be provided as per the limits fixed by the King himself
 - o Nayaks were permitted to build their own fortresses
 - o They had full freedom to take decisions about their internal administrative matters.
- According to Nuniz, Vijayanagara Empire was divided into 200 parts to be ruled by 200 Nayaks, under this Nayankara system.
- During the royal festivities, Nayaks were expected to send costly gifts to the King as well as the food items such as wheat and meat.
- Law and order was the prime obligation of the Nayaks.
- Agricultural production was to be increased in their lands. They were taking back 9/10 portion of the produce as their shares.
- 50 percent of the total revenue was shared by Nayak with the King, in addition to the other obligations such as military and event management.
- Some Nayaks were removed from their positions and were also punished on not fulfilling their duties. Their lands were taken by the King.

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Difference between Maha Mandaleswarar and Nayak

The differences between Maha Mandaleswarar and Nayak lies within the facts that:

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- Nayak was the permanent resident of the mandal responsible for revenue and military supplies to the centre. While, Maha Mandaleswarar was a transferable Viceroy with no obligations for revenue or military sharing. He was only the royal representative.
- Maha Mandaleswarar was to supervise the Nayak's loyalty and his revenue and military sharing promptness. Peer reports were also shared with the King by the Maha Mandaleswarar
- Though the Nayankara system is considered similar to the Land Grant system of Europe, Nayaks did not get the political importance that the Lords in the European system enjoyed. Nayaks were treated only as Military Generals. They were removed any time by the King.
- Defects of the Nayankara system was mainly due to the introduction of Palayagara system by Nayaks. PalAyagaras acted more loyal to the Nayaks than to the King.

The centre did not have direct and uniform control on the provinces ruled by them as each Nayak had his own method of administration independently with no interference by the centre.

Check Your Progress

1. Who established the Vijayanagara Empire?
2. Under the Vijayanagara Empire, into how many mandals was Tamil Nadu divided?

4.3 MADURAI NAYAKS

In 1529, war broke out between the Pandyas and Cholas. Defeated Chandrasekara Pandya, approached the Emperor Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagara Empire for a solution and support. Vijayanagara Emperor deputed the General Nagama Nayak to contain Chola and re-install Chandrasekara Pandya as the King. Nagama Nayak defeated the Chola King. As the Pandya King was meek and unfit, Nagama Nayak assumed himself as the King of Pandya Kingdom at Madurai. Krishnadevaraya got offended by this act of Nagama Nayak and sent Nagama Nayak's son Viswanatha Nayak to Madurai to defeat his father and capture the kingdom. In the process, the Pandya King installed by Viswanatha Nayak, started acting recklessly, making Vijayanagara Empire to nominate Viswanatha Nayak as the King of Madurai. Thus, in 1529, Madurai came under Nayaks' rule.

Due to the series of succession wars at the Vijayanagara Empire, the Nayaks started establishing their own independent rule upon the weakened status of the Vijayanagara Empire itself. Thus, the Nayak's rule in Tamil Nadu began. Madurai Nayak's rule started in 1529 with Viswanatha Nayak and ended in 1736 with the rule of Meenakshi. There were thirteen Nayak rulers, who ruled Madurai for 207 years. In the history of Tamil Nadu, Madurai Nayak's rule has a special significance. Historians often differ about the year of establishment of Madurai Nayak's rule. Some opine that it started when Nagama Nayak was appointed as Madurai Nayak, while others opine that the Nayak's rule at Madurai began only when Viswanatha Nayak became the Governor of Madurai. It is significant that Viswanatha Nayak was appointed as political and administrative head. The rule of Madurai Nayak kings is given below chronologically (from 1529 to 1736):

- Viswanatha Nayak (1529-1564)
- Krishnappa Nayak I (1564-1572)
- Veerappa Nayak (1572-1595)
- Krishnappa Nayak II (1595-1601)
- Muthu Krishnappa Nayak (1601-1609)
- Muthu Veerappa Nayak I (1609-1623)
- Thirumalai Nayak (1623-1659)
- Muthu Veerappa Nayak II (1659)
- Sokkanatha Nayak (1659-1682)
- Muthu Veerappa Nayak III (1682-1689)
- Rani Mangammaal (1689-1706)
- Vijayaranga Sokkanatha Nayak (1706-1732)
- Rani Meenakshi, the last ruler among Madurai Nayaks (1732-1736)

Viswanatha Nayak (1529-1564)

Viswanatha Nayak ruled for 35 years, establishing his qualities of discipline, administrative skills and valour. His provinces included Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Thirunelveli, Thiruchi, Salem, and Travancore. He brought in a variety of reforms and was responsible for the introduction of Palayagar system. He is considered as the backbone of Madurai Nayak rule and responsible for its century long, deep rooted stability. He stayed an unchallenged ruler, assisted by his General and Chief Minister Ariyanatha Mudaliar. His other contributions include:

- During his rule, Viswanatha Nayak removed the forests on both banks of Cauvery and Vaigai to free the people from the fear of thieves and dacoits.
- He befriended Thenkasi Pandiyas and contained the long war waged by the five Pandyas.
- He renovated the Nelliappar Temple in Tirunelveli.

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- He expanded the Tirunelveli City and improved the irrigation facilities.
- He constructed the Teppa Kulam at Tiruchi.
- He renovated the Thayumanava Temple at the Rock Fort, Tiruchi.
- He also renovated the Srirangam Temple and created a township around the temple with good streets and houses for the people to occupy.
- He brought peace in his administration and used the method of Palayapattu by bringing in 72 palayapattu on the fortress walls of Madurai. Palayagar had to pay the Nayak King one-third of their revenue arising out of the lands given to them and the remaining could be apportioned for the Army and their own administrative expenses. Ettayapuram, Panchaalankurichi, and pudukottai belonged to this system.
- Waynod, Kambam, and Gudalur were brought under the Madurai Nayak rule.
- Agriculture, handicrafts, and small industries were flourishing and people lived without any fear of civil disturbance or revolts.

Krishnappa Nayak (1564-1572)

As a loyal Nayak to the Vijayanagara Empire, Krishnappa Nayagar, son of Viswanatha Nayak had to witness many events during his reign of the Madurai state like:

- During this time, the fierce battle of Thalakotta was fought between the Deccan Sulthans of Bijapur, Golkonda, Bidar, Pidar, and Ahmed Nagar, called as the Bahmani Sulthans and the Vijayanagar Empire. This war determined the future of Vijayanagar Empire as the victory of Bahmini Sulthans marked the destruction and fall of Vijayanagar Empire.
- Soon, Penukonda, which was the capital of Vijayanagar Empire, also got attacked by the Sulthans and Chandragiri and Vellore became the capitals of the Empire, successively.
- Krishnappa Nayak-I had to quell the revolt by the Palayagar Thumbichi Nayak, who was imprisoned and later killed.
- Ceylon was captured by Krishnappa Nayak-I, after a war between him and Kandi King at Puttalam. Singhalas were defeated twice and the Kandi King went into exile and committed suicide. Revenue Collections were re-established from Ceylon periodically as 'kappam', by the King's representative, Vijaya Gopala Nayak, brother-in-law of Krishnappa Nayak-I.
- Krishnappa Nayak-I created a town called Krishnapuram, near Palayamkottai. He built a temple for Thiruvenkatanathar. He also gifted a chariot to the temple. He also created township for the Brahmins around the temple.

- Krishnappa Nayak-I was known for his intelligence, piousness, open-mindedness, and honesty. His priority for the welfare of his subjects brought him this fame.

Descendants of Krishnappa Nayak

Descendants of Krishnappa Nayak ruled Madurai from 1572 to 1623.

- (i) **Veerappa Nayak (1572-1595):** During his regime, Christianity flourished and all religions got equal importance. He also built a fort at Aruppukottai. He built many temple towers and about thousands of pillars, halls, and other palatial halls (Mantapas) at Madurai.
- (ii) **Krishnappa Nayak II (1595-1601):** His rule was uneventful but peaceful.
- (iii) **Muthu Krishnappa Nayak (1601-1609):** During his rule, in 1606, Robert De Nobili, a priest from Italy arrived at Madurai and started following all the Indian practices including vegetarianism. He learned Tamil, Telugu, and Sanskrit, along with the Hindu religious scriptures. He converted upper caste Hindus into Christianity. Muthu Krishnappa Nayak was also friendly with Portuguese, who were residing and trading from the East Coast belts. He also built a Shiva temple at Kayathar and created a city called Krishnapuram. He renovated many temples, created Agraharas, and ponds.
- (iv) **Muthu Veerappa Nayak I (1609-1623):** During his rule, Muthu Veerappa Nayak-I revolted against the Vijayanagara Empire, which was ruling from Vellore as its capital. He was defeated in this revolt.
 - He changed the capital to Tiruchi to subdue Tanjore Nayak.
 - Mysore King Raja Udayar invaded Madurai and was defeated by the PalAyagar Chieftains of Kannivadi and Virupakshi.
 - Robert De-Nobili, during his time, built a Christian Temple at Madurai in 1610
 - It is said that Nayakpersecuted those who got converted into Christianity.

Thirumalai Nayak (1623-1659)

Muthu Veerappa Nayak-I was succeeded by his brother, Thirumalai Nayak.

- In the history of Madurai Nayaks, Thirumalai Nayak was the first to enjoy the full-fledged powers of the King.
- Thirumalai Nayak reverted the capital to Madurai from Tiruchi due to several considerations.
- Mysore King Chamaraja Udayar invaded Madurai and was defeated by three PalAyagar Chieftains.
- Chera King was also defeated and made to pay revenue to the Madurai Kingdom.

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- Maravar state was divided into three parts and Sethupathis were made their Chieftains.
- As Thirumalai Nayak wanted to get freedom from the Empire of Vijayanagara, he sought the help of Golkonda Sultan. The last Emperor of Vijayanagara, Sreerangan was defeated. However, Tamil Nadu again got invaded by the Muslim rule of the Sultans at the initiative of Thirumalai Nayak.
- Irked by this act of Thirumalai Nayak, the Mysore King, Gandharva Narasaraja, invaded Madurai and the Mysore army, on its way to Madurai, took revenge by cutting the noses of all those who came across the army. At this time, Thirumalai Nayak sought the help of Raghunatha Sethupathi, who in turn defeated the Mysore forces and drove them back to Mysore, cutting their noses in retaliation. Sethupathi was awarded the title 'Thirumalai Sethupathi'.
- Following which, Thirumalai Nayak resorted for help from the Portuguese for capturing Sethupathi in exchange of granting concessions to them. After their establishment, they drove the Dutch away. The Dutch captured Tiruchendur with the help of their Naval Force. They also took away Tuticorin in 1658 from the Portuguese.
- Thirumalai Nayak is most popular for his *Mahal* at Madurai. He renovated many temples and built many choultries. He also decorated the Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple.
- Literature of Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit were patronised by the Nayak and Madurai Monthly Festivals were created during his reign.
- Thirumalai Nayak continued his fight to protect his territories and his people and also liberate his kingdom from the Empire.

Muthu Veerappa Nayak II (1659)

He ruled only for four months. He strengthened the Tiruchi Fort to prevent Bijapur Sultan's invasion. As a result, Bijapur Sultan captured Tanjore Nayak and took a huge wealth from Muthu Veerappa Nayak II.

Sokkanatha Nayak (1659-1682)

He became the King at the age of sixteen years. His Prime Minister and Secretary, along with General amassed huge wealth from the subjects by torturing them.

- Realising the evils committed by his three representatives, Sokkanatha Nayak killed the Secretary and blinded the Prime Minister. General ran away to Gingee and initiated a war on Madurai with the help of Gingee and Tanjore Nayaks. The war was won by Sokkanatha Nayak.
- There was a famine at Tiruchi and Tanjore. Though Tanjore King did not help the people, Sokkanatha Nayak did a lot of relief work.

- In 1663, Bijapur Sultan, Adil Shah, sent a General (Vanamiyan), who involved himself in loot and arson of properties. This forced Sokkakanatha Nayak to pay a huge sum to Vanamiyan for him to return to his state.
- Sokkanatha Nayak waged a war on Tanjore and captured Tanjore for a short while. From the letters of Father Newhopp, it is evident that Tanjore became free from Madurai invasion, shortly after.
- The internal unrest and the frequent wars led to famine. It is quoted that thousands of people migrated from the villages and towns. The Dutch gave them shelter and took them abroad as slaves

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Muthu Veerappa Nayak III (1682-1689)

- During his rule, Muthu Veerappa Nayak was able to consolidate the territories lost by his father Sokkanatha Nayak. He went around all of his terrains and focused on the welfare of the subjects and strength of the army.
- Sethupathi dynasty joined hands with Tanjore forces and Madurai forces in exile to wage a war on Muthu Veerappa Nayak. However, the losses were negligent.
- John D Britto, arrived at Madurai in 1680, from Portugal. He began to establish Christianity in Marava belt. He could not go ahead with the conversions as there were protests and resistance from the people. He was also threatened and attacked.
- Charity was also the priority of Muthu Veerappa Nayak as it was followed by his forefathers. He established a number of Choultries and built many temples. He created Agraharas and gave gifts to the Brahmins. He is also considered as a noble man, who followed the principle of Monogamy.

Rani Mangammal (1689-1706)

Rani Mangammal ruled Madurai state on behalf of Vijayaranga Sokkanathar, who became the King at his third month of birth. His mother, Muthammaal, committed suicide, unable to bear the loss of her husband Muthu Veerappa Nayak.

- Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb insisted on receiving revenue from the Southern states during 1693. As Mysore and Tanjore Kings were paying the revenue, Rani Mangammal followed suit to get protection from the Tanjore and Mysore Kings, who were the threat to her kingdom. In 1697, she got back some territories from the Tanjore King, with the help of the Muslim General. She also made peace with Tanjore King, Shaji, by sending him huge amount of wealth to avoid wars.
- The Chera King from Travancore, stopped paying the revenue during the regime of Rani Mangammal. To re-establish the practice, she sent an army in 1697, which was defeated. However, later, Dalavai Narasappaiyan, led an army to defeat the Chera King. He also looted the revenue, along with costly gifts and ornaments.

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- She subdued the Tanjore King by waging a war in 1700. The Tanjore king, then, compromised with her by paying huge revenue and wealth to make peace.
- In 1698, Sethupathi captured Madurai. Dalavai Narasappaiyan fought off the forces out of Madurai. However, in 1702, Sethupathi killed Narasappaiyan in a war and became the King. Due to that war, the Marava Belt Provinces gain freedom from the Nayak rule.
- Christianity flourished during her time as she gave some concessions to the Jesuits. She encouraged religious freedom of her subjects.
- In 1701, she gifted lands for a *Dargah* and protected the Muslims.
- She built better roads up to Rameswaram and encouraged tree plantations in her territory. She also worked to improve agriculture, by providing effective irrigation facilities.
- She constructed Summer Resort at Tamukkam, which is still considered one of a kind.
- Rani Mangammal lives on in the pages of history on account of her love for the subjects and her political wisdom.

Vijayaranga Sokkanatha Nayak (1706-1732)

Considered to be a very inefficient ruler of his age, Vijayaranga Sokkanatha Nayak spent more time on religious pursuits and expenditure.

- Subjects and their welfare were not his concern and his officials too followed the system of apathy.
- During 1710 and 1720, there were severe drought conditions in the Madurai state.
- Coimbatore and Salem went under the control of Mysore rule
- Maravar belt kingdom saw successive wars and infighting.
- The Tanjore king captured the Maravar belt and kept major part to himself during 1729.
- He divided the remaining kingdom of Maravar into five parts, among which, three were distributed to Kaattaya Thevar and the remaining two were given to another Kattaya Thevar, who became the King of Sivaganga.
- In all of these events, Vijayaranga Sokkanatha Nayak played a passive role and the Nayaks started losing territories and power.

Rani Meenakshi (1732-1736)

- The last ruler of Nayak dynasty in Madurai had to face a lot of internal wars. She foiled the evil plans of her political rivals by adopting Vijayakumaran.

- Karnataka Nawab, Chanda Saheb, came to collect the revenue in 1734. To overcome this crisis, Rani Meenakshi made peace with her local political rival Bangaru Nayak (Vijayakumaran's father).
- Chanda Saheb again came to Tiruchi in 1736 and recaptured Dindigul from Bangaru Nayak, along with Madurai.
- At this juncture, Chanda Saheb imprisoned Meenakshi herself.
- Meenakshi, the last empress of the Nayak dynasty committed suicide by taking poison.

Thus, ended the 207 years rule of Nayak dynasty in Madurai and the rule of Karnataka Nawab began.

Check Your Progress

3. List the Nayak rulers in Madurai from 1529 to 1595.
4. List the provinces of Viswanatha Nayak.
5. Name the descendants of Krishnappa Nayak, who ruled Madurai from 1572 to 1623?
6. How did Meenakshi the last empress of the Nayak dynasty die?

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4.4 THANJAVUR/TANJORE NAYAKS

Tanjore Nayaks' rule began in 1532. The rulers were loyal to the Vijayanagara Empire and helped the Empire in various wars and in collection of the revenue.

Sevvappa Nayak (1532-1560)

During his rule, there was peace and prosperity in the Tanjore state. Sevvappa Nayak during confrontation with the Madurai Nayak had to exchange Vallam with Tiruchirappalli. Though not eventful, during his rule, he built Sivaganga Fort at Tanjore. He also constructed various temples and halls. He was instrumental in the occupation of Nagapattinam by Portuguese.

Achuthappa Nayak (1560-1600)

A loyalist of the Vijayanagara Empire, Achuthappa Nayak assisted the Emperor in Thalikottai War and also contained the power of the Madurai Nayak. He paid the revenue to the Emperor regularly and was considered as confidante of the Emperor. Arunachaleswarar Temple of Thiruvannamalai was completed during his time. Kumbakonam Mahamaham Pond was also repaired by him. He created the initiative of Brahmadeya donations to the Brahmins. Cauvery banks were also repaired during his rule. It is said that the death of Achuthappa in 1600 was mourned by 370 women by committing self-immolation.

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Raghunatha Nayak (1600-1633)

Raghunatha Nayak's rule is considered the best by the historians in the annals of Tanjore Nayak dynasty. He was a warrior, a philanthropist and a poet. He ascended the throne in 1600 after facing a revolt by his step brother. It is said that after his father's demise, Raghunatha Nayak killed that brother in a cruel manner and came to power. Vijayanagara Empire became weak after the Thalikottai war. After the Battle of Thoppur, the Empire's status deteriorated even further. Raghunatha Nayak actively supported the Empire's cause and earned the goodwill of the Emperor, which in turn, protected his kingdom.

Though Raghunatha Nayak tried his best to befriend the Madurai Nayaks, the relationship weakened once Muthu Veerappa Nayak became the King of Madurai. Raghunatha Nayak married the daughter of Muthu Veerappa Nayak to defuse the situation and to re-establish the friendship. However, the Madurai-Tanjore relationship remained strained forever. It is claimed that Raghunatha Nayak subdued the Solagar of the coastal belt and Muras of North Arcot District, who were acting against the interests of the kingdom. Raghunatha Nayak kept good relations with the Europeans.

Vijaya Raghava Nayak (1633-1673)

Vijaya Raghava Nayak ruled for 40 years. However, due to his inefficiency, the Tanjore Nayaks' rule gradually deteriorated. It is stated by Buronso, in his writings, that Vijaya Raghava Nayak imprisoned his two brothers, after blinding them. He was an educationist and wrote a drama called Raghunatha Yutham, which also contained his autobiography. The drama threw a light on the Nayak's rule in Tanjore. During his tenure, the feud between Tanjore and Madurai deepened. The Madurai, Senji/Gingee, and Tanjore Nayaks decided to revolt against the Empire of Vijayanagara during the rule of Sreerangan. However, Vijaya Raghava Nayak re-established his loyalty to the Empire, thereby establishing the enmity between Tanjore and Madurai and Tanjore and Senji. It also earned the enmity of the Bijapur and Golkonda Sultans indirectly. Bijapur and Golkonda Sultans attacked Tanjore, which was unable to get any help from Madurai or Maravar Belt. He entered into a shameful compromise with the Muslim rulers at that time.

In 1648, Bijapur Sultan again invaded Tanjore after occupying Gingee. In this invasion, the Nayak went into exile into the forests and was brought back to enter into an unconditional surrender agreement. Vijaya Raghava Nayak celebrated the Navratri festival by spending a huge amount of money. In 1659, when Tanjore Nayak diverted the ire of Bijapur and Golkonda Sultans towards Tiruchi Fort, Sultan's Army could not capture the fort and in revenge attacked and vandalised Tanjore. They captured Mannargudi and Vallam in this operation. Fearing attack, the King again went into the forests, along with his subjects. As the kingdom of Tanjore was empty, the Sultan's army got their largest booty in this invasion. During their return, this army was attacked by the dacoits, who captured the wealth and returned a portion to the Nayak King out of pity.

In 1664, Vijaya Raghava Nayak recaptured Vallam. During this time, when Madurai Chokkanatha Nayak proposed to marry Vijaya Raghava Nayak's daughter, he refused. This ignited a war between Madurai and Tanjore, which is considered as the last war that closed the chapters of Tanjore Nayak's rule forever. In the war of Madurai with Tanjore, Vijaya Raghava Nayak and his son Mannardas died. All the women of his harem were killed by a bomb blast.

Venkatakrishna Nayak, the General who won this war, completed the process by annexing Madurai with Tanjore under one rule. Alagiri Nayak was appointed as the Governor of Tanjore by the Madurai Nayak.

Alagiri Nayak (1674)

Once installed, Alagiri started defying the rule of Madurai and refused to pay the revenue to the Madurai Nayak. This brought the bitterness in the relationship between Tanjore and Madurai. It is said that Venkanna, a Rayasam, desiring to finish Alagiri and take over the kingdom, approached the Bijapur Sultan to dethrone Alagiri. Following which, Alagiri went into exile to Mysore.

Sengamala Das (1675) (The last king of Tanjore Nayak dynasty)

Sengamala Das was only four years old, when he ascended to the throne. Sultan's General Ekoji (Venkaji) with all the booty, returned to Kumbakonam. Unsatisfied to be seated as the Diwan, Venkanna misguided Ekoji to capture the Tanjore for him as its King. Ekoji (Venkaji) drove away Sengamala Das in 1675 and assumed the powers as the King of Tanjore. This marked the end of Tanjore Nayak's rule once and for all in the history of Tamil Nadu and the beginning of the rule of Marathas.

4.5 SENJI/GINGEE NAYAKS (1526-1648)

Gingee Fort is considered as the strongest in terms of military power. This fort was constructed in 1422 by Vijaya Ranga Nayak based on Chola architecture. This fort is also considered a historical one due to its prominence at the end of 13th Century and at the beginning of the 14th Century under the Hoysalas and the Vijayanagara Empire. Gingee was made the capital of the Mandal and Vaiyappa Nayak was appointed as its Governor. The first king of Gingee Nayaks is Vaiyappa Nayak, who assumed power in 1526. The dynasty ruled for about 122 years. On Gingee, there are only a few evidences of this dynasty, mostly in the form of stone inscriptions at Thiruparankundram Temple and inscriptions found related to Surappa Nayak's rule. There is also a literary evidence called *Karnataka Rajakkal Suvistara Sarithiram*, which mentions Gingee Rule. Gingee kingdom's territory starts from Palar on the coastal side and extends up to Kollidam across the river Cauvery.

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Vaiyappa Nayak (1526-1541)

Vaiyappa Nayak controlled Tondaimandalam and Cholamandalam and was responsible for collecting revenue. He was the confidante of Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagara Empire. Vaiyappa Nayak reset all the irregularities in collections and also took the control of the Gingee Nayak rule. He constructed temples at Srimushnam as well as at Thirukovilur in the South Arcot District. He remained the Gingee King until 1541.

Thuppaki Krishnappa Nayak (1541-1554)

Thuppaki Krishnappa Nayak brought peace and stability during the Gingee rule. He strengthened the fort of Gingee and was instrumental in the development of the township and surrounding areas. He renamed the Fortress of Anandagiri as Rajagiri. He built a strong wall around the Rajagiri Fort.

Surappa Nayak (1554-1567)

During his rule, a lot of literary and religious events took place. Besides, Surappa Nayak assisted the Vijayanagara Emperor Sadasiva Raya in the Thalikottai wars. Surappa Nayak was given the title 'Karnataka Simma Prathishta Baanachaariyaar'. The poet, Rathinagiri Srinivasa Dikshithar, composed a drama called 'Bhuvana Purushothama' during this period.

Krishnappa Nayak-I (1567-1576)

The Gingee kings' rule lacks any records to establish the years of their rule and validate the concurrent events. Krishnappa Nayak-I became the full-fledged King of Gingee as Sadasiva Raya of Vijayanagara became weak after the Thalikottai war. There are no further historical evidences to describe his rule or the chronology.

Krishnappa Nayak-II (1576-1616)

Considered as the best king of the Gingee dynasty, Krishnappa Nayak-II was the contemporary of the Emperor Venkata and Raghunatha Nayak of Tanjore. He rebelled against the Emperor Venkata in 1586. Following which, he was imprisoned. As a gesture of gratitude to the Raghunatha Nayak of Tanjore, who intervened and freed him, Krishnappa Nayak-II gave his daughter in marriage to Raghunatha Nayak. This information is mentioned in Ramapath Raamba's Raghunatha Yutham and also in Sahithya Rathnakaram of Yagna Narayana Dikshithar.

During this time in 1597, the Portuguese traveller, Bemando Adigal, visited Gingee and wrote about the Gingee Fort, along with the township, its strength, and beauty. Krishnappa Nayak-II had established good relations with both the Dutch and Portuguese. When he permitted the Dutch to build a Fort at Devanampattinam, Portuguese resisted the move, due to which, the Dutch enlarged their domain to Thirupapuliyur and Palaverkadu. Krishnappa Nayak-II treated all of the religions equally, while he himself was a follower of the Vaishnavism. He

permitted Christians and Jains to build their temples around. He donated wealth to many temples and improved the townships. He also improved agriculture. Krishnappa Nayak-II joined hands with Vellore Chakkarayan and Madurai Muthu Veerappa Nayak to fight against Emperor of Vijayanagara. The three year Thoppur war ended in 1616 with the death of Vellore Chakkarayan and the defeat of Krishnappa Nayak-II. Though he lost his entire country, Krishnappa Nayak-II continued to hold the Gingee Fort and started paying the revenue to the Vijayanagara Empire. He was followed by Varadappa Nayak, about whose rule there is not much information.

Appa Nayak (The Last King of Gingee Nayaks)

During the rule of Varadappa Nayak and Appa Nayak, both were found inefficient and had to face the invasion of Golkonda Sultan. At one state, Bijapur Sultan too joined Golkonda forces and finally Appa Nayak was defeated. Bijapur forces under the command of Mustafa khan captured Gingee Fort, which marked the end of the Gingee Nayak's rule.

Check Your Progress

7. What are the architectural contributions of Achuthappa Nayak?
8. Who constructed the Gingee Fort?

4.6 ADMINISTRATION

The Nayak administration system by and large though based on the Vijayanagara Empire style, was not felt complete. After Thirumalai Nayak assumed the power at Madurai, he started ruling independently, which was similar to the Vijayanagara Empire's system with minor modifications as required with the changing times. These historical observations are available in *Madurai Nadu* written by Mr. Nelson; *Nayakkar Varalaru* written by Professor R. Sathyanathayyar; T.V. Mahalingam's '*Tirunelveli Varalaaru*' and '*Ramappaiyan Ammanai*', a historical ballad, by Vaiyapurip Pillai.

Central government was the focal authority for all the states divided and ruled by the Governors. Palayams were under the rule and authority of the Governors. Palayams were given all the powers by the centre and it did not interfere in the local rule or administration. It appears to be a federal rule set up by the centre coordinating between the Vijayanagara Empire and the states through the Palaya authority rule. The King was the central power of the kingdom and the orders of the King was the law of the land. Kings followed all the traditions of the state and the people. They participated in the rituals, functions, and art and culture festivals. All religions were duly respected. Though Ministers were in the advisory capacity, they had to be in the confidence circle of the King to continue as the Minister. There were various cadres in the central government of Nayak kingdom:

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- Dalavai was the Chief Minister and also the General of the forces. They hold twin responsibilities of being the War Head as well as the Administrative Head. Dalavai was considered the De-facto ruler of the country. Brahmins were usually appointed as Dalavais.
- Pradhani was the Finance Minister. He assumed the Dalavai's powers, when Dalavai was away. Pradhani was more powerful than other ministers.
- Rayasam was considered the Chief Secretary of the government. He was the kingpin of the government and was in close touch with the King.
- Kanakkar was the Chief Accountant.
- Dhanathipathi was responsible for external affairs and internal liaising, along with coordination efforts.
- Other officials included Thirumanthira Nayagam and Adapakaran as the Senior and Junior Employees of the government respectively.

State governance

States were called 'Seemai' and were under the command of the governors. Those governors who were located far from the kingdom enjoyed more powers. They acted under the orders of the king through the Dalavai. Under the governors, 72 Palayas were ruled. This administration was equal to the local administration system, which was followed earlier. This Palayagar system was considered the best for improving the strength of the King and his governance.

Local administration

Ayagar system was deeply ingrained in the society during the Nayak's rule replacing the local administration system of the Chola kingdom. There were 12 persons in the Ayagar system at the village level including the officials. Some of the important ones were: Karnam were responsible for Accounts, Maniyagarar for revenue collections, and Thaliyari for local policing and law and order. The others in the group were not considered as government officials but only formed the team of the Ayagar system. They were also given lands as gifts. However, they were supposed to pay taxes called 'Jodi'. This system was followed by the British later.

Justice

Justice was the domain of the King. This is mentioned in a literary work called *Amukthamaalya* by Krishnadevaraya. According to which, 'rendering justice is the duty of the King'. However, in practice, the Palayagar were rendering justice at their respective levels. Nayaks focused on severe punishments and control of crimes. They also showed much concern about the natural justice factors and maintaining peace.

Army formations

Nayaks' strength was all about their military power as well as their intelligence system. They employed all types of forces. However, artillery force is not confirmed by the historians. They purchased elephants and horses from the Arabians and the Portuguese. The system of intelligence was very well knit and Nayak's main strength lies in this robust system.

Finance

Land revenue was the primary source of income. Profession tax and wealth tax were also prevalent during that time. Marriage tax was also collected. Temple festivals were also levied with Pidari tax. Foreigners were levied with custom duty and those who carried arms were taxed, even more. Though taxes were specific, the burden was felt by the subjects who suffered under the ruthless revenue collection system. Most of the money collected was spent on the wars, at the palace, or other functions or festivals.

Palayagar system

This system comprised of 72 Palayas in each state. Each Palayam was headed by a Palayagar elected from the local ethnic groups. They had three types of authority:

- (a) **Finance and revenue collection:** Out of the total collections, they had to share the certain amount of revenue with the King, while the rest they can keep for their own administration and other related expenses.
- (b) **Justice:** They were authorised to deal with all the disputes and cases in their jurisdiction.
- (c) **Military:** One third of the revenue was to be spent on the army maintenance by the Palayagars.

Palayagars formed their own government. Day to day affairs were run by their officials, created in a similar manner as to the government at the centre. They had a Pradhani. They also had a system of 'Sharo'. Peasants who enjoyed allotment of the Sharo lands were expected to grow crops during the time of peace and fight during war time for the army. Palayagar system had its own pros and cons. However, the system provided the kingdom with a peaceful and well defined local administration system.

Check Your Progress

9. Which works of literature describe the administration system during the Nayaks' rule?
10. Who were responsible for local policing at the local level?

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4.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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1. Harihara I and his brother Bukka Raya I of Sangama Dynasty were the first to establish the Vijayanagara Empire in 1336.
2. Tamil Nadu was divided into five mandals.
3. The Nayak rulers in Madurai from 1529 to 1595 were:
 - (a) Viswanatha Nayak (1529-1564)
 - (b) Krishnappa Nayak I (1564-1572)
 - (c) Veerappa Nayak (1572-1595)
4. The provinces of Viswanatha Nayak included Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Thirunelveli, Thiruchi, Salem, and Travancore.
5. The descendants of Krishnappa Nayak, who ruled Madurai from 1572 to 1623 are Veerappa Nayak (1572-1595), Krishnappa Nayak II (1595-1601), Muthu Krishnappa Nayak (1601-1609), and Muthu Veerappa Nayak I (1609-1623).
6. Meenakshi, the last empress of the Nayak dynasty, committed suicide by taking poison.
7. The architectural contributions of Achuthappa Nayak include building of Arunachaleswarar Temple of Thiruvannamalai and repairment of Kumbakonam Mahamaham Pond and Cauvery banks.
8. The Gingee Fort was constructed in 1422 by Vijaya Ranga Nayak based on the Chola architecture.
9. The works of literature, which describe the administration system during the Nayaks' rule are *Madurai Nadu* written by Mr. Nelson; *Nayakkar Varalaru* written by Professor R. Sathyanathayyar; T.V. Mahalingam's '*Tirunelveli Varalaaru*'; and '*Ramappaiyan Ammanai*', a historical ballad, by Vaiyâpurip Pillai.
10. Thaliyaris were responsible for local policing at the local level.

4.8 SUMMARY

- The Vijayanagara Empire was established in the Deccan Plateau region in South India. Harihara I and his brother Bukka Raya I of Sangama Dynasty were the first to establish it in 1336. During their rule, the Vijayanagara Emperors created a system of Nayankara (Nayakkar), whereby the vast Empire was divided into various states or mandals and Nayaks were placed in charge of the provinces.

- In 1529, war broke out between Pandyas and Cholas. Defeated Chandrasekara Pandya, approached the Emperor Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagara Empire, who deputed the General Nagama Nayak to contain Chola and re-install Chandrasekara Pandya as the King. In the process, Viswanatha Nayak became the King of Madurai. Thus, in 1529, Madurai came under Nayaks' rule.
- Viswanatha Nayak ruled for 35 years, establishing his qualities of discipline, administrative skills and valour. His provinces included Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Thirunelveli, Thiruchi, Salem, and Travancore. He is considered as the backbone of Madurai Nayak rule and responsible for its century long, deep rooted stability.
- Tanjore Nayaks' rule began in 1532. The rulers were loyal to the Vijayanagara Empire and helped the Empire in various wars and in collection of the revenue.
- Raghunatha Nayak's rule is considered the best by the historians in the annals of Tanjore Nayak dynasty. He was a warrior, a philanthropist and a poet. He ascended the throne in 1600 after facing a revolt by his step brother.
- The first king of Gingee Nayaks is Vaiyappa Nayak, who assumed power in 1526. The dynasty ruled for about 122 years. On Gingee, there are only a few evidences of this dynasty, mostly in the form of stone inscriptions at Thiruparankundram Temple and inscriptions found related to Surappa Nayak's rule.
- Nayak administration system by and large though based on the Vijayanagara Empire style, was not felt complete. After Thirumalai Nayak assumed the power at Madurai, he started ruling independently, which was similar to the Vijayanagara Empire's system with minor modifications as required with the changing times.

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4.9 KEY WORDS

- **Agrahara:** It refers to a grant of land and royal income from it, typically by a king or a noble family, for religious purposes, particularly to Brahmins to maintain temples in that land or a pilgrimage site and to sustain their families.
- **Choultries:** It was resting place, an inn, or caravansary for travellers, pilgrims, or visitors to a site, typically linked to Buddhist, Jain and Hindu temples.
- **Jesuits:** It refers to a member of the Society of Jesus, a Roman Catholic order of priests founded by St Ignatius Loyola, St Francis Xavier, and others in 1534, to do missionary work.

- **Dargah:** It means a shrine built over the grave of a revered religious figure, often a Sufi saint or dervish.

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4.10 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. What are the differences between Maha Mandaleswarar and Nayak?
2. Would you call Viswanatha Nayak's rule to be a prosperous one? Discuss briefly.
3. Write a short note on Raghunatha Nayak's rule.
4. Who were the various cadres in the central government of Nayak kingdom?

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the characteristics of the Nayankara system.
2. Describe the ways through which Thirumalai Nayak and Rani Mangammal consolidated their power.
3. Evaluate the events that were instrumental in the end of Vijaya Raghava Nayak's rule.
4. Explain the methods through which the Nayaks' administration system worked.

4.11 FURTHER READINGS

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BLOCK - II
POLIGARI SYSTEM, IMPORTANT TEMPLES
AND CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION

Poligari System

NOTES

UNIT 5 POLIGARI SYSTEM

Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Objectives
- 5.2 Poligar System: An Overview
- 5.3 Kaval System
 - 5.3.1 Features of Society
- 5.4 Temples, Festivals and Cultural Contribution
- 5.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 5.6 Summary
- 5.7 Key Words
- 5.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 5.9 Further Readings

5.0 INTRODUCTION

The unit deals with the reign of Poligars or Polygars in the south. Poligar was the feudal title for a class of territorial administrative and military governors appointed by the Nayaka rulers of South India. Various administrative reforms were witnessed during the reign of the Poligars like construction of forts, irrigation projects and religious institutions. They were also instrumental in protecting Hindu religion from invaders after the fall of the Vijaynagar Empire. Poligars were the devotees of goddess Kali and they never allowed their territory to be annexed by the attackers like Aurangzeb. The unit also discusses about the essentialities of kaval system, caste division and society structure during the period. The status of women in society, cultural contribution to the society, and significance of temples and festivals have also been discussed in detail in the unit.

5.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the significance of the Poligari system
- Describe the Kaval system in detail
- Discuss the caste division and society structure during the period
- Analyse the status of women in society
- Understand the working of temples, festivals and cultural contributions during the period

5.2 POLIGAR SYSTEM: AN OVERVIEW

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Viswanatha Nayakar (1529-1564), a Vijayanagara viceroy to Madurai, ruled for 35 years and established his qualities of discipline, administrative skills and valour. He brought in a variety of reforms and was responsible for the introduction of Palayagar System. His provinces included Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Thirunelveli, Thiruchi, Salem and Travancore. He is considered the backbone of Madurai Nayakar Rule for its establishment and for its century-long deep rooted stability.

Poligar system, though popularized by Viswanatha Nayakar, the Palaya Division System and Rules for administration was conceived by Prabharudhran II Kakatiya King. According to Father. Heras there seems to be a similarity between the Poligar system and the Mid Era European Lord system.

Meaning of the word 'Poligar': Poligar or Palayakara system was introduced at Madurai Fort, after Vijayanagara Empire invented and implemented the Nayankara System throughout the empire and created over 200 Nayakar Mandals spread over the entire south from Thungabatra River to Kanyakumari.

The term poligar is peculiar to the Madras Presidency; and the persons were subordinate feudal chiefs occupying tracts more or less wild and generally of predatory habits in former days; they are now much the same as Zamindars in the highest use of the term. The word is Tamil Paalayakaran, the holder of a Paalayam or feudal estate. In Tamil the word Paalayam means the country or district of a country.

Poligar System: There were 72 bastions in the Madurai Fort. Each one of them were formally placed in charge of a particular chief who was bound for himself and his heirs to keep his post at all times and under all circumstances. He had to pay a fixed annual tribute and to supply besides a quota of cavalry and troops and maintain peace over a particular tract of country. In return he was given charge of a number of villages equated to his rank as well as the title of Paalayakaran (Poligar), besides other valuable gifts and privileges. A considerable part of the country, south of Tiruchi, had passed into the hands of the Poligars. Poligars were virtually reporting to Nayakars though they were part of the Viayanagara Empire. Hardly anything remained in the hands of the sovereign in the Madurai and Dindigul regions; while all the country north of the Tamraparani river was in the hands of Poligars. The Palaiyam organisation likewise spread into the Carnatic and Mysore regions as well.

The Power Exercised by the Poligars: The Poligars collected two sorts of revenue as district-watchers (Desha Kaval) and village watchers (Thala Kaval). The village revenue known as Tallum Kaval were of a much older creation than the Poligar's influence and authority, being coeval with the establishment of villages and constituting the feud for the support of the tallian; or officers of police. The Poligars had so encroached upon and assumed these rights that more than four-fifths of the villages in Tirunelveli had come under their influence and their peons

had superseded the talliards or retained them on condition of receiving from them a share of their perquisites.

The Desha Kaval or district watching-fees originated either from a grant of the ruler or from the voluntary action of the villagers, who, being unable to protect themselves, submitted to such contributions. In later times these were levied by the Poligars from defenceless villagers as the price of forbearing to plunder them. "These contributions consisted in payments of money, grain, plough, or cattle, and various other articles, and were made by armed peons detached from the fort of the Poligar for that purpose; they were not regulated by any fixed principle; but the amount depended upon the conscience of the Poligar; and when the payment of them was resisted or not quickly submitted to it was enforced by torture and the whip; the whole village was put into confinement; every occupation was interdicted, the cattle pounded, and the inhabitants taken captive or murdered. The fees and collections thus made on account of the police, were exclusive of other assessments to which the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages were subject equally with those in the pollams, under various pretenses such as hunting, batta, marriage expenses, and presents.

Palayams were given all the powers by the Centre and the Centre did not interfere in local rule or administration. It appears to be a Federal Rule set up by the Centre coordinating between the Vijayanagara Empire and the States through the Palaya Authority Rule.

Under the Governors, 72 Palayas were ruled as units of administration. This administration is equal to the local administration system followed earlier. This Palayagar system gave the best strength and credibility to the King and his governance.

Process in the Palayagar System: This system comprised of 72 Palayas of the state. Each Palayam was headed by a Palayagar elected from the local ethnic groups. They had three types of authority:

1. Finance and Revenue Collection Authority: Out of the collections they had to share the Revenue with the King and also for their own administration and own expenses.
2. Justice: They were authorized to deal with all the disputes and cases in their jurisdiction.
3. Military: One third of the revenue was to be spent on the Army maintenance by the Palayagars.

Palayagar's Jurisdiction: Palayagars created their own governmental formation similar to that of Nayakar Governments. Day to day affairs were run by their officials created similar to the Government at the Centre. They had a Pradhani.

Every considerable town and village in the Nayak Kingdom was fortified and garrisoned with regular troops, artillery, trained elephants and horses; and a

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Dalakartan was in charge of the defence of each town and responsible for its safety. Madurai City was also under a Dalakartan who commanded the garrison and the police of the capital. The Poligars in order to perform their military duties effectively, were to keep in perpetual readiness a kind of militia properly equipped for service and ready to take the field at a moment's notice. This militia was exceedingly numerous, in fact nearly all the able bodied ryots resident in the Poligar's dominions were militia men and liable to be called out whenever there was danger of invasion or a prospect of foreign service.

Some of the nobles other than the Poligars, who lived at the capital, held large estates subject to military service and maintained regiments of infantry and cavalry. Some of the Poligars were placed in authority over others and they were made answerable for the good conduct of their subordinates.

Thus the Sethupathi of Ramnad was the head of a section of them; the Poligar of Dindigal was the chief of 18 Poligars and occupied a most distinguished position in the time of Tirumala Nayakar.

Whenever troops were required by the Nayak for military operations the Dalavay (Dalakartan) of Madurai sent requisitions to Poligars, to furnish armed men within a certain time; the Poligars immediately sent round orders to the dalakartans and headmen of the towns and villages; and on the day named, or soon afterwards, the levies were ready for service and in marching order. In times of pressing necessity the Sethupathi and every great leader of men in the kingdom would be called to arms, and swarms of troops would hurry to the king's assistance from every quarter.

The soldiers of the Poligars were mostly ryots supporting themselves by lands granted to them rent-free on condition of rendering military service and received only batta when on march. They also had a system of 'Sharo'. Peasants who enjoyed allotment of the Sharo lands were expected to grow in the peace time and to fight during war time, for the Army.

Palayagar system had its own good and bad aspects. However, the system provided the Kingdom a peaceful and well-defined local administration and was also a necessity. Nelson mentions this Palayagar System as the best system of local administration.

Check Your Progress

1. What do you mean by the term 'Poligar'?
2. Throw some light on the life of Viswanatha Nayakar.
3. To whom did the Poligars report?
4. Name the two types of revenue collected by the Poligars.

5.3 KAVAL SYSTEM

The term '*kaval*' refers to 'watch'. It is used to denote the functionary who performs this duty. Kaval System was like a police organization. The chief was called Thalayari. The system of enforcement was found to be old as used to be in the earlier Kings' times of appointing Village Security and Policing.

There were four divisions:

1. Arasu Kaval for the entire Government
2. Nadu Kaval- District
3. Thisai Kaval- Area
4. Sthala Kaval (Tala Kaval)- Village

Their salaries were portion of the produce or in cash.

5.3.1 Features of Society

Let us discuss the features of society during this time.

- **Caste Division:** Due to the frequent invasions during the Nayakar Rule and Sethupathi Rule, the people were under direct attack. The life was not found peaceful. As the community lived under a deep rooted Caste systems the Caste difference alone could make a difference in their style of life. Kula and Gothra were considered primary. Brahmins occupied the highest position. Dalavai, Pradhani, Rayasam were the top governmental posts occupied only by Brahmins. They were also Chief advisers to the King. As they were able to foresee things and had Divine Blessings, Brahmins were considered supreme. Alongwith them prohibits were also treated specially.

In the next strata, Kammalar were found. They had five sub sects in the Caste: Carpenter, Gold Smith, Black Smith, Lock Smith, and Sculptor. By and large, the downtrodden had to face the increasing inequalities during the Nayakar's time. Inter-caste marriages were banned by Nayakars. This information is available in a stone inscription of 1623.

- **Status of Women:** High strata women had proficiency in education and were also intelligent. Womens' education was not formal. Dowry was practiced during weddings and the bride was gifted with properties and jewelleryes. High strata traders were marrying many women. Kings were having more than 200 wives in their harem. Thirumalai Nayakar had 200 wives who followed sati practice and burnt themselves when he died. Achuthappa Nayakkar had more than 300 women in his harem. Sati practice was not found amongst the other strata people. Women were not found having any status in the society other than being a companion to the husband. Prostitution was socially accepted. The women were also engaged in the temple maintenance work.

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5.4 TEMPLES, FESTIVALS AND CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION

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Let us now look at other aspects of society at this time.

- **Food:** There were no restrictions in their food habits. People in the lower strata consumed meat, fish, eggs and rice. Many were also traders in food items. Alcohol was also consumed in the state.
- **Ornaments:** The dress of higher strata consisted of silk and different varieties of clothes. Sowrastras were employed for weaving special woven clothes for the Royal Family. These women adored jewels and ornaments. Other strata people wore normal clothing.
- **Festivity:** Dance, drama and music were popular in the country. During wedding celebrations, people were enjoying a festive entertainment.
- **Temples:** Temples were a part of the system and people celebrated temple festivals with more concern and happiness. Madurai is popular for its monthly festivals of temples. Apart from that entertainments included music, dance and drama. Few people were also artistic. Historian Abidbhai refers some of the practices as superstitious and based on the caste differences, involving sacrifices, meaningless rituals and also caste based.
- **Economy:** Weaving was popular in Madurai. Thoothukudi was focusing on pearl diving. Agricultural activities were predominant in the rainfed and riverfed areas. Townships were developed and the people resorted to take up small trades. Livestock rearing and dyeing clothes were also followed as a profession. Economic Development was minimal and the people lived a conservative economic life.

Check Your Progress

5. What does the term '*kaval*' mean?
6. What are the top governmental posts during the period of Poligars?
7. Write a brief note on the economy during the rule of Poligars.

5.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Poligar was the feudal title for a class of territorial administrative and military governors appointed by the Nayaka rulers of South India. The term poligar is peculiar to the Madras Presidency; and the persons were subordinate feudal chiefs occupying tracts more or less wild and generally of predatory habits in former days; they are now much the same as Zamindars in the highest use of the term.

2. Viswanatha Nayakar (1529-1564), a Vijayanagara viceroy to Madurai, ruled for 35 years and established his qualities of discipline, administrative skills and valour. He brought in a variety of reforms and was responsible for the introduction of Palayagar System. His provinces included Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Thirunelveli, Thiruchi, Salem and Travancore. He is considered the backbone of Madurai Nayakar Rule for its establishment and for its century-long deep rooted stability.
3. Poligars were virtually reporting to Nayakars though they were part of the Viayanagara Empire.
4. The Poligars collected two sorts of revenue as district-watchers (Desha Kaval) and village watchers (Thala Kaval).
5. The term '*kaval*' refers to 'watch'. It is used to denote the functionary who performs this duty.
6. The top governmental posts during the period of Poligars were Dalavai, Pradhani, Rayasam which were occupied only by Brahmins.
7. Economic development during the rule of Poligars was minimal and the people lived a conservative economic life. Weaving was popular in Madurai. Thoothukudi was focusing on pearl diving. Agricultural activities were predominant in the rainfed and riverfed areas. Livestock rearing and dyeing clothes were also followed as a profession.

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5.6 SUMMARY

- Viswanatha Nayakar (1529-1564) ruled for 35 years establishing his qualities of discipline, administrative skills and valour. He brought in a variety of reforms and was responsible for the introduction of Palayagar System.
- He is considered the backbone of Madurai Nayakar Rule for its establishment and for its century-long deep rooted stability.
- Poligar system, though popularized by Viswanatha Nayakar, the Palaya Division System and Rules for administration was conceived by Prabharudhran II Kakatiya King.
- Poligar or Palayakara system was introduced at Madurai Fort, after Vijayanagara Empire invented and implemented the Nayankara System throughout the empire and created over 200 Nayakar Mandals spread over the entire south from Thungabatra River to Kanyakumari.
- A considerable part of the country, south of Tiruchi, had passed into the hands of the Poligars. Poligars were virtually reporting to Nayakars though they were part of the Viayanagara Empire.
- The Poligars collected two sorts of revenue as district-watchers (Desha Kaval) and village watchers (Thala Kaval). The village revenue known as

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Tallum Kaval were of a much older creation than the Poligar's influence and authority, being coeval with the establishment of villages and constituting the feud for the support of the tallian; or officers of police.

- The Desha Kaval or district watching-fees originated either from a grant of the ruler or from the voluntary action of the villagers, who, being unable to protect themselves, submitted to such contributions.
- Palayams were given all the powers by the Centre and the Centre did not interfere in local rule or administration.
- The Palayagar system is comprised of 72 Palayas of the state. Each Palayam was headed by a Palayagar elected from the local ethnic groups. They had three types of authority: finance and revenue collection authority, justice and military.
- The Poligars in order to perform their military duties effectively, were to keep in perpetual readiness a kind of militia properly equipped for service and ready to take the field at a moment's notice.
- Some of the nobles other than the Poligars, who lived at the capital, held large estates subject to military service and maintained regiments of infantry and cavalry.
- The Sethupathi of Ramnad was the head of a section of them; the Poligar of Dindigal was the chief of 18 Poligars and occupied a most distinguished position in the time of Tirumala Nayakar.
- In times of pressing necessity the Sethupathi and every great leader of men in the kingdom would be called to arms, and swarms of troops would hurry to the king's assistance from every quarter.
- Kaval System was like a police organization. The Chief was called Thalayari. The system of enforcement was found to be old as used to be in the earlier Kings' times of appointing village security and policing.
- Due to the frequent invasions during the Nayakar Rule and Sethupathi Rule, the people were under direct attack. The life was not found peaceful. As the community lived under a deep rooted Caste systems the Caste difference alone could make a difference in their style of life.
- Dalavai, Pradhani, Rayasam were the top governmental posts occupied only by Brahmins. They were also Chief advisers to the King.
- High strata women had proficiency in Education and were also intelligent. Womens' education was not formal. Dowry was practiced during weddings and the bride was gifted with properties and jewelleryes.
- Thirumalai Nayakar had 200 wives who followed sati practice and burnt themselves when he died. Achuthappa Nayakkar had more than 300 women in his harem.

- The dress of Higher Strata consisted of silk and different varieties of clothes. Sowrastras were employed for weaving special woven clothes for the Royal Family. These women adored jewels and ornaments. Other strata people wore normal clothing.
- Temples were a part of the system and people celebrated temple festivals with more concern and happiness. Madurai is popular for its monthly festivals of temples. Apart from that entertainments included music, dance and drama.
- Weaving was popular in Madurai. Thoothukudi was focusing on pearl diving. Agricultural activities were predominant in the rainfed and riverfed areas. Townships were developed and the people resorted to take up small trades.

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5.7 KEY WORDS

- **Poligar:** It refers to the post of a subordinate feudal chief in the former Madras Presidency of India.
- **Kaval:** The term refers to 'watch'. It is also used to denote the functionary who performs this duty. It was an ancient and indigenous institution of Tamil Nadu.
- **Rainfed Area:** It refers to the area which is filled or supplied primarily with rainwater.

5.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. What do you understand by the Poligar system?
2. What is Desha Kaval?
3. What are the three types of authorities in the process of the Palayagar System?
4. List the four divisions of the Kaval System.
5. Write a short note on the caste division of the society.

Long Answer Questions

1. Describe the Palayagar System in detail.
2. Discuss the status of women during Poligar rule.
3. Analyse the cultural contributions of the society during the period.

5.9 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 6 FAMOUS TEMPLES OF MADURAI

NOTES

Structure

- 6.0 Introduction
- 6.1 Objectives
- 6.2 Madurai
 - 6.2.1 Temples in Madurai
- 6.3 Srirangam
- 6.4 Rameswaram
- 6.5 Chidambaram
- 6.6 Thiruvarur
- 6.7 Tirunelveli
- 6.8 Srivilliputtur
- 6.9 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 6.10 Summary
- 6.11 Key Words
- 6.12 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 6.13 Further Readings

6.0 INTRODUCTION

Mythology cites Madurai as a forest called Kadambavanam. Once a merchant passing through the forest saw Indran, the King of Gods, worshipping a Swayambhulingam under a Kadam tree. This was immediately reported to King Kulsekarer Pandayan. The king cleared the forest and built a splendid temple, known as the Sri Meenakshi Sundareswarer Temple, around the holy Lingam and later built a beautiful lotus-shaped city surrounding the temple. It is said that Lord Vishnu presided over the wedding of Shiva and Meenakshi, and the divine couple made their home in Madurai, where they ruled (and continue to symbolically rule) as queen and king. Meenakshi Kalyanam Festival is carried out even today at Madurai, every year.

The unit aims to examine the grandiosity and splendor of the city of Madurai and the renowned temples of the city. Besides Madurai, the unit also discusses other historical and religious destinations of the state such as Srirangam, Rameswaram, Chidambaram, Thiruvarur, Tirunelveli, and Srivilliputtur.

6.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the significance of Madurai through historical and religious perspective
- Describe the various temples situated in Madurai

- Discuss the stories related to the temples
- Analyse the architecture method behind the temples
- Understand the importance of temples like Srirangam, Rameswaram, Chidambaram, Thiruvavur, Tirunelveli, and Srivilliputtur

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6.2 MADURAI

Madurai and Tamil Language are inseparable as the language and literature developed through the Muchchangam (Tamil Sangam of the Sangam Age). It is famous for its world acclaimed Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple. The city of Madurai has been constructed in the form of a lotus and is built around the temple. It is situated on the banks of the river Vaigai. Owing to its rich cultural heritage and architectural splendor, the city is often referred to as the 'Athens of the East'. The origin of Madurai dates back to the Sangam period, the golden period of Tamilagam and Tamil Literature.

Lord Siva appeared on the naming ceremony of the city and blessed it. The divine nectar (madhu) from the tangled locks of Siva fell on the blessed city and so, the city came to be known as 'Madhurapuri'. It is also said that centuries ago Lord Siva himself performed sixty-four wonders, called 'Thiruvilaiyadals', in Madurai. The holy city of Madurai finds mention in the great Indian epics - Ramayana, Kautilya's Arthashastra. Madurai also served as the capital of Pandayan Kings. Besides, the scene of Silappadikaram epic written by Ilango Adigal is also based on Madurai and Madurai Pandiyan King.

In 302 BC, Megasthenes visited Madurai and was followed by Marcopolo and Ibn Batuta, all of whom mentioned about their visit in their travelogues. There were many others travelers, from countries like Rome and Greece, who visited the city and established trade with the Pandya Kings. Madurai was captured by the Cholas in the 10th century AD and was ruled till the end of the 13th century. In 1223 AD, Pandyas came to power again and patronized the Tamil language. The city became prosperous during the reign of the Pandya Kings.

Many master-pieces or 'Silapathikaram' were created during that time. The great Tamil epic was also written during this time. It is based on the story of Kannagi, who burnt Madurai in lieu of injustice caused to her husband Kovalan. In April 1311, Malik Kafur, the general of Alauddin Khilji, the then ruler of Delhi, raided and robbed Madurai for precious stones, jewels, and other rare treasures. This was followed by subsequent raids by other Muslim Sultans. Finally, in 1323, the Pandya kingdom came under the Delhi Empire ruled by the Tughlaqs. In this time period, Madurai Sultanate was formed by the provincial Governor Jalaluddin Asansha (1335-1340) declaring independence from the Delhi Sultanate of Tughlaq. Madurai Sultanate lasted for 46 years until its defeat was pre-determined by Delhi Sultanate, through Kumara Kampana of Vijayanagara Empire.

The year 1371 saw the downfall of the Tughlaqs and Madurai came under the reign of the Vijayanagar dynasty of Hampi. Kings of this dynasty left the captured land to governors called Nayaks, for the efficient management of their empire. After the death of Krishna Deva Raya (King of Vijayanagar Empire) in 1530 AD, the Nayaks became independent and started ruling the territories autonomously. Among Nayaks, Thirumalai Nayak (1623-1659) was the most popular one.

Around 20,000 people per day visit the Meenakshi Temple's almost 700,000 square feet of space, including the two principal sanctuaries and dozens of shrines of varying sizes. Bordered by high walls and gateways, it is a bewildering collection of indoor and outdoor spaces: small, cramped shrines, vast halls, low and high ceilings, darkness, hustle and bustle, quiet spaces, and chaos. All told, it contains around 30,000 sculptures. Many sacred sites and structures in India have mythical origins, and the city of Madurai near the southern tip of the subcontinent in Tamil Nadu state is no exception. According to tradition, more than 3500 years ago the God Indra installed a small tower over a naturally formed stone lingam as a sign of devotion to Shiva, one of the primary deities in the vast Hindu pantheon. Other gods followed and began to worship there. Soon a human devotee witnessed the miraculous scene of gods worshipping at the lingam and notified the local king, Kulashekhara Pandya, who built a temple at the site.

The Meenakshi Temple is a prime example of Dravidian architecture—often include covered porches on temples, tall entry gate towers on two or more sides, many-pillared halls, and a water tank or reservoir for ritual bathing.

Two principal sanctuaries (accessible only by Hindus) sit at the center of the temple complex: one dedicated to Meenakshi (who is considered a manifestation of the goddess Parvati), and another dedicated to Sundareshwara or 'Beautiful Lord' (a form of the god Shiva).

At the south end of the complex is the Golden Lily Tank, which is used by believers for ritual bathing before they enter the sanctuaries of Meenakshi and Sundareshwara. The northeast corner of the complex is occupied by the Thousand Pillar Hall, a vast, ornate mandapa. Although there are actually only 985 pillars, the effect is impressive, with most of the stone pillars carved in high or low relief depicting gods, demons, and divine animals. Thousand Pillar Hall functions primarily as a museum, with exhibitions of bronze sculptures, paintings, and objects.

The tallest Gopura (Shrine) rises to approximately 170 feet and contains more than 1500 figures that are repaired and repainted every twelve years.

Madurai City is built around the temple in an artistic way. Its importance radiates outward from the central shrines of Madurai Temple, to the rest of the world. Festivity of Madurai enchants the pilgrims and also the tourists of the world.

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6.2.1 Temples in Madurai

Some of the temples in Madurai are as follows:

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Edaganathar Temple: Edaganathar Temple is a Hindu temple dedicated to the deity Shiva, located in Thiruvudagam, a village in Madurai district. The temple is located on the banks of Vaigai River. Shiva is worshipped as Edaganathar, and is represented by the lingam. His consort Parvati is depicted as Visalakshi. The presiding deity is revered in the 7th century Tamil Saiva canonical work, the Tevaram, written by Tamil saint poets known as the nayanars and classified as Paadal Petra Sthalam. The temple has a number of shrines, with those of Edaganathar and his consort being the most prominent. The Muthu Pandal is the most prominent festival. The original complex is believed to have been built by Pandyan Empire, while the present masonry structure was built during the Nayak during the 16th century. Inscriptions from the period of Jatavarman Kulasekhara Pandyan (12th century AD), and Krishna Deva Raya are seen in this temple, speaking of their endowments to this shrine. Sambandar's miracle is celebrated every year as Edu Ethireriya Utsavam.

Kallazhagar Temple: It is situated in Alagar Koyil and is dedicated to Lord Vishnu. Constructed in the Dravidian style of architecture, the temple is glorified in the Divya Prabandha, the early medieval Tamil canon of the Azhwar saints from the 6th–9th centuries AD. It is one of the 108 Divyadesam dedicated to Vishnu, who is worshipped as Kallazhagar and his consort Lakshmi as Thirumamagal. The temple has a seven-tiered Rajagopuram. The temple is surrounded by a large fort, part of which is dilapidated. The temple follows Thenkalai tradition of worship. The temple houses some rare Vijayanagara sculptures similar to the ones present in Soundararajaperumal Temple, Thadikombu, Krishnapuram Venkatachalapathy temple, Srivilliputhur Divya Desam and Jalakandeswarar Temple, Vellore. Millions of people gather in Madurai to witness the event of Kallazhagar crossing the Vaigai river.

Koodal Azhagar Temple: This temple is dedicated to the Hindu god Vishnu. Constructed in the Dravidian style of architecture, the temple is glorified in the Divya Prabandha, the early medieval Tamil canon of the Azhwar saints from the 6th–9th centuries AD. It is one of the 108 Divyadesam dedicated to Vishnu, who is worshipped as Koodal Azhagar and his consort Lakshmi as Mathuravalli.

A granite wall surrounds the temple, enclosing all its shrines. The temple has a five-tiered Rajagopuram, the gateway tower. The temple is originally believed to be built by the Pandyas, with later additions by the Vijayanagar and Madurai Nayak kings who commissioned pillared halls and major shrines of the temple during the 16th century. The inscriptions in the temple refer the presiding deity as Koodal Azhagiya Perumal. There are inscriptions in the temple indicating generous gifts and endowments in the form of land, houses and gold to maintain and administer the temple. The temple was expanded during the rule of Madurai Nayaks in the 16th century.

The vimana of the temple is believed to be the work of Vishwakarma, the divine architect. The shadow of the vimana does not fall on the ground. The Ashtanga Vimana is found in Mannar Koil Ambasamudram Uthiramerur, Thirukoshtiyur and Cheranmadevi temples. The inner walls of the sanctum has paintings of Ashtadikpalagas.

Historians are of the opinion that Koodal Azhagar temple finds mention in Sangam literature (3 century BCE - 3 century AD) in works like Madurai Kanchi by Mangudi Marudan, Paripâmal, Kaliththokai and Silappatikaram. Madurai Kanchi details the Thiruvonam festival celebrated in the temple. Koodal Azhagar temple is revered in Nalayira Divya Prabhandam, the 7th–9th century Vaishnava canon, by Periazhwar, Thirumalisai Alvar and Thirumangai Azhwar. The temple is classified as a Divyadesam, one of the 108 Vishnu temples that are mentioned in the book. During the 18th and 19th centuries, the temple finds mention in several works like 108 Tirupathi Anthathi by Divya Kavi Pillai Perumal Aiyangar and Koodal Sthala Purana.

Legend of Periyazhwar: The temple follows the traditions of the Thenkalai sect of Vaishnavite tradition and follows Vaikasana aagama. After independence, Madurai became one of the major commercial districts of Tamil Nadu. It is surrounded by several hills, mainly Annamalai, Pasumalai and Nagamalai, named after their resemblance to an Elephant, a Cow and a Snake respectively. The city is a major exporter of jasmine flowers. Due to its historical background, the temple city of Madurai attracts thousands of pilgrims and visitors every year from India and abroad.

Madurai is one of the major cities in the Indian State of Tamil Nadu. It is the administrative headquarters of Madurai District, the third largest city in Tamil Nadu and 25th most populated city in India. Located on the banks of River Vaigai, Madurai has been a major settlement for two millennia.

Madurai is closely associated with the Tamil language, and the third Tamil Sangam, a major congregation of Tamil scholars said to have been held in the city. The recorded history of the city goes back to the 3rd century BCE, being mentioned by Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to the Maurya empire, and Kautilya, a minister of the Mauryan emperor Chandragupta Maurya. Signs of human settlements and Roman trade links dating back to 300BC are evident from excavations by Archeological Survey of India in Manalur. The city is believed to be of significant antiquity and has been ruled, at different times, by the Pandyas, Cholas, Madurai Sultanate, Vijayanagar Empire, Madurai Nayaks, Carnatic kingdom, and the British East India Company British Raj.

The city has a number of historical monuments, with the Meenakshi Amman Temple and Tirumalai Nayak Palace being the most prominent. Madurai is an important industrial and educational hub in South Tamil Nadu. The city is home to various automobile, rubber, chemical and granite manufacturing industries. Madurai is also considered as an important centre in respect of Trade, Agriculture and Medical Tourism also.

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Madurai is one major city that carries a number of historical evidences on the spiritual incidents for the Religious devotees. At the same time Madurai displays valour by conducting Jallikattu sports during the Pongal Celebrations as a Tamils festivals. Madurai is one city that boasts off its link with the Tamil Language and development.

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Check Your Progress

1. During what period was Madurai established?
2. During which year did Madurai come under the reign of Vijayanagar dynasty?
3. Give the names of some famous temples of Madurai.

6.3 SRIRANGAM

Srirangam is a major pilgrimage destination for Hindus (especially Srivaishnavites) and the largest temple complex in India. According to the temple's website, Srirangam can be considered the biggest functioning Hindu temple in the world, as it covers an area of about 631,000 square metres (6,790,000 sq ft) with a perimeter of 4 km (10,710 ft) The temple town lies on an islet formed by the twin rivers Cauvery and Coleroon.

The Srirangam temple complex is composed of 7 concentric walled sections and 21 towers gopuram. The southern gopuram of the temple, called the Rajagopuram, is 239.5 feet tall and, as of 2016, is the tallest in Asia. The construction of this Rajagopuram was begun during the reign of Achyuta Deva Raya of the Vijayanagara empire. However, construction was halted after his death and the structure of the rajagopuram remained incomplete for 400 years. The temple has seven prakaras (elevated enclosures) with gopurams articulating the axial path, the highest at the outermost prakara and the lowest at the innermost.

The Srirangam temple is called Antya Ranga is a gopuram fully made of gold, which is protected by an electrical fence.

Ramanujar body was preserved and kept inside this temple. Inside the temple complex, there is a separate temple dedicated to the goddess Andal. Additionally, there is a museum, a library and a bookshop. The deity (in a reclining posture) faces South.

Beyond the ancient textual history, archaeological evidence such as inscriptions refer to this temple, but these stone inscriptions are from late 1st millennium AD. The inscriptions in the temple belong to the Chola, Pandya, Hoysala and Vijayanagar dynasties who ruled over the region. Then Chola kings Dharmavarcholan and Killivalavan developed the shrine into the big temple seen now. They built the basic foundations and main buildings. Srirangam's History got important during the invasion of Muslim emperors. Srirangam was captured and

the riches were looted. They took away the idol of Alagiyamanavalar Perumal and plundered the treasures, jewels and ornaments which belonged to Srirangam temple. The temple idol of Alagiyamanavalar Perumal was sent to Delhi. In Delhi, the idol of Alagiyamanavalar Perumal was taken care of by the daughter of the Sultan. The Sultan handed over the statue of Alagiyamanavalar Perumal back to Ramanujacharya. The Daughter of Sultan could not bear this. She is said to have disappeared mysteriously. She now has a separate shrine near the Sriranganatha temple and people worship her. She is called 'Thulukka Nachiyar'. Even after this incident Srirangam was often attacked and ransacked by the muslim sultans of Delhi and later by the Bahamani sultanate established in Deccan region. After the rise of Vijayanagara Empire, Krishna Deva Raya realized the importance of this sacred city and prioritized Srirangam as equal as Thirupathi and bequeathed a plenty of treasures, jewels and lands to the Srirangam temple. During his period the Srirangam temple was well reformed and many plans were executed for the growth and people welfare and so Srirangam got developed rapidly.

Despite the construction of various mandapas and gopuras over a span of many centuries, the architecture of the Ranganathaswamy temple is one of the better illustrations of Hindu temple planometric geometry as per agama design texts in the Tamil tradition. According to George Michell, a professor and art historian on Indian architecture, the regulating geometry and plan of Srirangam site takes on 'a ritual dimension since all the architectural components, especially the focal gopuras and the most important colonnades and mandapas, are arranged along the axes dictated by the cardinal directions'. This alignment integrates the routes that devotees follow as they journey unto the innermost sanctum.

6.4 RAMESWARAM

Rameswaram, is located on Pamban Island separated from mainland India by the Pamban channel and is about 40 kilometres from Mannar Island, Sri Lanka. It is considered to be one of the holiest places in India for the Hindus, and part of the Char Dham pilgrimage.

Rameswaram is significant for many Hindus as a pilgrimage to Varanasi and it is considered to be incomplete without a pilgrimage to Rameswaram. The town along with the Ramanathaswamy temple is one of the holiest Hindu Char Dham (four divine sites) sites comprising Badrinath, Puri and Dwarka. Though the origins are not clearly known, the Advaita school of Hinduism established by Sankaracharya, attributes the origin of Char Dham to the seer. The four monasteries are located across the four corners of India and their attendant temples are Badrinath Temple at Badrinath in the North, Jagannath Temple at Puri in the East, Dwarakadheesh Temple at Dwarka in the West and Ramanathaswamy Temple at Rameswaram in the South. Though ideologically the temples are divided between the sects of Hinduism, namely Saivism and Vaishnavism, the Char Dham pilgrimage is an all Hindu affair. The journey across the four cardinal points in India is

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considered sacred by Hindus who aspire to visit these temples once in their lifetime. Traditionally the trip starts at the eastern end from Puri, proceeding in clockwise direction in a manner typically followed for circumambulation in Hindu temples. The temple is one of the famous pilgrimage sites historically – the Maratha kings who ruled Thanjavur established chatrams or rest houses all through Mayiladuthurai and Rameswaram between 1745 and 1837 CE and donated them to the temple.

There are sixty-four Tirthas or Theerthams (holy water bodies) in and around Rameswaram. According to the Skanda Purana, all twenty-four of them are important. Of the Twenty four, 14 are in the form of tanks and wells within the precincts of the temple. Bathing in these tanks is a major aspect of the pilgrimage to Rameswaram and is considered equivalent to penance. Twenty-two of the tanks are within the Ramanathaswamy Temple. The foremost one is called Agni Theertham, the sea (Bay of Bengal). Jatayu, King of the Birds, who fought in vain with the demon-king Ravana to save Sita, is said to have fallen down at Jadayu Theertham as his wings were severed. Villoondi Theertham literally translates to ‘buried bow’, is located around 7 kilometres from the main temple on the way to Pamban. It is believed to be the place where Rama quenched the thirst of Sita by dipping the bow into the sea water. Other major holy bodies are Hanuman Theertham, Sugreeva Theertham and Lakshmana Theertham.

The Ramanathaswamy Temple is the most notable historic landmark of the town. Located in the centre of town, Ramanathaswamy Temple is a famous Hindu temple dedicated to Shiva. The temple is one of the 12 Jyotirlinga shrines, where Shiva is worshipped in the form of a Jyotirlinga meaning “pillar of light”.

It is also one of the 275 Paadal Petra Sthalam (is quoted in spiritual hymns) temples and is glorified in hymns by the three of the most revered Nayanar saints (7th century Saivite saints), Appar, Sundarar and Tirugnana Sambandar.

The temple in its current structure was built during the 12th century by Pandya Dynasty. The temple has the longest corridor among all Hindu temples in India. The breadth of these columned corridors varies from 17 to 21 feet with a height of 25 feet. Each pillar is sculpted in Nayak style as in Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple.

The contribution of the kings of the Sethupathy dynasty (17th century) to the temple was considerable. Large amount of money was spent during the tenure of Pradani Muthirulappa Pillai towards the restoration of the pagodas which were falling into ruins – the Chockattan Mantapam or the cloistered precincts of the temple was reconstructed by him.

The rulers of Sri Lanka contributed to the temple – Parakrama Bahu (1153–1186 AD) was involved in the construction of the sanctum sanctorum of the temple. The eastern tower and shrine of Nataraja were built by Dalavai Sethupathy in 1649 AD. The second enclosure is ascribed to Chinna Udayar Sethupathy and his son Ragunatha Thirumalai (1500–1540 AD). The third enclosure was

constructed by Muthu Ramalinga Sethupathy (1725–1771 AD) – his statue is located in the entrance of the corridor.

It is in the Gulf of Mannar, at the tip of the Indian peninsula Pamban Island, also known as Rameswaram Island, is connected to mainland India by the Pamban Bridge. Together with Varanasi, It is said that the Hindu god Rama built a bridge from here across the sea to Lanka to rescue his wife Sita from her abductor Ravana. The Ramanathaswamy Temple, dedicated to the Hindu God Shiva, is at the centre of the town and is closely associated with Rama. The temple and the town are considered a holy pilgrimage site for Shaivas and Vaishnavas.

Rameswaram is the closest point from which to reach Sri Lanka from India, and geological evidence suggests that the Rama Sethu was a former land connection between India and Sri Lanka. Majority of the workforce depend upon Tourism and fishery as their avocation, in Rameswaram.

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6.5 CHIDAMBARAM

Chidambaram Nataraja temple or Thillai Nataraja temple is situated in the Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu. It is located around 200 km from the capital city of Chennai. Synonymous with temples and festivities, the town ranks high in terms of religious significance, culture and tradition. Ruled by the Cholas, Pandyas, Marathas and finally the British, the town is mainly known for tourism which forms the backbone of its economy.

Apart from the temple circuit, Chidambaram lies very close to Pichavaram, which is one of the largest mangrove forests in the world. Second only to the Sunderbans, this fascinating ecosystem is located between two estuaries, the Vellar estuary in the north and Coleroon estuary in the south and is at a distance of 15 km from the town. The pristine scenery of the back waters coupled with the maze of interconnected canals and unique vegetation makes Pichavaram a popular tourist destination. The town is also famous for weaving, silk fabrics and artificial jewellery, which is popularly known as covering jewellery.

Also known as Chidambaram temple, this spectacular monument is literally the soul of the town. The temple is one among the five holiest temples of Lord Shiva or Pancha Bootha Sthalas as it is also known and is located in the heart of the town. Spread over an area of over 50 ac., the monument is a mammoth structure and an architectural marvel. Dedicated to Lord Shiva, this temple is of very high religious importance for the followers of Shaivism making it an extremely popular pilgrimage centre. The highlight of the temple is of course the fact that Shiva in the temple is depicted in dancing form and is seen performing Ananda Tandava, which means ‘dance of delight’.

Normally, Lord Shiva is depicted in the form of a ‘Linga’ which is the classic and most commonly found form. Another unique feature of this temple is the

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presence of the deity of Lord Govindaraja Perumal making it one of the rare temples dedicated to both the Shaivite and Vaishnavite deities. The ancient temple has undergone several renovations during the reign of various dynasties like the Pallavas, Cholas, Pandyas and Cheras and what stands today is the structure of 12th-13th century. The massive temple structure has nine gateways and four of these are adorned by 'gopurams' or towers that are decorated with highly exquisite and intricate carvings. There are five elaborate halls in the temple of which the Raja Sabha or the 1000-pillared hall is one of the most splendid features of the temple. The temple car is yet another stunning structure that is pulled by thousands of devotees twice a year during the bi-annual temple festivities. Kali Amman temple

Check Your Progress

4. Why is Srirangam considered as the biggest functioning Hindu temple in the world?
5. Throw some light on the interiors of the Srirangam temple.
6. Where is Rameswaram located?
7. Which Hindu pilgrimage is the closet point to Sri Lanka from India?

6.6 THIRUVARUR

Thyagaraja Temple is a Shiva temple, located in the town of Thiruvavarur. Shiva is worshiped as Vanmiganathar, and is represented by the lingam-referred to as Maragatha lingam. The main idol of worship is Lord Thiyagarajar, depicted as a Somaskanda form. His consort Parvathi is depicted as Kondi. The presiding deity is revered in the 7th century Saiva canonical work, the Tevaram, written in Tamil by saint poets known as the Nayanars and classified as *Paadal Petra Sthalam*. As per Hindu legend, the temple is the place where Kamalaambika's penance to marry Thyagaraja remain unfulfilled.

The temple has six daily rituals and twelve yearly festivals on its calendar. The temple has the largest chariot in Asia and the annual Chariot festival is celebrated. The present masonry structure was built during the Chola dynasty in the 9th century, while later expansions are attributed to Vijayanagar rulers of the Sangama Dynasty (1336–1485 AD), the Saluva Dynasty and the Tuluva Dynasty(1491–1570 AD).

Temple Shrines: The historic name of Thiruvavarur was Aaroor (Arur) and it finds mention in the 7th century saiva canonical work, Tevaram. The term Thiru is added to all temple cities that are mostly revered by the verses of Tevaram, which is the case of Arur becoming Thiruvavarur. Another name of Thiruvavarur is Kamalalayaksetra, meaning the 'holy place that is an abode of lotuses'; the town is also referred so due to the presence of the Kamalalayam tank and the temple deity, Kamalambigai.

Sundial to view stars: According to legend, a Chola king named Muchukunda obtained a boon from Indra and wished to receive an image of Thyagaraja Swamy reposing on the chest of reclining Lord Vishnu. Indra tried to misguide the king and had six other images made, but the king chose the right image at Tiruvarur. The temple is believed to have been initiated with a large complex by the Pallavas during the 7th century. Contemporary history of the temple dates back to the time of the Medieval Cholas. An inscription dated in the 20th regnal year of Rajendra I (1012–1044) beginning with introduction ‘Tirumanni valara’ is found on the north and west walls of the Thyagaraja shrine. It gives a list of gifts including a number of jewels and lamps to the god veedhividankar (Thyagarajar). We infer from the records that the temple was built in stone in the regnal years of the king by Anukkiyar Paravai Nangaiyar. Besides the same lady liberally endowed gold for plating and gilding parts of the vimana, the entrance and the four sides of the shrine. Copper was also donated for plating the doors, corbels of the pillars of the mandapa in front of the shrine.

The temple complex seems to have acted as the cultural model for the big Brahadeeswarar temple at Thanjavur of Rajaraja Chola I, wherein he enshrined a vitankar which shared with the Adavallan of Chidambaram the status of state cult. The last Chola monarch to play an important role in the affairs of the temple was Kulothunga Chola III in the early part of the 13th century A.D.

It attracted saivas of all schools and was important centre of Golaki matha in the 13th and 14th century. It was also an important Jaina dwelling place, which was attacked by saivas, as is evident from Periya Puranam, account of life of Dandiyadigal.

The temple complex covers 30 acres, with the Kamalalayam tank to its west and is one of the largest in India. It houses four gateway towers known as gopurams. The tallest is the eastern tower, with four stories and a height of 30 metres. The temple has numerous shrines, with those of Thyagarajar (Veethi Vidangar) and Neelothbalambal (Alliyankothai) being the most prominent. There are numerous shrines and mandapas (halls) in the three spacious enclosures (prakaram). The two main shrines of the temple are for vanmikinathar (Lord Siva) and Thyagarajar. Of the two, the former is the most ancient, and derives its name from the anthill (putru), which takes the place of linga in the main shrine.

Appar, the 7th-century poet saint, refers to the main deity in his hymn as puttritrukondan (one who resides in the ant hill). The Stala vriksham (temple tree) is patiri (trumpet flower tree). The principles and practises of tree-worship and ophilotary are ancient bases whereupon a later date linga worship seems to have been established. Here all the nine Navagrahas are located towards south in straight line also located in northwest corner of 1st (prakaram). It is believed that all the planetary deities got relieved off their curse and hence worshiped Thyagaraja. This temple hold the record of having maximum number of shrines (called sannithis in Tamil) in India. Some of the major shrines in the temple are of Aananthiswarar,

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Neelothmbal, Asaleswarar, Adageswarar, Varuneswarar, Annamalieswarar and Kamalambal. The unique feature of the temple is the standing Nandi facing the presiding deity. The temple has a lot of halls, with six of them being the most prominent.

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The Thiruvarur chariot festival: Kulothunga Chola II (1133–50 CE) enlarged the temple ritual to have fifty six festivals, some of which are followed in modern times. The annual chariot festival of the Thygarajaswamy temple is the largest of its kind in Asia and India weighing 300 tonne with a height of 96 ft. The memorial for Thiruvalluvar, Valluvar Kottam, at Nungambakkam, Chennai, is inspired from the design of the Thiruvarur chariot. The Thyagarajar Temple at Tiruvarur is famous for the ajapa thanam (dance without chanting), that is executed by the deity itself. Temple Vidhividangar Ajabathanam Dance without chanting, resembling the dance of Sri Thyagaraja resting on Lord Vishnu's chest.

Historically, Thiruvarur has been a centre of eminent people in religion, arts and science. Sundarar, an 8th-century Saivite saint, mentions 'I am the slave of all those born in Thiruvarur' in his works in Tevaram. Two of the 63 nayanmars of Saivite tradition namely, Kalarsinga Nayanar and Tandiyadigal Nayanar were born in Thiruvarur. The Periyapuranam, a 12th-century Saiva canonical by Sekkizhar, dedicates a chapter to those born in Thiruvarur, including these two saints. The town was a traditional centre of music and dance – the inscriptions from Rajaraja Chola associate a large body of dancers associated with the temple. Thiruvarur is home to Trinity of Carnatic music, namely Thyagaraja (1767–1847 CE), Muthuswami Dikshitar (1775–1835 CE) and Shyama Shastri (1762–1827). A unique musical instrument called panchamuga vadyam with each of its five ends ornamented differently is used in the temple. A type of nadaswaram (pipe instrument) called Barinayanam is also a unique instrument found only in Thiruvarur.

6.7 TIRUNELVELI

Tirunelveli boasts of a rich Hindu tradition as the roots of the city are deeply established in Hindu mythology. Though the city is the home of people of all religions, but the cultural heritage of the town is tremendously Hindu. Some of the popular temples of Tirunelveli are: Ambasamudram near Tirunelveli is a temple town. Kasi Vishvanathar temple, Thirumulanthaswamy temple, Veerama thandeswarar temple, Ammaiappan temple, Krishnaswamy temple, Purushotama Perumal temple and Lakshmi Narayana Perumal temple are located here.

Courtallanathar Temple located near main falls is dedicated to Lord Siva, which contains many inscriptions about Chola and Pandya Kings.

Krishnapuram near Tirunelveli is dedicated to Lord Vishnu. The Presiding deity is Thiruvenkatanathar. There are a number of life-size sculptures in this temple with intricate workmanship.

Kurukuthurai Murugan Temple in the midst of Tamiraparani River on both the sides is beautifully carved out of a rock known as Thiruvuruvamalai. It is said that the same rock was used for carving the temple of Lord Muruga at Tiruchendur in 1653.

Muruga Temples are Two; one is in the heart of Tirunelveli junction and is 300 years old. The other is situated on an island in the river Tamiraparani and is carved out of a rock. It is said that the same rock was used for the Muruga temple of Tiruchendur.

Nambi Malai: On the hills close by stands a small temple dedicated to Lord Nambi called Malai Nambi with a panoramic view of the village below. This hill is called Nambi Malai (Nambi Hill).

Nanguneri: Nanguneri is surrounded by lush green fertile, big water tank and acres of fertile land. The western part of Nanguneri is dotted with a chain of mountains called Western Ghats. Sri Vanamamalai Temple is the Deity. Nanguneri lies north of Eruvadi near Tirunelveli.

Papanasam is a holy place on the western ghats of Pothigai Hills. It is close to the Papanasam Falls, on the banks of the Tamiraparani River where Siva and Parvathi appeared before the great saint Agasthiya. Hence the falls is popularly called the "Agasthiya Falls". This is also the birth place of Swami Sivanantha, the saint and philosopher.

Srivaikuntam is famous for the temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu known as Sri Vaikuntapathi Swami with a lofty gopuram. The Thiruvengada Mudaliyar Mandapam is rich with sculptures of Yallis, Elephants and Warriors. The Ekadasi Mandapam which is opened on Vaikunta Ekadasi days contains exquisite sculptures. The Kailasanathaswamy temple is another important temple. It contains six inscriptions of the times of Veera Pandiya Kattabomman.

Nellayappar Gandhimathi Temple: This temple is situated in the heart of the city. This is a twin temple dedicated to Parvathi (Kanthimathi) and Siva (Nellaiyappar) Rare Jewels, the Golden Lily Tank, Musical Pillars and a hall of thousand pillars.

Sankaran Kovil is a unique temple dedicated to Sankaranarayana who is the combined manifestation of Siva and Vishnu. There are two other shrines dedicated to Siva and Parvathi. Twice a year, the sun's rays fall on the pedestal.

Tenkasi-Kasi Vishwanathar Temple: This town is 'Kasi (Varanasi) of the South'. The temple is, 554 feet in length and 318 feet width. 172 feet temple tower was built in 1456 by King Parakirama Pandian. Then the temple tower was damaged in 1924 due to thunder and it was rebuilt.

Thiruidaimarudur Athalanathar temple and Narumponathar temple on the banks of river Tamiraparani river attracts tourists mainly because of scenic beauty. The stone sculptures are legend of the temples is interesting. The four styles of

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temple architecture viz. Pandiya, Chera. Chola and Vijayanagara beautify the glorious temple

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Nellaiappar Temple is dedicated to the deity Shiva worshipped as Nellaiappar (also called Venuvananathar) represented by the lingam and his consort Parvati. The temple is located on the northern banks of Thamirabarani River in Tirunelveli district. The presiding deity is revered in the 7th century Tamil Saiva canonical work, the Tevaram, written by Tamil saint poets known as the nayanmars and classified as Paadal Petra Sthalam. The temple complex covers an area of fourteen and a half acres and all its shrines are enclosed with concentric rectangular walls. The temple has a number of shrines, with those of Swamy Nellaiappar and his consort Sri Kanthimathi Ambal being the most prominent.

The temple has three six rituals and six yearly festivals on its calendar. The original complex is believed to have been built by Pandyas, while the present masonry structure was added by Cholas, Pallavas, Cheras, Nayaks (Madurai Nayaks). According to the puranas, both the Gopurams were built by Pandyas and the sanctums of the temple were constructed by Nindraser Nedumaran who reigned in the 7th century. The mani mandapam with its famous musical pillar was built by Later Pandyas in the 7th century. Originally the Nellaiappar and Kanthimathi temples were two independent structures with spaces in between. It was in 1647 that Thiru Vadamalaiappa Pillaiyan, a great devotee of Siva linked the two temples by building the 'Chain mandapam'. To the western portion of the chain mandapam is the flower garden that was set up in 1756 by Thiruvengadakrishna Mudaliar. In the centre of the Flower Garden is a square vasantha mandapam with 100 pillars. The Nandi mandapam is said to have been built by Sivanthiappa Nayak in 1654. The flag stand near the Nandi was set up in 1155.

There are a number of stone inscriptions those of Veerapandiyan who regained about 950 and those of Rajendran I and Kulothunga Chola I. The inscriptions of Maravarman Sundara Pandyan refer to the Lord as 'Woodayar' and 'Wodeyanayanar' and the Goddess as 'Nachiar'. From the inscriptions of Kulasekkara Pandiyan we learn that he defeated the Chera, Chola and Hoysala kings and built the outer walls of the temple with the war booty.

Nellaiappar temple is spread over an area of 14 acres. The gopuram of this temple is 850 feet long and 756 feet wide. The composite columns of Virabhadra holding sword and horn are found be additions of the Vijayanayagara kings during the early 1500s. Similar columns of Virabhadra are found in Adikesava Perumal Temple at Thiruvattaru, Meenakshi Temple at Madurai, Kasi Viswanathar temple at Tenkasi, Krishnapuram Venkatachalapathy temple, Ramanathaswamy Temple at Rameswaram, Soundararajaperumal temple at Thadikombu, Srivilliputhur Andal temple, Srivaikuntanathan Perumal temple at Srivaikuntam, Avudayarkovil, Vaishnava Nambi and Thirukurungudi Nachiar temple at Thirukurungudi. Thaamira Ambalam Tirunelveli also is one of the five places where Lord Shiva is said to have displayed his dance and all these places have dance stages/ ambalams.

While Tirunelveli has the Thaamirai Ambalam, the others are the Rathina Ambalam at Thiruvaalangadu, the Chitra Ambalam at Courtallam, the Velli Ambalam at Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple and the Pon Ambalam at Thillai Nataraja Temple.

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6.8 SRIVILLIPUTTUR

The temple is associated with the life of Andal, who was found under a Tulsi plant in the garden inside the temple by Periyalvar. She is believed to have worn the garland before dedicating it to the presiding deity of the temple. Periyalvar, who later found it, was highly upset and stopped the practise. It is believed Vishnu appeared in his dream and asked him to dedicate the garland worn by Andal to him daily, which is a practise followed during the modern times. It is also believed that Ranganatha of Srirangam married Andal, who later merged with him.

The history of Srivilliputhur centres around the Srivilliputhur Andal Temple, dedicated to Andal. It is argued that the temple of Vatapatrasayi is present from the 8th century, but the epigraphic records are available only from the 10th century. The view that the Andal temple was built during the 14th century is highly debated by the historians. The temple has inscriptions from Chola, Pandya and Nayak rulers, spanning across various centuries from the 10th to 16th centuries. As per some accounts, the original structure was constructed by Tribuvana Chakravarthy Konerinmai Kondan Kulasekaran and the Andal temple by Barathi Rayar.

Srivilliputtur has a significant place in Vaishnava philosophy and worship practices. The Srivilliputtur Divya Desam has the unique distinction among all other divya desams of being the birthplace of two important Azhwars among the twelve azhwars, sri periyazhwar, who became the father-in-law of the Ranganatha himself and Andal who was the incarnation of Bhoomadevi and attained union with the Ranganathan at Srirangam. Andal is the only female Azhwar saint of the 12 Alvar saints of South India. She is credited with the Tamil works of Thirupavai and Nachiar Tirumozhi that are still recited by devotees during the Winter festival season of Margazhi. The town wakes up to the sounds of Thiruppavai is believed to lead to a sublime atmosphere throughout the day.

The temple has two divisions - the one of Andal located on the Southwest and the second one of Vatapatrasayi (Vishnu) on the Northeast direction. A granite wall surrounds the temple, enclosing all its shrines, the garden where Andal was found and two of its three bodies of water. The rajagopuram, the temple's gateway tower, 192 ft tall. The tower is originally believed to have been built by Periyalvar with the prize money he obtained from religious debates in the court of Vallaba Pandya in Madurai.

The Andal shrine houses the image of Andal and Rangamannar. Garuda, who brought Ranganathar, the divine bridegroom, from Srirangam is also housed in the same shrine. The walls around the shrine has paintings of the life of Andal.

Famous Temples of Madurai The second hall from the entrance towards the sanctum, the Kalyana Mandapa, houses huge life-size sculptures of Mohini, Rama, Kamadeva, Rati and many other deities.

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Check Your Progress

8. Which temple has the largest chariot in Asia?
9. What is the other name of Thiruvarur?
10. List the names of the famous temples of Tirunelveli.
11. How many divisions are there in Srivilliputtur temple?

6.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The origin of Madurai dates back to the Sangam period, the golden period of Tamilagam and Tamil Literature.
2. The year 1371 saw the downfall of the Tughlaqs and Madurai came under the reign of the Vijayanagar dynasty of Hampi.
3. Some of the famous temples of Madurai are Edaganathar Temple, Kallazhagar Temple, Koodal Azhagar Temple.
4. Srirangam can be considered the biggest functioning Hindu temple in the world, as it covers an area of about 631,000 square metres (6,790,000 sq ft) with a perimeter of 4 km (10,710 ft) The temple town lies on an islet formed by the twin rivers Cauvery and Coleroon.
5. Ramanujar's body is preserved and kept inside the Srirangam temple. Inside the temple complex, there is a separate temple dedicated to the goddess Andal. Additionally, there is a museum, a library and a bookshop. The deity (in a reclining posture) faces South.
6. Rameswaram, is located on Pamban Island separated from mainland India by the Pamban channel and is about 40 kilometres from Mannar Island, Sri Lanka. It is considered to be one of the holiest places in India for the Hindus, and part of the Char Dham pilgrimage.
7. Rameswaram is the closest point from which to reach Sri Lanka from India, and geological evidence suggests that the Rama Sethu was a former land connection between India and Sri Lanka.
8. Thyagaraja Temple, which is located in the town of Thiruvarur, has the largest chariot in Asia and the annual Chariot festival is celebrated.
9. Another name of Thiruvarur is Kamalalayaksetra, meaning the 'holy place that is an abode of lotuses'; the town is also referred so due to the presence of the Kamalalayam tank and the temple deity, Kamalambigai.

10. Some of the popular temples in Tirunelveli are: Ambasamudram near Tirunelveli is a temple town. Kasi Vishvanathar temple, Thirumulanthaswamy temple, Veerama thandeswarar temple, Ammaiappan temple, Krishnaswamy temple, Purushotama Perumal temple and Lakshmi Narayana Perumal temple are located here.
11. Srivilliputtur temple has two divisions - the one of Andal located on the Southwest and the second one of Vatapatrasayi (Vishnu) on the Northeast direction.

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6.10 SUMMARY

- Madurai is famous for its world acclaimed Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple. The city has been constructed in the form of a lotus and is built around the temple. It is situated on the banks of the river Vaigai. Owing to its rich cultural heritage and architectural splendor, the city is often referred to as the 'Athens of the East'. The origin of Madurai dates back to the Sangam period, the golden period of Tamilagam and Tamil Literature.
- Lord Siva appeared on the naming ceremony of the city and blessed it. The divine nectar (madhu) from the tangled locks of Siva fell on the blessed city and so, the city came to be known as 'Madhurapuri'. It is also said that centuries ago Lord Siva himself performed sixty-four wonders, called 'Thiruvilaiyadals', in Madurai.
- The holy city of Madurai finds mention in the great Indian epics - Ramayana, Kautilya's Arthashastra. Madurai also served as the capital of Pandayan Kings. Besides, the scene of Silappadikaram epic written by Ilango Adigal is also based on Madurai and Madurai Pandiyan King.
- Madurai was captured by the Cholas in the 10th century AD and was ruled till the end of the 13th century. In 1223 AD, Pandyas came to power again and patronized the Tamil language. The city became prosperous during the reign of the Pandya Kings.
- Many master-pieces or 'Silapathikaram' were created during that time. The great Tamil epic was also written during this time. It is based on the story of Kannagi, who burnt Madurai in lieu of injustice caused to her husband Kovalan.
- In 1323, the Pandya kingdom came under the Delhi Empire ruled by the Tughlaqs. In this time period, Madurai Sultanate was formed by the provincial Governor Jalaluddin Asansha (1335-1340) declaring independence from the Delhi Sultanate of Thughlaq.
- The year 1371 saw the downfall of the Tughlaqs and Madurai came under the reign of the Vijayanagar dynasty of Hampi.

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- After the death of Krishna Deva Raya (King of Vijayanagar Empire) in 1530 AD, the Nayaks became independent and started ruling the territories autonomously. Among Nayaks, Thirumalai Nayak (1623-1659) was the most popular one.
- The Meenakshi Temple is a prime example of Dravidian architecture—often include covered porches on temples, tall entry gate towers on two or more sides, many-pillared halls, and a water tank or reservoir for ritual bathing.
- At the south end of the complex is the Golden Lily Tank, which is used by believers for ritual bathing before they enter the sanctuaries of Meenakshi and Sundareshwara.
- Edaganathar Temple is a Hindu temple dedicated to the deity Shiva, located in Thiruvudagam, a village in Madurai district. The temple is located on the banks of Vaigai River. Shiva is worshipped as Edaganathar, and is represented by the lingam.
- Kallazhagar Temple is situated in Alagar Koyil and is dedicated to Lord Vishnu. Constructed in the Dravidian style of architecture, the temple is glorified in the Divya Prabandha, the early medieval Tamil canon of the Azhwar saints from the 6th–9th centuries AD.
- Koodal Azhagar Temple is dedicated to the Hindu God Vishnu. It is one of the 108 Divyadesam dedicated to Vishnu, who is worshipped as Koodal Azhagar and his consort Lakshmi as Mathuravalli.
- Madurai is closely associated with the Tamil language, and the third Tamil Sangam, a major congregation of Tamil scholars said to have been held in the city.
- The city has a number of historical monuments, with the Meenakshi Amman Temple and Tirumalai Nayak Palace being the most prominent. Madurai is an important industrial and educational hub in South Tamil Nadu. The city is home to various automobile, rubber, chemical and granite manufacturing industries.
- Srirangam is a major pilgrimage destination for Hindus (especially Srivaishnavites) and the largest temple complex in India. According to the temple's website, Srirangam can be considered the biggest functioning Hindu temple in the world, as it covers an area of about 631,000 square metres (6,790,000 sq ft) with a perimeter of 4 km (10,710 ft). The temple town lies on an islet formed by the twin rivers Cauvery and Coleroon.
- Rameswaram, is located on Pamban Island separated from mainland India by the Pamban channel and is about 40 kilometres from Mannar Island, Sri Lanka. It is considered to be one of the holiest places in India for the Hindus, and part of the Char Dham pilgrimage.

- There are sixty-four Tirthas or Theerthams (holy water bodies) in and around Rameswaram. According to the Skanda Purana, all twenty-four of them are important. Of the Twenty four, 14 are in the form of tanks and wells within the precincts of the temple.
- The Ramanathaswamy Temple is the most notable historic landmark of the town. Located in the centre of town, Ramanathaswamy Temple is a famous Hindu temple dedicated to Shiva. The temple is one of the 12 Jyotirlinga shrines, where Shiva is worshipped in the form of a Jyotirlinga meaning 'pillar of light'.
- Chidambaram Nataraja temple or Thillai Nataraja temple is situated in the Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu. It is located around 200 km from the capital city of Chennai. Synonymous with temples and festivities, the town ranks high in terms of religious significance, culture and tradition. Ruled by the Cholas, Pandyas, Marathas and finally the British, the town is mainly known for tourism which forms the backbone of its economy.
- Thyagaraja Temple is a Shiva temple, located in the town of Thiruvarur. Shiva is worshipped as Vanmiganathar, and is represented by the lingam-referred to as Maragatha lingam.
- The historic name of Thiruvarur was Aaroor (Arur) and it finds mention in the 7th century saiva canonical work, Tevaram.
- The temple complex seems to have acted as the cultural model for the big Brahadeeswarar temple at Thanjavur of Rajaraja Chola I, wherein he enshrined a vitankar which shared with the Adavallan of Chidambaram the status of state cult.
- Tirunelveli boasts of a rich Hindu tradition as the roots of the city are deeply established in the Hindu mythology. Though the city is the home of people of all religions, but the cultural heritage of the town is tremendously Hindu.
- Srivilliputtur temple temple is associated with the life of Andal, who was found under a Tulsi plant in the garden inside the temple by Periyalvar. She is believed to have worn the garland before dedicating it to the presiding deity of the temple. Periyalvar, who later found it, was highly upset and stopped the practise. It is believed Vishnu appeared in his dream and asked him to dedicate the garland worn by Andal to him daily, which is a practise followed during the modern times. It is also believed that Ranganatha of Srirangam married Andal, who later merged with him.
- The temple has inscriptions from Chola, Pandya and Nayak rulers, spanning across various centuries from the 10th to 16th centuries. As per some accounts, the original structure was constructed by Tribuvana Chakravarthy Konerinmai Kondan Kulasekaran and the Andal temple by Barathi Rayar.

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6.11 KEY WORDS

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- **Dravidian Architecture:** It refers to an architectural idiom in Hindu temple architecture that emerged in the southern part of the Indian subcontinent or South India, reaching its final form by the sixteenth century.
- **Char Dham:** It is a term which was coined by Shri Adi Shankaracharya. It means 'four abodes of Gods'. These are holy pilgrimage sites.
- **Periyar:** It refers to the longest river and the river with the largest discharge potential in the Indian state of Kerala. It is one of the few perennial rivers in the region and provides drinking water for several major towns.
- **Gopuram:** It refers to a monumental tower, usually ornate, at the entrance of any temple, especially in Southern India. This forms a prominent feature of Koils, Hindu temples of the Dravidian style.
- **Shankaracharya:** It refers to a commonly used title of heads of monasteries called mathas in the Advaita Vedanta tradition.

6.12 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. What is the significance of Meenakshi Kalyanam Festival?
2. Write a short note on the Meenakshi Temple.
3. What is the significance of Rameswaram temple for Hindus?
4. Why is Chidambaram town famous?
5. For which temple is Thiruvarur famous?
6. Write a note on the temple complex of Thyagaraja Temple.
7. How was Srivilliputhur Andal Temple built?

Long Answer Questions

1. Explain the architectural structure of the Srirangam temple in detail.
2. Why is the Ramanathaswamy Temple considered as the most notable historic landmark of Rameswaram? Explain.
3. Describe the ancient history of the Chidambaram temple.
4. What is the significance of Thiruvarur Chariot Festival? Discuss.
5. Describe the various temples located in Tirunelveli.

6.13 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 7 THANJAVUR MARATHA KINGDOM

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Structure

- 7.0 Introduction
- 7.1 Objectives
- 7.2 Tanjore Maratha Rule
- 7.3 Marathas of Thanjavur
- 7.4 Raja Serfoji
- 7.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 7.6 Summary
- 7.7 Key Words
- 7.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 7.9 Further Readings

7.0 INTRODUCTION

The period of the 18th century is remembered as a period of rich accumulation of the music, literature and drama of the south along with the emphasis on the religious beliefs. Thanjavur (formerly Tanjore) was the centre of this cultural upheaval which witnessed the royal patronage to art and learning. Marathas rule Tanjore from the late 17th century till 1855 when it was taken over by the British.

The unit will explore the invasion and rule of Marathas in Tanjore. In the same perspective, the reigns and contributions of Maratha rulers towards Tanjore has also been discussed in the unit and a detailed synopsis on the life, works and contributions of Raja Serfoji has been taken into account in the unit.

7.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the dominance of Maratha Kingdom in Tanjore
- Discuss the Marathas rulers of Tanjore in detail
- Describe the works and achievements of Raja Serfoji

7.2 TANJORE MARATHA RULE

The Tanjore Maratha kingdom of the Bhonsle dynasty was in power between the 17th and 19th centuries. Their native language was Marathi. Following the extinction of the Chola rule in the 15th century (specifically around 1436), the Tanjore area

came under the rule of the Pandyas and then, following the invasion of Malik Kafur, it fell into disorder. Pandya chieftains very quickly reasserted their independence and forced the Delhi Sultan to flee Thanjavur (formerly Tanjore). Soon afterwards, however, they were conquered by the Vijayanagara Empire. The Emperor appointed his trusted kin, who belonged to the Telugu Balija caste as Governors (Nayakas) of Madurai and Thanjavur. An internal family squabble between Chokkanatha Nayak of Madurai Nayak dynasty and his uncle Vijayaraghava Nayaka of Thanjavur, led to a war, and eventually defeated Tanjore. The rule of the Tanjore Nayaks lasted until 1673 when Chokkanatha Nayak the ruler of Madurai invaded Tanjore and killed its ruler, Vijayaraghava. Nayakar Dynasty at its extinction had Alagiri Nayakar who was installed as the Tanjore King in 1674. Alagiri started defying the rule of Madurai and refused to pay the revenue share to the Madurai Nayakar. This brought the stalemate relationship between Tanjore and Madurai. It is said that Venkanna, a Rayasam intrigued to finish Alagiri and take over the rule by himself. He approached the Bijapur Sultan to dethrone Alagiri. Alagiri went into exile at Mysore. In the meantime, Maratha ruler Shivaji Raje became the Chhatrapati, in 1674 and declared himself a sovereign king, minting his own coins.

Sengamala Das (The Last King of Tanjore Nayakar Dynasty) when he ascended the throne was only 4 years old. Bijapur Sultan's general Ekoji (Vyankoji) with all the booty returned to Kumbakonam. Unable to be seated as the Diwan, Rayasam Venkanna suggested Ekoji to capture the Tanjore Power and take over as its king.

Journey From Pune to Tanjore

The Adilshah of Bijapur had amongst its nobles Shahji Raje and he was the lord of Bengaluru in the period from 1636 to his death in 1666. Meanwhile his son Shivaji Raje had challenged the might of the Mughal Empire as well as the Adilshah and forged a strong compact kingdom of his own that stretched from the old jagir of Pune to the Arabian Sea and included many parts of the Konkan coastal strip.

In 1676, Chhatrapati Shivaji began the last great campaign of his life – to capture the south and meet his step brother Vyankoji who had inherited Shahji Raja's estate in the south. In 1677, Chhatrapati Shivaji met the Qutb Shah, who was awed by the mighty Maratha army that entered his city. Relieved by the friendly overtures of the Maratha king, Qutb Shah readily agreed to lend a part of his army to accompany the Maratha army on its conquest of the south. The Maratha army with Qutbshahi troops, led by Chhatrapati Shivaji, soon captured all the forts and major towns north of the Cauvery. Just beyond the river lay Thanjavur and Chhatrapati Shivaji is said to have met Vyankoji and then returned to his camp. During this time, he rebuilt and strengthened the Fort of Gingee so that it became the largest and the strongest fort in India and placing his own trusted officers there, returned to his capital Raigad. Chhatrapati Shivaji invaded Gingee

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and Tanjore in 1676–1677 and made his brother Santaji the ruler of all lands to the north of the Coleroon. During the last years of Shivaji’s reign, Vyankoji also allied with Chokkanatha of Madurai to repulse an invasion from Mysore.

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Vyankoji had led an army to Tanjore in 1676 on behalf of Bijapur and imposed his own rule, evicting the Nayaka ruler of Tanjore. Ekoji (Vyankoji) drove away Sengamala Das and assumed powers as the King. The Tanjore Maratha’s Rule began in 1675. He took over the administration of Tanjore and ruled until 1684.

An extremely fertile plain with its own sea ports, Thanjavur was a prize acquisition. The consequence was the neglect of Bengaluru and its capture by the Mughals who sold it to the ruler of Mysore. The years 1680 and 1681 were traumatic years for the Marathas. Chhatrapati Shivaji died in 1680 and Vyankoji, the year after. The two kingdoms followed very different paths from then onwards. The centre of the cultural upheaval was the state of Tanjore, where royal patronage to art and learning created new literary works that live till this day. From late seventeenth century Tanjore was under Maratha rule, until it was taken over by the British in 1855.

7.3 MARATHAS OF THANJAVUR

The Tanjore Maratha Kings are as follows:

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|-----------------|-----------|
| 1. Vyankoji | 1676-1684 |
| 2. Shahuji | 1684-1712 |
| 3. Serfoji-I | 1712-1728 |
| 4. Thukoji | 1728-1736 |
| 5. Pratap Singh | 1739-1763 |
| 6. Thuljaji | 1763-1787 |
| 7. Amar Singh | 1787-1798 |
| 8. Serfoji-II | 1798-1833 |
| 9. Shivaji II | 1833-1855 |

Vyankoji (1676-1684): Vyankoji’s rule was marked by more of wars and skirmishes. He entered into an understanding with Chikkadevaraya of Mysore and sold Bengaluru Jagir for ` 3 lakhs. He is said to have collected 3/4th of the produce as tax and accumulated it for him in the temples. He also imported Marathas from North and restructured the administration. Father Britto comments that Vyankoji was not concerned about the public and their welfare. He handed over the Tanjore belt to his eldest son Shahuji and died.

Shahuji II -1684-1712: Vyankoji’s eldest son ascended the throne at the age of twelve. During his reign, the Mughals occupied the Coromandel coast and Tiruchirapalli and forced him to pay tribute. Shahuji was a patron of literature.

During his reign, there were frequent skirmishes and battles with the Raja of Madurai *Thanjavur Maratha Kingdom* and Ramnad for control of the border lands.

Serfoji (1675–1728), also called Sarabhoji I was a younger son of Vyankoji and he ruled from 1712 to 1728. His rule was marked by regular warfare and disputes with the Madurai Nayak. He was the third Raja of the Bhonsle dynasty. He consolidated the hold of Marathas over Tanjore and patronized arts and literature.

The reign of Serfoji I was known for literary works of considerable significance. Advaita Kirtana, a Tamil manuscript in the Tanjore library speaks of a breach in the Cauvery Dam and refusal of the Madurai Nayak to allow this repair. Drought and famine followed, and then, the necessary repairs were carried out. There is a Sanskrit manuscript named Sarabhoji Charitra which praises the king for fighting with those who came to cut off the Cauvery dam. The reference here has to be traced to an event in the Marava war of succession.

Serfoji I is presented as a pious and charitable monarch. He endowed Brahmins with agraharams like Mangamatam in Tiruverkadu and Sarabhojirajapuram in Tirukkadaiyur. Vidyaparinaya written by Vedakavi was enacted in the festival of the Goddess Anandavalli in Thanjavur. It speaks of the marriage of the individual soul with Vidya. Sarabharaja Vilasa and Ratinamanmatha were written by Jagannatha, the son of a minister of Ekoji. Sivabharata, a Sanskrit manuscript deals with the ancestry and achievements of Shivaji. It was translated into Tamil as Sivajicharitam.

Serfoji I did not have a legitimate male offspring of his own. However, after his death, a claimant rose in the person of Katturaja who assumed the name Shahuji II and claimed to be an illegitimate offspring of Serfoji I.

Tukkoji (1728-1736): Tukkoji, a younger brother of Serfoji I, ruled Thanjavur from 1728 to 1736. His reign witnessed the invasion of Chanda Sahib and he is credited with having repulsed a Muslim invasion of Madurai.

Pratap Singh 1739-1763: A period of anarchy followed the death of Tukkoji and came to an end when Pratap Singh came to the throne in 1739. He ruled until 1763. He allied with Muhammad Ali, the Nawab of the Carnatic, and aided the British East India Company against the French East India Company in the Carnatic Wars and the Seven Years' War. He was the last king to be addressed to be the Directors of the British East India Company as 'His Majesty'. In 1762, a tripartite treaty was signed between Thanjavur, Carnatic and the British by which he became a vassal of the Nawab of the Carnatic.

Thuljaji (1763-1787): Thuljaji was a very weak ruler and the last independent ruler of Thanjavur. In 1773, Thanjavur was annexed by the Nawab of the Carnatic who ruled till 1776. The throne was restored to him by the Directors of the British East India Company. But his restoration came at a heavy price as it deprived him of his independence.

Amar Singh (1787-1798): Amar Singh who seized the throne for himself with the help of the East India Company. He declared himself as the King under an agreement

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Thanjavur Maratha Kingdom with the Company in the place of Serfoji II who was young. Amar Sing was cruel and is referred to as a tyrant. As Father Schwartz appealed to Cornwallis the Governor General, he reinstated Serfoji II as the King of Tanjore.

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Check Your Progress

1. Who rebuilt and strengthened the Fort of Gingee?
2. When did Chhatrapati Shivaji invade Gingee and Tanjore?
3. Which years are considered as traumatic years for the Marathas and why?
4. Throw a brief light on Vyankoji rule.
5. What is *Advaita Kirtana* all about?
6. What does the Sanskrit manuscript '*Sivabharata*' deals with?

7.4 RAJA SERFOJI

Serfoji II (1777 – 1832) was the last ruler of the Maratha principality of Tanjore to exercise absolute sovereignty over his dominions. His descendants, however, have managed to thrive as titular Maharajahs of Thanjavur to the present day. Serfoji was born in 1777 in the royal house of the Maratha king, Chhatrapati Shivaji. Raja Thulajah, the king of Thanjavur adopted him as his son in 1787 by duly performing all of the religious rites. The boy was entrusted to the care of Rev. Christian Freidrich Schwartz, a Danish missionary.

During Serfoji's reign which lasted from 1798 until his death in 1832, for the first time, the proceedings of the Tanjore durbar were recorded in paper. The Delta region was divided into five districts each under a Subedar. Cultivable lands yielded good profits and the judiciary system was highly efficient and praiseworthy.

Serfoji is also credited with having built a lot of chattrams or rest houses for weary pilgrims. These pilgrims received free boarding and lodging and their needs were taken care of by the State. In all Serfoji built three important chattrams, including one at Orathanadu.

Serfoji founded a school called Navavidhya Kalanidhi Sala where languages, literature, the sciences and arts and crafts were taught in addition to the Vedas and Shastras. Serfoji maintained close ties with the Danes at Tarangambadi and visited their schools quite often and appreciated their way of functioning. Impressed, he tried to implement European methods of teachings and education all over his Empire. He was a supporter of the emancipation of Indian women and by revolutionized education appointing women teachers. Serfojis is also credited with installing a hand press with Devanagari type in 1805, the first of its kind in South India. He also established a stone type press called '*Nava Vidhya Kalanidhi Varnayantra Sala*'. Serfoji constructed ten water tanks and a number of wells for civic use. He implemented an underground drainage system for the whole of Thanjavur city.

Serfoji established the Dhanavantari Mahal, a research institution that produced herbal (indigenous medicine) medicine for humans and animals. The institution also treated sick people and maintained case-sheets which have become famous of late. Here, physicians of modern medicine, ayurveda, unani and siddha schools have performed research upon drugs and herbs for medical cure and had produced eighteen volumes of research material. Serfoji also had the important herbs studied and catalogued in the form of exquisite hand paintings.

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Based on the medical prescriptions stored at the Dhanvanthri Mahal, a set of poems were compiled detailing the procedures to cure various diseases. These poems were collected and published as a book, called Sarabhendra Vaidhya Muraigal.

In September 2003, a meeting between Dr. Badrinath and Babaji Rajah Bhonsle, the Prince of Thanjavur and sixth descendant of King Serfoji II, revealed the existence of 200-year-old manuscripts in the Saraswathi Mahal library containing records of the eye operations believed to be conducted by Prince Serfoji II. This is not strange for Serfoji is known to conduct such operations. He usually carries a surgical kit with him wherever he goes and performs surgery on people afflicted by cataracts. Serfoji's 'operations' have been recorded in detail in English with a case history of the patient operated upon. These manuscripts form a part of the collection at the Saraswathi Mahal Library. Serfoji created the first Zoological Garden in Tamil Nadu in the Thanjavur palace premises.

Serfoji erected a shipyard at Manora, around fifty kilometres from Thanjavur. Serfoji also established a meteorological station to facilitate trade. He had a gun factory, a naval library and a naval store with all kinds of navigational instruments. Serfoji was also keenly interested in painting, gardening, coin-collecting, martial arts and patronized chariot-racing, hunting and bull-fighting.

Serfoji was a patron of traditional Indian arts like dance and music. He authored famous works like 'Kumarasambhava Champu', 'Mudrarakshaschaya' and 'Devendra Kuruvanji' and introduced western musical instruments like clarinet and violin in Carnatic Music. The five storeyed Sarjah Mahadi in the Thanjavur palace and the Manora Fort Tower at Saluvanayakanpattinam were constructed in Serfoji's reign. He installed lightning rods at the top of these monuments and had the history of the Bhonsle Dynasty inscribed on the south-western wall of the Brihadeeswara Temple. It is considered to be the lengthiest inscription in the world. Serfoji also renovated and reconstructed several existing temples like the Brihadeeswara Temple apart from building new ones. He was also an ardent philanthropist and a member of the Royal Asiatic Society.

In 1820-21, Serfoji embarked on a pilgrimage to Kasi along with a retinue of 3,000 disciples and camp-followers. He encamped at several places along the route, giving away alms to the needy and the poor and engaging himself in acts of charity. He was also involved in the renovation of several holy places. Memories of the pilgrimage have survived to the present day in the paintings of the bathing ghats on the Ganges and the different holy sites commissioned by him.

Serfoji was open-minded and tolerant of other faiths. He liberally funded churches and schools run by Christian missionaries. He was also a patron of Thanjavur Bade Hussein Durgah.

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Serfoji II died on the 7 March 1832 after a reign of almost 40 years (His first reign was from 1787 to 1793 and his second reign was from 1798 to 1832). His death was mourned throughout the empire and his funeral procession was attended by over 90,000 people.

Serfoji's greatest contribution: The Saraswathi Mahal Library was founded as a Palace Library by the Nayak kings of Thanjavur (1535–1675), it was however Serfoji who enriched it with priceless works, maps, dictionaries, coins and artwork. The bibliophile that he was, purchased around 4000 books from different parts of the world and enriched his library with his enormous book collection. Medical treatises, in the library collection contained his remarks alongside, in English. His library included treatises on Vedanta, grammar, music, dance and drama, architecture, astronomy, medicine, training of elephants and horses, etc. Serfoji setup the first Devanagari printing press in South India, using stone letters. He sent many Pundits far and wide and collected huge number of books and manuscripts for this Library. All the books in the library carry his personal autograph in English. Apart from these, the Library contains a record of the day-to-day proceedings of the Maratha court known as the Modi documents, French-Maratha correspondence of the 18th century.

The Encyclopædia Britannica in its survey of the Libraries of the world mentions this as 'the most remarkable Library in India'. The Library is situated in the centre of Nayak palace and it was opened for public in 1918. There is also a small museum for the visitors.

Shivaji II (1833-1855) was the last Maratha ruler of Thanjavur and reigned from 1832 to 1855. He was a weak and feeble prince with barely any authority. As he died childless in 1855, Thanjavur was annexed by the British as per the provisions of the Doctrine of Laps

The Administration and Economy

The king was assisted in the administration of his country by a council of ministers. The supreme head of this council of ministers was a Mantri or Dalavoy. The Dalavoy was also the Commander-in-chief of the Army. Next in importance at the court was a Pradhani or Dewan also called Dabir Pandit. The country was divided into subahs, seemais and maganams in the decreasing order of size and importance. The five subahs of the country were Pattukkottai, Mayavaram, Kumbakonam, Mannargudi and Tiruvadi.

The ruler collected his taxes from the people through his mirasdars or puttackdars. They were collected right from the village level onwards and were based on the agricultural produce of the village. Rice was one of the primary crops in the region and the land used for cultivation was owned by big landlords.

It was Anatharama Sashtry who proposed collecting taxes to improve conditions for the poor. No foreign trade was carried out. The only foreign trade in the country was carried out by European traders who paid a particular amount of money as rent to the Raja. The currency system used was that of a chakram or pon (1 chakram = one and three-fourths of a British East India Company rupee). Other systems of coinage used were that of pagoda (1 pagoda = three and a half Company rupees), a big panam (one-sixth of a Company rupee) and a small panam (one-thirteenth of a Company rupee)

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The story of the Maratha kingdom of Thanjavur is not merely a political one. Thanjavur was the fountainhead of culture, music, drama and literature for over a century.

The rajas were true patrons of the arts. The Bharatnatyam dance form of this day is not more than three centuries old and owes its origin to the Dasiyattan or Thanjavur natyampatronised during the Maratha period. The devadasi tradition perpetuated the music and dance forms and enriched them with new additions.

Thus the 200 year old Maratha Rule in Tanjore Concluded. The rule generally was observed as a tyranny where people struggled and suffered under the pressure of Wars, Bribes and Taxes. Except Serfoji II others were all directing their focus and forces towards war and looting.

Check Your Progress

- 7. Who was Vyankoji Raje?
- 8. What was Dhanavantari Mahal established by Serfoji?
- 9. Who was the last Maratha ruler of Thanjavur?

7.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

- 1. Chhatrapati Shivaji rebuilt and strengthened the Fort of Gingee so that it became the largest and the strongest fort in India and placing his own trusted officers there, returned to his capital Raigad.
- 2. Chhatrapati Shivaji invaded Gingee and Tanjore in 1676–1677 and made his brother Santaji the ruler of all lands to the north of the Coleroon.
- 3. The years 1680 and 1681 were traumatic years for the Marathas because Chhatrapati Shivaji died in 1680 and Vyankoji, his step brother also died the year after. The two kingdoms followed very different paths from then onwards.
- 4. Vyankoji’s ruled Tanjore between the years 1676-1684 and it was marked by more of wars and skirmishes. He entered into an understanding with Chikkadevaraya of Mysore and sold Bengaluru Jagir for ` 3 lakhs. He is

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said to have collected 3/4th of the produce as tax and accumulated it for him in the temples. He also imported Marathas from North and restructured the administration. Father Britto comments that Vyankoji was not concerned about the public and their welfare. He handed over the Tanjore belt to his eldest son Shahuji and died.

5. *Advaita Kirtana*, a Tamil manuscript in the Tanjore library speaks of a breach in the Cauvery Dam and refusal of the Madurai Nayak to allow this repair.
6. *Sivabharata*, a Sanskrit manuscript deals with the ancestry and achievements of Shivaji. It was translated into Tamil as *Sivajicharitam*.
7. Vyankoji Raje or Ekoji I was the younger half-brother of Chhatrapati Shivaji and founder of Maratha rule in Thanjavur.
8. The Dhanavantari Mahal established by Serfoji is a research institution that produced herbal (indigenous medicine) medicine for humans and animals. The institution also treated sick people and maintained case-sheets which have become famous of late. Here, physicians of modern medicine, ayurveda, unani and siddha schools have performed research upon drugs and herbs for medical cure and had produced eighteen volumes of research material. Serfoji also had the important herbs studied and catalogued in the form of exquisite hand paintings.
9. Shivaji II (1833-1855) was the last Maratha ruler of Thanjavur and reigned from 1832 to 1855.

7.6 SUMMARY

- The Tanjore Maratha kingdom of the Bhonsle dynasty was in power between the 17th and 19th centuries. Their native language was Marathi.
- The Adilshah of Bijapur had amongst its nobles Shahji Raje and he was the lord of Bengaluru in the period from 1636 to his death in 1666. Meanwhile his son Shivaji Raje had challenged the might of the Mughal Empire as well as the Adilshah and forged a strong compact kingdom of his own that stretched from the old jagir of Pune to the Arabian Sea and included many parts of the Konkan coastal strip.
- In 1676, Chhatrapati Shivaji began the last great campaign of his life – to capture the south and meet his step brother Vyankoji who had inherited Shahji Raja's estate in the south.
- Vyankoji had led an army to Tanjore in 1676 on behalf of Bijapur and imposed his own rule, evicting the Nayaka ruler of Tanjore. Ekoji (Vyankoji) drove away Sengamala Das and assumed powers as the King. The Tanjore Maratha's Rule began in 1675. He took over the administration of Tanjore and ruled until 1684.

- Vyankoji's rule was marked by more of wars and skirmishes. He entered *Thanjavur Maratha Kingdom* into an understanding with Chikkadevaraya of Mysore and sold Bengaluru Jagir for ` 3 lakhs.
- Vyankoji's eldest son ascended the throne at the age of twelve. During his reign, the Mughals occupied the Coromandel coast and Tiruchirapalli and forced him to pay tribute.
- Serfoji (1675–1728), also called Sarabhoji I was a younger son of Vyankoji and he ruled from 1712 to 1728. His rule was marked by regular warfare and disputes with the Madurai Nayak.
- The reign of Serfoji I was known for literary works of considerable significance. Advaita Kirtana, a Tamil manuscript in the Tanjore library speaks of a breach in the Cauvery Dam and refusal of the Madurai Nayak to allow this repair.
- Serfoji I did not have a legitimate male offspring of his own. However, after his death, a claimant rose in the person of Katturaja who assumed the name Shahuji II and claimed to be an illegitimate offspring of Serfoji I.
- Tukkoji, a younger brother of Serfoji I, ruled Thanjavur from 1728 to 1736. His reign witnessed the invasion of Chanda Sahib and he is credited with having repulsed a Muslim invasion of Madurai.
- A period of anarchy followed the death of Tukkoji and came to an end when Pratap Singh came to the throne in 1739. He ruled until 1763. He allied with Muhammad Ali, the Nawab of the Carnatic, and aided the British East India Company against the French East India Company in the Carnatic Wars and the Seven Years' War. He was the last king to be addressed to be the Directors of the British East India Company as 'His Majesty'.
- Thuljaji was a very weak ruler and the last independent ruler of Thanjavur. In 1773, Thanjavur was annexed by the Nawab of the Carnatic who ruled till 1776.
- Amar Singh who seized the throne for himself with the help of the East India Company. He declared himself as the King under an agreement with the Company in the place of Serfoji II who was young. Amar Sing was cruel and is referred to as a tyrant.
- Serfoji II (1777 – 1832) was the last ruler of the Maratha principality of Tanjore to exercise absolute sovereignty over his dominions.
- During Serfoji's reign which lasted from 1798 until his death in 1832, for the first time, the proceedings of the Tanjore durbar were recorded in paper. The Delta region was divided into five districts each under a Subedar. Cultivable lands yielded good profits and the judiciary system was highly efficient and praiseworthy.

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- Serfoji founded a school called Navavidhya Kalanidhi Sala where languages, literature, the sciences and arts and crafts were taught in addition to the Vedas and Shastras.
- Serfoji established the Dhanavantari Mahal, a research institution that produced herbal (indigenous medicine) medicine for humans and animals.
- Based on the medical prescriptions stored at the Dhanvanthri Mahal, a set of poems were compiled detailing the procedures to cure various diseases. These poems were collected and published as a book, called Sarabhendra Vaidhya Muraigal.
- Serfoji erected a shipyard at Manora, around fifty kilometres from Thanjavur. Serfoji also established a meteorological station to facilitate trade. He had a gun factory, a naval library and a naval store with all kinds of navigational instruments. Serfoji was also keenly interested in painting, gardening, coin-collecting, martial arts and patronized chariot-racing, hunting and bull-fighting.
- Serfoji was open-minded and tolerant of other faiths. He liberally funded churches and schools run by Christian missionaries. He was also a patron of Thanjavur Bade Hussein Durgah.
- The Saraswathi Mahal Library was founded as a Palace Library by the Nayak kings of Thanjavur (1535–1675), it was however Serfoji who enriched it with priceless works, maps, dictionaries, coins and artwork.
- Under Serfoji's rule, the ruler collected his taxes from the people through his mirasdars or puttackdars. They were collected right from the village level onwards and were based on the agricultural produce of the village.
- The story of the Maratha kingdom of Thanjavur is not merely a political one. Thanjavur was the fountainhead of culture, music, drama and literature for over a century.

7.7 KEY WORDS

- **Skirmish:** It refers to an episode of irregular or unpremeditated fighting, especially between small or outlying parts of armies or fleets.
- **Carnatic:** It refers to a historically important region on the south eastern coast of India: now in Madras state.
- **Siddha Medicine:** It refers to an ancient system of medicine prevalent in South India. The word Siddha comes from the Tamil word for perfection.

7.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. What was the last great campaign of Chhatrapati Shivaji's life?
2. What is *Vidyaparinaya* by Vedakavi all about?
3. Who created the first Zoological Garden in the Thanjavur palace premises?
4. Write a short note on the reigns of Tukkoji and Pratap Singh.

Long Answer Questions

1. Analyse the reigns of Tanjore Maratha Kings in detail.
2. Discuss some remarkable changes in Tanjore during Serfoji's reign?
3. What were the hobbies of Raja Serfoji? Discuss.
4. Describe the administration and economy during Serfoji's rule?

7.9 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 8 SARASWATHI MAHAL LIBRARY

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Structure

- 8.0 Introduction
- 8.1 Objectives
- 8.2 Tanjore Saraswathi Mahal Library: An Overview
- 8.3 Specialties, Museum and Administration of the Library
 - 8.3.1 Collection of Manuscript
- 8.4 Literary and Cultural Contributions to Society
- 8.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 8.6 Summary
- 8.7 Key Words
- 8.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 8.9 Further Readings

8.0 INTRODUCTION

The Saraswathi Mahal Library was founded as a Palace Library by the Nayak kings of Tanjore. Sevappa Nayak (1532-1560) was the founder of Tanjore Nayakar dynasty. Serfoji-II enriched it with priceless works, maps, dictionaries, coins and artwork. Although we have already discussed about the beginning of Maratha rule in Tanjore, but still a brief account will help to understand the unit better. Vijayaraghava Nayakar (1634-1674), the last king of Nayak Kings of Thanjavur, lost his life in a battle with Chokkanatha Nayakar of Madurai in the year 1662. The Madurai Nayakar appointed Alagiri, as the Governor of Tanjore. This was followed by a long civil war in the Tanjore kingdom. Alagiri defied the power of Madurai Nayakar King and it strained the relationship between Alagiri and Chokkanatha Nayakar. Sengamaladas was the infant son of Vijayaraghava. Venkanna the Rayasam of Vijayaragava desired to make Sengamaladas as the Nayakar of Tanjore and sought the help of Bijapur Sultan who sent Ekoji (Vyankoji) to capture Tanjore. He defeated Alagiri and crowned Sengamaladas. But, Venkanna did not get any benefit from this espionage and war. So he induced Ekoji to usurp the power and got victory. Thus, in 1676 Ekoji established Maratha rule in Tamil Nadu. Maharaja Serfoji II ruled Tanjore from 1798 to 1832.

Now, in this unit you will study about the establishment and development of Saraswathi Mahal Library, which is not just the one of the oldest libraries in Asia but it also displays the rare collection of palm leaf manuscripts and paper written in Tamil, Sanskrit and few other Indian languages. The unit will account the efforts of Maharaja Serfoji in the expansion of the library and in the compilation of books in the store. Besides, the unit will also outline the specialties of the library, museum

and its administration. In addition to this, the unit goes on discussing the various sections of the library and functions of the library in detail.

Saraswathi Mahal Library

8.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the formation and development of the Saraswathi Mahal Library
- Discuss the endeavours of Maharaja Serfoji in the further expansion of the library
- Understand the process of compilation of manuscripts and collection of books
- Discuss the specialities of the library, library museum and its administration
- Analyse the different sections of the library
- Discuss the literary and cultural contributions to the society

8.2 TANJORE SARASWATHI MAHAL LIBRARY: AN OVERVIEW

Tanjore Maharaja Saraswathi Mahal Library is a synthesis of different cultures and a treasure trove of knowledge put together by the successive dynasties of Nayaks and Marathas of Tanjore. The Saraswathi Mahal Library was founded as a Palace Library by the Nayak kings of Tanjore (1535–1675), it was however Serfoji-II who enriched it with priceless works, maps, dictionaries, coins and artwork. The name Maharaja Serfoji, which is part of the library's name, can be traced to the Maratha King Maharaja Serfoji II, an eminent scholar who took a special interest in developing the library. It is said that he undertook a pilgrimage to Banaras and employed many pandits to buy and copy large number of works from all renowned centres of Sanskrit learning in North India. Because of his efforts only, the library boasts of an extensive Sanskrit manuscript collection of 36,326 titles, a good part of which was collected by Maharaja Serfoji II.

He purchased around 4,000 books from different parts of the world and enriched his library with his enormous book collection. Medical treatises in the library collection contained his remarks alongside, in English language. His library included treatises on Vedanta, grammar, music, dance and drama, architecture, astronomy, medicine, training of elephants and horses, etc. Serfoji set up the first Devanagari printing press in South India, using stone letters. He sent many Pundits far and wide and collected huge number of books and manuscripts for this Library. All the books in the library carry his personal autograph in English. Apart from these, the Library contains a record of the day-to-day proceedings of the Maratha court known as the Modi documents, French-Maratha correspondence of the

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18th century. The Encyclopedia Britannica in its survey of the libraries of the world mentions this as 'perhaps the most remarkable library in India'.

The library is situated in the centre of Nayakars palace and it was opened for public in 1918. There is also a small museum there for the visitors.

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The library's manuscript department has a rich collection of manuscripts in Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu and Marathi which were further bolstered when the library came into possession of the private libraries of several important scholars and personalities living in and around Tanjore. Maharaja Serfoji himself started the reference books department of the library and nearly 4,500 books in English, French, Latin, Italian and other language collected by him find place here. Moreover, the library also has its own printing press to publish the rare and unpublished manuscripts into printed book form.

Some of the rare collections of books found at the library are as follows:

- Dr. Samuel Johnson's dictionary published in 1784
- The pictorial Bible printed in Amsterdam in the year 1791
- The Madras Almanac printed in 1807
- Lavoisier's *Traité Élémentaire de Chimie* ("Elements of Chemistry")
- The notes of Bishop Heber on Raja Serfoji II
- The correspondence letters of William Torin of London who purchased a lot of books for Raja Serfoji II and the Saraswathi Mahal Library
- Ancient maps of the world
- Town planning documents of Tanjore including the underground drainage system, the fresh water supply ducting system
- Pictorial charts of the theory of evolution of man as evinced by Charles Le Brun

Check Your Progress

1. Who was the founder of Saraswathi Mahal Library?
2. Why does the name of the library contain term the 'Maharaja'?
3. What is the collection of Sanskrit manuscript in the library?
4. Where does the library situated?

8.3 SPECIALTIES, MUSEUM AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE LIBRARY

Library Museum: Efforts were made to microfilm and catalogue the contents way back in 1965 when the Government of India sanctioned the fund for library's development. Since then no efforts were made to scan the documents and

computerize the same using present day technology. It is also a designated 'Manuscript Conservation Centre' (MCC) under the National Mission for Manuscripts established in 2003.

Saraswathi Mahal Library

The Thanjavur Maharaja Serfoji's Sarasvati Mahal Library is an unbounded repository of culture and inexhaustible treasure-house of knowledge built up by the successive dynasties of Nayaks and Marathas of Thanjavur. It contains very rare and valuable collection of manuscripts on all aspects of art and culture. During the reign of these Nayak and Maratha dynasties, Thanjavur was the centre of art and literature and the kings were the patrons which led to enrich the collection of the library, in various fields. Maharaja Serfoji II, among the other Maratha Kings, was an eminent scholar in many branches of learning. In his infancy he came under the influence of a Danish missionary Father Rev. Schwartz, who was his father's friend and guide Serfoji II had his early education under him.

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With a great enthusiasm he took special steps for the enrichment of the Library. It is a fitting tribute to the Great Collector Serfoji, that the Library is named after him. Administration till the survival of the last Maratha Queen, the Library was a palace property. After the death of the last queen, the Library together with her properties formed the subject of litigation in civil courts. The public of Thanjavur began to interest themselves in making this library as a National pride, The Government of Madras took possession of the library under the charitable Endowment Act and have framed a scheme for the management of the Library. A five member committee under the ex-officio Chairmanship of the District Collector was appointed to maintain the Library. The name of the Library was changed from 'The Sarasvati Mahal Library' to 'The Thanjavur Maharaja Serfoji's Sarasvati Mahal Library.'

In 1983, the library was declared as an institution of national importance. The Government of Tamil Nadu ordered to abolish the five member committee of administration and to register this under the Registered Society Act of 1975. The Society consists of ex-officio members of both Central and State Governments, nominated scholars, member from the Royal family and Director of the Library. The Director is the Secretary to the Society. The Library receives funds from the Government of Tamil Nadu for the maintenance of the Library and from Government of India for developmental activities.

Various sections were started in 1979 such as:

- (a) Pandits section,
- (b) Conservation section,
- (c) Microfilm section,
- (d) Publication section,
- (e) Marketing section,
- (f) Printing section,

- (g) Binding section and
- (h) Reference Book section.

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Pandit's Section: Language Pandits for Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Modi and Sanskrit are working in this section. Their nature of work is cataloguing, editing and maintaining the manuscripts accordingly. The Library has the richest collection of manuscripts which reflect the culture of South India. In addition to the Main collections the Library also came in possession of the private libraries of several Pandits and their Patrons who were living in and around Thanjavur or elsewhere. Even now, this library is receiving manuscripts from generous people. It has more than 46,695 manuscripts in the form of palm-leaf and paper.

8.3.1 Collection of Manuscript

The manuscripts of this library represent:

- (a) The collection of works on art, science and literature of Tamil from time immemorial.
- (b) The Collection of works of the Vijayanagara renaissance brought under the Nayak rulers of Thanjavur from 1535 to 1673 A.D
- (c) The collection of works brought by the Maratha rulers of Thanjavur
- (d) The collection of works written by scholars in the country of the Nayak and Maratha Kings of Thanjavur between 1535 to 1855 A.D.
- (e) The collection made by Maharaja Serfoji from all over India and
- (f) The later collections from the families of great scholars

I. Collection of Sanskrit Manuscripts: More number of the manuscripts in this library is in Sanskrit language i.e. 39,300 manuscripts out of 46,695 belongs to this language. The Sanskrit manuscripts collection of this library has a unique value, in that it preserves the literary works of authors spread over 400 years. The scripts used for Sanskrit are Grantha, Devanagari, Nandinagari, Telugu and a few in Malayalam, Kannada, Oriya etc. This collection covers almost all branches of Sanskrit literature.

Dr. A. C. Burnell prepared a list for the Sanskrit manuscripts of this library and described this collection thus "It may perhaps be asked of the library is worth the labour spent on it. I can answer unhesitatingly that it is. It is now a recognised fact that nearly all Sanskrit works of importance, exist in different recensions. The Library is unrivalled in this respect. It contains several good manuscript of all the most important ones known as yet including a few that are new Sanskrit manuscripts have long been very dear and; the cost of making paper transcripts is now very heavy. As far as I can judge it would not be possible to form a collection like that at Tanjore at a less cost than £ 50,000 but many manuscripts are unquestionably unique."

II. Collection of Tamil Manuscripts: There are about 3,518 Tamil manuscripts in this library. They are in palm-leaves and belong to the following categories.

- (a) Rare commentaries on Sangam works.
- (b) Unpublished portions of classics.
- (c) Saiva, Vaishnava and Jain works.
- (d) Later poetry of all descriptions and
- (e) Medical works of exceptional value.

Some of the rare works belonging to Imperial Chola period are written in dialects of manipravala style. The medical manuscripts are very unique and valuable. Many of them based on the medical records and processes made in Dhanvantari Mahal and written by famous Tamil scholars like Kottaiyur Sivakolundu Desikar.

III. Collection of Telugu Manuscripts: This Library has nearly 802 Telugu manuscripts which are mostly in palm-leaf and a few in paper. These are the most valuable collection of manuscripts particularly relating to the Southern School of Telugu literature. The important Telugu Classics - like Padya Kavyas, Dwipada Kavyas, Prabandas etc., are available in this library.

IV. Collection of Marathi Manuscripts: The Marathi manuscripts of this library consists of the works of South Indian Maharashtrians numbered about 3075, of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the hierarchy of the saints of Maratha country belonging to the Ramadasi and Dattatreya mutts. The works written by the great saints who adorned the mutts, the poets during: the reign of Mahrattas had left hundreds of original works and translations. The Marathi manuscripts are mostly in paper and a few in palm-leaf. The paper manuscripts were written in Telugu script (for Marathi language). These manuscripts deal with the subjects like philosophy, literature, drama music, lexicon, medicine and science.

V. Collection of Modi Documents: Modi is an ancient script used for Marathi language to record the political and administrative documents of the Maratha Kings of Maharashtra as well as Thanjavur. It contains a record of the day-to-day proceedings of the Maratha court. They are also called 'Maratha Raj Records' Approximately 850 bundles containing innumerable Modi documents are available in the Library They are all paper manuscripts written in Marathi language These are transcribed into Nagari script and published with Tamil translation These are the only indigenous source materials for the history of the Marathas of Thanjavur.

VI. Collection of Books: There is a Reference Library comprises of old books and new books The old books were mostly collected by the king Serfoji-II during his life time which consists of 4,500 books in English French, German, Italy, Greek and Danish languages. These books deal with many subjects. The latter collection consists of more than 42,600 books, which are in Tamil, English, Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi, Telugu and a few in other Indian and Foreign languages These books are catalogued according to the language and class)ied under various subjects.

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8.4 LITERARY AND CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SOCIETY

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There are numerous literary and cultural contributions this medieval library to the society. The main functions of this library are preservation, cataloguing, publication and service to the scholars.

- (a) **Preservation:** In ancient days, copying of the original manuscript was the only method for preserving the scripts and other bristled manuscripts. Due to the development of science and technology, preservation of original in the form of microfilm and microfiche are prevalent. Since 1979, the facility of microfilming the manuscripts has been adopted in the library. Apart from this, modern conservation techniques like, fumigation, lamination and de-acidification methods are being followed to avoid decay by insects, acidity and other mechanical damages. Preservative is smeared on the palm-leaves to give flexibility to the leaves and to get rid of the insects. An indigenous preservative consisting of the powder mixture of sweet flag, black cumin, cloves, pepper, bark of cinnamon with camphor also used in the manuscript cup-boards.
- (b) **Cataloguing:** The earliest catalogue available in this library was prepared in 1801 A.D. by Sadasiva Bhatta alias Gangadhara Bhatta by the order of the King Serfoji which was only for palm-leaf manuscripts. There is a separate catalogue for paper manuscripts of this library prepared in the year 1807 AD. Later in 1840 and 1857, catalogues were prepared by the orders of Shivaji II and the then District Collector Forbbes, accordingly. In 1857, by the order of the British government, Dr. A. C. Burnell prepared a catalogue for Sanskrit manuscripts which was published in 1880 in two volumes. In 1920, the preparation of descriptive catalogues for all the manuscripts was started and the work is still going on. So far 23 volumes of catalogues for Sanskrit manuscripts, 10 volumes for Tamil, 5 volumes for Marathi and 2 volumes for Telugu have been published. Apart from these a catalogue for Rajah's collection of English books is also published and all these catalogues are available for sale.
- (c) **Publication:** This library is publishing rare and unpublished manuscripts to spread the knowledge contained in the manuscripts to the public with the grant-in-aid from the Government of India. So far, 354 books are published in which 114 are in Sanskrit, 175 in Tamil, 40 in Marathi, 19 in Telugu and 6 in English. A quarterly journal is also released by the Library since 1939. Minor works and Research articles based on the Library manuscripts are published in it. Service to the Scholars This Library renders the following services to the Research Scholars. Transcribing service, Translation service, Reprographics service and consulting service. A few decades back, this library was merely an institution for preserving the manuscripts and books

but now it has become an active centre for research in various disciplines. So scholars from all over the world are utilising this library for their research.

Saraswathi Mahal Library

Museum: A small museum is situated in the library to depict the importance of the library by displaying various rare artifacts available here. Rare manuscripts, books, beautifully decorated Thanjavur style of paintings in paper, wood, glass and canvass, illustrated manuscripts like Gaja Sastra, Asva Sastra, Mythological paintings, Botanical specimen paintings, Military costumes, Ramyana in miniature paintings, Rare maps, sketches and prints are displayed in this museum for the visitors. The Library Authorities request the people to donate rare and valuable manuscripts, books, paintings and artifacts to the Library which were not properly maintained in the villages, temples or in the mutts to preserve the cultural heritage benefit of this Country, for the future generation to study and research. Library preserves with meticulous care and makes available to successive generations of readers and scholars.

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Art and Architecture: The Saraswathi Mahal, established by king Sarfoji II was a unique example for the art and architecture of the Tanjore Marathas. According to Robinson, who visited Saraswathi Mahal in 1824, it was a full-fledged centre of learning, where research facilities were available on western model. The ancient architecture patterns were followed in the construction of Hindu temples during this period. The indo-sarasonic type of architecture was also followed. The Tanjore Marathas built many temples. Among those the Ganesa Temple which was built in of the Brahadeswara temple complex at Tanjore and Vaidyanatha Swamy temple were the classical examples. They built many choultries. Among them the choultry in Orthanadu was a magnificent one. The art of music dance, painting and printing were encouraged.

Sculptures

Maratha sculptures are beautiful and ornamental. They are engraved on single stone. They are also placed on walls and pillars. They have more messages and values. One of the masterpieces of Maratha sculpture was the bronze image of Ammani Amma, the wife of Pratap Singh. It is a Portrait figure. It is now in the temple of Tiruvidaimarudur. It is in a standing posture holding a lamp in her hand. A parrot is seated on her right shoulder. Another sculpture was the silver plated bullvahana in Tanjore temple. The stone sculptures of the King Sarfoji II were an excellent piece of Art. This statue is now in the Saraswathi Mahal Library in Tanjore.

Paintings

The mural paintings in the front mandapa of the subramaniya shrine in the Brahagdeeswara temple at Tanjore are classical examples of Maratha painting. The valuable portrait paintings of the Maratha rulers adorn the inner walls of Tanjore palace and Saraswathi Mahal.

King Sarfoji II had a vision that guided and helped Tanjore to forge ahead of other princely states and advance into a new age and emerge as a fitting

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competitor to European nations. Above all, he was an enlightened and educated soul; the quintessential Indian Maharajah of the British colonial era who was at home with both Latin as well as Sanskrit and could converse and compile literary works in both Tamil as well as English.

While many Rajahs were engrossed in fighting and civil wars, Serfoji-II ushered in an era of peace, prosperity and scientific development and pioneered new administrative and educational reforms. He bequeathed a treasure of wisdom and knowledge collected from the entire Universe, to the benefit of the posterity.

Check Your Progress

5. What are the specialties of the Saraswathi Mahal Library Museum?
6. How many Tamil manuscripts are there in the library?
7. What is the style of written works belonging to the Imperial Chola period?
8. How are the Marathi manuscripts in the library written?
9. How many library books are published till date?

8.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The Saraswathi Mahal Library was founded as a Palace Library by the Nayak kings of Tanjore. Sevappa Nayak (1532-1560) was the founder of Tanjore Nayakar dynasty.
2. The name Maharaja Serfoji, which is part of the library's name, can be traced to the Maratha King Maharaja Serfoji II, an eminent scholar who took a special interest in developing the library. It is said that he undertook a pilgrimage to Banaras and employed many pandits to buy and copy large number of works from all renowned centres of Sanskrit learning in North India.
3. Owing to the efforts of Serfoji II, the library boasts of an extensive Sanskrit manuscript collection of 36,326 titles, a good part of which was collected by Maharaja Serfoji II.
4. The library is situated in the centre of Nayakars palace and it was opened for public in 1918. There is also a small museum there for the visitors.
5. The library museum contains very rare and valuable collection of manuscripts on all aspects of art and culture. During the reign of these Nayak and Maratha dynasties, Thanjavur was the centre of art and literature and the kings were the patrons which led to enrich the collection of the library, in various fields.
6. There are about 3,518 Tamil manuscripts in this library. They are in palm-leaves and belong to the categories such as rare commentaries on Sangam

works; unpublished portions of classics; Saiva, Vaishnava and Jain works, poetry of all descriptions; and medical works of exceptional value.

Saraswathi Mahal Library

7. The rare written works belonging to Imperial Chola period are written in dialects of Manipravalam style. The medical manuscripts are very unique and valuable. Many of them based on the medical records and processes made in Dhanvantari Mahal and written by famous Tamil scholars like Kottaiyur Sivakolundu Desikar.
8. The Marathi manuscripts are mostly written in paper and a few in palm-leaf. The paper manuscripts were written in Telugu script (for Marathi language). These manuscripts deal with the subjects like philosophy, literature, drama music, lexicon, medicine and science.
9. Till date 354 books are published in which 114 are in Sanskrit, 175 in Tamil, 40 in Marathi, 19 in Telugu and 6 are in English. A quarterly journal is also released by the Library since 1939. Minor works and Research articles based on the Library manuscripts are published in it.

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8.6 SUMMARY

- Saraswathi Mahal Library was founded as a Palace Library by the Nayak kings of Tanjore. Sevappa Nayak (1532-1560) was the founder of Tanjore Nayakar dynasty. Serfoji-II enriched it with priceless works, maps, dictionaries, coins and artwork.
- Vijayaraghava Nayakar (1634-1674) the last king of this dynasty, lost his life in a battle with Chokkanatha Nayakar of Madurai in the year 1662. The Madurai Nayakar appointed Alagiri, as the Governor of Tanjore.
- In 1676, Ekoji established Maratha rule in Tamil Nadu. Maharaja Serfoji II ruled Tanjore from 1798 to 1832.
- Tanjore Maharaja Saraswathi Mahal Library is a synthesis of different cultures and a treasure trove of knowledge put together by the successive dynasties of Nayaks and Marathas of Tanjore.
- The Saraswathi Mahal Library was founded as a Palace Library by the Nayak kings of Tanjore (1535–1675), it was however Serfoji-II who enriched it with priceless works, maps, dictionaries, coins and artwork. The name Maharaja Serfoji, which is part of the library's name, can be traced to the Maratha King Maharaja Serfoji II, an eminent scholar who took a special interest in developing the library.
- Serfoji set up the first Devanagari printing press in South India, using stone letters. He sent many Pundits far and wide and collected huge number of books and manuscripts for this Library. All the books in the library carry his personal autograph in English.

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- The library contains a record of the day-to-day proceedings of the Maratha court known as the Modi documents, French-Maratha correspondence of the 18th century.
- The Library is situated in the centre of Nayakars palace and it was opened for public in 1918. There is also a small museum there for the visitors.
- Maharaja Serfoji himself started the reference books department of the library and nearly 4,500 books in English, French, Latin, Italian and other language collected by him find place here.
- The library is also a designated 'Manuscript Conservation Centre' (MCC) under the National Mission for Manuscripts established in 2003.
- The Government of Madras took possession of the library under the charitable Endowment Act and have framed a scheme for the management of the Library. A five member committee under the ex-officio Chairmanship of the District Collector was appointed to maintain the Library. The name of the Library was changed from 'The Sarasvati Mahal Library' to 'The Thanjavur Maharaja Serfoji's Sarasvati Mahal Library.'
- In 1983, the Library was declared as an institution of national importance. The Government of Tamil Nadu ordered to abolish the five member committee of administration and to register this under the Registered Society Act of 1975.
- The Collection of works of the Vijayanagara renaissance brought under the Nayak rulers of Thanjavur from 1535 to 1673 A.D.
- More number of the manuscripts in this library is in Sanskrit language i. e. 39,300 manuscripts out of 46,695 belongs to this language. The Sanskrit manuscripts collection of this library has a unique value, in that it preserves the literary works of authors spread over 400 years.
- There are about 3,518 Tamil manuscripts in this library. They are in palm-leaves and belong to the following categories.
- This Library has nearly 802 Telugu manuscripts which are mostly in palm-leaf and a few in paper. These are the most valuable collection of manuscripts particularly relating to the Southern School of Telugu literature.
- The Marathi manuscripts of this library consists of the works of South Indian Maharashtrians numbered about 3075, of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the hierarchy of the saints of Maratha country belonging to the Ramadasi and Dattatreya mutts.
- Modi is an ancient script used for Marathi language to record the political and administrative documents of the Maratha Kings of Maharashtra as well as Thanjavur. It contains a record of the day-to-day proceedings of the Maratha court.

- There is a Reference Library comprises of old books and new books The old books were mostly collected by the king Serfoji-II during his life time which consists of 4,500 books in English French, German, Italy, Greek and Danish languages.
- Since 1979, the facility of microfilming the manuscripts has been adopted in the library. Apart from this, modern conservation techniques like, fumigation, lamination and de-acidification methods are being followed to avoid decay by insects, acidity and other mechanical damages. Preservative is smeared on the palm-leaves to give flexibility to the leaves and to get rid of the insects.
- The earliest catalogue available in this library was prepared in 1801 A.D. by Sadasiva Bhatta alias Gangadhara Bhatta by the order of the King Serfoji which was only for palm-leaf manuscripts. There is a separate catalogue for paper manuscripts of this library prepared in the year 1807 AD.
- This library is publishing rare and unpublished manuscripts to spread the knowledge contained in the manuscripts to the public with the grant-in-aid from the Government of India.
- A small museum is situated in the library to depict the importance of the library by displaying various rare artifacts available here. Rare manuscripts, books, beautifully decorated Thanjavur style of paintings in paper, wood, glass and canvass, illustrated manuscripts like Gaja Sastra, Asva Sastra, Mythological paintings, Botanical specimen paintings, Military costumes, Ramyana in miniature paintings, Rare maps, sketches and prints are displayed in this museum for the visitors.
- The Tanjore Marathas built many temples. Among those the Ganesa Temple which was built in of the Brahadeeswara temple complex at Tanjore and Vaidyanatha Swamy temple were the classical examples. They built many choultries.
- Maratha sculptures are beautiful and ornamental. They are engraved on single stone. They are also placed on walls and pillars. They have more messages and values. One of the masterpieces of Maratha sculpture was the bronze image of Ammani Amma, the wife of Pratapsingh.
- The mural paintings in the front mandapa of the subramaniya shrine in the Brahagdeeswara temple at Tanjore are classical examples of Maratha painting. The valuable portrait paintings of the Maratha rulers adorn the inner walls of Tanjore palace and Saraswathi Mahal.
- King Sarfoji II had a vision that guided and helped Tanjore to forge ahead of other princely states and advance into a new age and emerge as a fitting competitor to European nations.

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- While many Rajahs were engrossed in fighting and civil wars, Serfoji-II ushered in an era of peace, prosperity and scientific development and pioneered new administrative and educational reforms.

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8.7 KEY WORDS

- **Manuscript:** It refers to a book, document, or piece of music written by hand rather than typed or printed.
- **Fumigation:** It refers to the action or process of disinfecting or purifying an area with the fumes of certain chemical.
- **Microfilm:** It refers to the film containing microphotographs of a newspaper, catalogue, or other document.
- **Manipravalam Style:** It refers to a literary style used in medieval liturgical texts in South India, which used an admixture of Tamil and Sanskrit. Manipravalam is termed a mixture of Sanskrit and Tamil.

8.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. What sort of manuscripts are present in the Saraswathi Mahal Library?
2. List the rare collection of books found at the library.
3. Name the various sections of the library.
4. Write a short note on collection of Sanskrit manuscript in the library.
5. Write a short note on the Maratha paintings at Saraswathi Mahal.

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the collection of manuscripts found in the library.
2. What sort of collection is there in the reference library? Explain.
3. Describe the preservation methods used in preserving the old manuscripts in the library.
4. Analyse the art and architecture of the Saraswathi Mahal Library in detail.

8.9 FURTHER READINGS

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Saraswathi Mahal Library

Irschick, E.F. 1969. *Politics and Social Conflict in South India*. Los Angeles: Berkeley Publishing.

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**UNIT 9 SETHUPATHI RULE
AT RAMNAD
(RAMANATHAPURAM)**

Structure

- 9.0 Introduction
- 9.1 Objectives
- 9.2 Overview of Socio, Economic and Religious Conditions
- 9.3 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 9.4 Summary
- 9.5 Key Words
- 9.6 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 9.7 Further Readings

9.0 INTRODUCTION

The Sethupathis belong to a Tamil clan of the Maravar community who lived in Ramanathapuram and Sivaganga district of Tamil Nadu, India. They were considered as independent and ruled the Ramnad kingdom. They were especially recognised for their military prowess. As Sethupathis had the skill to mobilise 30 to 40 thousand armed soldiers within 8 days, Nayakars and even Nawab and Marathas were scared of them. Madurai Nayak or Muthukrishnappa Nayak was the first recorded Sethupathi, who assumed the title Udaiyan Rakunatha Sethupathi and ruled from 1606–1621. Later, they lost their freedom under British rule and instead became Zamindars. In this unit, we will discuss the contribution of Sethupathis with respect to culture. We will also discuss the socio, economic, cultural, and religious conditions during their rule.

9.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the social, economic, and religious conditions during Sethupathis' rule
- Discuss the characteristics of Sethupathis' rule
- Explain the cultural contribution of Sethupathis

9.2 OVERVIEW OF SOCIO, ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

*Sethupathi Rule at Ramnad
(Ramanathapuram)*

Sethupathi's rule at Ramnad (Ramanathapuram) was noteworthy in many aspects. They created a very commendable atmosphere in the Tanjore Belt for socio, economic, cultural, and religious conditions to flourish.

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The method of administration

The majority of the people in the Sethupathi Country were Maravas. The country was divided into eight revenue districts and seventy two palayams. They were ruled by the palayakars. The village administration was looked after by Maniakarar. He had an assistant named Kanakkappillai for accounting purposes. Irrigation and Drinking water facilities were improved by digging street wells, canals, and ponds. They strengthened their fortresses with stone-built fortresses and also dug big water divides around the fortress. Some Sethupathis also released their own coins.

Ramnad Sethupathi's rule was marked by the special kind of security system. Many villages and their assets including the livestock and traders' commodities were covered under this security system. There were two levels of the security layers:

- Desa kaval (Macro Security)
- Sthala Kaval (Micro Security)

Sthala Kaval heads were controlled and supervised by the heads of Desa Kaval administratively. Each village had many soldiers who were under one head to command. Each one enjoyed gifts in the form of lands from the King. The King had several officials. The most important post was 'Kariakartha', who sat in front of the Kings entrance and ruled the country. Dhanathipathi was another important position who executed the orders of the Sethupathi King. Only people from Pillai community were appointed at this position. Apart from this, the King had Thandel and Nagutha as ship officers.

Economic conditions

The financial administration was considered excellent during that time. The land revenue formed a major source of the King's revenue. Sethupathis also had rights to collect pearls through pearl diving. They were levying taxes of various types such as Arasirai Tax from Rameswaram and Tuticorin coastal belt, Customs Duty, etc. Some of the tax collection rights were given to private agents as well. However, later on many wars of that time kept the economy stagnated and under developed. Besides, there were floods, famines, and cyclones. Agriculture was the primary occupation. Carpet making and oil extraction business flourished in that belt. The year, 1706, witnessed a heavy drought in the Maravar Seemai region. Fishing

rights in Keezakkara coast was given to the Dutch by the Kizavan Sethupathi. He also constructed a dam across the Vaigai for Ramnad.

Social conditions

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People of many castes were found in the society of Sethupathis ruled kingdom. Castes were divided into four groups:

- Brahmins
- Sathiriyar
- Vaisiyar
- Soothirar

There were several sub castes within each caste. Caste-based distinction played a prominent role in the society. Each community lived in a segregated locality, which was called Kottai. In each Kottai, only one community used to live. In rare cases, all types of communities lived in the same Kottai. Sub-castes included Palayakarar, Seniyar, Thottiyar, Saluppar, Servaikarar, and Ullayakkarar.

Religious conditions

During that time, most of the Sethupathi's subjects worshipped Lord Shiva and Vishnu. They celebrated all kinds of religious festivals. Thai Poesam Festival for Lord Murugan was celebrated with especial fervour. At Rameswaram, Lord Rama was worshipped and Dandeswarar Pujas were carried out. Besides, Shiva Linga Puja, Kaliamman Puja, Pallakku Nayakkar, Puja and Durga Puja were performed. Vijaya Ragnatha Sethupathi performed Hiranya Garbha Yagna. Hence, he got the title, 'Hiranya Garbayajji'. He was an ardent Shaivite.

Sethupathi Kings patronised a lot of temples during their time. Ragnatha Sethupathi built a few temples and renovated a few others. Rameswaram Temple was enlarged by him by the construction of the second outer ring pathway. A portion of the government's income was shared with Rameswaram Temple. They donated funds to Thiruppullani Temple and Uthirakosamangai temple as well. King Kizavan Sethupathy donated funds to many mutts. Sethupathi Kings celebrated Navarathri Festival in the same style as was done by the Nayakars. Madurai, Thiruvananthapuram temples were donated funds by Vijaya Ragnathar. Rameswaram Temple was especially looked after by him. Generally, temples were administered by the Gurukkal, while Battar was assisted by the helpers such as Thoppukarar and Nandavanakarar. The temple treasury was looked after by the Bandarathakal.

At that time, there were three classes of Muslims:

- Maraikayars, who were overseas traders
- Rowthers, who worked at the palaces and were in the armed forces
- Leppais, who were engaged in the weaving industry

Muslims largely occupied the places like Kamudhi, Paramakkudi, and Ilayankudi. Muslims, who were in pepper trade were addressed as Malabar Maplas. Most of them were very rich and close to the Sethupathi Dynasty. They had constructed Jumma Pallivasal for their place of worship. Christianity too spread in the Maravar Seemai during the Sethupathi Kings. However, during the time of Kizavan Sethupathy, the conversion efforts were defeated. He was punitive to the Christianity and its influence. Some historians view this as a political decision to overcome the political crisis due to conversions, while a few others consider this as his personal aversion. However, Vijayaragunatha Sethupathi was supportive of Christianity and its growth. He permitted construction of a Church and also assisted by giving the materials required for the construction. However, in the later part of his rule, Vijayaragunatha Sethupathi started torturing the Christians. Vaduganatha Thevar, who succeeded him gave support to the Christians.

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Cultural Contribution of Sethupathis of Ramnad

Thus, Sethupathy dynasty's rule in the Ramnad (Maravar Seemai) was considered historic and heroic for their valour and army strength. Building and renovating the temples and creating the Brahmadeya Donations were seen as their social priorities. However, there was no evidences of any major contributions, when it comes to arts and culture or sculptures and architectural specialities.

Sethupathis established their credibility as warriors and ardent followers of local administration principles established in the Palayagar system by the Vijayanagara Empire. It is notable that during their regime, the Hindus and Muslims had their religious freedom and growth and also the participation in royal affairs, including the armed forces. However, Christianity did not enjoy such a liberty and faced persecution and torture. As the caste system was quite strong, the functional divisions and the living patterns display the caste oriented and community-based social life.

Except for one famine the rest of the rule of Sethupathis marked a peaceful and prosperous period. Generally, the Kings used to have a luxurious life with lavish expenses. They practiced polygamy and their wives used to eventually kill themselves at the demise of the King through the method of Sati (Udankattai). The family tree of Sethupathi rulers is furnished chronologically to understand their continued power in the Ramnad during the Vijayanagara Empire; Nayakar Empire, and independent rule. Even today, their dynasty exists amidst us in the form of Zamindars to be remembered as a part of this Sethupathi history. Chieftains under the Madurai Nayaks are:

- Sadaikka Thevar Sethupathi (1590–1621)
- Kootan Sethupathi (1621–1637)
- Dalavai Sethupathi (1637–1659)
- Raghunatha Sethupathi (1659–1670)

*Sethupathi Rule at Ramnad
(Ramanathapuram)*

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The independent kings were:

- Raghunatha Kilavan (1670–1708)
- Vijaya Raghunatha Sethupathi I (1708–1723)
- Sundaresvara Raghunatha Sethupathi (1723–1728)
- Kumara Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Sethupathi (1728–1734)
- Muthukumara Raghunatha Sethupathi (1734–1747)
- Rakka Thevar (1747–1748)
- Vijaya Raghunatha Sethupathi II (1748–1760)
- Muthuramalinga Sethupathi I (1760–1794)
- Ruler of princely state under the paramountcy of the British Raj
- Mangaleswari Nachiyar (1795–1803)

The zamindars are as follows:

- Mangaleswari Nachiyar (1803–1807)
- Annaswami Sethupathi (1807–1820)
- Ramaswami Sethupathi (1820–1830)
- Muthu Chella Thevar Sethupathi (1830–1846)
- Parvatha Vardhani Ammal Nachchiar (1846–1862)
- Muthuramalinga Sethupathi II (1862–1873)
- Court of Wards (1873–1889)
- Bhaskara Sethupathy (1889–1903)
- Dinakara Sethupathy
- Raja Rajeswara Sethupathi (1903–1929)
- Shanmugha Rajeswara Sethupathi (1929–1967)
- Ramanatha Sethupathi (1967–1979)
- Rajeswari Nachiyar (1979–present)

Check Your Progress

1. What were the two levels of the security layers during Ramnad Sethupathi's rule?
2. Who was Madurai Nayak?
3. What was the major source of the King's revenue?
4. List the three classes of Muslims, who lived during Sethupathi's rule.

9.3 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The two levels of the security layers during Ramnad Sethupathi's rule were:
 - (a) Desa kaval (Macro Security)
 - (b) Sthala Kaval (Micro Security)
2. Madurai Nayak or Muthukrishnappa Nayak was the first recorded Sethupathi, who assumed the title Udaiyan Rakunatha Sethupathi and ruled from 1606–1621.
3. Land revenue formed a major source of the King's revenue.
4. The three types of Muslims, who lived during Sethupathi's rule were:
 - (a) Maraikayars, who were overseas traders
 - (b) Rowthers, who worked at the palaces and were in the armed forces
 - (c) Leppais, who were engaged in the weaving industry

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9.4 SUMMARY

- The Sethupathis belong to a Tamil clan of the Maravar community, who lived in Ramanathapuram and Sivaganga district of Tamil Nadu, India. They were considered as independent and ruled the Ramnad kingdom.
- Sethupathi's rule at Ramnad (Ramanathapuram) was noteworthy in many aspects. They created a very commendable atmosphere in the Tanjore Belt for socio, economic, cultural, and religious conditions to flourish.
- The majority of the people in the Sethupathi Country were Maravas. The country was divided into eight revenue districts and seventy two palayams. They were ruled by the palayakars.
- It is notable that during their regime, the Hindus and Muslims had their religious freedom and growth and also the participation in royal affairs, including the armed forces. However, Christianity did not enjoy such a liberty and faced persecution and torture.
- The financial administration was considered excellent during that time. People of many castes were found in the society of Sethupathis ruled kingdom.
- Sethupathy dynasty's rule in the Ramnad (Maravar Seemai) was considered historic and heroic, mainly for their valour and army strength.

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9.5 KEY WORDS

- **Shaivite:** A member of one of the main branches of modern Hinduism, devoted to the worship of the god Shiva as the supreme being.
- **Zamindar:** A landowner, especially one who leases his land to tenant farmers.

9.6 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. How was the administration system during the Sethupathis' rule?
2. Emulate all the zamindars of Sethupathi dynasty.

Long Answer Questions

1. Describe the social, economic, and cultural conditions during the Sethupathis' rule.
2. Discuss the religious conditions during the Sethupathis' rule.

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UNIT 10 IMPACT OF BRITISH RULE IN TAMIL NADU

*Impact of British Rule
in Tamil Nadu*

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Structure

- 10.0 Introduction
- 10.1 Objectives
- 10.2 Life of Tamils under British Rule
 - 10.2.1 Social Conditions
 - 10.2.2 Economic Conditions
 - 10.2.3 British Rule and Education: Primary, Secondary, and Collegiate
- 10.3 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 10.4 Summary
- 10.5 Key Words
- 10.6 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 10.7 Further Readings

10.0 INTRODUCTION

During the Vijayanagara Empire, the European settlements began to slowly appear in Tamil Nadu. Among the Europeans, the British East India Company first appeared in Tamil Nadu in 1626, at a village called Armagaon (Durgarazpatnam), around 35 miles North of Pulicat, where they built a 'factory' (warehouse). Following that first point of contact, the history is pretty much an evidence of the huge impact that the British made on Tamil Nadu. The British rule in Tamil Nadu has created a sizeable impact on various segments such as social life, economic style and life, religious, and general living of the Tamilians. Besides, the various changes on the system of education including the primary, secondary and collegiate education, formation of universities, predominance of English over the mother tongue Tamil, etc., marked the style of the British rule.

10.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the impact of British rule in Tamil Nadu
- Discuss the social, economic, and religious life of Tamilians under British rule
- Explain the impact of British rule on the education system of Tamil Nadu

10.2 LIFE OF TAMILS UNDER BRITISH RULE

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The British rule in Tamil Nadu brought in a variety of changes in the social, cultural, as well as economic system of Tamil society. In order to conform to the British rule in India, many Indian citizens, irrespective of their social status, started learning English and also changed their dressing style and food habits. One can say that the people were exposed to the outside world beyond India due to the British influence. British rule brought in a lot of perceivable changes in the society, especially in Tamil Nadu. It triggered many reforms in the societal structure of Tamil Nadu. Even today, we follow many of the British legacies that has been imbibed into the Indian consciousness and culture. Many practices and etiquettes as well as habits are considered acceptable as a part of development and progress. The British are responsible for bringing changes and improving system such as:

- Communications
- Literature
- Printing and publishing technology
- Newspapers
- Railways and quick travel
- Education as a module for development
- Erasing ignorance and growth of analytical thinking
- Innovations and inventions
- Changed methods in agriculture, small industries, and trade
- Changes brought out in the field of tastes and fashions
- Changes in food habits and dressing habits
- Cultural development based on Western culture
- Showcasing of Indian's intelligence and their skills
- Financial institutions like banks
- Air travel

10.2.1 Social Conditions

The feeling of small India and small Tamil Nadu started evaporating, once the people started seeing the bigger picture of India as a big and vast nation with varied culture and iconic heritage. Many Indians went abroad to England, Germany, America, and other countries for training, which led to further improvement in their thinking.

There are strong reasons for Christianity to create an impression that it created, especially on the downtrodden to follow their religion.

- Christianity did not have the caste distinctions within their religion as oppose to Hindu religion.

- Downtrodden of Tamil belts felt equated with others by the removal of the caste system and untouchability
- Tamil Christians adapted themselves to the systems and habits of the Christians as displayed by the British easily.
- Missionaries worked hard to establish hospitals, schools, and churches in all the small towns as well as big cities.
- Christian priests treated all the Christians alike and won the hearts of the downtrodden through their serving nature.

Tamils started using English words for easy understanding of their British rulers. Besides, many Tamil words were replaced by the English equivalents.

10.2.2 Economic Conditions

During British rule Tamil Nadu went through numerous ups and downs in terms of economy. Such instability was mainly due to the events such as famines, the First World War, the great depression, the Second World War, and the freedom struggle in India. All of these formed the foundation on which the economy of Tamil Nadu stood. And the foundation of the economy of Tamil Nadu was no doubt agriculture, which remain the productive force even during the British rule. However, its force was somewhat drained by the land revenue system, which was oppressive. Additionally, the British Empire, due to their selfish motives, barely devoted any attention to improve the irrigation facilities. The 19th century, however, saw a new approach as British, feeling secured about their rule, started promoting agriculture, especially irrigation system.

During the administration of Munroe (1920-1927), the Ryotwari system was introduced, which made way for the tenancy system. The introduction of such systems of Madras Presidency led the British government to concentrate on irrigation for improving agricultural yields. This brought in changes in cropping pattern, but also led to rural indebtedness, backward methods of cultivation, inadequate irrigation facilities, which resulted in the poverty among the rural mass of Madras Presidency. The positive outcomes, however, trump the negative ones, as increased crop yields from 4% to 12% encouraged the farmers, which made the government assist them even more.

When it comes to industries, the British were only interested in draining the wealth of the India. Hence, they didn't devote any time on the development of any industries and used India merely for its raw materials. It was not until around the year, 1830 that the British began to set up some small-scale industries in India, but it was mostly met with failure. The lack of diversity and general attitude of the British didn't yield any great success.

10.2.3 British Rule and Education: Primary, Secondary, and Collegiate

The system of education in India was based on the religious pursuits and expertise. Education was imparted by the religious wings and they mainly imparted knowledge

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about literature, philosophy, and the religion. Maths, history, and geography were not taught. This system kept the students ignorant about the rest of the world. British did not interfere with the extant system of education, when they initially were establishing their rule in India. However, in 1800, they started establishing a few schools and educational institutions to educate their children. In 1813, they started a standard education System in India which also entered Tamil Nadu.

The 1698 East India Company Act necessitated Jesuits to establish educational institutions for the benefit of the soldiers' children. General Warren Hastings established Calcutta Madarasa in 1781. Banaras Hindu University was started in 1792. As recommended by Educationists, like Charles Grant and William Wilberbores, and as initiated by Lord Minto, the 1813 Charter Act was released. Accordingly, new colleges were opened, while the existing ones were re-structured. Separate Budgetary allocation of one lac rupees for education was made. In 1835, Lord Macaulay released his recommendations and notes on education. General William Bending issued the orders for making English as the language of instructions in the schools and colleges.

From 1813 to 1854, there were certain transition issues in the education system. Medical colleges were opened in Calcutta and Bombay in 1835 and 1845 respectively. An engineering college was opened at Roorkee and a girl's school was opened in Bengal.

The year, 1854 is considered a remarkable year in the annals of Indian education system. It's a milestone year. Charles Wood introduced a new charter for the education system in India. Lord Dalhousie approved the plans:

- Benefitting the Indians through the English education system should be the aim of education. This will improve the knowledge and discipline as well as mould Indians into honest government officials.
- Education policy should aim at spreading the Western knowledge
- Indian languages should be adopted in teaching, along with English. Indian Languages should not be neglected.
- Higher education should cover the areas of Indian heritage and culture
- New Schools should be opened with the private initiatives, along with the government
- All states of India shall have the Department of Education and Directors of Public Instructions.
- Universities should be established in cities like Calcutta and Bombay.
- Education should be divided into Primary, Secondary, Higher Secondary and University levels.
- Institutions established, without religious back up should be given grants and students should get scholarships

- Those, who are interested in teaching, should be trained and their status enhanced.
- Text books in Indian languages should be written and the priority should be given to vocational education and also women's education.

Woods Education Plan is also called the Magna Carta of English education in India. Following this, Universities at Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta were established. Teachers' training was also commenced. The position of Director of Public Instructions was created and School inspectors were appointed to assist him.

Renaissance in Tamil Nadu

Based on the Charles Wood Magna Carta, the oldest high school was converted into the University of Madras and the necessary enactment was passed by the Constitutional Committee of India in 1857. The High School was transferred to the Education Department and was named as the Presidency College. However, later the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 affected the growth of education. After this, the Government was strict with the missionaries, who were running these educational institutions. Between 1857 and 1875, many Colleges were started in the Madras Presidency. At Kumbakonam, a high school was converted into a college. Madras Christian College was started under the private initiatives.

Historians have observed that at the close of 1871, more than 12 colleges were functioning in the Madras Presidency. In the next ten years, the number of colleges doubled. It was also observed that the primary education was not given the thrust by the government and the missionary institutions felt that they were not given the concessions in the process. Hunter Commission was thus, formed by Lord Rippon, consisting of 22 members and following are the recommendations of Hunter Committee, submitted in 1882:

- Primary education should be transferred to the private managements and administration will be by the local administrators.
- Private schools will be given grants and there will be no interference by the government in the administration.
- A common syllabus for government and private educational institutions should be prepared
- If a few classes pertain to a specific religion, other students of different religions should not be compelled to attend the same.
- High schools should be given priority to the vocational education
- Growth of primary education should be carefully considered.

In 1868, recommendations for women's education were considered in Tamil Nadu. Due to these efforts, by the end of 19th Century, 34 high schools and 3 women's colleges were established in the Madras Presidency. Initially, students

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from the city of Madras got benefitted by the physical training facilities established in 1858. In 1877, separate budget was allotted for the physical training. The year, 1878, saw the creation of playgrounds and sports stadiums in the government schools.

With the initiatives of Lord Curzon, Shimla Conference was conducted for the Directors of Public Instructions all over India at Shimla. Following a lot of meetings, the government got directly involved in the growth of education. University Act 1904 was passed as a result of the Shimla Conference suggestions and observations. The governing councils and the senate were restructured. With this Act, the governmental regulations on the universities were tightened.

In 1910, university education was shifted to the newly formed, Education Department from the Home Department. Sir Harcourt Butler, in 1913, passed a resolution that there should be jurisdictions for the universities and there should be universities and residential universities in each state. As a result, universities were established in Kasi and Patna in the year 1916 and 1917 respectively. According to Sir Michael Chetler Commission, formed in 1919:

- High schools have failed to impart suitable education for the country's progress.
- Intermediate sections should be removed from the university and be added to the high schools.
- Central Government should establish a model university.
- In the university jobs, the local people should be involved

As a result of this, between 1919 and 1929, 13 Universities were established. In 1925, an Inter-University board was also established.

The Hardak Committee Report 1929 is considered as a historic one. This committee recommended that Indians should be encouraged to learn and the literary experts should be increased to enhance the standard of education. In 1935, the state autonomy was given and the administration of education was handed over to the state governments. Though there were plans for a huge fund allocation, International financial crisis (the Great Depression of 1930) led to delays in implementation. In 1937, changes were brought in and the compulsory primary education system was finalised.

The Second World War, many recommendations on the vocational education, along with the employment thereafter, were not implemented. However, from high school till university education, the vocational education was accepted as a subject to be taught. The 1937 Wardha Primary Education Scheme or Basic Education System was an attempt by Mahatma Gandhi to develop an indigenous method of education in India. He was especially concerned about the poor condition of the system of primary education in India. In the Round Table conference, he also expressed concern about the alarming low percentage of literacy among Indian people.

Apart from the Wardha scheme, the 1944-Sergeant Scheme for Education was introduced, featuring:

- Education should go side by side with moral lessons to inculcate the idea of morality into the students.
- Children completing 3 years should be admitted into nursery schools.
- 6 to 14 years old of efficient students should be given admission into high school and university thereafter.
- 11 to 17 years old of efficient students should be given higher education and university education.
- Technical education and commerce, arts education should be promoted. Similarly, those with mental and physical disabilities should be given special education.
- Illiteracy of the older generation should be eradicated within 20 years.
- Teachers' Training should be given more importance.
- Compulsory physical education, health check-up, mid-day meals for children with malnutrition were also recommended. Social and leisure activities were also made a part of the school education.

The University Act 1904 was passed as a result of the suggestions and observations of the Shimla Conference. The governing councils and the senate were restructured. With this Act, the governmental regulations on the universities were tightened. New Courses were started and a lot of changes were made in the existing patterns. South Indian Languages were patronised. In 1924, a committee was appointed by the University of Madras to invite suggestions for developing Southern languages, including Tamil language. A number of language research centres were opened in the respective departments. In 1923, by an Act of the Government, University of Madras got its autonomy.

In 1925, Andhra University was started, but there were demands for a Tamil university. In 1921, Chettinadu King, Annamalai Chettiar, started Meenakshi College in Chidambaram. A Fact Finding Committee, in 1928, recommended the need for a university. In 1929, Annamalai Chettiar upgraded the status of Meenakshi College and integrated it with other colleges. He created a Charitable Trust with a Corpus Fund of 20 lacs rupees. Annamalai University was started in 1929. It became the second best university in Tamil Nadu. Other efforts include:

- 1948, Education Commission under Dr. S. Radhakrishnan
- 1952, High School Reforms committee under Dr. A. L. Mudaliar
- 1964, Dr. Kothari Committee for educational reforms

Education in Tamil Nadu grew constantly and with quality, under British rule. All efforts made to augment educational systems and utilise the human resources bore fruits. Today's educational system of Tamil Nadu is at par with world's top most education system.

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Check Your Progress

1. Where did the British East India Company first appear in Tamil Nadu?
2. Who established the Calcutta Madarasa?
3. When was the Ryotwari system introduced?
4. List three features of Charles Wood's new charter for the education system in India.

10.3 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The British East India Company first appeared in Tamil Nadu in 1626, at a village called Armagaon (Durgarazpatnam), around 35 miles North of Pulicat.
2. General Warren Hastings established the Calcutta Madarasa in 1781.
3. Ryotwari system was introduced during the administration of Munroe (1920-1927).
4. The features of Charles Wood's new charter for the education system in India are:
 - (a) Benefitting the Indians through the English education system should be the aim of education. This will improve the knowledge and discipline as well as mould Indians into honest government officials.
 - (b) Education policy should aim at spreading the Western knowledge
 - (c) Indian languages should be adopted in teaching, along with English. Indian Languages should not be neglected.

10.4 SUMMARY

- Following that first point of contact, the history is pretty much an evidence of the huge impact that the British made on Tamil Nadu. The British rule in Tamil Nadu has created a sizeable impact on various segments such as social life, economic style and life, religious, and general living of the Tamilians.
- British rule brought in a lot of perceivable changes in the society, especially in Tamil Nadu. It triggered many reforms in the societal structure of Tamil Nadu.
- During the British rule Tamil Nadu went through numerous ups and downs in terms of economy. Such instability was mainly due to the events such as

famines, the First World War, the great depression, the Second World War, and the freedom struggle in India.

- British did not interfere with the extant system of education, when they initially were establishing their rule in India. However, in 1800, they started establishing a few schools and educational institutions to educate their children.
- In 1813, they started a standard education System in India which also entered Tamil Nadu. The year, 1854 is considered a remarkable year in the annals of Indian education system. It's a milestone year. Charles Wood introduced a new charter for the education system in India.
- Based on the Charles Wood Magna Carta, the oldest high school was converted into University of Madras and the necessary enactment was passed by the Constitutional Committee of India in 1857.
- Education in Tamil Nadu grew constantly and with quality, under British rule. All efforts made to augment educational systems and utilise the human resources bore fruits.

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10.5 KEY WORDS

- **Ryotwari System:** One of the two main system used to collect revenues from the cultivators of agricultural land. These revenues included undifferentiated land taxes and rents, collected simultaneously.
- **Magna Carta:** It was a document constituting a fundamental guarantee of rights and privileges.

10.6 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. What are the reasons for the strong impression of Christianity in Tamil Nadu?
2. What were the recommendations of the Hunter Committee with regards to education?

Long Answer Questions

1. Describe the impact of the British on the economic conditions of Tamil Nadu.
2. Discuss the efforts made by the British in the field of education.

10.7 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 11 ROLE OF MISSIONARIES IN TAMIL NADU

*Role of Missionaries in
Tamil Nadu*

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Structure

- 11.0 Introduction
- 11.1 Objectives
- 11.2 Advent of Missionaries
 - 11.2.1 Christian Missionaries in Tamil Nadu
- 11.3 The Missionaries and Social Legislations
 - 11.3.1 Status of Women
- 11.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 11.5 Summary
- 11.6 Key Words
- 11.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 11.8 Further Readings

11.0 INTRODUCTION

During the 19th century, Tamil Nadu witnessed a renaissance, which was mainly due to the pioneering efforts put in by the Christian Missionaries. They served Tamil Nadu irrespective of caste, creed, or colour and also worked with determination and commitment. Many social practices that were found undesirable and harsh were removed by the missionaries. Many of the deep rooted discriminations on the basis of caste were opposed by the missionaries and some of the social evils were condemned by them. Though their aim was to convert people to Christianity, their approach was to concentrate on social issues. This enabled Christianity to spread faster in the region.

11.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the role of missionaries in Tamil Nadu
- Discuss the social legislations introduced by the missionaries in Tamil Nadu
- Explain the abolition of various social evils by the missionaries

11.2 ADVENT OF MISSIONARIES

With the arrival of the Europeans, Christianity also gained followers in Tamil Nadu. It was in the 16th century that the Christian missionaries started working in India, starting with Francis Xavier. Of all the missionary members, the most respectable

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one was from Madurai Mission, named, Robert De Nobili. He served for about 50 years in India. Apart from him, there were John De Britto and Joseph Bessy, who worked at Tiruchi and Madurai Missionary. However, later the East India Company started to hinder the missionaries' work, fearing that they would damage the local sentiments by staying in the company ruled locations and hence, refused to grant permission to them. William Kesari, a missionary, stayed outside British colony at Serambur and continued his missionary work in the British colonies. In 1813, a charter permitted Christian missionaries to spread Christianity in British Indian territory. A Christian Religious Regional Head was appointed in Calcutta. Bishop Heber and Daniel Wilson were amongst the three Religious Regional Heads. Besides the English, Germans and Americans too came to India to spread Christianity.

11.2.1 Christian Missionaries in Tamil Nadu

There were a lot of missionaries, who left a permanent mark on the Indian society. They encouraged positive changes in the age-old customs and traditions and improve the society for good. They are also responsible for the upliftment of women and downtrodden section of society. Some of these influential missionaries are:

- (a) **Barthlomeo Chegan Balk:** It was King Frederick IV of Denmark, who considered sending missionaries to India from the Protestant group. Two missionaries were sent at that time, who established the Tharangambadi Mission. Balk learned Tamil and translated the New Testament into Tamil. 1707 onwards, due to his efforts, it was found that nine members have embraced Christianity. While the other one, John Bishop Febrius too, translated the Old Testament into Tamil.
- (b) **Father Schwarts:** He worked in Tharangambadi Mission from 1750 to 1798. He served the regions of Cuddalore, Tiruchi, Nagapatnam, Tanjore, and Kumbakonam. He established a strong foundation for the missionary activities at Thirunelveli and Palayamkottai. He entered Palayamkottai in 1778 and converted a Brahmin lady into Christian. Due to his efforts, forty people embraced Christianity at Palayamkottai. It was the first time that a church was being built at Palayamkottai, south of Tiruchirapalli. Schwarts got the temple solemnised. Jenike, Jerike, and James Hav continued their service to the people of Thirunelveli and Palayamkottai.
- (c) **Charles Theophilus Evalt Rainiers:** Rainiers was a German missionary. He entered Tamil Nadu in 1814 and learned Tamil at Tharangambai. He came to Thirunelveli in 1820 and continued his missionary work till 1838.
- (d) **Thomas Ragland:** Thomas Ragland had been given the title 'An Apostle of North Thirunelveli'. He arrived at Madras in 1853 and along with other missionaries, Devid Benn and Robert Medows, went to Tirunelveli in 1854. He made Sivakasi as the centre of his operations and carried out his religious services in Sivakasi, Virudunagar, Sankarankovil, Puliyangudi, Sathur,

Kovilpatti, and Panayadipatti. He created 47 Christian Parishes and convert 700 people into Christians.

These missionaries worked for the spread of Christianity as well as to build educational institutions and for the social upliftment. They helped in eradication of the blind beliefs and superstitious practices.

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11.3 THE MISSIONARIES AND SOCIAL LEGISLATIONS

With the advent of the Christian Missionaries, Tamil Nadu entered into the era of renaissance. The Missionaries taught the locals, Western style of life as well as the discipline, character, along with the religious culture under a single umbrella called Christianity, without distinction of caste, creed, or colour. There were two most important benefits of Christianity and the missionary activities:

- People learned how to express their protests against superstitious practices.
- People also received training to follow a path of self-discipline so as to be an example to others with respect to the individual morality.

Missionaries commenced their religious pursuits through the eradication of caste inequalities and also the traditional practice of untouchability. When the British first entered Tamil Nadu, they found the deep rooted caste system as the main evil decelerating the progress of the country. In 1858, the Conference of the Preachers decided that caste system should be questioned and the same should not be followed by the Christianity. They also concluded that if the government supported the caste system, the Christians should question the same. This is evident that neutralisation of casteism in Tamil Nadu was spearheaded by the Christian missionaries as early as in 19th Century. In the 19th Century, Tamil Nadu had the rampant system of slavery. This was not addressed by the British rulers. It was prevalent in Tamil speaking areas and other parts of India. This was brought to the notice of the larger English population by the missionaries only. Missionaries carried out an anti-slavery movement, which was the basis on which the government enacted law against slavery in 1843. The Indian Penal Code was enacted in the year 1861, based on these developments. All were brought equal before the law.

The country was facing droughts and famines all through the years of 1837, 1876, and 1896. Many of the people lost their lives, while the others struggled to survive. However, the kings and other establishments did not take the relief measures seriously. The social belief was to feed only the Brahmins. Other poor and downtrodden were always left out during any such disasters by the kings. Missionaries brought in a drastic change to this approach of the society. They provided the relief services, whole heartedly and without any discrimination. They organised relief in a systematic way and covered a larger population. As a result of which, the people who survived the severe famine and drought, realised the value

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of these services and converted into Christianity. The missionary activities generally involved all the socially useful and critical aspects that they found lacking in the country. Their contributions also include:

- Establishing orphanages
- Establishing primary health centres
- Developing nursing
- Improving old age care
- Women enlightenment
- Building of roads
- Village hygiene and development
- Voice against the caste differences
- New philosophy of freedom and independence
- Equality for all

The modern educational methods and standards were brought in, which changed the culture of Tamil Nadu completely. Missionaries commenced their religious pursuits and education as early as in the year 1830. As the missionaries wanted to start from the grass root levels, when it comes to spreading Christianity, they ensured that Tamil was the medium of education. This was another advantage for the Indian society, which quickly responded to the learning process, which was also affordable. The missionary education system for a beginner consisted of the following:

- Reading
- Writing
- Bible school
- Arithmetic tables

At the colleges, literature, history, and mathematics were taught. 1854 Education Policy led to the creation of the position of Director of Public Instructions. Due to this streamlining, the missionary institutions that is, schools and colleges grew in numbers. One such oldest institution is Madras Christian College. In 1870, missionaries functioning under eight dioceses created 483 schools in the Madras Presidency, with 27000 students learning there.

11.3.1 Status of Women

The beginning of the 19th century saw the abolition of a number of cruel practices that were practised against the women and children, due to the efforts of missionaries. These practices which were deeply rooted Indian psyche were abolished by creating awareness and imposing strict laws.

Abolition of Sati

Sati or Udan Kattai Eruthal is a practice of self-immolation by widowed women in their husband's pyre, shortly after the death of their husbands. Although the connotation is that of free will, but it got lost and instead the women started being forced into the pyre by her in-laws either because of financial reasons or out of spite. This tradition was practised in a rampant fashion. However, with the advent of missionaries the Sati was abolished in 1829. Their determinately worked against the British government, who were hesitant to interfere in this cruel custom. The missionaries collected data, generated awareness through books and pamphlets, and compiled statistics of the victims, which drove the government to prohibit this practice. With regards to Sati, William Carey of Baptist missionary was the first man, who was successful in abolishing the sati custom in Calcutta. The beginning of the 19th century saw the evangelical church in Britain and its members in India, all of whom started campaigns against sati. Leaders of these campaigns included the trio of Serampore William Carey and Jhon Clark Marshman and William Ward. Such efforts finally led to the abolishment of Sati in 1829.

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Child marriages

In the late 19th century, social reforms including the abolishment of child marriage was pursued. In fact, the severe criticism by the British of these practices encouraged educated Indians to work towards abolishing it. A lot of female missionaries started working in India, especially those of the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society, to gain knowledge and report on their interactions with Indian women. They particularly attacked child marriage and the practice of purdah. These customs were considered obstacles to the upliftment of females through mission schools. With such efforts, the Child Marriage Restraint Act or Sarda Act was imposed by the British government on 1 April 1930, which restricted the practice of child marriage across the whole nation, with the exceptions of some princely states like Hyderabad and Jammu and Kashmir.

Widowhood

A woman becomes a widow, after the death of her husband. As we discussed, on being a widow, women were often subjected to the practice of Sati. After its abolishment, the widows enjoyed the legal right to live. Although a lot of them were saved by the laws, their lives were still not easy. Following their husband's death, their lives were basically guided by a strict set of rules and regulations, which they have to follow devotedly or they would be ostracised from the society. They had to observe *brahmacharya* for the rest of their lives. Additionally, they have to perform fasts, nurse elderly persons, etc.

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Devadasi system

Devadasi, which means ‘Servants of God or Goddesses’, is a practice, which prevailed in ancient India. Under this practice, virgin girls are dedicated to temples for temple service or religious mendicancy. Earlier they enjoyed higher status in the society than other women due to the fact that they cannot be a widow. They mainly performed rituals in the temples and took part in the performance of sacred dances, sang, and played instruments. However, slowly they started getting sexually exploited by the upper-caste members of society. They now can be defined as a ‘servant of God but wife of the whole town’ (Torri, 2009). These girls didn’t even reach puberty and were forbidden from getting married in a traditional sense. They had to sexually serve the priests, inmates of the temple, the Zamindars and other men of power as it was considered equal to serving God.

On observing the injustice dealt to these women, Christian lady Missionary, Amy Carmichael, started working towards rehabilitation of these women. She saved a young girl just initiated as Devadasi in Tuticorin village, near Madurai in Tirunelveli district of the then Madras province, on 1st March 1901. Following this, she led a delegation to the administrative officers of the district. In 1904, Amy Carmichael had rescued and adopted about seventeen women from this cruel tradition. Later, she started a Devadasi Rescue Home named, ‘Tara Mandal’ for their basic education. She extended her rehabilitation work by starting a home at Donavar as well. Thus, the year, 1901, is marked as the beginning of ‘the organised effort for the rehabilitation of the Devadasi in Tamil Nadu’.

Due to such efforts, the British Government of India enacted a Devadasi Prevention Act in 1934. However, it was not enforced in independent India. Other Christian missionaries like the famous doctor, Willium Wallness and Mrs. Mary Wallness, Mr. Haward and Mrs. Haward of Miraj, and Kadoli Central Maharashtra also worked for the eradication of for Devadasi tradition.

Although the government was also fighting against these social evils, it was mainly because of the missionaries’ effort that brought in social acceptance to shed these evils, gradually. The modern Tamil woman was educated to be aware of the social evils and their basic rights. The missionaries showcased the examples of some women, who excelled in their jobs and live proudly in the society. For this purpose, separate women’s institutions were started. Most of these were created by the Christian missionaries.

Conclusion

By and large, the missionaries have been functioning in India for the purpose of the spread of Christianity. However, they achieved conversions as a result of fulfilment of the social obligations, disaster management, and eradication of the evils such as sati, slavery, casteism, ignorance, and inequalities. It will not be an exaggeration to conclude that the role of Christian missionaries in the renaissance in India is

considerable. Tamil Nadu stepped into a new cultured era on account of the steps laid and maintained by the Christian missionaries.

*Role of Missionaries in
Tamil Nadu*

Check Your Progress

1. Who was the pioneer, when it comes to Christian missionaries in India?
2. Who translated the New Testament into Tamil?
3. List any five contributions of Christian missionaries.

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11.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Francis Xavier was the pioneer, when it comes to Christian missionaries.
2. Bartholomeo Chagan Balk translated the New Testament into Tamil.
3. The contributions of Christian missionaries include:
 - (a) Establishing orphanages
 - (b) Establishing primary health centres
 - (c) Developing nursing
 - (d) Improving old age care
 - (e) Women enlightenment

11.5 SUMMARY

- During the 19th Century, Tamil Nadu witnessed a renaissance, which was mainly due to the pioneering efforts put in by the Christian Missionaries. They served Tamil Nadu irrespective of caste, creed, or colour and also worked with determination and commitment.
- The Christianity as a religion taught the locals, Western style of life as well as the discipline, character, along with the religious culture under a single umbrella called Christianity, without distinction of caste, creed, or colour.
- The modern educational methods and standards were brought in, which changed the culture of Tamil Nadu completely. Missionaries commenced their religious pursuits and education as early as in the year 1830.
- The beginning of 19th Century saw the abolition of a number of cruel practices that were practised against the women and children, due to the efforts of missionaries. These practices which were deeply rooted Indian psyche were abolished by creating awareness and imposing strict laws.

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11.6 KEY WORDS

- **Diocese:** It refers to a district under the pastoral care of a bishop in the Christian Church.
- **Brahmacharya:** It is a concept within Indian religions that literally means 'conduct consistent with Brahma'.

11.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. What were the two most important benefits of Christianity and the missionary activities?
2. What was the role of missionaries with regards to education in Tamil Nadu?

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the work of various Christian Missionaries in Tamil Nadu.
2. Describe the social evils which were eradicated by Christian Missionaries.

11.8 FURTHER READINGS

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*Role of Missionaries in
Tamil Nadu*

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BLOCK - IV
DRAVIDIAN MOVEMENT AND VARIOUS RULERS

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UNIT 12 DRAVIDIAN MOVEMENT

Structure

- 12.0 Introduction
- 12.1 Objectives
- 12.2 Brahmin and Non-Brahmin Divide
 - 12.2.1 Non-Brahmins Organisations
 - 12.2.2 Brahmin Organisations
- 12.3 South Indian Liberal Federation or the Justice Party
 - 12.3.1 Justice Party's Policies and its Fallout
- 12.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 12.5 Summary
- 12.6 Key Words
- 12.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 12.8 Further Readings

12.0 INTRODUCTION

The Dravidian movement was a massive movement started with a small event of the formation of the Justice Party on November 20, 1916 in Victoria Memorial Hall in Madras by T. M. Nair and P. Theagaraya Chetty. It was formed as a result of a series of non-Brahmin conferences and meetings in the Madras Presidency. Caste discriminations had created a huge gulf between the Brahmins and Non-Brahmins in Tamil Nadu culminating in a communal violence during the late 19th and early 20th century.

12.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the origins of the Dravidian movement
- Discuss the formation of Non-Brahmin organisation
- Describe the South Indian Liberal Federation or the Justice Party

12.2 BRAHMIN AND NON-BRAHMIN DIVIDE

Communal division between Brahmins and non-Brahmins was prevalent in the Madras Presidency during the late 19th and early 20th century, mainly due to caste prejudices and disproportionate amount Brahmin representation in the government

and other public jobs. The Justice Party's foundation marked the culmination of several efforts to establish an organisation to represent the non-Brahmins in Madras Presidency.

The Brahmins in Madras Presidency enjoyed a higher position in India's social hierarchy. By the 1850s, Telugu and Tamil Brahmins, comprising only 3.2% of the population, began to increase their political power by filling out most of the jobs, which were open to Indian men, with the men from their own caste. They dominated the administrative services and the newly created urban professions in the 19th and early 20th century. The higher literacy and English language proficiency among Brahmins were instrumental in this ascendancy. The political, social, and economical divide between Brahmins and non-Brahmins became more apparent in the beginning of the 20th century.

Although the caste groups consist of Brahmins and Non Brahmins among Hindus, Muslims, Indian Christians, Europeans, and Eurasians, the minority population of Brahmins enjoyed the majority in the employment. By default, Brahmins occupied key governmental positions such as Deputy Collector and Sub Judges in District Munsifs courts. This remained as an anomaly for the Justice party to address, when they came to power. The dominance of Brahmins in the other fields of political importance and power:

- During 1910–20, eight out of the nine official members (appointed by the Governor of Madras) were Brahmins in the Madras Legislative Council.
- A similar pattern was found with the members elected in the council from the district boards and municipalities.
- Regional Branch of the Indian National Congress was also dominated by Brahmins.
- 11 major newspapers and magazines were found in the presidency. Of which, four (The Hindu, Indian Review, Swadesamithran, and Andhra Pathrika) were published by Brahmins while New India, run by Annie Besant, was sympathetic to the Brahmins.

12.2.1 Non-Brahmins Organisations

In 1909, two lawyers, P. Subrahmanyam and M. Purushotham Naidu, announced their plans to establish an organisation named 'The Madras Non-Brahmin Association' and recruit a thousand non-Brahmin members before October 1909. They elicited no response from the non-Brahmin populace and the organisation never saw the light of the day. In 1912, disaffected non-Brahmin members of the bureaucracy like Saravana Pillai, G. Veerasamy Naidu, Doraiswami Naidu, and S. Narayanaswamy Naidu established the 'Madras United League' with C. Natesa Mudaliar as the Secretary. The league restricted itself to social activities and distanced itself from contemporary politics. On 1st October 1912, the league was reorganised and renamed as the 'Madras Dravidian Association'. The association

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opened many branches in Madras city. Its main achievement was to establish a hostel for non-Brahmin students. It also organised annual 'At-home' functions for non-Brahmin graduates and published books presenting their demands

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Role of British government in uplifting the Non-Brahmins

Historians differ about the extent of British influence on the evolution of the non-Brahmin movement. Kathleen Gough argues that although England played a role, the Dravidian movement had a bigger influence in South India. Eugene F. Irschick (1969) holds the view that British officials sought to instigate the growth of non-Brahmanism, but does not characterise it simply as a product of that policy. David. A. Washbrook (2008) disagrees with Irschick and states that 'Non-Brahminism became for a time synonymous with anti-nationalism—a fact which surely indicates its origins as a product of government policy.' Washbrook's portrayal has been contested by P. Rajaraman (1988), who argues that the movement was an inevitable result of a longstanding 'social cleavage' between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins.

While the role of British in the development of the non-Brahmin movement is broadly accepted by other historians. The statistics used by non-Brahmin leaders in their 1916 manifesto were prepared by senior Indian Civil Service officers for submission to the public services commission. The Mylapore Brahmin faction rose to prominence in the early 20th century. England, while acknowledging its usefulness, was wary and supported non-Brahmins for several government posts. They sought to weaken the Mylaporean Brahmins by appointing non-Brahmins to several government posts. Lord Amphill was a vocal opponent of the Mylapore Brahmins and advocated the induction of non-Brahmin members in the government. In 1912, under the influence of Sir Alexander Cardew, the Madras Secretariat, for the first time used Brahmin or non-Brahmin as a criterion for job appointments. By 1918, it was maintaining a list of Brahmins and non-Brahmins, preferring the latter.

Identity politics among linguistic groups was common in British India. In every area, some groups considered the British less threatening than a Congress-led independent government.

Subsequently, stronger groups were formed to denounce the supremacy of the Brahmins in key economic, political, and power positions by various methods. Such methods were mainly used to bring out the displeasure to the knowledge of the Crown:

- Expressed by the Non-Brahmin leaders in the form of pamphlets and open letters written to the Madras Governor.
- Such pamphlets are found to have been authored by the pseudonymous author calling himself 'fair play' in 1895.

This led to the formation of the fourth faction by the non-Brahmin, which rose to compete with the three new factions formed amongst the Brahmins. This faction later became the Justice party.

Causes

There are several causes for the formation of Non-Brahmin organisations:

- The primary cause for this grouping was the social inequality, which prevailed all over India.
- The flame of Western education brought in a lot of social changes in the outlook and living style of the people.
- The education system was conceived as a tool to go beyond religious preaching.
- The high level of Brahmin dominance since time immemorial
- Oppression and untouchability in the sociological system
- Caste system determining the economic supremacy and power
- The specific social division of the 'Varnas', the Brahmins, Kshathriyas, Vysias, and Sudhras determined the social status, creating inequalities and also the obstacles in the progress of the deserving person
- Women were denied their social status and were force to live as dependants all their lives.
- Women started realising their rights and opportunities available to them at the advent of the British rule and with the modern education system.
- Social perception travelled beyond the temple and priests towards a society based on rationalism and reasoning and with equal opportunities for all.

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12.2.2 Brahmin Organisations

By the second decade of the 20th century, the Brahmins of the presidency were themselves found divided into three factions, namely:

- Mylapore faction comprising Chetpet Iyers and Vembakkam Iyengars,
- Egmore faction led by the editor of The Hindu, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar
- Salem nationalists led by C. Rajagopalachari.

Other dominant factions in the print media were The Madras Mail and Madras Times, managed by Europeans sympathetic to the crown and three Evangelical non-political periodicals.

12.3 SOUTH INDIAN LIBERAL FEDERATION OR THE JUSTICE PARTY

On 20th November 1916, about thirty prominent non-Brahmin leaders met in Victoria Public Hall under Chetty and T. M. Nair. They established the South Indian People's Association (SIPA) to publish English, Tamil, and Telugu newspapers to publicise grievances of non-Brahmins, with Chetty as the secretary.

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Chetty and Nair had been political rivals in the Madras Corporation council, but Natesa Mudaliar was able to reconcile their differences. In December 1916, the association published 'The Non Brahmin Manifesto', affirming its loyalty and faith in the British Raj, but decrying Brahmin bureaucratic dominance and urged for non-Brahmins to 'press their claims as against the virtual domination of the Brahmin Caste'. The manifesto was harshly criticised by the nationalist newspaper, *The Hindu* (on 20 December 1916):

It is with much pain and surprise that we have perused this document. It gives a manifestly unfair and distorted representation of many of the matters to which it makes reference. It can serve no purpose but it is bound to create bad blood between persons belonging to the Great Indian Community.

The meeting of November 1916 also formed the political association called South Indian Liberal Federation (SILF). Later, the association came to be popularly known as the Justice Party, after the English daily Justice published by it.

On 19th August 1917, the first non-Brahmin conference was convened at Coimbatore under the presidency of Ramarayaningar. In the following months, several non-Brahmin conferences were organised. On 18th October, the party published its objectives, which are:

- To create and promote the education, social, economic, political, material and moral progress of all communities in Southern India other than that of the Brahmins
- To discuss public questions and make a true and timely representation to the government of the views and interests of the people of Southern India with the object of safeguarding and promoting the interests of all communities other than that of the Brahmins
- To disseminate sound and liberal views with regards to public opinion by public lectures, distribution of literary works, and by other means

Between August and December 1917, conferences were organised all over the Madras Presidency—at Coimbatore, Bikkavole, Pulivendla, Bezwada, Salem, and Tirunelveli. These conferences and other meetings symbolised the arrival of the SILF as a non-Brahmin political organisation.

During its early years, the party was involved in petitioning the imperial administrative bodies and British politicians, demanding more representation for non-Brahmins in the government.

When a de-archaic system of administration was established due to the 1919 Montagu–Chelmsford reforms, the Justice Party took part in presidential governance. In 1920, it won the first direct elections in the presidency and formed the government. For the next seventeen years, it formed four out of the five ministries and was in power for thirteen years. It was the main political alternative to the nationalist Indian National Congress in Madras. After it lost to the Congress in the 1937 election, it never recovered.

The features of the new face of the Justice Party:

- In the year 1938, when the Justice party lost in the elections, Erode Venkatappa Ramasamy or Thanthai Periyar assumed the leadership of the party.
- Justice Party was renamed at a rally in 1944. Periyar, in his capacity as the leader of the Justice Party, declared that the party would henceforth be known as the Dravidar Kazhagam, or 'Dravidian Association' and withdrew it from the electoral politics.
- A few, who disagreed with Periyar, started a splinter group, claiming to be the original Justice Party. This party was led by veteran Justice Party leader P. T. Rajan. This party survived until 1957.

Periyar promoted the principles of rationalism and self-respect, and fought for women's rights and eradication of caste system. He opposed the exploitation and marginalisation of the non-Brahmin Dravidian people of South India by the dominant Brahmins and the imposition of what he considered as Indo-Aryan India. Periyar made serious efforts to find a solution for the eradication of:

- Brahmin's dominance over the other lower castes
- Discrimination of the Dravidian community
- Superstitious beliefs and worship of god
- Discrimination based on gender
- Inequalities in the society and the class conflict between working class and the capitalist class

Dravidar Kazhagam vehemently fought for the abolition of untouchability. It also focused its attention on the liberation of women, women's education, consent for marriage, widow remarriage, orphanages, and mercy homes.

12.3.1 Justice Party's Policies and its Fallout

The role of Justice Party in the political arena and its rule for over thirteen long years before the independence of India set the stage for a number of social changes and systems based on the British educational system. The Justice Party, however, later lost its face and got converted into Dravidian Movement for a social change at the hands of Periyar. The philosophy of the Dravidian Movement was well spelt; they were not for Electoral Politics, but for social change politics.

The Justice Party was isolated in contemporary Indian politics by its many controversial activities. It opposed Brahmins in civil service and politics; this anti-Brahmin attitude in fact, shaped many of its ideas and policies. It opposed Annie Besant and her home rule movement, because home rule was believed to benefit the Brahmins. The party also campaigned against the non-cooperation movement in the presidency. It was at odds with M. K. Gandhi, primarily due to his praise for Brahmanism. Its mistrust of the Brahmin-dominated Congress led it to adopt a

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hostile stance toward the Indian independence movement. The Justice Party's period in power is worth remembering for the introduction of caste-based reservations, and educational and religious reforms. It is also remembered for participating in the anti-Hindi agitations of 1937–40. The party had a role in creation of Andhra and Annamalai universities and for developing the area around present-day Theagaroya Nagar in Madras city. The Justice Party and the Dravidar Kazhagam are the ideological predecessors of present-day Dravidian parties like the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and the All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, which have ruled Tamil Nadu.

The main reasons for the fall of the Justice Party are:

- Though the party was launched for the removal of the dominance of Brahmins, it, itself, got converted into an organisation of high caste Non-Brahmins.
- The down trodden and the untouchables had no role to play in this politics floated by the Justice Party.
- In order to promote the Dravidian unity by marginalising the Brahmin dominance, Justice Party never hesitated to sympathise and support the Crown. This made them avoid participating in the independence struggle. People did not approve the role of the Justice Party as an opponent of the independence struggle.
- The Justice Party was dominated by the leaders, who believed in the traditional superstitions and the religious policies. Other oppressed minorities such as Muslims, dalits, and the new Christians were removed from the party.
- It was a political race between the Telugus and the Tamils.
- The Justice Party proved itself to be a broker for upliftment of upper caste Non Brahmins only.
- The Justice party could not face the Congress, Brahmins, and the Swaraj movement for independence.
- The Justice Party could not fulfil the objectives for which the party was formed.

Check Your Progress

1. What were the reasons for Brahmins' ascendancy to the higher status in Tamil society?
2. Who was the Secretary of 'Madras United League'?
3. What was the 'The Non Brahmin Manifesto' all about?
4. Mention any three social problems targeted by Thanthai Periyar.

12.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The reasons for Brahmins' ascendancy to the higher status in Tamil society were the higher literacy and English language proficiency among Brahmins.
2. C. Natesa Mudaliar was the Secretary of 'Madras United League'.
3. 'The Non Brahmin Manifesto' affirmed its loyalty and faith in the British Raj, but decried Brahmin bureaucratic dominance and urged for non-Brahmins to 'press their claims as against the virtual domination of the Brahmin Caste'.
4. The social problems targeted by Thanthai Periyar were:
 - (a) Brahmin's dominance over the other lower castes
 - (b) Discrimination of the Dravidian community
 - (c) Superstitious beliefs and worship of god

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12.5 SUMMARY

- Dravidian movement is a massive movement started with a small event of the formation of the Justice Party on November 20, 1916 in Victoria Memorial Hall in Madras by T. M. Nair and P. Theagaraya Chetty. It was formed as a result of a series of non-Brahmin conferences and meetings in the Madras Presidency.
- In 1909, two lawyers, P. Subrahmanyam and M. Purushotham Naidu, announced their plans to establish an organisation named 'The Madras Non-Brahmin Association' and recruit a thousand non-Brahmin members before October 1909. They elicited no response from the non-Brahmin populace and the organisation never saw the light of the day.
- Historians differ about the extent of British influence on the evolution of the non-Brahmin movement. Kathleen Gough argues that although England played a role, the Dravidian movement had a bigger influence in South India.
- On 20th November 1916, about thirty prominent non-Brahmin leaders met in Victoria Public Hall under Chetty and T. M. Nair. They established the South Indian People's Association (SIPA) to publish English, Tamil, and Telugu newspapers to publicise grievances of non-Brahmins, with Chetty as the secretary.
- The meeting of November 1916 formed the political association called South Indian Liberal Federation (SILF). The role of Justice Party in the political arena and its rule for over thirteen long years before the independence of

India set the stage for a number of social changes and systems based on the British educational system.

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12.6 KEY WORDS

- **District Munsiff Court:** The court of the lowest order handling matters pertaining to civil matters in the district.
 - **Swaraj:** Self-government or independence for India.
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12.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. Which fields were dominated by Brahmins in Tamil Nadu?
2. What kind of organisations were formed by the Brahmins?
3. What were the features of the new face of the Justice Party?

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the role of British government in uplifting the Non-Brahmins.
 2. Trace the formation of the Justice Party, along with its objectives.
 3. Describe the policies and the fallout of the Justice Party.
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UNIT 13 SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

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Structure

- 13.0 Introduction
- 13.1 Objectives
- 13.2 Role of Social Activists
- 13.3 Social and Cultural Issues
- 13.4 Justice Manifesto
 - 13.4.1 Manifesto vis-à-vis the Actual Performance of the Justice Party
 - 13.4.2 Self Respect Movement of Periyar
- 13.5 Status of Women
- 13.6 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 13.7 Summary
- 13.8 Key Words
- 13.9 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 13.10 Further Readings

13.0 INTRODUCTION

During British rule, a number of reforms were undertaken to develop and transform Tamil society. Many of the obstacles were removed by legislations, which were in turn, encouraged by the social reform activists. The major aim of all the social reform activists was to eradicate the evils of caste system and work for women's advancement and religious reformations. In this unit, we will discuss the contribution of various activists, especially Periyar, towards the social transformation of Tamil Nadu.

13.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the social transformation affected by the Dravidian movement
- Discuss the Self-Respect movement of Periyar
- Describe the status of women during that period

13.2 ROLE OF SOCIAL ACTIVISTS

There are several individuals and organisations, who struggled to bring about a change and reformation in the society, which was suffering due to the superstitious beliefs, lack of public instructions (education) and absence of societal determination

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to remove the obstacles and develop. However, the following organisations and activists played a major role in changing the consciousness of the society:

- (a) **Vaikunda Swami (1803-1851):** He carried out social reforms and transformations in Kanyakumari. He advocated for the unity of all irrespective of caste, creed, or colour. Untouchables were also encouraged by him to come out of the social restrictions imposed on them.
- (b) **Brahma Samaj:** Raja Ram Mohan Roy established Brahma Samaj in Bengal. The ideals reached Madras in 1864 and Brahma Samaj of Madras was started by two advocates of the Madras High Court. Brahma Samaj played a major role in the society through a number of reformations and transformations. The evils of casteism, superstitious beliefs, and discrimination against women were all the focus of their activities.
- (c) **Arul Prakasa Vallalar (1823-1874):** Vallalar started social reforms activities in Tamil Nadu at Vadalur, near Cuddalore. He also spread his philosophy of unity and peace amongst the people of that place. As he was considered more of a religious head, his other preaching went unnoticed or unrecognised.
- (d) **Vedanayagam Pillai (1826-1889):** Vedanayagam pillai from Tanjore district stood for women's rights, education, and liberation from the enslaved status. He was considered a literary force in creating awareness in the society.
- (e) **Theosophical Society:** In 1882, Theosophical Society was started in Madras. This was non-religious and non-political reform mission. A lot of activities including the Hindu Religion Reformation and social transformation were carried out by this society.
- (f) **Ramakrishna Mission:** The year, 1897, saw Swami Vivekananda's visit to Madras, where he expressed an idea to start the Ramakrishna Mission. The Mission was started at Belur, West Bengal in 1897-98. This Mission has carried out a lot of service activities involving social services during disasters and famines. Educational institutions were also started by this mission.
- (g) **Christian Missionaries:** Individually and as a group, the services of Christian Missionaries should always be remembered in the light of their overall service to the people of Tamil Nadu. They are responsible for addressing most of the social evils present in Tamil Nadu. Although the missionaries achieved their ultimate goal of religious conversions, they also rendered service for the betterment of the downtrodden and untouchables in creating a casteless society of Tamils. Rich with modern education, new cultural and social practices, Tamils started learning a sense of consciousness and lifestyle.

13.3 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ISSUES

As we had already discussed in Unit 10, British rule in Tamil Nadu brought in a variety of changes in the social, cultural, as well as economic system of Tamil society. British rule brought in a lot of perceivable changes in the society. It triggered many reforms in the societal structure of Tamil Nadu. Even today, we follow many of the British legacies that has been imbibed into the Indian consciousness and culture. Many practices and etiquettes as well as habits are considered acceptable as a part of development and progress. The social issues dealt by the British included the following:

- Caste differences
- Untouchability
- Women enslavement
- Temple entry rules
- Brahmin supremacy

During the rule of the Crown, all these issues were found to be obstacles for the development. Thus, various steps for awareness were taken in this direction for social reforms and transformations to commence rapidly and become an ongoing part of the societal development in Tamil Nadu.

13.4 JUSTICE MANIFESTO

In the 1916 elections of the Imperial Legislative Council, the non-Brahmin candidates from the southern districts constituency and landlords' constituency were defeated by the Brahmin candidates. These defeats increased animosity and the necessity to form a political organisation to represent non-Brahmin interests. As we have already discussed the formation of the Justice Party in the previous unit, here we will concentrate on the manifesto published by them. On 20th November 1916, about thirty prominent non-Brahmin leaders met in Victoria Public Hall under Chetty and T. M. Nair. In December 1916, the association published 'The Non Brahmin Manifesto', affirming its loyalty and faith in the British Raj, but decrying Brahmin bureaucratic dominance and urged for non-Brahmins to 'press their claims as against the virtual domination of the Brahmin Caste'. The manifesto was harshly criticised by the nationalist newspaper, *The Hindu* (on 20 December 1916):

It is with much pain and surprise that we have perused this document. It gives a manifestly unfair and distorted representation of many of the matters to which it makes reference. It can serve no purpose but it is bound to create bad blood between persons belonging to the Great Indian Community.

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13.4.1 Manifesto vis-à-vis the Actual Performance of the Justice Party**NOTES**

The manifesto provided for a strong, idealistic approach to eradicate Brahmin domination and spread Non-Brahmin representation in the government and other economic activities. However, the Justice Party could not come out of these ideals to participate in the independence struggle and also traded-off the national spirit for reaching their manifesto's goals. During its years in power, Justice passed a number of laws with lasting impact. Some of its legislative initiatives are still in practice. In 1921, the first Justice government passed the first communal government order, thereby becoming the first elected body in the Indian legislative history to legislate reservations, which have since become a benchmark. The Madras Hindu Religious Endowment Act, introduced in 1922 and passed in 1925, brought many Hindu Temples under the direct control of the state government. This Act set the precedent for later Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment (HR & CE) Acts and the current policies of the Tamil Nadu. The first Justice Government reversed the policy of the Government of India (Act of 1919) prohibiting women from becoming legislators. In 1921, eligibility to vote was made gender neutral. This resolution cleared the way for Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi's nomination to the council in 1926, when she became the first woman to become a member of any legislature in India.

In 1922, the first Justice Ministry officially replaced the terms 'Panchamar' or 'Paraiyar' (which were deemed derogatory) with 'Adi Dravidar' to denote the Scheduled Castes in the presidency.

The Madras Elementary Education Act of 1920 introduced compulsory education for boys and girls and increased elementary education funding. It was amended in 1934 and 1935. The act penalised parents for withdrawing their children from schools. The Madras University Act of 1923 expanded the administrative body of the University of Madras and made it more representative. In 1920, the Madras Corporation introduced the Mid-day Meal Scheme with the approval of the legislative council. It was a breakfast scheme in a corporation school at Thousand Lights, Madras. Later, it expanded to four more schools. This was the precursor to the free noon meal schemes introduced by the Tamil Nadu government.

The State Aid to Industries Act, passed in 1922 and amended in 1935, advanced loans for the establishment of industries. The Malabar Tenancy Act of 1931 controversially strengthened the legal rights of agricultural tenants and gave them the 'right to occupy (land) in some cases'.

Justice governments also initiated slum clearance schemes and built housing colonies and public bathing houses in the congested areas. They also established the Indian School of Medicine in 1924 to research and promote Ayurveda, Siddha, and Unani schools of traditional medicine. The Madras Town Planning Act of 1920, created residential colonies to cope up with the city's rapid population growth. Universities were also established during the rule of Justice Party.

Political legacy

The Justice party served as a non-Brahmin political organisation. Though non-Brahmin movements had been in existence since the late 19th century, Justice was the first such political organisation. The party's participation in the governing process under diarchy taught the value of parliamentary democracy to the educated elite of the Madras state. In fact, Justice and Dravidar Kazhagam are the political forerunners of the present day Dravidian parties. The party began to accept Brahmin members only in October 1934. The Party considered inclusion of Brahmins and Muslims at a later stage to overcome the open protests and disapprovals from Brahmins and the Muslims. However, by that time the Party was turned into a Dravidian Movement away from legislature politics. The pressure to compete with the Justice party forced the Congress party to let more non-Brahmins into the party power structure. The party's policies disrupted the established social hierarchy and increased the animosity between the Brahmin and non-Brahmin communities.

Nationalism

The Justice party was loyal to the British Empire. In its early years, Justice opposed the Home Rule Movement. It did not send representatives to the Central Legislative Assembly, the national parliamentary body. The Justice Party government headed by the Raja of Panagal banned the publication and distribution of poems written by Indian nationalist, Subramanya Bharathy. However, by the mid-1920s, the party adopted more nationalist policies. During the civil disobedience campaign, the Justice governments did not protest the policemen's harsh measures.

Justice party, which had captured power in 1920, claiming to represent all non-Brahmins in the presidency, gradually lost the support of many communities alienating Scheduled Castes and Muslims. Justice party never regained Muslim support, because it failed to convince the group that high-caste Hindus had not received a disproportionate allocation of jobs opened up by communal reservation.

13.4.2 Self Respect Movement of Periyar

The Self-Respect Movement was started by the face of new Justice Party, Erode Venkatappa Ramasamy or Thanthai Periyar, whose maxims included:

- All are equal, irrespective of their economic status.
- Men and women are equal and thus, equal opportunities should be provided to them in all streams.
- Caste, religion, country, and colour based discriminations should be eradicated to move towards unity.
- All classes of the strata of society should enjoy their share of the resources and opportunities, without any discrimination
- Knowledge, research, views, and feelings of every individual should be respected and freedom should prevail.

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Dravida Kazagam declared that their movement is not hatred towards Brahmins, but the disapproval of their supremacy and an attempt to give equal opportunities to the other castes, who have been denied their rights so far. In 1929 and 1930, the Self-Respect maxims were expanded and widely accepted and later, laid the foundation for the social transformations in Tamil Nadu. One of the areas of Periyar's focus was on the upliftment of rural communities. In a booklet called *Village Uplift*, Periyar pleaded for rural reform. At that time rural India still formed the largest part of the Indian subcontinent, in spite of the ongoing process of urbanisation. Thus, the distinction between rural and urban had meant an economic and social degradation for rural inhabitants. Periyar wanted to eradicate the concept of 'village' as a discriminatory word, just as the concept of 'outcast' among social groups. Periyar advocated for a location, where neither the name nor the situation or its conditions imply differences among people either by chance or by design.

Though the DMK split from the Dravidar Kazhagam, the organisation made efforts to carry on the Periyar's Self-Respect Movement to villagers and urban students. Periyar also blamed the capitalists for their control of machineries, creating difficulties for the workers. According to his philosophy, rationalism, which was supposed to lead the way for peaceful life, had resulted in poverty and worries for the people because of dominating forces. He stated that 'there is no use of simply acquiring titles or amassing wealth if one has no self-respect or scientific knowledge.' Periyar's philosophy of self-respect was based on his image of an ideal and a universally accepted world. His philosophy preaches that human actions should be based on rational thinking. Further, the outcome of the natural instinct of human beings is to examine every object and every action and even nature with a spirit of inquiry and to refuse to submit to anything irrational, which he compares to slavery. Freedom means respect towards thoughts and actions considered 'right' by human beings on the basis of 'reason'. There is not much difference between 'freedom' and 'self-respect'.

Periyar's foremost appeal to people was to develop self-respect. He preached that the Brahmins had monopolised and cheated other communities for decades and deprived them of self-respect. He stated that most Brahmins claimed to belong to a 'superior' community by birth with the reserved privilege of being in charge of temples and performing *archanas*. He felt that they were trying to reassert their control over religion by using their superior caste status to claim the exclusive privilege to touch idols or enter the sanctum sanctorum. Periyar brought in the radical thinking and a paradigm shift in the minds of the Dravidian Community. Thus, the philosophy of self-respect taught that human actions should be guided by reason, right and wrong should be understood from rational thinking and conclusions drawn from reason should be respected under all circumstances.

13.5 STATUS OF WOMEN

The beginning of the 19th century saw a number of cruel practices that were practised against women and children like:

- Sati
- Female foeticide
- Child Marriages
- Purdah System
- Polygamy
- Widowhood
- Devadasi system

As we have already discussed in the Unit 11, the Christian missionaries were instrumental in bringing about the much needed change in the society of Tamil Nadu. Due to their efforts, many of the evil practices were abolished and strict laws were about against them. However, the Justice Party has played a crucial role in the upliftment of women as well. It was the Justice Party, which brought out the legislation to reverse the government's Act prohibiting women to become legislators. This rule reversal paved the way for future reforms for securing women's status in Tamil Nadu.

As a rationalist and ardent social reformer, Periyar vehemently advocated that women should be given their legitimate position in society equal to men, with good education and the right to property. He didn't think age and social customs as a bar for women to marry. He was keen for women to realise their rights and be worthy citizens of their country. Periyar fought against the orthodox traditions of marriage as suppression of women in Tamil Nadu and throughout the Indian sub-continent. Though arranged marriages were meant to enable a couple to live together throughout life, it was manipulated to enslave women. Much worse was the practice of child marriages practised throughout India at that time. Periyar was against all of the superstitions that were oppressing women. According to him:

- Women should have the right to live, even after her husband is dead.
- Remarriage of widows was also advocated by Periyar.
- Periyar was against the dowry system, where the bride's family is supposed to provide the husband a huge amount of money or property. But in many instances, dowries were misused by bridegrooms. There have been hundreds of thousands of cases, where wives have been murdered, mutilated, and burnt alive because the father of the bride was unable to make the dowry payment to the husband. Periyar fiercely stood up against this abuse meted out against women.

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- Periyar fought fiercely for for women to have the right to separate or divorce their husbands under reasonable circumstances.
- Birth control remained taboo in society of Periyar's time, he advocated for it not only for the health of women and population control, but for the liberation of women.
- On chastity of women, Periyar criticised the hypocrisy and argued that it should either be applied to the men or not at all.
- Periyar advocated getting rid of the Devadasi system. In his view, it was an example of the worst kind of degradations of women, attaching them to temples for the entertainment of others and as temple prostitutes.
- Further, for the liberation of women, Periyar pushed for their right to have an education and join the armed services and the police force. He held that, in matters of education and employment, there should be no difference between men and women.

Check Your Progress

1. State the major aim of all the social reform activists.
2. What were the social issues dealt by the British?
3. What was the Madras Hindu Religious Endowment Act all about?
4. What did Periyar's philosophy preach?

13.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The major aim of all the social reform activists was to eradicate the evils of caste system and work for women's advancement and religious reformations.
2. The social issues dealt by the British included the following:
 - (a) Caste differences
 - (b) Untouchability
 - (c) Women enslavement
 - (d) Temple entry rules
 - (e) Brahmin supremacy
3. The Madras Hindu Religious Endowment Act, introduced in 1922 and passed in 1925, brought many Hindu temples under the direct control of the state government.
4. The Periyar's philosophy preached that human actions should be based on rational thinking. Further, the outcome of the natural instinct of human beings

is to examine every object and every action and even nature with a spirit of inquiry and to refuse to submit to anything irrational, which he compares to slavery

Social Transformation

13.7 SUMMARY

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- During the British rule, a number of reforms were undertaken to develop and transform the society. Many of the obstacles were removed by legislations, which were in turn, encouraged by the social reform activists.
- There are several individuals and organisations, which struggled to bring about a change and reformation in the society, which was suffering due to the superstitious beliefs, lack of public instructions (education) and absence of societal determination to remove the obstacles and develop.
- On 20th November 1916, about thirty prominent non-Brahmin leaders met in Victoria Public Hall under Chetty and T. M. Nair. In December 1916, the association published 'The Non Brahmin Manifesto', affirming its loyalty and faith in the British Raj, but decrying Brahmin bureaucratic dominance and urged for non-Brahmins to 'press their claims as against the virtual domination of the Brahmin Caste'.
- The Self-Respect Movement was started by the face of new Justice Party, Erode Venkatappa Ramasamy or Thanthai Periyar. Dravida Kazagam declared that their movement is not hatred towards Brahmins, but the disapproval of their supremacy and an attempt to give equal opportunities to the other castes.
- The beginning of 19th Century saw a number of cruel practices that were practised against women and children. As a rationalist and ardent social reformer, Periyar vehemently advocated that women should be given their legitimate position in society equal to men, with good education and the right to property.

13.8 KEY WORDS

- **Diarchy:** It refers to government by two independent authorities (especially in India 1919–35).
- **Archanas:** It was a special, personal, abbreviated puja done by temple priests in which the name, birth star and family lineage of a devotee are recited to invoke individual guidance and blessings.
- **Sanctum Sanctorum:** The holy of holies in the Jewish temple.

13.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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Short Answer Questions

1. What were the maxims of the Self-Respect Movement?
2. Discuss the strong convictions of Periyar with regards to women.

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the role of various social activists in transforming the society.
2. Evaluate the actual performance of the Justice Party vis-à-vis their manifesto.

13.10 FURTHER READINGS

Gopalakrishnan, M.D. 1991. *Periyar: Father of the Tamil race*. New Delhi: Emerald.

Mangalamurugesan, N.K. 1979. *Self-Respect Movement in Tamil Nadu, 1920-1940*. Madurai: Koodal Publishers.

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UNIT 14 DRAVIDAR KAZHAGAM MOVEMENT AND SOCIAL LEGISLATIONS

*Dravidar Kazhagam
Movement and
Social Legislations*

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Structure

- 14.0 Introduction
- 14.1 Objectives
- 14.2 Social Legislations
- 14.3 Dravidian Journals and Literature
 - 14.3.1 Publications of D.K. Party
 - 14.3.2 From Stage to Screen
- 14.4 Launch of the DK Movement
 - 14.4.1 Principles and Reforms of the Dravidar Kazhagam
- 14.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 14.6 Summary
- 14.7 Key Words
- 14.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 14.9 Further Readings

14.0 INTRODUCTION

At the end of 19th century, Tamil Nadu witnessed a lot of activities related to social reformation. Social legislations were in the offing as early as in 1918 during the time of British rule. The Indian social activists, especially the Dravidians played an active part in raising voice against social injustice and uplifting the downtrodden people. This was mainly accomplished through the publication of various journals and literature relating the poor condition of the certain section of society. However, The DK or Dravidar Kazhagam movement played a huge role as well in uplifting the social conditions and putting pressure on the government to form laws and legislations. This unit throws light on these legislations and the movement.

14.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the role of social legislations in uplifting the society
- Discuss the Dravidian journals and literature, which led to social reform
- Describe the launch and principles of the Dravidar Kazhagam movement

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14.2 SOCIAL LEGISLATIONS

As the request of the Justice Party to prepare an electoral role based on the caste classifications was not accepted by South Borough Voting Franchise Committee of the Government, the Meston Committee was constituted. After the publication of the report of the Meston Committee, Justice Party faced the electorate. In 1919, the Constitution Reforms Act was passed and thus, during the general elections in 1920, Brahmins and Non Brahmins finally got a direct opportunity to fight each other in elections. The Justice Party won in this elections. Other legislations introduced during this period are:

- In 1921-22, Non-Brahmins were given reservation in the government jobs, local government, educational institutions, and social organisations, through a legislation. An order was passed for a community based representation.
- The usage of the word 'Paraya-Panchama' was replaced by the word 'Adi Dravida' by an Act of Social Justice in 1922.
- Downtrodden were given free education through various plans. Mid-day meal scheme was introduced for children at school. 37 schools were started in coastal areas for the benefit of the fishermen's children.
- 4, 40, 000 acres of lands were distributed to the landless downtrodden people for building houses.
- Madras State Aid through Industries Act 1922 was introduced to assist industries financially, with water facilities and facility to improve the research and development.
- Staff Selection Board was constituted in 1924, which later on became the Public Service Commission.
- Hindu Religious Endowment Act was introduced to restructure the religious reforms.
- In 1926, for the first time, a lady representative, Dr. Muthulakshmi, was elected to the legislature. She was responsible for many social legislations in the future.
- Inappropriate treatment of persons belonging to the lower castes was curbed by a legislation in the year 1920. Schools were ordered to admit dalits to schools without any discrimination.
- Women's Liberation Act was introduced by Dr. Muthulakshmi. One of the Acts brought out in 1930 aimed at abolishing the Devadasi system.

Talking about social reforms and legislations, we need to understand the active role played by Periyar E. V. Ramasamy Naicker, leader of Dravidar Kazhagam and the Justice Party that ruled Tamil Nadu for three terms. Periyar took an active part in the national struggle for independence. He accepted Rajaji's advice and joined the Congress Party. Periyar joined the Non-cooperation

movement in 1920. He also took an active part in the spread of Khadi. In 1921, he participated in the agitation against toddy shops. In 1922, he became the Chennai Congress Committee President. In 1924, he spearheaded the Vaikam Agitation carried out against untouchability and discrimination by the higher castes against lower castes. Raising his voice against the Gurukulam System, Periyar condemned the discrimination by the higher castes against the lower castes. Due to difference of convictions, Periyar left the Congress party.

In the year 1938, when the Justice Party lost the elections, Periyar assumed the leadership of the party. Following this, the Justice Party was renamed. At a rally in 1944, Periyar, in his capacity as the leader of the Justice Party, declared that the party would henceforth be known as the Dravidar Kazhagam (DK), or 'Dravidian Association'. However, a few who disagreed with Periyar started a splinter group, claiming to be the original Justice Party. This party survived until 1957 and led by veteran Justice Party leader, P. T. Rajan. Periyar promoted the principles of rationalism, self-respect, women's rights, and eradication of caste. He opposed the exploitation and marginalisation of the non-Brahmin Dravidian people of South India and the imposition of what he considered Indo-Aryan India. We have already discussed Periyar's various contributions to the Tamil society in Unit XII and XIII.

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam or DMK's (a political party) ideologies were based on both of the ideologies of Periyar and C.N. Annadurai (an Indian politician who served as 1st Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for 20 days in 1969 and fifth, and last Chief Minister of Madras from 1967 until 1969). While Periyar advocated a separate independent Dravidian or Tamil state, Annadurai compromised with the Delhi government, while demanding more state independence. Those who parted company with Periyar joined the DMK. Though the DMK split from the Dravidar Kazhagam, the organisation made efforts to carry on Periyar's Self-Respect Movement to villagers and urban students. According to DMK, the Tamil language was much richer than Sanskrit and Hindi in content, and thus was a key which opened the door to other subjects. The Dravidar Kazhagam continued to counter Brahmanism, Indo-Aryan propaganda, and uphold the Dravidians' right of self-determination.

Check Your Progress

1. What was the Vaikam Agitation all about?
2. Why was the Tamil language considered to be a key to other subjects by DMK?

14.3 DRAVIDIAN JOURNALS AND LITERATURE

The Dravidian movement had a noteworthy progress during the British Era, mainly due to the social ethos and also the theme of rationalism and removal of social

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evils. Behind these evils, there was only one group i.e., the Brahmins, who misused their supremacy to suppress the downtrodden and the other upper-castes who ranked below the Brahmins. Dravidian Movement was a unified attempt to remove the Brahmin supremacy and control their political and socio-economic powers. Periyar took a bold step of converting the Justice Party into Dravidian Movement. He also disassociated Dravida Kazhagam from the politics completely. DK was projected and conducted as a social movement, a movement for rational thinking, and reformist outfit. Atheism was virtually followed by each member of Kazhagam as, 'A Hindu in the present concept may be a Dravidian but a Dravidian in the real sense of the term cannot and shall not be a Hindu'. Efforts were made to destroy the images of sacred Hindu deities such as Lord Rama and Lord Ganesha, along with the Ramayana and other Sanskrit epics to serve the political ends of the Dravida Kazhagam. Ravana was depicted as a Dravidian of excellent character. In the preface to Naicker's 'Tree reading', about the Ramayana he states that 'the veneration of the story any longer in Tamil Nadu is injurious and ignominious to the self-respect of the community and of the country'.

The Dravidian Movement has been instrumental in bringing the people of Tamil Nadu to an awareness of itself as a community. The DK through its organisational units in every district and taluq in Madras brought the message of Tamil nationality to the masses. The Madras city branch was conspicuous for conducting a free library, a reading room, and a very successful debating society. A professor of English was its president. But the responsibility for running the branch efficiently and for spreading the D.K. message among the students rested with the general secretary. Nevertheless, the enthusiasm and interest in the activities of the D.K. among a section of the student population in the Tamil districts was kept alive by the forceful tongue and versatile pen of C.N. Annadurai.

14.3.1 Publications of D.K. Party

Dravidar Kazhagam had two publications, a daily newspaper, *Viduthalai* and weekly magazine, *Kudi Arasu*. Both had a very limited circulation. Considering the Kazhagam's hold on the masses in the 1940's, this print media was encouraging. In villages, small reading groups were started by the local Kazhagam members, who purchased the party papers, which led to the whole village invariably reading it. One *Viduthalai* was read by at least 20 people.

Staging plays was also found to be a popular mode of reaching the people. The first play was called '*Chandrodayam*' was written by Annadurai and his friends in 1942, who had little to no previous experience. Annadurai took a leading role in the play. When the play was staged at one of the Justice conference in 1942, not only was it well attended but also received favourable comments from those experienced in the dramatic field. This was a symbolic play, in which Tamil Nadu was portrayed as a rich land, where the leader and the people are slaves to the cultural ideas of Brahmins. The play not only provided a regular income for

Annadurai to offset the acute financial difficulties in running a weekly, but increased his personal popularity among the Kazhagam workers as well as the public.

The publication, *Dravida Nadu*, had popularity among the general public and it exceeds to 12,000 copies in a week in 1945. The popularity of *Dravida Nadu* among the people emboldened others to start separate weeklies of their own, not merely for profit, but also to enlarge the membership of the D.K and spread the philosophy of the Dravidar Kazhagam. But *Kudi Arasu* did not exceed 6000 or 7000 copies in a week. The issues of *Kudi Arasu* generally contained one or more Naicker's speeches, four programmes, all India political events, world politics, and party meetings and functions held throughout the districts. Other magazines, newspapers, and journals started by the DK Members were:

- N.V. Natarajan's *Dravidan*
- T.M. Parthasarathis's *Tamil Ulagam*
- Nedunchezian's *Manram*
- Anbazhagan's *Puduvalvu*

Annadurai also wrote short stories, one act plays, and political essays, which served the double purpose of increasing both their circulation and his own popularity among the readers

Dravidian writers' forum

Not content with his success in Tamil Journals, Annadurai with the help of his friends started what was then called the *Dravida Eluttalar Kazhagam*, in December 1945 in Madurai city, with the aim of encouraging Non-Brahmins to write in Tamil. The forum was headed by S. Gurusami, the editor of *Viduthalai*, but the moving force behind it was Annadurai. He encouraged all those who had the urge to say something to contribute articles, poems, plays, and even novels, not only to his own weekly but also to others. As a result there was a tremendous burst of literary activity, such as rarely witnessed in Tamil Nadu before. Literary forums worked as a medium to convey their message more effectively and convincingly than before.

Employing literary art for political propaganda was not a novelty in the Tamil country. The members of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee had done this before with success, during the early phase of the freedom struggle. D.K. writers were able to create a body of new readers and encourage their readers in turn to participate in creative activity. This was a great success and later benefited the DK and the writers in material form. Several editions of Annadurai's novels, short stories, collected essays and speeches were sold. Among the new body of readers, emerged a group of intelligent young men, who not only admired Annadurai's style of writing and speaking, but imitated it with an extraordinary degree of success. During the early phase of the freedom struggle, T.K. Pavalalar, a member of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, wrote a number of dramas like 'Katarin vetri' and 'Tesiykkodi', with the 'motive of emphasising the fight for

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national freedom' and acted them successfully during that period. Other influential writers and publishers were:

- M. Karunanidhi was a writer of standing in Tamil literature. In the beginning, he was popular as a script writer, but later he also gained acclaim as a poet, an essayist, and a novelist
- Some critics consider T.K. Srinivasan as one of the leading short story writers in Tamil.
- Rama Arangannal and A.K. Velan made a name as a script writers for films.
- Annadurai style, which was noted for its cadence achieved by the skilful use of alliteration. Notable among those who followed this style were M. Karunanidhi, T.K. Srinivasan, Rama Arangannal, and A.K. Velan. They in turn became the leading members of the D.K. and followers of Annadurai.

14.3.2 From Stage to Screen

In 1945, Annadurai wrote the story and the film script for the movie, '*Velaikkaari*' (Maid - servant), which turned out to be a great success because of its new ideas, sparkling humour, striking dialogue, and superb acting. *Velaikkaari* heralded a new era in the Tamil film world, for it excelled in all respects: story and acting. Annadurai's script largely contributed to the phenomenal success of the film. With him started a new style of script writing, which abounded in alliteration, exotic rhythm, and pull-all achieved with the use of simple, day to day spoken Tamil. Annadurai and his followers were then the only politicians, who comprehended the potential of the medium of the film and exploited it to the maximum to spread their political doctrine subtly and effortlessly among the masses. Their link with the film industries catapulted them to power within 18 years.

Annadurai revived the Sangam classics, a body of literature written in the early centuries of the Christian era. Annadurai, Anbazhagan, and Nedunchezhan in that order used the same classics to kindle Tamil nationalism by harping on the past glory portrayed in them. They not only popularised the Tirukkural, the non-sectarian ethical work, but developed a cult of it. Since Annadurai's entry into politics, this had become a Bible for the members of the D.K. Though Annadurai's literary interests, the Kazhagam attracted the support of a number of scholars, his histrionic talents brought, into its fold many actors of film fame. Thus, Annadurai's manifold activities drew the support of a number of academics, actors, writers, dramatists, journalists, and students, as well as the public, whose support had been lacking until he entered into politics as the leader of the D.M.K. and contested the elections. Furthermore, to emphasise the difference between the former Justice party and the D.K., a flag was also adopted. It was a black flag with a red circle in the centre; the black representing the Dravidians ignominious conditions, while the red emphasising the D.K members' determination to ameliorate this condition through social and political changes.

When Annadurai voiced his opposition to the DK policies for mourning the India's independence in 1947 and participation in the Dravidanadu Separation Conference, three important weeklies, Maram, New Justice, and Pudavalvu unequivocally supported his stand. The Dravidant Student Federation, the Dravidian Writers Association, the Dravidian Dramatist Society, and all those associations with which Annadurai had close contact, stood by him. Annadurai boycotted the Dravida Nadu separation conference held at Cuddalore on 14 October 1947. Similarly, he stayed away from the Kazhagam confederation held at Tuticorin on 8 and 9 May 1948.

On both these occasions, Annadurai absence was taken seriously by the delegates and at the opening session of the Tuticorin confederation, Ramasamy Naicker was asked to explain Annadurai's absence. He claimed it as Annadurai's aim of disrupting party unity for his own political gain. While he was making this accusation, a section of the delegates staged a walkout. By this demonstration, Naicker for the first time, saw Annadurai's position and influence among the party members'. Annadurai agreed to preside over the special Dravida Kazhagam conference in October 1948. This special conference held at Erode on 23 and 24 October, was very eventful because Naicker not only praised Annadurai's capabilities as a leader but indicated that he would step down in favour of him.

Check Your Progress

3. Why was atheism followed by each member of Kazhagam?
4. What was the first play of Dravidar Kazhagam?

14.4 LAUNCH OF THE DK MOVEMENT

On 18 September 1949 in Madras city, under Annadurai's leadership, a new political party was inaugurated, pledged to adhere to the policies of the parent body, but with a genuine democratic organisation. Though the immediate causes of the split were personal, differences arose between Annadurai and Naicker in running the party. Annadurai could not work under Naicker's 'despotic leadership'. This despotism is best illustrated in his own speech, where he said 'As a president I could only take the lead and it was for others to do the work'. The steady growth of D.M.K in the 1950s under the leadership of Annadurai offered a wider scope for young men to play a constructive role in the politics of the country.

In May 1956, when the party decided to contest the second general election in 1957, the focus of attention was solely upon the D.M.K. With the D.M.K in power in 1967, Naicker became more or less one with the ruling forces, as a result of which, he not only lost his identity but endangered the very existence of the D.K even as a 'pressure group' in the politics of Tamil Nadu. Through this, we can understand that the Dravidian movement and its philosophy was instilled in the

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minds of the ranks and files with the neo-thinking and the support of print media and the visual media of the yesteryears. The literary renaissance led to Tamil Nadu achieving a treasure of literary scholars. Dravidar Kazhagam stands proudly in bringing this treasure to the people and the history of Tamil Nadu.

14.4.1 Principles and Reforms of the Dravidar Kazhagam

Periyar spent over fifty years propagating the idea that everyone was an equal citizen and the differences on the basis of caste and creed were man-made to keep the innocent and ignorant as underdogs in the society. Although Periyar's speeches were targeted towards the illiterate and more mundane masses, scores of educated people were also swayed. His ideologies included:

- Eradication of caste discrimination
- Promotion of women rights
- Promotion of Tamil language and grammar

The bedrock of Periyar's principles and the movements that he started lies on rationalism.

- An insignificant minority in society was exploiting the majority and trying to keep it in a subordinate position forever. He wanted the exploited to sit up and think about their position and use their reason to realise that they were being exploited by a handful of people.
- If they started thinking, they would realise that they were human beings like the rest, that birth did not and should not endow one with superiority over others.
- They must awaken themselves and do everything possible to improve their own lot.

Periyar explained that:

- Wisdom lies in thinking and the spear-head of thinking is rationalism.
- No other living being harms or degrades its own class. But man, said to be a rational living being, does these evils.
- The differences, hatred, enmity, degradation, poverty, and wickedness, now prevalent in the society are due to lack of wisdom and rationalism and not due to god or the cruelty of time.

Periyar also blamed the capitalists for their control of machineries, creating difficulties for the workers. According to his philosophy, rationalism, which has to lead the way for peaceful life for all, had resulted in causing poverty and worries for the people because of dominating forces. He stated that there is no use in simply acquiring titles or amassing wealth, if one has no self-respect or scientific knowledge. He gave an example of the West sending messages to the planets, while the Tamil society in India were sending rice and cereals to their dead forefathers through the Brahmins. He added that 'any opposition not based on

rationalism, science, or experience will one day or another, reveal the fraud, selfishness, lies and conspiracies’.

Periyar wanted thinking people to see their society as far from perfect and in urgent need of reform. He wanted the government, the political parties, and social workers to identify the evils in society and boldly adopt measures to remove them. Periyar’s philosophy did not differentiate social and political service. According to him, the first duty of a government is to run the social organisation efficiently, while the philosophy of religion should be to organise the social system. Periyar stated that while Christian and Islamic religions were fulfilling this role, the Hindu religion remained totally unsuitable for social progress. He argued that the government was not for the people, but, in a topsy-turvy manner, the people were for the government. He attributed this situation to the state of the social system contrived for the advantage of a small group of people. He further advocated for the modernisation of villages by providing public facilities such as schools, libraries, radio stations, roads, bus transport, and police stations. Periyar felt that a small number of cunning people created caste distinctions to dominate the society, so he emphasised that individuals must first develop self-respect and learn to analyse propositions rationally. According to Periyar, a self-respecting rationalist would readily realise that the caste system had been stifling self-respect and therefore, he or she would strive to get rid of this menace.

Periyar stated that the caste system in South India is due to Indo-Aryan influence, linked with the arrival of Brahmins from the north. Ancient Tamil Nadu society (part of Tamilagam) had a different stratification, according to which it was divided into four or five regions (Tinai), determined by natural surroundings and adequate means of living. Periyar also argued that birds, animals, and worms, which are considered to be devoid of rationalism do not create castes or differences of high and low in their own species. But man, considered to be a rational being, was suffering from this irrationality because of religion and discrimination.

Tamil Language and Writing

Periyar claimed that Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Kannada came from the same mother language of Old Tamil. He explained that the Tamil language is called by four different names, since it is spoken in four different Dravidian states. With relation to writing, Periyar stated that using the Tamil script will foster knowledge, talent and courage and enlighten the people. Further, he explained that it will enrich the language. Periyar also stated that if words of North Indian origin (Sanskrit) are removed from Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam, only Tamil will be left. Periyar believed that Tamil language will make the Dravidian people unite under the banner of Tamil culture and that it will make the Kannadigas, Andhras and the Malayalees vigilant. With regards to a Dravidian alliance under a common umbrella language, Periyar stated that ‘a time will come for unity. This will go on until there is an end to the North Indian domination. We shall reclaim an independent sovereign state for us’.

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At the same time, Periyar was also known to have made controversial remarks on the Tamil language and people from time to time. On one occasion, he referred to the Tamil people as 'barbarians' and the Tamil language as the 'language of barbarians'. Periyar's ideas on Tamil alphabet reforms (Periyar Tamil) were later adopted by the government of Tamil Nadu as the official version of Tamil language. In stone inscriptions from 400 or 500 years ago, many Tamil letters are found in other shapes. As a matter of necessity and advantage to cope with printing technology, Periyar thought that it was sensible to change a few letters, reduce the number of letters and alter a few signs. He further explained that the older and more divine a language and its letters were said to be, the more they needed reform. Because of the changes brought about by means of modern transport and international contact and happenings that have attracted words and products from many countries, foreign words and their pronunciations have been assimilated into Tamil quite easily. Further, changing the shape of letters, creating new symbols, adding new letters, and dropping those that are redundant, were quite essential according to Periyar. Thus, the glory and excellence of a language and its script depend on how easily they can be understood or learned and on nothing else.

Thoughts on Thirukkural

Periyar hailed the Thirukkural as a valuable scripture, which contained many scientific and philosophical truths. He also praised the secular nature of the work. Periyar praised Thiruvalluvar (Tamil poet and philosopher) for his description of god as a formless entity with only positive attributes. He also suggested that one who reads the Thirukkural will become a follower of Self-Respect Movement and absorb knowledge about politics, society, and economics. According to him, though certain items in this ancient book of ethics may not relate to today, it permitted such changes for modern society.

On caste, he believed that the Thirukkural illustrates how Vedic laws of Manu were against the Sudras and other communities of the Dravidian race. On the other hand, Periyar opined that the ethics from the Thirukkural was comparable to the Bible. The Dravidar Kazhagam adopted the Thirukkural and advocated that Thiruvalluvar's Thirukkural alone was enough to educate the people of the country. One of Periyar's quotes on the Thirukkural from Veeramani's Collected Works of Periyar was 'when Dravida Nadu (Dravidistan) was a victim to Indo-Aryan deceit, Thirukkural was written by a great Dravidian Thiruvalluvar to free the Dravidians'. Periyar also asserted that due to the secular nature of Thirukkural, it has the capacity to be the common book of faith for all of the humanity and can be kept on par or above the holy books of all religions.

Self-determination of Dravida Nadu

The Dravidian-Aryan conflict was believed to be a continuous historical phenomenon that started when the Aryans first set their foot in the Dravidian lands. Even a decade before the idea of separation appeared, Periyar stated that, as

long as Aryan religion, Indo-Aryan domination, propagation of Aryan Vedas and Aryan 'Varnashrama' existed, there will be the need for a 'Dravidian Progressive Movement' and a 'Self-Respect Movement'. Periyar became very concerned about the growing North Indian domination over the south, which appeared to him no different than the foreign domination. He wanted to secure the fruits of labour of the Dravidians to the Dravidians, and lamented that fields such as political, economic, industrial, social, art, and spiritual were dominated by the north for the benefit of the North Indians. Thus, with the approach of independence from Britain, this fear that North India would take the place of Britain to dominate South India became more and more intense.

Periyar was clear about the concept of a separate nation, comprising Tamil areas, that is part of the then existing Madras Presidency with adjoining areas into a federation guaranteeing protection of minorities, including religious, linguistic, and cultural freedom of the people. A separatist conference was held in June 1940 at Kanchipuram, where Periyar released the map of the proposed state of Dravida Nadu, but failed to get British approval. On the contrary, Periyar received sympathy and support from the people such as Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar and Muhammad Ali Jinnah for his views on the Congress, and for his opposition to Hindi. The concept of Dravida Nadu was later modified down to Tamil Nadu.

Anti-Brahmanism

Periyar was a radical advocate of anti-Brahmanism. Periyar's ideology of anti-Brahmanism is quite often confused as being anti-Brahmin. Even a Non-Brahmin who supports inequality based on caste was seen as a supporter of Brahmanism. Periyar called upon both Brahmins and non-Brahmins to shun Brahmanism. In 1920, when the Justice Party came to power, Brahmins occupied about 70 percent of the high level posts in the government. After reservation was introduced by the Justice Party, it reversed this trend, allowing Non-Brahmins to rise in the government of the Madras Presidency. Periyar, through the Justice Party, advocated against the domination of Brahmins, who constituted only 3 percent of the population, over government jobs, judiciary, and the Madras University. His Self-Respect Movement espoused rationalism and atheism and the movement had currents of Anti-Brahmanism. Periyar also criticised Subramanya Bharathi in the journal, *Ticutar*, for portraying Mother Tamil as a sister of Sanskrit in his poems.

According to the booklet 'Gandhi and Periyar', Periyar, in the magazine, *Kudi Arasu* in 1925, reported on the fact that Gandhi was ousted from the Mahasabha because he opposed resolutions for maintaining caste and untouchability laws, which would spoil his efforts to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. From this, Gandhi learned the need for pleasing the Brahmins if anything was to be achieved. Periyar in his reference to Gandhi used opportunities to present Gandhi as, on principle, serving the interests of the Brahmins. Periyar and Gandhi met at Bangalore to discuss this matter. The main difference between them came out, when Periyar stood for the total eradication of Hinduism to which Gandhi

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objected saying that Hinduism is not fixed in doctrines but can be changed in its views. On the temple entry issue, Gandhi never advocated the opening of Garbha Griha to Harijans in consequence of his Hindu belief. Periyar and his followers emphasised that Periyar was the real fighter for the removal of untouchability and upliftment of Harijans.

Periyar was generally regarded as a pragmatic propagandist, who attacked the evils of religious influence on society, mainly what he regarded as Brahmin domination. Since a very young age, he felt that some people used religion only as a mask to deceive innocent people and regarded it as his life's mission to warn people against superstitions and priests. On Hinduism, Periyar believed that it was a religion with no distinctive sacred book or origins, but an imaginary faith preaching the 'superiority' of the Brahmins, the inferiority of the Shudras, and the untouchability of the Dalits. Periyar's life and teachings have influenced many political leaders, writers, and poets not only in Tamil Nadu, but all over India.

Check Your Progress

5. What was the issue behind the split between Annadurai and Naicker?
6. Why did Periyar criticise Subramanya Bharathi in the journal, *Ticutar*?
7. On what issue did the main difference between Gandhi and Periyar arise?

14.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The Vaikam Agitation was carried out against untouchability and discrimination by the higher castes against lower castes.
2. The Tamil language was considered to be a key to other subjects by DMK as it was much richer than Sanskrit and Hindi in content.
3. Atheism was virtually followed by each member of Kazhagam as, 'a Hindu in the present concept may be a Dravidian but a Dravidian in the real sense of the term cannot and shall not be a Hindu'.
4. The first play of Dravidar Kazhagam was called '*Chandrodayam*', written by Annadurai and his friends in 1942.
5. The issue behind the split between Annadurai and Naicker lies in running the party. Annadurai could not work under Naicker's 'despotic leadership'.
6. Periyar criticised Subramanya Bharathi in the journal, *Ticutar* for portraying Mother Tamil as a sister of Sanskrit in his poems.
7. The main difference between Gandhi and Periyar arose, when Periyar stood for the total eradication of Hinduism to which Gandhi objected saying that Hinduism is not fixed in doctrines but can be changed in its views.

14.6 SUMMARY

- At the end of 19th Century, Tamil Nadu witnessed a lot of activities related to social reformation. Social legislations were in the offing as early as in 1918 during the time of British rule.
- The Indian social activists, especially the Dravidians played an active part in raising voice against social injustice and uplifting the downtrodden people. Dravidian Movement had a noteworthy progress during the British Era, mainly due to the social ethos and also the theme of rationalism and removal of social evils.
- Dravidar Kazhagam had two publications, a daily newspaper, *Viduthalai* and weekly magazine, *Kudi Arasu*. Both had a very limited circulation. Considering the Kazhagam's hold on the masses in the 1940's, this print media was encouraging.
- In 1945, Annadurai wrote the story and the film script for the movie, 'Velaikkaari' (Maid - servant), which turned out to be a great success because of its new ideas, sparkling humour, striking dialogue, and superb acting.
- On 18 September 1949 in Madras city, under Annadurai's leadership, a new political party was inaugurated, pledged to adhere to the policies of the parent body, but with a genuine democratic organisation.
- Though the immediate causes of the split were personal, differences arose between Annadurai and Naicker in running the party.
- Periyar spent over fifty years propagating the idea that everyone is an equal citizen and the differences on the basis of caste and creed were man-made to keep the innocent and ignorant as underdogs in the society.

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14.7 KEY WORDS

- **Gurukulam System:** It was a type of education system in ancient India with *shishya* ('students' or 'disciples') living near or with the guru, in the same house.
- **Atheism:** It means the absence of belief in the existence of deities.
- **Taluq:** Taluq or a tehsil is an administrative division in some countries of South Asia.

14.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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Short Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on Periyar's political journey.
2. How did the movie, *Velaikkaari*, bring Annadurai's name into prominence?
3. What was the foundation of Periyar's principles?

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the social legislation introduced by the Justice Party after gaining power.
2. Describe the importance of publications in carrying the message of Dravidar Kazhagam.
3. Examine the different principles held by Periyar.

14.9 FURTHER READINGS

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