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GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS

TAMIL NADU'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE *Freedom Struggle*



TAMIL NADU'S
CONTRIBUTION TO THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE



SPECIAL PUBLICATION - 2023

M.K. STALIN
CHIEF MINISTER OF TAMIL NADU



SECRETARIAT
CHENNAI - 600 009.

31 July, 2023

Message

I am happy to have hoisted the national flag three straight years now as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. But I take more pride and immense pleasure to be born as a Tamizhan as the first seeds for the Indian freedom struggle were sown from the Tamil land. As the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, I am humbled to present this book, which sheds light on the hidden histories of our brave Tamil freedom fighters and their invaluable contributions to the Indian Freedom Movement. Tamil Nadu has been a land of courage, resilience, and determination, where the flame of freedom burned brightly even in the darkest hours of colonial rule. From the 18th century onwards, our land witnessed countless acts of resistance and sacrifice, marking the birth of a fervent struggle against tyranny and injustice. I salute all of them for their valour and great sacrifices.

This book aims to bring to the forefront the forgotten chapters of our history, which have been confined to books in Tamil for far too long. By translating and presenting these narratives in English, we aspire to bridge the knowledge gap and ensure that the nation recognises and reveres the sacrifices made by freedom fighters from Tamil Nadu and their pioneering efforts.

Our beloved leaders and former Chief Ministers of Tamilnadu, both Perarignar Anna and Dr Kalaignar always honoured our great freedom fighters. It is actually Dr Kalaignar who built memorials for the two distinguished freedom fighters and national leaders Rajaji and Kamarajar. Statues for Netaji, Kakkan and many other freedom fighters were also installed by our leader Dr Kalaignar.

Our leader Perarignar Anna wholeheartedly support India in the Indo - China war in 1962. Dr Kalaignar raised six crores to help the Indian government in its fight against Pakistan in the 1972 war. (The contribution of all other states except Tamil Nadu in that war time was eighteen crores only). In the Kargil War (1999) also, Dr Kalaignar's government contributed fifty crores to the Union government led by A.B.Vajpayee. As we recently celebrated the 75th year of independence, our

I have been speaking in many events that the history of India should be rewritten from the river beds of South India and especially from Tamilnadu. We have strong reasons for that. Tamil is not only the oldest living classical language, but also the greatest secular language of the globe. The Tamils belong to one of the most ancient and cultured civilisations in the world. It is not just a matter of pride. It is a rare self-realisation that comes through many centuries of history. In order to script a new, true history of Indian subcontinent from the Tamil land, the history of Indian freedom movement should also start from Tamil land.

This book is an eye opener to the hidden history of our freedom movement and its unsung heroes. This book is an effort taken in that right direction. I strongly believe that more books will follow this one in due course of time. Through these pages, we shall be introduced to the courageous souls who fought relentlessly for India's independence. The stories of these unsung heroes shall resonate with the spirit of unity that has always been a hallmark of our great nation.

I thank Dr R.Selvaraj IAS, Secretary for Tamil development and Information department, Thiru D.Mohan IAS, Director for Information and Public Relations department, Joint Director (Publications), Tamilarasu I & PR Department, writers of these articles, the advisory group members and all other goodselves who played their great part in the preparation of this book. By bringing the stories of our Tamil freedom fighters to a wider audience, we are strengthening the foundation of our nation's collective history.

May this book serve as a beacon of inspiration for generations to come and ignite the flame of patriotism in the hearts of every Indian. Let us collectively honor and cherish the memories of our brave forefathers, whose sacrifices paved the way for an independent, sovereign and secular India.

Long live Tamil Nadu!

Long live India!

Yours sincerely,



(M.K.STALIN)

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MINISTER FOR
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CHENNAI - 600 009.

13.07.2023
Date

Preface

Perarignar Anna said, "The only way to achieve independence is through valiant sacrifice."

"As the path becomes visible in the glow of lightening during the darkness-rain-cyclone, India's democracy stands despite the pressure like a river of fire," said Muthamizharignar Kalaignar.

Many valiant freedom fighters from Tamil Nadu gave their lives, blood, and personal lives to breathe the air of freedom.

In the whole of the Indian subcontinent, it was the Tamil land which had first voiced out for independence.

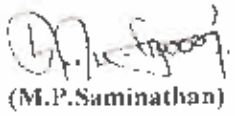
Nerkattumseval Pulithevan who refused to pay a tax of even a single grain to the British administration, Khan Sahib Marudhanayagam who fought against the British with self-respect not bowing down to them ever, Veerapandiya Kattabomman who had said 'Ask me to give charity, I will, but not tax', his army commander Sundaralingam, Veeramangai Velunachiyar who fought for eight years to retrieve Sivagangai, Kuyili was the first suicide bomber who planned an attack on the British armoury, Chinnamarudhu and Periyamarudhu who were so brave such that even the cannon slides down at their victorious valance, Dheeran Chinnamalai who went to the hanging stage without caring about his life, the Vellore fort which made the British army get afraid, the first sepoy mutiny of the Indian Independence movement, 'Kappalottiya Thamizhan' V.O.C. who had a shipping company against the British and the patriotic songs by Bharathiyar were all from the Tamil land which made the British administration tremble.

Due to the results in Tamil land because of the various movements announced such as Salt Satyagraha at Vedaranyam, Quit India Movement, etc., made India get independence from British rule.

To celebrate these histories, as announced by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, in 2021 on Independence Day after hoisting the national flag at the Secretariat, Chennai for the first time, a document containing the complete detailing of the contributions of Tamil Nadu in the Indian Independence movement would be prepared and released in Tamil and English, as a means to commemorate the selfless sacrifice done by the numerous martyrs of Tamil Nadu who had participated in the Indian Independence movement, to facilitate the present younger generation to know these histories of sacrifices, I am extremely happy that the Information and Public Relations Department through the Tamilarasu has published a book titled 'Documentation of historical gallantry'.

I request that everyone reads the historical accounts about martyrs and benefits from them.

With Affection



(M.P.Saminathan)

SHIV DAS MEENA
Chief Secretary

Secretariat,
Chennai - 600 009.

Foreword

"Several new challenges may arise in each of our works. In such challenges, we can achieve complete success with the virtues of modesty, simplicity, Ahimsa and tolerance", said Mahatma Gandhi.

Because of the freedom fighters and martyrs who toiled to free our country from British rule, India got its independence.

The valiant martyrs, saviours of our Tamil land, had significantly contributed to several movements associated with the freedom struggle eventually resulting in India's independence from the British.

The Tamil people commemorate the sacrifices made by the freedom struggle martyrs through their thoughts and actions even today.

Considering the need for us to commemorate the gallant history of the freedom struggle martyrs, as announced by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu that a document compiling the contributions of Tamil Nadu to the Indian freedom struggle is to be prepared. The Information and Public Relations Department, with the support of several scholars, has published a special issue of the "Tamilarasu", 'Tamil Nadu's contribution to the Freedom Struggle', which is greatly commendable.

I strongly believe that through this edition of "Tamilarasu", the readers will get insights in the role of Tamil Nadu in India's freedom struggle.

With regards,

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Dr. R. SELVARAJ, I.A.S.,
Secretary to Government.



Tamil Development and
Information Department
Secretariat, Chennai-600 009.

Foreword

Tamil Nadu was involved in the struggle for Indian Independence 150 years ago.

Indian Independence struggle fighters, especially those who struggled for freedom from Tamil land, have been remembered, celebrated, and paid tribute by the Government of Tamil Nadu.

The sacrifices made by the martyrs of the Indian Independence Movement are deeply rooted in the hearts of all Indians. India has attained independence today by positioning ethical principles as its only goal, making that a movement, and succeeding at it. As Indians, we are obligated to commemorate and protect such great martyrs who fought for independence in the path of 'Ahimsa'.

In that way, according to the announcement made by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in his Independence Day Address that the contributions of Tamil Nadu in the freedom struggle be compiled, made ready as documentation and released in Tamil and English. I take immense pride that the Information and Public Relations Department through 'Tamilarasu' has designed and published a book titled 'Documentation of historical gallantry'.

This book will undoubtedly illustrate in front of our eyes the sacrifices made by the leaders of the Indian Independence movement.

I wish this documentation would be in the hands of the people of Tamil Nadu like a crown encrusted with precious stones.

With Affection

(R. Selvaraj)

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Editor's Note

To bring India, which was in the darkness of oppression, to the light of freedom, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, Tamil Nadu contributed significantly as it rose with valour and spearheaded several movements at the forefront. Several freedom fighters took part in the movement with the least botheration regarding their lives. They roared saying that 'Freedom is our birthright and we shall achieve it'. Our Hon'ble Chief Minister has been taking several initiatives such that we remember forever the sacrifices of our freedom struggle martyrs.

To commemorate the memories of the leaders from Tamil Nadu who had contributed to the Indian Independence movement, memorial structures were established by the Information and Public Relations Department. A memorial for V.O.C. along with the Oil Press at Guindy, Chennai; A memorial for Uthamar Gandhi at Guindy, Chennai; Memorial house for Mahakavi Bharathiyar at Tiruvallikeni, Chennai and Ettayapuram and Ottapidaram, Thoothukudi.

A memorial for Martyr Subramania Siva at Papparapatti, Dharmapuri; A memorial for Gopal Naicker at Virupatchi, Dindigul; A memorial for Dheeran Chinnamalai at Odanilai, Erode and memorial statue at Sankaragiri; A memorial for Thillaiyadi Valliammai at Thillaiyadi, Mayiladuthurai; A memorial for Marudhu Pandiyas at Tirupattur, Sivagangai.

Memorial for Veeramangai Velunachiyar at Soorakulam, Sivagangai; A memorial for Martyr Vanjinathan at Sengottai, Tenkasi; A memorial for V.O.C. at Tirunelveli; A memorial for Ondiveeran at Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli; A memorial for Veeran Alagumuthu Kone at Kattalangulam, Thoothukudi.

A memorial for Veeran Sundaralingam at Gavarnagiri, Thoothukudi; A memorial for Veerapandiya Kattabomman at Kayathar, Thoothukudi; A memorial pillar commemorating the golden jubilee of the 'Quit India movement' at Guindy, Chennai; A memorial pillar for Sepoy Mutiny at Vellore; A memorial structure for Veerathaai Kuyili at Soorakulam, Sivagangai; A memorial structure commemorating Golden Jubilee year of Independence at Kamarajar Salai, Chennai, have all been built to commemorate the sacrifices of our martyrs and our gallant history. Through this, the current generation will also know the history of our ancestors.

In the current regime, the Government of Tamil Nadu headed by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, has been taking several initiatives to commemorate the sacrifices of the martyrs who made the nation's independence possible.

The house in which Mahakavi Bharathiyar resided at Kasi, Uttar Pradesh has been renovated. Statues have been instilled for V.O.C., Marudhu Panidiyars and Veerapandiya Kattabomman.

The Oil Press pulled by V.O.C. at Coimbatore Central Prison has been polished. The memorial house of V.O.C. at Ottapidaram, Thoothukudi has been renovated.

Light and Sound Show at the V.O.C. Memorial at Tirunelveli, a statue of V.O.C. at Coimbatore, a statue of freedom fighter Anjalai Ammal at Cuddalore, Light and sound show on the occasion of the 75th Independence day of the nation and a statue of freedom fighter Veerar Thali Palayakarar Mulaiyandi Venkidupathi Ethalappar Nayakar have been set up

A new statue for Veeran Sundaralingam has been instilled at his memorial at Gavarnagiri, Thoothukudi. At the Egmore Museum premises, a statue for Uthamar Gandhi and a photo exhibition titled 'Thamizhagam in the freedom struggle' have been set up. Martyrs' Memorial has been set up at Perungamanallur, Usilampatti, Madurai District. A special issue was published and released to celebrate the 150th birth anniversary of V.O.C. Along with that, to commemorate the greatness of V.O.C., a mobile photo exhibition was conducted at Koyambedu, Chennai. A special issue was published and released to commemorate the centenary death anniversary of Mahakavi Bharathiyar. Veeramangai Velu Nachiyar dance drama was staged.

'Thamizhagam in the Freedom Struggle' three-dimensional light and sound show was set up. Along with all these initiatives by the Information and Public Relations Department, programs are conducted every year on behalf of the Government for the legendary leaders who fought for the nation's independence and their statues are garlanded as a mark of respect.

Following this, to facilitate further deeper understanding of the contributions of the Tamil Nadu warriors, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu announced in his Independence Day Speech the previous year. According to that announcement that the contributions of Tamil Nadu in the Indian Independence Movement are to be analysed completely and documentation is to be done, the 'Tamilarasu' has published on behalf of the Information and Public Relations Department, a historical compilation titled 'Tamil Nadu's contribution to the Freedom Struggle' and the Department takes immense pride on its release.

I thank the writers who have with their powerful words penned the articles published in this special issue, and the Department officers who facilitated the process with utmost co-ordination.

With Affection

(D. Mohan)

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"Our Tamil society should rise higher in thought, culture, civility and behaviour. That is, we should be transformed into an egalitarian and humane society. That is what our freedom fighters wished. They fought and sacrificed for that."

- Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
Thiru. M.K. STALIN

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★★★★★

Introduction

Dr. Bernard D' Sami

Tamil Nadu's Contribution to the Freedom Struggle - A Fresh look

The observation of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. M.K.Stalin that the role of Tamil Nadu in the Freedom Struggle is not adequately captured is correct in many ways. Tamil Nadu's proactive involvement has been told, retold and repeated with just small new additions.

Kattabomman, Marudhu brothers, V.O.Chidambaram, Velu Nachiyar and many others confronted head-on and fought the British directly and openly. These events in History have been recorded, told and retold.

Events, processes, coverage and narratives of Tamil Nadu's contribution from different perspectives are inadequate. Hence, this book recounts different perspectives of Tamil Nadu's contribution, capturing even the lesser-known uprisings in the Kolli Hills by the Malayale tribes in Tamil Nadu (1795), which occurred much before Birsa Munda's Santhal uprising in 1895. Tamil Nadu, for her part, had the first resistance to the British coming from the Tribals. Peasant uprisings had occurred in many places, and Tanjore was the epicentre for peasant uprisings. How the leaders in Tamil Nadu made use of classical Tamil Literature for the freedom struggle is a revelation for anyone interested in exploring liberation movements.

British industrial policy brought the emergence of many industries, particularly textiles. Of the 179 strikes reported for the whole of India in 1937, involving about 6,50,000 workers, Madras presidency accounted for 61 disputes involving 60,980 working people. The Trade Union movement was strong under the leadership of Singaravelar. Strikes, lockouts, shootouts, imprisonment and suppressing the Trade Union movements were a strategy adopted by the British. Marxist ideology inspired several underground movements, but survived the attempts of the British to stifle them.

It is also interesting to note that many foreigners, non-British, supported the cause of independence including Annie Besant, whose operational area was Madras. The Irish Suffragettes - Margaret Cousins and Dorothy Dinajaradasa advocated the cause of voting rights of women and voted in 1921. Indian women voted much before the English could give them voting rights in 1928. Many European/British supporters of Gandhi were targeted by the police and intelligence agencies. The case of Dr. Paton has been elaborately dealt with in this book.

Tamil Cinema and Print media played a vital role in creating a heightened consciousness of freedom. Tamil cinema reached the nook and corners of the Madras Presidency, and the silver screen made many subscribe to the cause of freedom. Songs on freedom

were on the lips of people, so the idea of freedom was easily understood by people of every class.

Indian Diaspora, in spite of being indentured labourers to nearly 56 countries in the world, to the shock and surprise of everyone, fought for the country's independence. Mahatma Gandhi's first publication in South Africa, '*Indian Opinion*', was published in four languages and Tamil was among them. Thillaiyadi Valliammai's association with Gandhi and her contribution are well known. The Indian National Army (INA) under Subhas Chadra Bose had a Tamil women's Brigade known as Rani of the Jhansi Regiment in the Indian National Army. Captain Lakshmi Seghal, and Janaky Athi Nahappan (1925-2014), were prominent in the struggle for freedom.

Tamil Newspapers and magazines run by the Tamil Diaspora were innumerable. Awareness on the freedom of the motherland was the running theme in the print media in foreign countries.

While the British in Calcutta and Bombay presidencies promoted education, the education has to be demanded by the people of Madras Presidency from the British. Though education was accessible only to a few, people were on the street to fight for freedom. Students from many colleges in Tamil Nadu participated in boycotts, demonstrations and swadeshi movement.

The contribution of all sections of people towards the freedom struggle has been ensured from national to regional levels. Tamil Nadu is not an exception in - the contribution of Christians and Muslims and it is substantial for the liberation of India from the clutches of the British.

Pondicherry, though under the French, served as a safe haven when British rule was oppressive for the people and movements. The secret of how Pondicherry served as a political refuge for Indian Freedom fighters has been transpired emerges in this book.

In short, the book thematically captures different areas that were hitherto unknown, in which the Tamils contributed to the Freedom Struggle.

Dr. Bernard D' Sami

Head-Project on Freedom Struggle in Tamil Nadu

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செய்தி மக்கள் தொடர்புத் துறை
விடுதலைப் போரில் தமிழகம்
புகைப்படக் கண்காட்சி
வ.உ.சிதம்பரனாரின்





GLORIOUS STRUGGLES IN TAMIL NADU AGAINST BRITISH OPPRESSION





(1710 - 1759 : Thoothukudi)

Veeran Azhagu Muthu Kone blocked the paying of tribute to the British. His soldiers were chained and taken to Nadukattoor. They refused to seek pardon despite that it would spare them from execution. Muthukone and six of his chieftains were shot dead by cannon fire.



(1715 - 1767 : Tirunelveli)

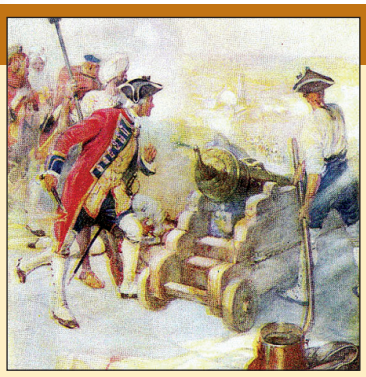
Poolithevan was the first great hero who sowed the seed for freedom by driving out Col. Heron and his army when he laid siege to Nelkattumseval fort in Tirunelveli and collected tax. Poolithevan fought against the British 17 times between 1750 and 1767.



(1725 - 1764 : Ramanathapuram)

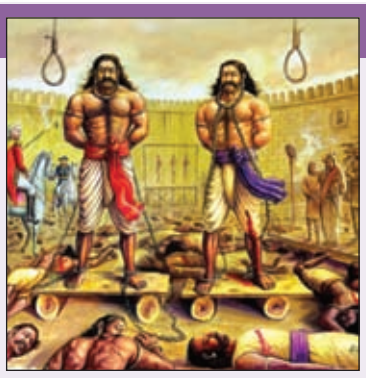
The British and the Arcot Nawabs utilized Mohammed Yusuf Khan alias Marudhanayakam to fight their enemies, the Polygars of Tamil Nadu. Though he was given power to rule Madurai later, he turned against the East India company rulers in his last days. He was hanged by the British at Sammattipuram area in Madurai on October 15, 1764.

1792 - Through an agreement, the East India Company wrested power from the Nawab of Arcot.



(1725 - 1774 : England)

When Robert Clive of East India Company laid siege to the Arcot fort between September 23 and November 14 of 1751, Chanda Sahib was engaged in the siege of Tiruchi with the French army. When the Nawab of Arcot was out of town, his small army and some soldiers of the French East India Company stayed in Arcot on behalf of Chanda Sahib to protect the fort. Through the 2nd Karnatic battle that broke out then, the East India Company established itself in India.



(1748 - 1801 : Sivaganga)

Among the South Indian Freedom fighters, Marudhu Pandiyargal, Kings of Sivaganga were the first ones to mobilize people against the British. The famous Jambutheevu proclamation of Marudhu Brothers was made from Tiruchi Fort in 1801. They were hanged by the British at the Tirupathur Fort near Ramanathapuram on October 24, 1801. In the same year, Kattabomman's brothers Oomaithurai and Sevathaiah were apprehended and beheaded by the British on November 16, 1801.



(1756 - 1805 : Kangeyam)

Dheeran Chinnamalai who led the Kovai Revolution was hanged by the British on the top of the Sankagiri fort on July 31, 1805.



(1760 - 1809 : Ramanathapuram)

Rebel Muthuramalinga Sethupathy, the king of Ramanathapuram refused to toe the British line and was arrested on February 8, 1795. He remained in prison for 14 years and died in the prison at Fort St.George on 23.01.1809.



(1760 - 1779 : Panchalankurichi)

Panchalankurichi ruler Veerapandia Kattabomman who fought the British from 1792 to 1798 refusing to pay tax was arrested and sent to gallows at Kayathar. In 1974, Hailing the sacrifice of Kattabomman, the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Muthamizharignar Kalaignar raised a model fort at Panchalankurichi.



(1806 - 1857 : Kangeyam)

Tamil Nadu soldiers were the first to stage a mutiny against foreign oppression in the 19th century; the Indian soldiers who were kept in the Vellore Fort rebelled and killed the British officers and soldiers on July 10, 1806. This rebellion was the rehearsal for the 1857 uprising.

Madras Native Association was formed with the purpose of highlighting the needs of the public rather than the desires of groups. One of the earliest such associations, It was founded by Gajulu Lakshminarasu, Srinivasanar and their supporters in 1852.



(1810 - 1857 : England)

Neil Statue Satyagraha – James Neil was a soldier in the Madras Regiment. Many British women and children were killed in an event that came to be called the Kanpur Massacre during the 1857 revolt. By way of revenge, Neil acted very brutally. Later, he was killed by an Indian. The British erected a statue for him in Chennai on Mount Road. Nationalists considered it as an insult to their sentiments and staged agitations continuously. S.N. Somayajulu of Tirunelveli led the protestors, who gathered from several parts of Madras Presidency. Many were arrested and imprisoned. Gandhi Adigal who came to Madras at that time, supported the agitation.



(1828 - 1902 : Egmore)

Madras Mahajana Sabha was one of the oldest institutions in South India started with clear-cut national ideals on May 16, 1884. It was set up by M.Veeraraghavachariar, P.Anandacharlu, P.Rangaiah with the last mentioned being the first President of the Sabha.



(1839 - 1895 : Tirunelveli)

Not merely rulers and subjects, but even Tamil literary works thundered against the British. 'Vannasarabam' Dhandapani Swamigal who wrote 'Aangileya Andhadhi' against the British, passed away.



(1847 - 1933 : London)

Home Rule League, a new organisation rose on the Indian political horizon in 1916. It advocated self-rule. It was started by Annie Besant and the place was Tamil Nadu. The Home Rule Movement was started in Chennai.



(1855 - 1916 : Thanjavur)

The first Tamil political daily – Swadesamitran was launched by G.Subramania Iyer.

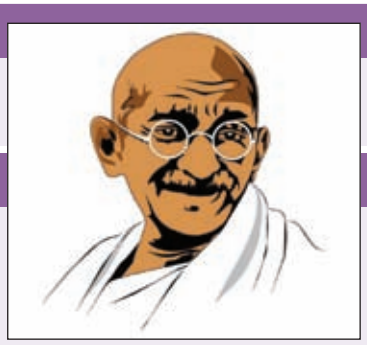


(1855 - 1916 : Thanjavur)

The first meeting of the Indian National Congress took place in Bombay on December 26, 1885. G.Subramania Iyer participated as the representative of the Chennai Presidency.

(1887)

Rao Sahib Thanjai Mookan Asari delivered the speech in Tamil at the 3rd Congress conference.



(1869 - 1948 : Porbandar)

The first visit of Gandhi Adigal to Thamizhagam on October 14.

(1869 - 1948 : Porbandar)

Gandhi Adigal spoke at a Marina meeting on March 18. On April 6, 1919, a hartal was observed by way of opposing the Rowlatt Act. At many places, agitations were held in Tamil Nadu.



(1872 - 1936 : Tirunelveli)

V.O.C. and Mahakavi Bharathi jointly started the Chennai Jana Sangam in Chennai. On October 16, 1906 V.O.C's Swadeshi shipping company was registered as per rules.

The India newspaper was started by the Mandayam family in 1906. Mahakavi Bharathiar was its Editor.



(1873 - 1938 : Patna)

Khilafat Day was observed on April 17, 1920, with a meeting on Marina beach presided over by Maulana Shaukat Ali.

The Communist Party of India was launched at Tashkent under the leadership of M.N. Roy. M.P.T.Acharya of Tamil Nadu was one of the founders of the party.

The Tamil who presided over the Indian National Congress Conference at Nagpur was C.Vijayaraghavachariar.



(1878 - 1898)

'The Hindu' India's national daily was started by six young men including Subramania Iyer and Mudumbai Veeraraghavachariar. The first Tamil novel – Prathapa G. Mudaliar Sarithiram – was written by Vedanayagam Pillai. Dialogues opposing the hegemony of the English language found a place in this novel.



(1878 - 1972 : Hosur, Krishnagiri)

Rajaji led the historically famous Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha March. It commenced at Tiruchirappalli on April 13, 1930 and reached Vedaranyam in Thanjavur District on April 28. Exclusively for this March, Namakkal Kavignar Ramalinganar composed a special song 'Kathi Indri Rathamindri Yudhamondru varugudhu/ Sathiyathin Nithiyatthai Nambum Yaarum Seruveer" ('A war without weapons and bloodshed is approaching; all those who believe in the eternity of Truth, join it').



(1879 - 1973 : Erode)

Periyar E.V.R. successfully led the Vaikom Satyagraha. This is the movement which achieved success by following Ahimsa.



(1884 - 1925 : Chennai Mahanam)

Thoothukudi Conspiracy Case. Following the arrest of V.O.C. and Siva on March 13, 1908, a rebellion broke out in Nellai, resulting in the sentencing V.O.C. to double life imprisonment and 10 years rigorous imprisonment to Siva by the British on 07.07.1908.



(1886 - 1911 : Sengottai)

Assassination of Ashe by Vanchinathan (Tirunelveli conspiracy case) – Neelakanta Brahmachari and a few others formed an underground organization with the name Bharata Matha Sangam. The purpose of this organization was to kindle patriotism among people by killing British officers. Vanchinathan of Sengottai was drawn by this organization. He shot dead the Tirunelveli District Collector Robert Ashe at Maniyachi Railway Junction on June 17, 1911.



(1891 - 1934 : Tiruvananthapuram)

The Provisional Government of India in exile was set up in the Afghan capital of Kabul on December 1, 1915. The brain behind this move was the foreign minister of the provisional government in exile and the Nanjil Tamil Shenbagaraman.



(1904 - 1932 : Erode)

Holding the National flag aloft, Kumarasamy, known as Tiruppur Kumaran fell down and died on January 11.

Arya (a) Bashyam entered Fort St. George and hoisted the National flag at midnight on January 25.

(1922)

Protesting against the visit of the Prince of Wales, Periyar conducted a hartal in Erode. Mahatma Gandhi called his followers to boycott the Prince's arrival and conduct the strike.



(1928)

Protest Movement against Simon Commission.

Bharathi's songs were confiscated. Opposing it, an adjournment motion was passed in the Madras Legislature.

In the committee which was appointed to determine the political future of the Indians, the fact that not a single Indian was a part of it did upset the Indians.



(1931)

Civil Disobedience Movement.

Movement was led by Rajaji. Processions meetings and strikes took place. Salt Satyagraha took place as the final-most movement. Headed by Rajaji on April 30, 1930, hundred volunteers started from Tiruchirapalli to take part in the Salt Satyagraha at Vedaranyam.



1937 **-** Congress Government headed by Rajaji takes over administration in Tamil Nadu.

1939 **-** Congress Governments all over India (including Rajaji in Chennai) quit office.

1940 **-** Kamarajar elected as the President of Tamil Nadu Congress Committee.

1942 **-** Quit India Movement; conspiracy cases – Seerkazhi, Kulasekarapattinam and Kurumbur Meygnanapuram.

1947 **-** India gains Independence from British Imperialism.



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DELHI EDITION
The Hindustan Times
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NEW DELHI: FRIDAY, AUGUST 15, 1947

QUALITY PUBLICITY SERVICE
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INDIA INDEPENDENT : BRITISH RULE ENDS

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY TAKES OVER

MOUNTBATTEN'S APPOINTMENT AS GOVERNOR-GEN

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NEW DELHI, Thursday.—At

sembly, consisting of the chosen re
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serve India and her people. "We
India discovers herself again," said
bers to take the new pledge.

NEW STAR RISES IN THE EAST

LEADERS TELL NATION OF TASKS AHEAD

The appointed day has come—the day appointed by destiny—and India stands forth again after long slumber, and struggle, awake, vital, free and independent, says Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in a message to the nation on Freedom Day.

"The past clings on to us still in some measure and we have to do much before we redeem the pledges we have so often taken. The moment is dust, history begins anew for us, the history which we shall live and act and others will

Attlee's Greetings To Nehru









Women's role in the Freedom struggle

75 சுதந்திரத் திருநாள் அமுதப் பெருவிழா





Velu Nachiyar (1730 - 1796 : Ramanathapuram)

Lost her husband Muthuvaduganathan and Sivaganga to British rulers in 1772 and retrieved Sivaganga in 1780, after 8 years. In the freedom struggle, she was the only queen to have gained back her kingdom.



Kuyili (1780 : Sivaganga)

This martyr tricked the British into believing that she was going to the temple in the Sivaganga palace with Velu Nachiyar on Vijayadasami Day in 1780. She set fire to her saree and jumped into their arsenal and blew it up.



Nagammaiyar E.V.R. (1885 - 1933 : Salem)

A decision to picket toddy shops was taken when Gandhi Adigal was staying in Periyar's house in Erode. Periyar was arrested for his participation. The very next day Nagammaiyar and Periyar's sister Kannammal joined the picketing. Nagammaiyar also participated in the temple entry agitation at Vaikom in Kerala in 1924.



Anjalai Ammal (1890 - 1961 : Cuddalore)

A native of Cuddalore, courted arrest with husband Murugan and daughter Leelavathi. Though she was pregnant, she fought, came out of the prison on parole and delivered the child. She passed away on February 20, 1961.



S.R. Kannammal (1891 - 1971 : Erode)

Younger sister of Periyar. In the 1930s, she was the publisher of 'Kudiarasu' magazine. Both Editor Periyar and Publisher Kannammal were arrested for an editorial written by Periyar under the heading 'Why this regime should be thrown out'. Periyar was sentenced to 6 months and Kannammal to 3 months. Kannammal followed Periyar from 1925. She was a councilor in Erode Municipality in 1932.



Rukmani Lakshmipathy (1892 - 1951 : Madras)

Was lathi-charged by the police in Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha in 1930s and was sentenced to jail. In the boycott of foreign goods agitation also was sentenced to a prison term. She donated all her jewels to Gandhi Adigal for Harijan Fund in 1933. She was the Vice Chairman of the Legislative Council of Madras Presidency in 1937. She went to prison by participating in the Individual Satyagraha in 1940. Elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1946 and became a Minister also.



Ammu Swaminathan (1894-1978: Palakkad, Kerala)

She was the wife of lawyer Swaminathan and mother of Captain Lakshmi. Got trained in many fields like car driving, horse riding, swimming and playing tennis. Was drawn to the freedom movement after listening to a speech by Gandhi Adigal in 1920. A high society life-style turned into a sublime one. She switched over to Khadi. She was a Member of Chennai Corporation and of Parliament twice. She was a keen participant in the agitations against the British.



Padmasini Ammaiyar (1897 - 1939 : Madurai)

Mobilised women in Madurai and fought against the British for the freedom of the Country. Her courage and oratory inspired a large number of women to participate in the freedom struggle. She was tortured in prison.



Ambujammal (1899 - 1983 : Madras)

She worked as a teacher in a girls school. Joined Mahatma Gandhi's satyagraha in 1930. She was sentenced for 6 months in the foreign goods boycott agitation in 1932. Undaunted, she participated in all agitations till Independence was attained.



V.M.Kothainayaki (1901 - 1960 : Chengalpattu)

Used to silk clothes and gold jewels, she started wearing Khadi after becoming a Gandhian. She participated in the picketing of toddy shops in 1931 and in the agitation against the Lothian Commission in 1932. She courted imprisonment several times. She was a great author.



K.B. Sundarambal (1908 - 1980 : Coimbatore)

A nationalist, she joined the Gandhian movement and aroused the emotions of people in Tamil Nadu through her patriotic songs. Sundarambal participated in the campaigns of the Congress without fail. She had sung songs on Khadi movement, demolition of untouchability and against the whitemen rule. During Kamarajar's rule, in 1958, she was elected as the member of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Council.



Captain Lakshmi (1914 - 2012 : Malabar)

The women's wing of the Indian National Army led by Netaji Subash Chandra Bose was named Rani Jhansi Regiment. Netaji appointed Captain Lakshmi as the Commander of that Regiment. About 1,000 women joined this army and faced the British army with weapons. Eighty per cent of this army consisted of women from Tamil Nadu.



K.P.Janaki Ammal (1917 - 1992 : Madurai)

To create awareness among people, she sang and acted on stage. When Viswanatha Das ran out of cash for the Swadeshi movement, she sold her jewels and helped him. She sold her house in West Masi street and gave the money for freedom fighters to enable them hold a secret conference at Madurai.



Mayakkaal (1920 : Perungamanallur)

A rebellion took place at Perungamanallur protesting against the Criminal Tribes Act on 03.04.1920. Police shot dead 16 persons. The police shot dead mercilessly a woman by name Mayakkal also while she was giving water to a bullet-injured person struggling for life.



Meena Krishnaswamy (1922 - 2012 : Madurai)

She went to prison at the age of 13. Joined the Wardha Ashram of Gandhi Adigal in 1939; studied basic education there for 3 years. During the Quit India movement in 1942, she campaigned in the villages around the Ashram. She underwent one year imprisonment in Nagpur in 1942. In total, she was in prison for six years.



Sornammal (1927 : Kanniyakumari)

When Gandhi Adigal came to Nagercoil in Kanniyakumari District with his wife Kasturba on October 8, 1927, Sornammal met him and donated all her jewels for the freedom struggle. She courted imprisonment through participation in Satyagraha agitations.



Sornathammal (1930 - 1940 : Madurai)

Imprisoned for 3 weeks in the boycott agitation of foreign goods in the 1930s and for 4 months in the individual satyagraha in the 1940s. Though subjected to inhuman torture, she was steadfast in her ideal.



Lakshmi Ammal (1932 : Tiruppur)

She was the mother of P.S.Sundaram who headed the procession in which Tiruppur Kumaran participated in 1932. To earn a livelihood, she went to Burma where she started 'Gandhi Seva Sangam' and strengthened the Khadi movement. She handed over her son Sundaram to Gandhi Adigal for public service. Lakshmi Ammal and Sundaram's wife Sumithra Devi participated in the Satyagraha in Tiruchengode under Rajaji's leadership and were sentenced to six months imprisonment.



Leelavathi (1957 - 1997 : Madurai)

She was the daughter of Cuddalore Anjalai Ammal. Along with her mother, Leelavathi participated in the Neil statue agitation in 1927 at the age of 9. Arrested along with her mother, she was sent to the juvenile prison due to her age where she remained for 4 years. After her release, Gandhi Adigal summoned her to Wardha Ashram. It was Gandhi Adigal who changed her name Ammakannu, given by her parents, to Leelavathi. She married freedom fighter E.R.Jamadagni.



சுதந்திரத் திருநாள்
அமுதப் பெருவிழா

Tamil Nadu Leaders' role in the Freedom struggle



M.Singaravelar (1816 - 1946 : Madras)

Born in a family of fisherfolk, he became a High Court lawyer. During the non-co-operation movement, he set fire to his advocate's robe and became a full-time professor. His writings, speeches and thinking were marked by individuality. He authored many books. For the first time in India, he celebrated May Day in Chennai in 1923. He presided over the Communist organization's conference held at Kanpur in 1925. A strong trade union leader who served many prison sentences.



Vaidyanatha Iyer (1819 - 1955 : Thanjavur)

In 1930, he delivered a speech as part of the Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha and was severely attacked by the Police. It was because of Vaidyanatha Iyer that a large number of people from Madurai participated in the freedom struggle. He was arrested and remanded to prison for six months. In 1932 again, he was arrested and imprisoned for one year for participation in the Civil Disobedience movement. In 1932, he entered the Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple along with downtrodden people as part of the Temple Entry movement. In 1946, he became a Member of the Legislative Assembly.



G.Subramania Iyer (1855 - 1916 : Thanjavur)

"The British Government is tormenting poor farmers. The protest method of begging it for corrective action will not help", wrote the leading journalist G.Subramania Iyer, while strongly condemning the British authorities in his newspaper.



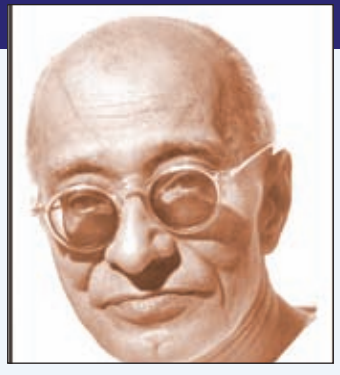
Salem C.Vijayaraghavachariar (1857 - 1906)

Vijayaragavachariar was a lawyer who opposed the British attitude of labeling freedom fighters as treasonists conspiring against the State and getting them severe sentences. Mahatma Gandhi had written a letter to Vijayaraghavachariar asking him to inform the Governor General about the problems of South African people. Till the end of his life, he relentlessly fought against the British Government and its repressive policies. He was a President of the All-India Congress Party.



V.O.Chidambaranar (1872 - 1936 : Tirunelveli)

V.O.Chidambaranar was a famous lawyer in Thoothukudi in 1907. He purchased a ship in 1907 and used it as a transport ship from Thoothukudi to Colombo. He was booked for treason by the then British Government. He was lodged in prison on July 8, 1908 to suffer a 40 year sentence. He was tortured by the British authorities who forced him to draw the wooden oil press in Kovai Prison.



C. Rajagopalachariar (1878 - 1972 : Madras)

He was a lawyer in 1900 and had a great affinity for the Gandhian movement. He participated in agitations against the Rowlatt Act, in the Non-Co-operation Movement, in the Vaikom Satyagraha and went to prison.

He was the last Governor general of India. He was one of the first few Indians to receive the Bharat Ratna award. He toiled to reduce the usage of nuclear weapons.



Periyar E.V.R. (1879 - 1973 : Erode)

E.V.R., who held 29 posts in public life gave all of them up to participate in the freedom movement in 1919. The posts included that of Chairman of Erode Municipality. His decision was the offshoot of the Jallianwalabagh carnage. He participated in dharnas against toddy shops, took part in the Khadi movement and led the Vaikom agitation and was imprisoned many times. He was also the President of Tamil Nadu Congress Committee. In 1925, he quit the Congress and formed the self-respect movement.



T.S.S.Rajan (1880 - 1953 : Srirangam, Trichi)

T.S.S.Rajan served as a Doctor in Burma. From there he went to London for higher studies. When Gandhi Adigal came to London from South Africa, Dr. Rajan got an opportunity to meet him at India House, hear his speeches and associate with him. After returning to India, Dr.Rajan served as Doctor besides participating in Congress Party work. He toured along with Gandhi Adigal when the latter came to Tamil Nadu in 1921 and translated his speeches. He participated in Flag satyagraha in Nagpur. He was arrested and imprisoned for a year. When Rajaji launched Salt Satyagraha agitation in 1930, at Trichy, the march started from the house of Dr.Rajan. He served as a Health Minister in the Rajaji's cabinet in 1937.



Chakkarai Chettiar (1880 - 1958)

He was a Member of the Chennai Corporation for 24 years from 1924 to 1948 and was Madras Corporation Mayor from 1941 to 1942. He was the President of various trade unions having thousands of workers as members. He was not only the leader of thousands of workers, but also of the national movement, according to Rajaji. Being a true friend of Bharathiyar, he was one among the 4 persons who spoke at the cremation of Bharathiyar.



Va.Ve.Su.Iyer (1881 - 1925 : Madras)

When he was a lawyer, he went to London for higher studies. As a revolutionary freedom fighter, during his 3 years of stay in London, he abstained from taking food for over 600 times and purchased arms and ammunition with the money he saved by such fasting.



Mahakavi Subramaniya Bharathiyar (1882 - 1921 : Ettayapuram)

By participating in three All-India Congress Committee conferences, he shaped his political life and personality. He started the 'Swadesha Prachaarini' organisation in Chennai with some like-minded freedom fighters. He was involved in attracting youth and students into serious politics and the freedom movement. He kindled the spirit of freedom through his songs and speeches. He made a great impression in journalism.



Thiru.Vi.Kalyanasundaram (1883-1953: Thandalam)

A freedom fighter, trade unionist, orator, journalist, writer, translator, politician and Gandhian. On 07.12.1917, he became the editor of the 'Desabakthan' magazine. He then started the weekly magazine 'Navasakthi'. On 17.12.1919, along with V.O.C., he met Tilakar at Chennai and arranged for a workers' meeting in Chennai. He established the Madras Labour Union in 1918 and held the State-level labour conference in 1920. In 1921, he met Mahatma Gandhi Adigal several times and translated many of the English speeches made by Mahatma Gandhi into Tamil.



Subramaniya Siva (1884 - 1925 : Dindigul)

He participated in the freedom movement along with V.O.Chidambaranar. He was sentenced to prison in 1908 and 1921. He organized his protest movement from Papparappatti in Pennagaram. He got 10 years imprisonment in a treason case. Due to harassment in prison, he was afflicted with leprosy.



Vanchinathan (1886 - 1911 : Sengottai)

A youth who got agitated after hearing that V.O.C. was given two life sentences, Vanchinathan shot dead Tirunelveli Collector Ashe when the latter was travelling by train, at Maniyachi Junction on June 17, 1911. He then shot himself to death when policemen tried to nab him.



Sathyamurthy (1887 - 1943 : Madras)

A lawyer by profession, due to patriotic feeling he joined the freedom struggle in 1919. He participated in many agitations including flag satyagraha in 1932 and went to prison many times.



P.Varadarajalu (1887 - 1957 : Rasipuram, Salem)

He fought for the rights of Madurai Harvey Mill workers in 1918. He made forceful speeches in support of the agitating workers. Gandhi Adigal stayed in his house when he came to Tiruppur in August 1920 and again in September to Salem. He was a forceful orator, journalist and trade union leader. He went to prison many times and was arrested mainly for his forceful articles.



Namakkal Kavignar V. Ramalingam Pillai (1888-1972)

In 1906, Ramalingam Pillai was a youth who was drawn to the Swadeshi movement due to the nationalistic upsurge in the period. In 1914, he gave a speech at the political conference held at Trichy. He met Dr. Annie Besant in that political meeting. He was the poet of the Gandhian era, a good speaker in Tamil and an artist. In 1930, His marching song for the Salt Satyagraha, 'Kathiyindri Raththamindri Yudham Ondru Varugudhu' (There's a war that's on without swords and bloodshed) became the bugle cry of the freedom fighters. In 1932, he was again arrested for participation in the Civil Disobedience movement. He has written poems about Mahatma Gandhi's programmes of Prohibition, Untouchability, Khadi and handicrafts development.



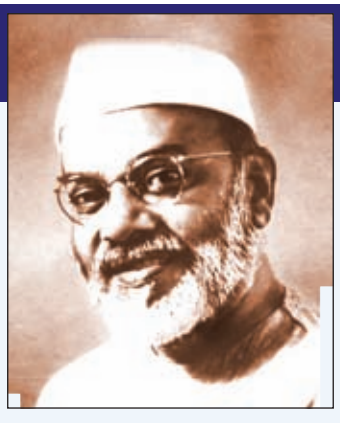
Dr.P.Subbarayan (1888 - 1962 : Salem)

Belonging to Kumaramangalam in Tiruchengode, Dr.Subbarayan started his career as a lawyer and participated in the freedom movement. In 1922, he was elected to the Chennai Presidency Legislative council for the first time. He successfully contested as an independent candidate in the 1926 Assembly Elections. Due to political circumstances prevailing at the time, he was elected as a Chief Minister. Then he joined the Congress Party. In 1942, he participated in the Quit India movement and was lodged in Trichy prison. All his family members were involved in public life.



Bharathidasan (1891 - 1964 : Puduchery)

He met Bharathiyar at the marriage of his physical training coach Velu Naicker. In the marriage, he sang the song of Bharathiyar 'Veera Sudhandhiram Vendi Nindraar, Pinnar Verondrum Kolvaaro' without knowing that Bharathiyar was also present there. The meeting between the two was happened through this Bharathiyar song. He sang many songs about Gandhi Adigal. In his poem about V.O.C., he compared the action of the patriot breaking stones in prison to breaking the teeth of the British regime and his drawing of the oil press to crushing the heads of the white rulers. He lauded Madasami who was involved in the Ashe murder case. His songs bear his individual stamp. He joined the self-respect movement in 1937.



J.C.Kumarappa (1892 - 1960 : Thanjavur)

A Gandhian economist, he pursued his higher education in the United States and London. His dissertation on 'Public Finance and Poverty in India' exposed the exploitation of the British. In 1931, he was sentenced to one-and-a-half-years imprisonment for sedition. He worked at the Sabarmati Ashram with Gandhi Adigal. In 1932, he was sentenced to two years of rigorous imprisonment in Nasik prison.



Omandur P.Ramasamy Reddiyar (1895 - 1970 : Madras)

In 1920, Ramasamy Reddiyar participated in the Indian National Congress meeting at Nagpur. He led the movement of Harijan entry into the Rameswaram Temple. In 1930, he participated in the Salt Satyagraha struggle at Vedaranyam and was remanded to prison for six months. In 1938, he was elected as the leader of Tamil Nadu Congress. In 1940, he presided over the 40th Congress committee meeting. On 15th August 1947 at the time of hoisting of National Flag at Fort St. George, Chennai, Ramasamy Reddiyar was the Chief Minister of Madras Presidency.



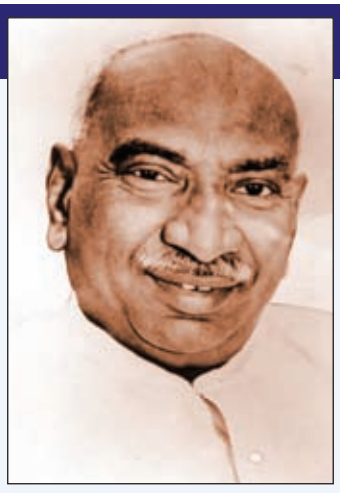
M.Bhakthavatchalam (1897 - 1987 : Madras)

He was the Secretary of the reception committee of the All-India Congress Committee conference held in Chennai in 1927. He participated in the agitation against the Simon Commission in 1928. In 1932, he was assaulted by the police and lodged in prison. He participated in all agitations sponsored by the Congress party. He was imprisoned many times. After independence, he became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.



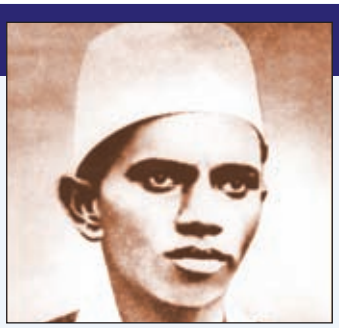
P.S.Kumarasami Raja (1898 - 1957 : Rajapalayam)

Belonging to Rajapalayam area, Thiru. Kumarasami Raja joined the freedom movement under the influence of Dr. Annie Besant, Satyamurthi and Gandhi Adigal. He agitated against the tyrannical rule of the British Government and went to prison in 1932. He took special interest in Khadi and the Co-operative movement. He was among those responsible for extending the influence of the freedom movement to the Southern Districts. He was the member of the Legislative Assembly from 1949 to 1952 and was also the Chief Minister of Madras Presidency.



K.Kamaraj (1903 - 1975 : Virudhunagar)

Kamarajar participated in the freedom movement from 1921. In that year, he travelled from his native place Virudhunagar to Madurai to hear the speech of Gandhi Adigal. He travelled to various towns and villages to create awareness about the freedom movement. In 1927, he participated as the commander of the volunteer force in the All-India Congress Committee conference. He was arrested and imprisoned many times. In 1940, 1942, 1944, 1946, 1948 and 1950 he was the president of the State Congress unit. In 1946, He was elected as the Member of the Assembly from Sattur Constituency. Then he became the President of the All-India Congress Committee. He was also the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.



Tiruppur Kumaran (1904 - 1932 : Sennimalai)

At the civil disobedience protest held in Tiruppur on 10.01.1932, he carried a flag in his hand at the head of the procession and marched forward with majesty. The police aggressively targeted Kumaran first. Kumaran was hit hard on his head and he fell unconscious. Despite being injured, Kumaran continued to hold the flag. He was admitted to hospital. He then passed away.



Ma.Po.Sivagnanam (1906 - 1995 : Madras)

Although he had studied only up to the third standard, he had a great love for the Tamil language. He participated in the freedom struggle and suffered imprisonment for 755 days. Through his books, he made the world know about Kattabomman and V.O.C.



Pa.Jeevanandam (1907 - 1963 : Kanniyakumari)

In his 14th year, Pa.Jeevanandam participated in Vaikom's Anti-Untouchability Movement. He started a weekly by name Janasakthi in 1937. He was known for his integrity despite his poor financial position. As his song "Kaalukku Seruppum Illai, Kal Vayitrukku Koozhum Illai, Paazhukku Uzhaithomada En Thozha, Pasiyattru Ponomada" (There is no slippers for our legs, no food for our stomach and we toiled in vain friend),he lived in a small hut till his last breath.



Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar (1908 - 1963 : Ramanathapuram)

Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar considered patriotism and spirituality to be his two eyes. In 1939, at Madurai he championed Harijan temple entry. He agitated against the Criminal Tribes Act brought by the British and went to prison many times for withdrawal of the Act. He suffered imprisonment many times for the freedom of the Country.



P.Kakkan (1908 - 1981 : Chennai)

For the freedom of the Country he involved in various agitations. Angered by his agitations and was imprisoned, on 24.10.1940, the British Government awarded him rigorous imprisonment and he was sentenced to prison in Vellore prison and Chennai Central prison. Till the Country attained freedom, he participated in various agitations and imprisoned.



Immanuvel Sekaran (1924 - 1957 : Ramanathapuram)

Immanuvel Sekaran was born in 1924 at Sellur near Paramakudi, Ramanathapuram District. In 1942, at the age of 18, he participated in the Quit India Movement. After Independence, he was in the Army for five years. He organised various agitations for the oppressed people. In 1957, he passed away.



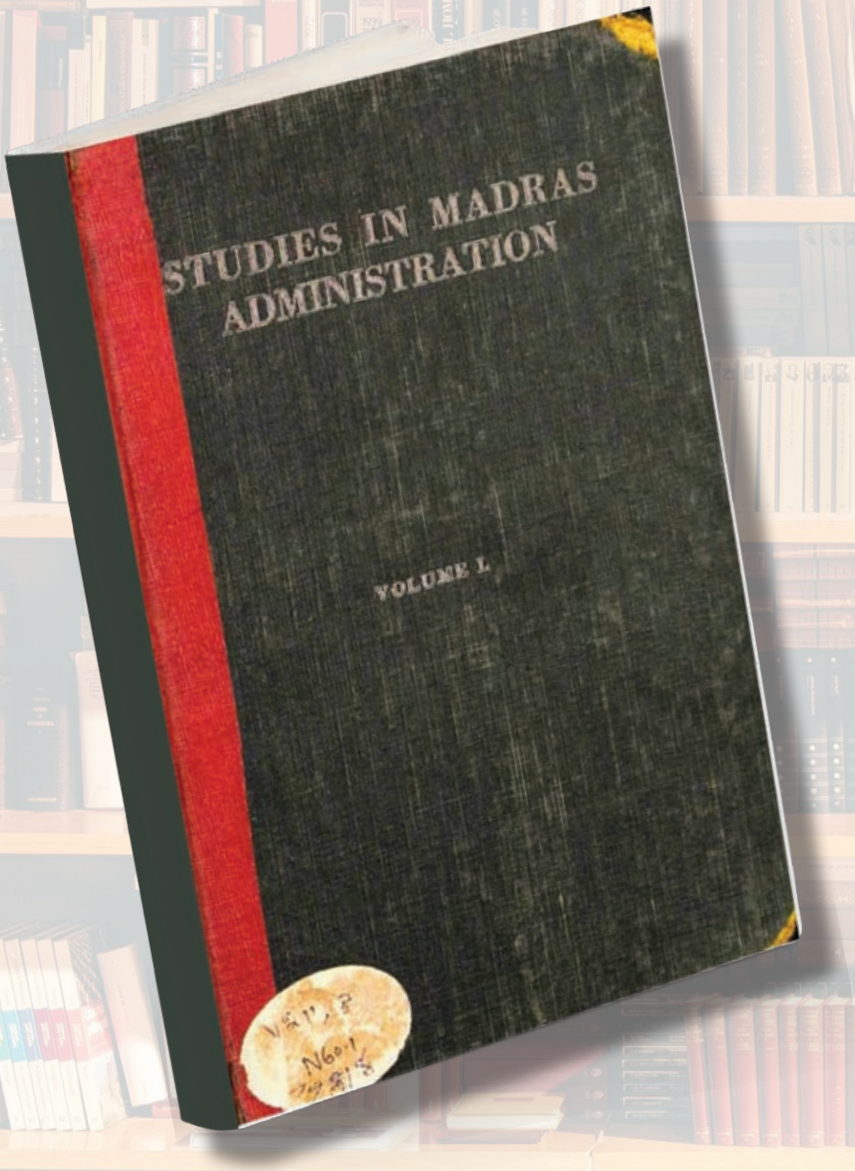
Madurai Maulana Sahib (1921)

In 1921, Maulana Sahib was arrested and remanded to prison for picketing toddy shops. In connection with the Khilafat non-co-operation movement, a meeting was held at Thanjavur. In that meeting, Maulana gave a fiery speech. Once he completed it, he was arrested and remanded to prison for 18 months. In 1932, for participation in the Civil Disobedience movement, he was imprisoned for two years in Cuddalore prison. During that period, his wife Sultan Beevi passed away. Though many suggested that he must apply for parole, he refused.

"This special Publication is also dedicated to hundreds of brave Martyrs who, like the martyrs featured in this special Publication, were prisoned and sacrificed their lives for our country against the oppression of the British and liberation of India."

STUDIES IN MADRAS ADMINISTRATION

Dr. B.S.BALIGA, B.A (Hons) (London), Ph.D. (London)
Late Curator, Madras Record Office



NATIONALISM AND INDEPENDENCE IN MADRAS

[Written in 1957 in connection with the Centenary Celebrations of the Freedom Struggle in India].

The dawn of nationalism in Madras began more than a century ago. It was heralded by a few intellectuals of this State who formed themselves into bodies like the Madras Native Association and the Madras Hindu Debating Society and who, evincing an ardent desire for administrative and political reforms, gradually won the sympathy and support of many people. As early as 1852, when the British Parliament was considering the question of the renewal of the East India Company's Charter, they sent a petition to the Parliament detailing the grievances of the people and pressed for the appointment of a Royal Commission to redress them.

They also pressed for the appointment of the elected representatives of the people to the Imperial and Provincial Executive Councils.

They repeated their demands in 1853 and, in stronger terms, in 1855 even after the passing of the Charter Act of 1853, which gave a fresh lease of life to the Company's Administration.

In their petition of 1855, which was discussed and approved at a public meeting held in Madras, they bitterly complained of the "unchecked career of misrule and oppression" of the Company's Government, demanded direct Government by the Crown and emphasised the imperative necessity of making that Government "constitutionally responsible to the people of the country" Their civilization and education, they said, eminently fitted them to take a proper share in the administration of their own country.

Then came the so called "Indian Mutiny" of 1857. It burst like a bombshell in Northern India causing widespread political and military upheavals. But in Madras it produced hardly any repercussions. The explanation for this is to be found in the fact that the people of this State showed no inclination to gain their political ends through violence.

If they had any such inclination, they would doubtless have tried to make capital of the convulsions that were then shaking the foundations of British rule. But they did no such thing. On the other hand, as will be presently shown, they sought to secure political reforms through peaceful and constitutional methods.

When, however, the disturbances broke out in Northern India, everything looked dark and gloomy to the Madras Government. They found that their military resources were quite inadequate to deal with any serious situation, having had then stationed most of their forces at Hyderabad, Nagpur and Mysore.

They were afraid that at any moment Hyderabad and Nagpur might flare up, the former because of its annexation made by Dalhousie in 1853. They were also afraid that in the Madras City itself the population, especially the Muslims, might give trouble because of the abolition of the Nawabship of the Carnatic, which had just then been made (1855). They were equally afraid that rebellions might be stirred up everywhere, and especially in the army, by disaffected persons and emissaries from Northern India.

They, therefore, brought into operation the provisions of Act XIV of 1857 and invested the Sessions Judges of all districts with powers to try offences against the State. But actually nothing serious took place either in the present, or in the former

composite Madras State. Some copies of a proclamation and letters urging the Nizam and his Minister to begin a holy war against the English were seized from some Muslims in Madras City.

Some minor disturbances caused mostly by private disputes occurred in Rajahmundry and were easily suppressed. A green flag and a proclamation urging the slaughter of the English were seized from some Muslims in Masulipatam. A few bands of Rohillas crossed the Nizam territory and attacked and plundered a couple of towns and villages in the Krishna, Cuddapah and Kurnool districts.

A Moplah rising which was meditated in Malabar was nipped in the bud and a Maharashtra inroad which was made into Kanara was repelled. These were the only political repercussions. Nor was there any, save one, military repercussion. As is well-known, in spite of its weakness in military resources, Madras sent out English as well as Indian troops to Northern India on 2 summons from Canning, the Governor-General. All these troops embarked without the least murmur and played no small part in the military operations in the north.

One troop alone of the Madras Army, the 8th Light Native Cavalry, showed disaffection. On their March from Bangalore to Madras, from where it was intended to embark them, the men of this troop first manifested hesitation and finally absolutely refused to embark unless they were granted the old rates of pay and pension which had been altered in 1833. This troop was disbanded and its disaffection, it is clear, arose not from political but from mercenary considerations.

Throughout the course of the disturbances in Northern India, the people from almost all Districts of this State, including the citizens of Madras, sent loyal addresses to the Government deploring and condemning the acts of violence committed in the north. Some even sent subscriptions unsought in aid of the relief of sufferers.

But this loyalty to constituted authority did not by any means make them blind to their political advancement. They welcomed the abolition of the East India Company's rule and hailed the direct assumption of the Government of India by Queen Victoria. But they never lost sight of their main demand, namely, that of responsible Government, and pressed for it whenever opportunities presented themselves.

Thus, in 1859, when Trevelyan, the most popular Governor of Madras since Munro, was recalled by the Secretary of State on account of his differences with the Government of India, they reiterated, in their farewell address presented to him (signed by more than 7,500 citizens), their insistent demand for responsible government. And the reply that he made must have given them some hopes and

also some food for reflection. For, this is what he said: "You say that you had hoped to have seen under administration the introduction of representative Government.

My answer is, qualify yourselves for representative institutions and they will be sure to come in good time. You are united under the common protection of the British Crown with a free people who have never grudged to others participation in the political advantages which they themselves enjoy.

The real delay is on your part. Cultivate the literature of England which is instinct with the spirit of self - Government. Learn by our example how to work representative institutions, for this is by no means an easy task and several famous nations have failed in the attempt. Above all things, strive to attain to a high moral standard. Public morality, without which national Government is impossible, is only the aggregate of each man's individual character.

Truth, justice, scrupulous fidelity to engagements, habitual preference of the public to private interests, are the qualities which elevate a nation and enable it to conduct its affairs with advantage."

But the wheels of Juggernaut rolled on and no sign of political reforms appeared anywhere on the horizon, though some attempts were made to foster local self-Government institutions by the introduction of the Towns Improvement Acts of 1865 and 1871, the District Municipalities Act of 1884 and the Local Boards Acts of 1871 and 1884.

These Acts created Municipalities and local boards which contained, besides official members, at first a few of the nominated, and subsequently some of the elected members and entrusted to these institutions the management of local affairs such as sanitation, roads, schools, etc. It was hoped that they would provide ideal training grounds for states in and legislators in the larger spheres of responsible Government.

But the responsible Government never came. The only thing that came therefore was political agitation.

This agitation was started with some vigour in Madras soon after the inception of the Indian National Congress (1885). By this time several newspapers in English as well as Indian languages had come into existence both in the city and in the Districts and these became no mean instruments in the hands of nationalists.

Thus in 1886, for instance, the Press began to criticise the current policies of the Government. It described the salt tax as the most unjust and cruel of all the taxes imposed on the country It assailed the income-tax and said that it should be imposed not on the Indians but on the English in England in as much as the revenue derived

from it was devoted to the benefit of the English in strengthening the defences of India in which they alone were interested.

It advocated the imposition of high duties on English goods in order to protect and foster Indian industries. It demanded the expenditure of not less than one-tenth of the Indian revenues on education. It attacked the conduct of several officers, including that of the Governor.

It pressed for the representation of more Indians in the Provincial Legislative Council and for vesting that Council with complete control over the budget. And, among other things, it insisted on the reduction of salaries of European Civil Servants and on the recruitment of more and more Indians in the Civil Services and the army.

The very next year (1887) witnessed the Third Session of the Indian National Congress in Madras. It was presided over by the All-India leader Sri. Bhadrudin Tayabji and its members from Madras included leaders like Sri. T.Madhav Rao, Sri. S.Subramania Ayyar, Sri. Rungiah Naidu, Sri. G.Subramania Ayyar, Sri. Sabapathy Mudaliar, Sri. S. A.Swaminatha Ayyar, Sri. P. Somasundaram Chetty, Sri. C.Vijayaraghavachariar, Mr. Eardley Norton and Mr. A.O.Hume.

It passed a series of resolutions stressing the necessity for the expansion of the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils, for the separation of the judiciary from the executive, for the throwing open of higher grade posts in the army to Indians, for the establishment of a military academy in India, for the reduction in public expenditure, for the imposition of higher import duties on finer classes of cotton fabrics and for the introduction of a technical education system in India suited to her conditions and capable of reviving her indigenous industries. Nor is this all.

It set up a machinery for carrying on national propaganda. It formed standing committees in all States and laid down that their primary duties should be "to promote the political education of the people", by distributing tracts and pamphlets, by holding public meetings, and by arranging important lectures "throughout the year" and it empowered these committees to form sub-committees in the Districts.

Under the impulsion of this Congress propaganda both the press and the public became more and more national-minded and more and more critical of British administration. Newspapers like The Hindu and the Swadesamitran began to strongly criticise the actions of the Government. Bodies like the Madras Mahajana Sabha (established in 1884) commenced to propagate Congress views. And, about the same time, District Conferences came to be held annually in several Districts presided over by eminent men like Sri. P.S.Sivaswami Ayyar, Sri. G.Subramania Ayyar and Sri. V.P.Madhav Rao.

These conferences organized by local leaders of all communities, Brahmins, Non-Brahmins and Muslims alike, discussed a large number of important matters, affecting the welfare of not only the District and the State but also the whole of India. The attainment of Swaraj (Responsible Government), the boycott of foreign cloth and foreign goods, the encouragement of swadeshi cloth and swadeshi goods, the establishment of swadeshi industries, the revival of panchayats and the eradication of the drink evil, all these loomed large in their discussions.

Their discussions also centred on subjects like the extension of franchise, the increase of elected Members in the Legislature, the separation of the executive and the judiciary, the introduction of compulsory primary education, the reform of local administration, the establishment of co-operative societies and the prevention of Indian emigration to Natal, Transvaal and other places. All these subjects were precisely similar to the subjects discussed at the various sessions of the Indian National Congress.

The tone of the speeches made at these conferences was usually moderate, but at times it became extreme, eloquent and insistent, as when Sri. G.Subramania Ayyar addressed the Second Thanjavur District Conference in 1908.

He spoke of the high-handed actions of the British Government, of their repressive measures, of the summary deportation of some of our leaders of the revival of obsolete ordinances of the prohibition of public 39 and of meetings, of the crusade against our swadeshi efforts the persistent misrepresentation of the Anglo-Indian press. He insisted on unity in the ranks of the Congress and deplored the split that had occurred between the moderates and the extremists at its Surat Session.

He exhorted all parties to work together for the common cause for achieving the four articles of the Indian political creed, namely, swadeshi, boycott foreign goods, national education and swaraj.

The resolutions passed by these conferences were generally forwarded to the Government, but the Government hardly took any notice of them. There is, however, evidence to show that the leaders of these conferences knew only too well that the Government would be indifferent.

Their main object was to rouse the political consciousness of the people and this they seem to have done in some measure through the delegates and others who attended the conferences and through the publicity given to their proceedings in the press.

As may be expected, some dissentient voices belittled these conferences. Some questioned the motives behind their organizers and described the whole movement as one Some others engineered by the Brahmins for their own benefit again made out that the people were entirely unconcerned about politics.

These criticisms failed to take note of the increasing influence of nationalism over all classes, including Non-Brahmins. For, it was at this time that national resentment against the British rose high and led to the assassination of Mr. Ashe, the Collector of Tirunelveli. It was at this time that some of the nationalists, under the inspiration of Sri. V.O.Chidambaram Pillai, started the first big national enterprise of its kind, namely, the Indian Steam Navigation Company.

It was at this time that Sri Subramania and carried on national Bharati composed national songs propaganda from Pondicherry. It was also at this time that Sri. V.O.Chidambaram Pillai and Sri Subramania Siva courted imprisonment by making spirited speeches exhorting the people to press for nothing less than "purna swaraj" and to offer passive resistance to the Government by boycotting British goods, British Courts and British Schools.

It must however be stated that nationalism, as yet, had not begun to permeate the masses. It was only occasionally, by fits and starts, that the masses were making themselves felt.

That great task of rousing the masses was attempted by the Home Rule, the Non-Co-operation and the Khilafat movements. These movements that came in the wake of the First World War (1914-1918) led to widespread political agitation.

The credit for broadcasting for the first time the seeds of nationalism in our State belongs to Dr. Annie Besant.

Within a year of the declaration of the war, she started in Madras, as the Government themselves have put it, a "red-hot agitation" for Home Rule (Self-Government or Swaraj) which soon began to spread like wild fire from District to District.

Campaign in March-April 1915 in a series of published in her newspaper "New India" asked to be governed by her own men freely elected by herself, to make and break Ministers at will, to have her own army and navy, to levy her own taxes, to frame her own budget, to educate her own people in her own way, in short, to become a sovereign nation within her own borders owing only allegiance to the Imperial Crown.

And so long as this swaraj was not attained, all her crying problems like the poverty of the masses, unemployment, the decay of industries and so forth would remain unsolved. In order to attain swaraj, Mrs. Besant organized a Home Rule League and preached everywhere about swadeshi, boycott of foreign goods, temperance, national education, labour welfare and responsible Government ideals similar in essence to those propounded by the Indian National Congress since 1885.

In vain the Governor sent a friendly remonstrance to her to dissuade her from her course. In vain also the Government proposed to the Government of India that drastic steps should be taken to check her activities which were fraught with danger to the public peace.

In vain too, she was compelled to deposit security for her press, and shortly afterwards, subjected to the penalty of forfeiting this security. She continued her agitation with unabated vigour, attacked the Press Act, appealed to the High Court, and thereby gained an immense popularity because, though that court decided against her, it adjudged at the same time that, out of the 14 extracts of her articles which had been considered as seditious by the Government, only 2 were really seditious.

She then, with the help of Mr. G.S.Arundale, the Organizing Secretary of the Home Rule League, began to enthuse the students and enlist their aid and sympathy. She condemned the existing educational system as being backward, reactionary and unpatriotic, hailed the students as the rising hope of India, who were destined to secure for the country freedom from foreign yoke, instituted Home Rule classes for them, formed Boy Scouts and Volunteer troops for them and took up their cause on every occasion. Nor was this all.

She turned the Theosophical Society, of which she was the President, into a political organization, believing as she did that all great national movements in India are rooted in religion and that the Home Rule Movement could not therefore be an exception to this rule; and by this single act, more than anything else, brought into the national arena hundreds of teachers, Government servants, social workers and other intellectuals.

Her Home Rule League, which she looked upon as an auxiliary to the Indian National Congress now began to carry on an extensive political propaganda.

Everywhere, both in the City and in the Districts, speeches were delivered, pamphlets were issued and students. Strikes and demonstrations were staged, all of which greatly disconcerted the Government and speedily led to the internment of Mrs. Besant and her associates, Mr. Arundale and Sri Wadia in the Nilgiris (June 1917).

This did not however abate the ardour of the movement; on the contrary it increased the ardour. A wave of resentment against the Government swept over the whole State. Protest meetings were held in every District, students strikes were organized in many schools and colleges, public processions were taken out and leaflets in Indian languages as well as picture he Olcott post cards on Home Rule were widely distributed. Lodge at Ootacamund in which she fixed up her residence became a centre of pilgrimage for all sorts of intellectuals and political workers.

Thither went continually for instruction and inspiration men like Sri. S.Subramania Ayyar, Dr. C.P.Ramaswami Ayyar and Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. Nor did the situation become better when her residence was transferred to Coimbatore District became a centre of special Home Rule activity came her release and the release of her associates (September 1917) but these events too failed to damp the Home Rule activities. Home Rule meetings continued to be held in the City and in the Districts; Home Rule volunteers continued to carry on propaganda in towns as well as villages; and the Home Rule Monster Petition was signed by thousands of people in all walks of life.

The Home Rule Movement very soon merged itself into the two greater movements of All-India importance, the Non-Co-operation and the Khilafat movements. These movements took the whole country by storm and, by identifying themselves with the Indian National Congress and utilizing its whole machinery for effective propaganda, gave a permanent character to nationalism.

They arose during the war and went on gaining momentum even after the war, even after the introduction of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919. They owed their origin to various causes but they owed their inspiration, their force and vitality, essentially to one towering personality, Mahatma Gandhi. After having successfully carried on the campaign of passive resistance for improving the lot of Indians in South Africa, Mahatma Gandhi returned to India in 1915 and almost immediately started political propaganda.

He took up the cause of the tenants of Bihar against the oppressions of the planters and organized passive resistance in the Kaira District of Bombay against the land revenue exactions of the Government. He then supported the extremist sections of the Indian National Congress and induced the Congress to join the Muslim League and the Muslim agitation against England and her allies when they endangered the suzerainty of the Khalifa, the Sultan of Turkey, and occupied the holy places of the Muslims in Asia Minor and Arabia.

Nor was this all. He assailed the Government when they curtailed the liberty of the people by arming themselves by the Rowlatt Acts with powers of arrest

and detention without trial of persons suspected of anti-Government activities, and condemned the Reforms of 1919 as being utterly inadequate to satisfy Indian aspirations. It is under these circumstances that he launched in February 1919 the Non-Co-operation and Khilafat agitation; and his sincerity, his spiritual insight and his political sagacity made him at once a great leader, a Mahatma, beloved and respected by both the Hindus and Muslims.

This agitation which is called the Satyagraha Campaign, or the Civil Disobedience Movement, stirred the hearts of millions all over India, and in pursuance of it, national leaders and political workers preached everywhere non-co-operation with the Government and passive resistance to the Government with unprecedented vigour.

In August 1920, Mahatma Gandhi himself came down on a propaganda tour to the south accompanied by the two notable Muslim leaders, Sri Muhammad Ali and Sri Shaukat Ali and delivered a number of speeches in Madras City and in the Districts.

In these speeches he emphasised that civil disobedience signified the force of truth or the force of the soul, that its acceptance involved the rejection of all physical violence as well as the implementation of all policies laid down by the Congress such as the resignation of titles, the boycott of Legislative Councils and foreign goods, national education, temperance, labour unions etc.

He also emphasised that the Hindus and Muslims should unite together and fight for their common cause, Swaraj, for the redressal of Khilafaṭ grievances, for the reparation of the Punjab atrocities and for the withdrawal of the Rowlatt Acts. Subsequently he came twice to Madras in 1921 to give a fillip to the movement.

It is not possible to describe here in any detail the results produced by the movement. All that can be said is that it resulted in many things of national significance. It resulted in hartals, processions and public meetings.

It resulted in the resignation of titles and honours. It resulted in the boycott of schools, law courts, the Legislative Council and the local bodies. It resulted in the formation of labour unions and strikes resulted in the boycott of toddy shops and toddy shop sales and caused a considerable loss of revenue to the Government. It resulted in the encouragement of the Charka and the Khadi.

It resulted in the formation of Youth Leagues and Congress organizations throughout the State. And, above all, it resulted in rousing a spirit of defiance against the authorities, and thus, in undermining in no small measure, the prestige of the Government.

All these results were due to the ceaseless efforts of our political leaders like Sri Kasturiranga Ayyangar, Sri Srinivasa Ayyangar, Sri C.Vijayaraghavachariar, Sri S.Satyamurthi, Sri V.O.Chidambaram Pillai, Sri Kalyanasundara Mudaliar, Sri Singaravelu Chetty, Sri E.V.Ramaswami Naicker, Dr. P.Varadarajalu Naidu, Sri Yakub Hasan and Sri C.Rajagopalachari. They were also due to the selfless devotion to the cause of patriotism shown by many of our political workers who went to jail in large numbers.

They were likewise due to the persistent national propaganda carried on by the newspapers like The Hindu, the Muhammadan, the Desabhakthan, the Tamil Nadu and the Swadesamitran.

Meanwhile the awakening of the political consciousness of the country had led to the introduction of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919. By the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909 the Madras Legislative Council, which was then the Executive Council, supplemented by additional members for making laws, had been enlarged, the number of its additional members having been raised from 20 to 42 of whom 19 were to be elected.

The official majority in the Council had been surrendered and the members had been given the rights of moving resolutions on the budget as well as on matters of public importance and of asking supplementary questions on reply to their interpellations.

But, nevertheless, its resolutions had not been binding Executive Government, nor control over any department of the Government, By the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, the Legislative Council ceased to be the Executive Council supplemented by additional members appointed or elected for the purpose of making laws.

It became a separate body of which the members of the Executive Council became ex-officio members. Its members, including the proportion of elected members, were also increased; there were to be now 98 elected members and not more than 30 nominated members. The Governor members of whom only 15 might be officials.

Its longer presided over it, though he had a right to address it. Powers too were enlarged. It had the powers of discussing and voting the budget, of moving resolutions on matters of public importance, of interpellation, of putting supplementary questions and of moving the adjournment of business to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance.

The constitution of the Executive Government was at the same time modified. system of dyarchy was introduced. Provincial subjects were classified Reserved as of

Transferred. And, while the former were administered by the Governor-in-Council, the latter were administered by the Governor acting with Ministers appointed from, and responsible to the Legislative Council.

When these reforms were on the anvil, a new party entered the political arena. This was the Non-Brahmin Party which came to be called the South Indian Liberal Federation or the Justice Party. It was by no means, as is sometimes supposed, a thoroughly reactionary party.

It was not anti-nationalist in its outlook. It was only more moderate than the Congress Party and it sought to attain its goal of full responsible Government through constitutional methods. It came into existence in this State towards the end of 1916 and gathered strength gradually during the Home Rule, the Non Co-operation and the Khilafat Movements.

Its first pillars were Sri P.Theagaraya Chetty, President of the South Indian Chamber of Commerce, the oldest member of the Corporation of Madras, and an ex-member of the Legislative Council, and Dr. T.M.Nair, both of whom enjoyed the confidence of large sections of the Non- Brahmins.

In December 1916 Sri P.Theagaraya Chetty issued a manifesto attacking the Home Rule Movement in trenchant language, charging it with being a scheme devised by the Brahmins who were not content with having secured the practical monopoly of political power and high government appointments, and calling upon all the Non-Brahmins to assert and press their claims against the domination of the Brahmins. The party thus ushered into this State was backed by a journal called The Non-Brahmin and, shortly afterwards, by a newspaper of its own called The Justice with Dr. T.M.Nair as editor and Sri Theagaraya Chetty as publisher. It lost no time in making propaganda.

It held several public meetings in the city and the Districts and urged that, in the coming reforms, communal representation by communal electorates as well as communal representation in public services, should be introduced.

It also vehemently protested against the nomination of Sri V.S.Srinivasa Sastry on the Franchise Committee and urged, in his stead, the nomination of either Dr. T.M.Nair or some other Non-Brahmin leader. Indeed, what gave the Justice Party, its strength was the appeal which it made to the entire Non-Brahmin Community that the predominance of the Brahmin leaders in the Home Rule and Congress movements and the over representation of the Brahmins in the services were matters demanding the serious notice of all the Non-Brahmins.

When the Reforms of 1919 were introduced, although they were not palatable to it, it accepted office and tried to work them. And during the non-co-operation and Khilafat agitations, it tried its best to counteract them, though in vain.

The Amidst this agitation and counter-agitation, the non-co-operation and Khilafat movements suddenly came to an end. Congress split over the question of Council entry and the Muslims be held with dismay the abolition of the Khalifa by Kemal Pasha.

But the agitation for swaraj, though abated, was continued, while Mahatma Gandhi took to constructive work, planning, as he said, to start the Civil Disobedience Movement at the proper opportunity.

During this time, till the advent of the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-1931, interest in nationalism was kept up by the Congress in our State by continual propaganda.

It was this propaganda that led to the launching of the no-tax campaign in Thanjavur. It was this propaganda that led to the collection of Khadi purses and to the picketing of toddy shops and toddy shop sales in various districts.

It was this propaganda that led to several strikes in textile mills in the State. It was this propaganda that led to the boycott of the Simon Commission when it arrived in Madras. And, finally, it was this propaganda that led to the general strike in the South Indian Railway (1928).

Close upon this came the Civil Disobedience Movement forged by Mahatma Gandhi and introduced at the Lahore Session of the Congress in 1929. The resolution on this movement framed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the rising leader of India, and issued on behalf of the Congress Working Committee, charged the British Government with having not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but also ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually and declared in emphatic terms that must therefore, sever the British connection and attain purna swaraj or complete independence.

The way to swaraj, it further declared, was not through violence but through civil disobedience, A manifesto like this issued to including non-payment of taxes. the numerous Congress organizations throughout India and a movement like this led by no less a leader than Mahatma Gandhi could not but be expected to produce widespread political agitation. A wave of nationalism, the like of which had never been witnessed before, spread over the whole of India and the Congress leaders and Congress workers came out everywhere and did their utmost to paralyse the activities of the Government.

The Government for the first time realised the national significance of the movement and introduced a series of repressive laws to meet the extraordinary situation.

The movement, indeed, shook the whole State of Madras. Its ordinary features here consisted, as before, of processions mass meetings, hartals, singing of national songs and so forth in defiance of prohibitory orders.

Its special features which alone can be indicated here consisted of salt satyagraha, labour strikes, anti-drink campaigns, agitations in local bodies, publicity in the press and, in some places, even mass risings in resentment at the repressive measures taken by the Government. Arcot, Vellore, Gudiyatham and Sholingur in North Arcot and But for these violent out-bursts at Tindivanam in South Arcot.

Such risings took place at occasioned by violent repression, the movement was characterised throughout by a sullen, persistent, non-violent agitation. In almost all districts, as well as in the City, the nationalist The Hindu, despite the press, notably the newspaper rigorous enforcement of the Press Ordinance, carried on subtle in almost all districts the national propaganda with success.

In almost all districts spathe cutting and picketing of toddy shops and in almost all toddy shop sales was conducted with great success. Districts, including the City, labour strikes in mills and factories were organized with equal success.

In almost all districts salt satyagraha was launched with even more success. And the greatest success in this satyagraha was achieved in Thanjavur under the able guidance of Sri C.Rajagopalachari. As this was the biggest organized effort & quot; in support of the Civil Disobedience Movement in Tamil Nadu, we may describe it in some detail.

Sri C.Rajagopalachari had by now come to the very forefront in the politics in Madras. He had become Mahatma Gandhi's right hand man and risen to the position of the President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee.

He fixed Vedaranyam as the chief scene of operations for his salt satyagraha and the moment Mahatma Gandhi began his famous march to Dandi (12th March 1930) issued an appeal for funds and volunteers and toured through Tamil Nadu addressing public meetings at various places to organize a march to Vedaranyam.

The funds poured in and the volunteers flocked to his standard from all Districts. He then sent an advanced guard to go along the route of the march from Tiruchirappalli to Vedaranyam, in order to arrange for accommodation and supplies at suitable halts and to rouse the sympathies of the people.

In this and in all other work connected with the campaign he found able lieutenants in Dr. T.S.S.Rajan and Mrs. Lakshmipathi. As soon as the news of the campaign came to be known, the Thanjavur district authorities became not a little perturbed, especially since the Government had issued no instructions as to how to deal with the situation and had, on the other hand, ordered that Sri C.Rajagopalachari should not be arrested until he had actually broken the salt law. Mr. J.A.Thorne, the energetic District Magistrate, however, did all that he could to obstruct, if not to prevent the march, by making it widely known that anybody who offered any assistance in the way of accommodation and supplies to the party would be prosecuted under section 157 of the Indian Penal Code.

In spite of this, however, the march from Tiruchirappalli began on the scheduled date, 13th April 1930. When Sri C.Rajagopalachari with a picked party of 99 salt satyagrahis came to Koviladi, he found the famous local chattram barred and bolted against him, but he was not discomfited.

He found some accommodation in a private house while the party made themselves comfortable on the river bed. This was the only place where Mr. Thorn's tactics succeeded.

Thereafter Sri C.Rajagopalachari and his party met welcome at Tiruvaiyar, Thanjavur and Kumbakonam and jubilant welcome from Kumbakonam onwards until they arrived at Vedaranyam on 28th March way in which this march was conducted extorted the admiration of Mr. Thorne.

He reported that Sri C.Rajagopalachari maintained excellent discipline among his followers, exercised complete control over them and observed strict non-violence. He, however, arrested him as soon as he began to collect salt from the salt swamp. Other leaders like Sri K.Sanatanam, Sri Vedaratnam Pillai, Mrs. Lakshmipathi, Dr. T.S.S.Rajan, as well as a large number of volunteers at once came forward to carry on the campaign and gave a lot of trouble to the authorities; and it was only after several arrests that the situation could be brought under control.

Under all this agitation it is no wonder that the Government themselves recognized that the Civil Disobedience Movement reflected real national spirit, that it had more staying power than the non-co-operation Movement that it was better organized and definitely more prepared for a long struggle that it no longer derived its inspiration from any personalities, not even Mahatma Gandhi's personality, that it had an independent basis of its own and a potentiality which made it clear that the cult of Mahatma Gandhi had merged in the cult of nationalism. Most of the present Congress leaders and political workers of this State took an active part in this movement and prepared the masses for further struggles for freedom that were to come in the near future.

Meanwhile, the Civil Disobedience Movement came to an end. By a settlement reached by Mahatma Gandhi on behalf of the Congress, with Lord Irwin the Viceroy, on behalf of the British Government (March 1931), the Congress called off the movement and agreed to participate in the Round Table Conference held in England and the Government withdrew all repressive ordinances banning the Congress bodies, etc., and released all political prisoners.

But this truce remained in force only for a time. The Civil Disobedience Movement was started again by the Congress early in January 1932 on account of the repressive ordinances passed by the Government to put down agitation in the North-West Frontier Province, in the United Provinces and in Bengal. The same weapons that were used before were used again throughout the State and when Mahatma Gandhi visited Madras and toured the districts early in 1934, huge crowds greeted him, venerated him, treated him like a god and contributed considerable sums to his Harijan Fund.

A spirit of wrathful defiance against the authorities now filled the air, and the situation was not eased until the movement was finally called off by Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress in April-May 1934 and the Unlawful Associations Ordinances were cancelled by the Government.

During all this time from the end of the Non Co-operation Movement to the end of the Civil Disobedience Movement, other parties in the State were not idle. The Justice Party, although it co-operated with the British in running the dyarchy under its leaders like the Raja of Panagal and Sri A.P.Patro, very soon began to lose all faith in dyarchy.

It happened like this. In 1926 it was defeated in the General Elections by the Swaraj Party, the party of the Congress which believed in council entry. But the Swaraj Party, though it had a majority, refused to form the Ministry and, as a result, an independent Ministry under Dr. P.Subbarayan, having the support of the Swaraj Party, was formed. As soon as this Ministry was formed, the Justice Party started an agitation against it and against the British Government itself and attempted to undermine the Congress.

It convened a meeting of the Non-Brahmin Federation at Coimbatore in July 1927 attended by its prominent leaders like the Raja of Panagal, Sri A.P.Patro, Sri R.K.Shanmugam Chetty, Sri A.Ramaswami Mudaliar, Sri O.Thanikachalam Chetty and presided over by Sri S.Kumaraswami Reddiar and at this meeting passed three important resolutions.

The first of these permitted the individual members of the Justice Party to enter the Congress with the object of swamping the Congress and working on the feelings of the Non-Brahmins inside the Congress.

The second condemned dyarchy as being a system utterly unworkable and demanded full provincial autonomy from the British Government. The third advocated a vote of no-confidence in the Legislature to unseat the Ministry. Soon after this meeting several prominent members of the Justice Party joined the Congress.

A vote of no-confidence was also brought in the Legislative Council, but the motion was defeated by the members of the Swaraj Party. This did not upset the Justice Party, and at the General Elections of 1930, the Congress (both the Congress Party and the Swaraj Party) having refused to contest the elections, easily obtained a majority and again formed a Ministry, this time headed by Sri B.Muniswami Naidu.

This Ministry was succeeded in 1932 by the Ministry of the Raja of Bobbili. The Justice Party now felt itself quite safe and, finding from the elections that the Non-Brahmins had little to fear politically from the Brahmins, threw open its membership to the Brahmins so as to strengthen its organization. But its position actually was by no means safe. This was clearly shown by the General Elections of 1934. The Justice Party was now completely defeated by then Congress Party, the Congress having lifted the ban on Council entry. The Congress Party however did not accept office and accordingly a Justice Party Ministry was again formed under the Raja of Bobbili.

But the sands of this party were running out fast. Thereafter disunity in its ranks, the lack of effective machinery and, above all, want of a dynamic nationalist policy, ruined all its chances of success.

About the same time, two new parties, namely, the Self- Respect and the Communist parties, came into existence. Both opposed the Congress and both demanded radical, social, economic and political reforms.

The Self-Respect Party was started by Sri E.V.Ramaswami Naicker who had played indeed no inconspicuous part in Coimbatore during the non-co-operation and Khilafat agitation. After that agitation however he left the Congress believing that the only way to improve the condition of the people was to abolish all caste distinctions, to banish all religion and to introduce some sort of Communism.

In 1933-1934 he toured the Tamil Nadu attacking all religions, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity alike, denouncing the Brahmins for being the authors of caste distinctions, condemning all forms of private property and advocating the establishment of the Russian form of Government as being the best suited to the country.

By his hatred of the Brahmins he won the support of the Non-Brahmins and the Justice Party and by his love of the Soviet system he earned the sympathy of the Communist Party. Wherever he went he formed associations of Self-Respectors

and his Self-Respect Party, because it promoted class hatred, caused some anxiety to the Government and, because it attacked the Congress, caused some annoyance to the Congress Party.

It contributed a succession of intemperate articles in some Tamil newspapers, violently abused the Brahmins and the Congress and organized demonstrations, though with little success, even against Gandhiji when he came on his southern tour in 1934.

But it was the Communist Party that caused real concern to the Congress and much anxiety to the Government received a fillip by the visit of Sri Saklatwala, a prominent labour leader and a Member of British Parliament, to Madras in 1927, and gave rise to several associations of workers. It refused to have anything to do with the Congress and denounced the Congress as the stronghold of landlordism, capitalism and private ownership.

The Congress found it impossible to conciliate the Communists (or; Socialists as they called themselves) who organized a spate of strikes in the City as well as in the districts. Indeed they grew from strength to strength in all parts of India. That was the reason why in July 1934 the Government of India banned the Communist Party and its organizations on the ground that they constituted a danger to public peace.

The Government of India stated that a close investigation of all Communist activities, and especially the Meerut Conspiracy case, had revealed to them that the Party aimed at nothing less than the violent overthrow of the existing order of society.

Its aims, they said, were hatred of God and all forms of religion, the destruction of private property, the enforcement of absolute social and racial equality, the annihilation of all forms of responsible Government including civil liberties such as freedom of speech and trial by jury, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat by means of a world revolution.

Its objects, they observed, were the achievement of complete independence of India by the violent overthrow of British rule, the cancellation of all national debts. Establishment of a Soviet Government, the abolition of the Indian States, the confiscation without compensation of all the lands, forests and other properties of the ruling princes, landlords, etc.

And it sought to secure these objects, they remarked, by developing a general strike of workers culminating in a general political strike, and by developing a peasant movement for the non-payment of rents and taxes into an All-India agrarian revolution, and by organizing a nation-wide movement for political independence by attaching to it all the workers, peasants and petty bourgeois and by spreading

revolutionary propaganda in the army and the police and inciting them to revolt against British rule.

As a result of this, in Madras, the Government declared unlawful the Young Workers League (November 1934) which had for its avowed object the overthrow of British Imperialism and which was in no sense a bonafide trade union and was in touch with the Communist International.

All this created a storm of protests in the left wing press and a great deal of uneasiness in the Self Respect Party, which had been seen imbibed some of the Communist ideas. Sri E.V.Ramaswami Naicker lost no time in announcing that his party was not a Communist Party, that it was only a Socialist Party, that it worked always within the bounds of law, that violence had no place in it and that its aim was the establishment of the British System of administration and failing that alone a Communist System of Administration.

His party, however, was not banned nor were the other Socialist organizations in the State banned, although some of them, like the All-India Congress Socialist Organization, agitated for complete independence, non-compromise with British Imperialism, the elimination of the princes, landlords and other classes of exploiters and the redistribution of lands to the peasants.

The banning of the Communist Party did not by any means put a stop to the activities of the Communists in the State. They formed what was called the Labour Protection League and steadily spread Communist ideas among the workers as well as the kisans. As yet however they did not start any widespread agitation. They started that only after the Congress Government came to power in 1937.

In the meantime the Government of India Act of 1935 was passed which gave a further instalment of reforms. So far as this State is concerned, it abolished dyarchy and, with certain exceptions, granted provincial autonomy. The State Government was given exclusive authority over provincial subjects and concurrent jurisdiction over certain other subjects.

The Government of India was precluded from interfering in State administration when the Governor-General proclaimed an emergency or considered interference necessary for ensuring the peace and tranquillity of India. The Governor, like the Governor-General, was also entrusted with certain discretionary powers and special responsibilities which he could discharge without consulting the Ministers.

Thus, under his discretionary powers, he could nominate certain members to the Legislative Council, appoint and dismiss Ministers and members of the Public Service Commission, summon, prorogue or dissolve the Legislature, stop the proceedings

of a bill which affected peace and tranquillity, return a bill to the Legislature for reconsideration with suggestions for amendment, veto a bill or reserve it for the consideration of the Governor-General, pass an Act or promulgate an Ordinance when immediate action was necessary or assume to himself all the powers of the State Government and the Legislature in the event of a breakdown of the Constitution.

Under his special responsibilities, he authorised to prevent any grave menace to public peace. Safeguard the legitimate interests of the minorities and the public servants, to administer the Partially Excluded Areas, to protect the rights of the rulers of India States and to execute the orders or directions issued to him by the Governor-General.

Subject to these restrictions, the Ministers were invested with full powers over all other subjects relating to State administration. The Governor was to appoint the leader of the party or the parties commanding a majority in the Legislature as the Chief Minister and also the other Ministers chosen by the Chief Minister generally from among the members of the Legislature.

If a Minister chosen was not a member of the Legislature, he had to become one within six months or resign. All the Ministers were to be responsible to the Legislature and were to resign if the Legislature passed a vote of no-confidence. The Governor was to preside over the Council of Ministers. The Legislature was to consist of a Legislative Council and a Legislative Assembly.

The Council was to consist of 46 members of whom a certain proportion was to be elected and a certain proportion to be nominated by the Governor. It was to be a permanent body, one third of whose members were to retire every three years. The Assembly was to consist of 215 members elected by voters arranged in separate electorates. It was to sit for five years unless sooner dissolved by the Governor.

The Council was to have no power to vote on demands for grants or to sanction expenditure; it could only discuss the budget. Such powers were to be exercised by the Legislative Assembly in which all money bills were to be first introduced. In case of difference of opinion between the two houses, the Governor was to summon a joint sitting to decide the disputed measure.

This Act came into force on 1st April 1937, but long before that date, strenuous efforts were made both by the Congress and the Justice Parties throughout the State to increase their strength and to carry on an effective propaganda for the forthcoming elections. On the Congress Party side, the propaganda was carried on by local leaders like Sri S. Satyamurthy and Sri C.Rajagopalachari and outside leaders like Sri Vallabhai Patel and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

In this election campaign no leader attracted a larger audience and none produced a greater impression than Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who arrived in Madras on 5th October 1936 and immediately afterwards started on a whirlwind tour of the Tamil Nadu. Wherever he went, he was given an enthusiastic reception. In almost every village on his route, the villagers gathered and cheered him on his arrival; in more important villages, welcome arches were erected, festoons were hung and Congress slogans were displayed.

He was received with flowers, fruits and music and sometimes with vedis. fired in his honour. In towns in which he halted, very large crowds assembled, consisting They of both townsmen and villagers of the surrounding areas minded not any inconvenience; they waited for hours to have his darsan and they brushed aside the feeble hostile demonstrations carried on in some places by the members of the Self-Respect Party.

They presented him addresses of welcome and thanked him for his campaign against poverty and unemployment. Indeed, he literally achieved mass contact and became exceedingly popular by frequently stopping his car while passing through the villages, by talking freely with all who came to see him, by mixing freely with them, by showing extreme solicitude for their welfare and by distributing the flowers and fruits presented to him, to the women and children.

And everywhere he delivered speeches laying emphasis on the prevailing poverty and unemployment in India and attributing them largely to the policies followed under British Imperialism. He remarked that, so long as British Imperialism remained, the masses could not hope to better their condition and that, therefore, it must be brought to an end.

He pointed out that to achieve this object all classes should strengthen the hands of the Congress which was the only powerful, organized and disciplined body in India. He asked the people to vote for the Congress and he invariably wound up by saying that the Congress was working for independence and that, once independence was gained, the problem of poverty and unemployment could be solved by introducing socialism in the country.

Pandit Nehru tour strengthened not a little the electioneering campaign of the Congress Party. The Justice Party's campaign lost all vigour, but by then, new parties having come into existence, such as the Peoples Party and the Provincial Branch of the Muslim League having been revived, the opponents of the Congress fondly hoped to undermine its strength.

In the General Elections held in 1937, however, the Congress Party won a decisive victory over the other parties. The fact that the anti- Congress vote was split

made little or no difference, and the Congress Party secured 159 out of the 215 seats in the Legislative Assembly and 26 out of the 46 seats in the Legislative Council.

The Congress Party, however, having refused to accept office without securing assurances against the interference in the day to day administration by the use of the Governor's, discretionary and special powers under the new Constitution, an Interim Ministry was formed under Sri K.V.Reddy. But in the first half of July, the Congress Party being satisfied with the assurances given by the Viceroy accepted office and formed a Ministry under Sri C.Rajagopalachari.

Of all the measures introduced by Sri C.Rajagopalachari Ministry none came in for so much opposition from his political opponents as the introduction of Hindustani (Hindi) compulsorily in certain schools as an experiment. The opposition to this measure came mostly from the Self-Respect Party led by Sri E.V.Ramaswami Naicker but it was backed alike by the Justice Party, the Muslim League and the Scheduled Caste Federation.

Meetings were held by the Self-Respect Party in the whole of Tamil Nadu at which speeches were made attacking the Brahmins and alleging that the introduction of Hindi was an attempt to impose Aryan influence on Dravidian culture to propagate Brahmin domination. Black flag demonstrations were made by this party during the visits of Ministers and above all picketing by successive batches of volunteers was conducted by this party before the Premier residence and before certain schools.

More than a thousand arrests were made in the City and most of the picketers were convicted. Sri E.V.Ramaswami Naicker himself was arrested, convicted and sentenced to one year imprisonment. But still the agitation went on. It ended only when the Congress Ministry laid down office in 1939 and the succeeding Government abolished the teaching of Hindi and released all Anti-Hindi prisoners. Meanwhile, in December 1938, Sri E.V.Ramaswami Naicker was elected as the President of the Justice Party, although he was then in Jail.

It was not, however, so much the open agitation of the Self-Respect Party or the Justice Party, as the underground agitation of the Communist Party which was rapidly becoming powerful, that caused much concern to the Congress Government. It was at this time that many of the Communists under the guise of Socialists formed unions embracing all branches of industry and husbandry.

It was at this time that they organized a large number of strikes in mills and factories in which the strikers employed violence, put forth unreasonable demands and spurned every attempt made by the Government to settle their grievances. It was also at this time that they began to foment kisan troubles in some districts.

But the times were fast changing. In September 1939 the Second World War broke out and opened a new chapter in the history of the struggle for independence. The Congress having decided not to participate in the war, Sri C.Rajagopalachari Ministry resigned in October and the Government was carried on As soon as by the Governor with the aid of Civilian Advisers this took place and individual satyagraha was permitted by the Congress, the whole State became a scene of agitation.

Every-where Congress Committees were formed, satyagraha pledges were taken, anti-war speeches were made, anti-war slogans were shouted, anti-war pamphlets were issued and anti-war posters were displayed; and all this anti-war propaganda led to a very large number of arrests. As the movement gained momentum, more and more people courted imprisonment, with the result that the Government were eventually compelled to ignore all but the leaders and to arrest only such as wielded any influence. It was not until the Satyagraha movement was withdrawn by the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee in January 1942, that things quietened down.

This was, however, only the very soon events moved to a crisis. The interminable waiting for the fulfilment of the pledges by the British, the failure of the Cripps Mission, the danger of the conversion of India into a theatre of war by Britain and her Allies, all these, induced Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress to make an all-out effort to get rid of British rule.

The nation having waited in vain could wait no longer for independence. The Civil Disobedience Movement, or the Quit India Movement as it was called, was fashioned by Mahatma Gandhi in May-June 1942, was put into shape by the Working Committee by the Wardha Resolution in July and was launched by the All-India Congress Committee by its Bombay Resolution on 8th August. This Resolution which was a long one demanded, in short, the immediate withdrawal of Britain from India, the setting up of a Provisional Government representing all the parties, the pooling of all resources for fighting the struggle for freedom against aggression of Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism and thereby strengthening the cause of the United Nations and, after the war was over, the establishment of a World Federation of free nations.

And, in order to secure the preliminary step, the immediate withdrawal of Britain, it sanctioned a nation-wide non-violent mass movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.

This clarion call was no sooner made, than Mahatma Gandhi and a large number of prominent Congress leaders were arrested and imprisoned and all the Congress Organizations throughout India were banned. This was a signal for the outbreak of a national uprising throughout India,in which violence was freely used with non-violence to paralyse the activities of the Government. British Government held

the Congress responsible for the violent outbreaks stating that the Congress must have known that the incitement to mass action on such a wide seale was bound to lead to violence, but the Congress held the Government responsible stating that it was the arrest of the leaders and the repressive policy of the Government that was responsible for violence.

So far as Madras was concerned, Sri C.Rajagopalachari having by this time resigned from the Congress on the issue of Pakistan before the passing of the Bombay Resolution, and the other leaders having been imprisoned, the people were more or less left to themselves and their resentment in many places resulted in acts of violence.

Indeed, any one who reads the records of this momentous period cannot fail to draw the inference that the policy of the Government was largely responsible for these acts of violence. For, the Government not only imprisoned all the leaders who could have exercised a restraining influence on the people but also banned all non-violent activities such as hartals, meetings, processions and demonstrations.

The result was, as may be expected. Popular resentment broke out with avirulence hitherto unknown in the political annals of Madras. People lost patience, resorted to all sorts of acts, including sabotage and arson, and courted imprisonment in large numbers.

In Madras City, even in the face of strong military forces, hartals and strikes frequently took place and acts of incendiarism were attempted. Hundreds of students of schools and colleges, including the lady students of the Queen Mary's College, observed hartals, led out processions and shouted Quit India slogans until they were dispersed by the police Hundreds of workers of the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills and Public Works Workshops struck work.

Hundreds of labourers of the Madras Port Trust, Madras Electric Tramway and Madras Corporation carried on labour agitation. Picketing of toddy shops was conducted in some places and toddy shops in Choolai were set on fire. Several post boxes were burnt and some attempts at incendiarism were made in the High Court buildings and a bomb was thrown in the Muthialpet police station.

In the Districts the situation often became worse. In North Arcot, besides hartals and demonstrations, telephone and telegraph wires were cut, post boxes were removed, the Public Works Inspection bungalow at Panapakkam and police huts at Vellore and the village were burnt, Forest rest houses near chavadis in Panapakkam and Timiri were set on fire and a goods train was derailed, badly damaging many wagons, between Collective fines were Tandarai and Adichanur railway stations. Collective fines were imposed on some villages in this District, amounting to

Rs. 6,535. In the South Arcot the students of the Annamalai University took a prominent part, organizing strikes, taking out processions, hoisting national flags etc.

Here too telephone and telegraph wires were cut in a number of places and a motor car belonging to a police official was burnt. In Chingleput, the students of the Loyola College, the Christian College and the Engineering College took an equally prominent part; they staged strikes, obstructed electric trains, and encountered lathi charges, imprisonment and even whipping.

Here also telephone and telegraph wires were cut in many places, some toddy shops and some sheds belonging to the essential services were burnt and an attempt was made to set fire to the post office at Kalathi. A collective fine of Rs. 5,000 was imposed on some villages and the Chingleput District Board and the Damal Panchayat Board were superseded for 6 months for supporting the Quit India Movement and condemning the repressive policy of the Government.

In Coimbatore, besides meetings, hartals, picketing of schools and colleges, and cutting of telephone and telegraph wires, large scale strikes were organized in a number of mills, some of which resulted in police interference. An ammunition train from Cochin consisting of two engines and forty four wagons was derailed by sabotage between Podanur and Singanallur railway stations. Attempts were made to derail trains at Pollachi and Chavadipalayam.

A village chavadi near Karnalur was attacked and damaged and several toddy shops were burnt at Singanallur, Parur and Kariyapalayam. All the sheds of the Sulur Aerodrome were set on fire and 22 motor lorries kept in them were destroyed. Here, besides imposing collective fines on certain villages amounting to Rs. 35,410, the Coimbatore Municipal Council suspended for 6 months for supporting the Quit India Movement was and condemning the repressive policy of the Government.

In Madurai similar acts of violence were resorted to. Madurai became the storm centre of the movement; and called for frequent interference of the military and the police. In addition to public meetings, hartals, cutting of telephone and telegraph wires, the roads were here barricaded and Government servants were assaulted.

A mass meeting convened here in defiance of the prohibitory orders led to police firing and the killing and injuring several persons. Another mass meeting led to the damaging of a municipal fire engine and the equipment, and to the burning of a police bus, some post offices and a Sanitary Inspector Office, and eventually to police firing and the killing and injuring of some persons.

The Madurai Municipal Council, the Dindigul Municipal Council, the Palani Municipal Council and the Madurai District Board were superseded for 6 months for

passing resolutions strongly condemning the repressive policy of the Government. In the Nilgiris, mostly processions, demonstrations, and students strikes were organized.

In Ramanathapuram, serious disturbances took place at Rajapalayam, Karaikudi, Devakottai, Tiruvadanai and Poolankuruchi and a large number of persons were killed in police firing. There were here also many cases of arson and incendiarism. The civil court building at Devakottai was burnt, the Sub-Treasury, the Sub-Registrar's Office, the Deputy Tahsildar Office and some other Government buildings at Tiruvadanai were set on fire, and attacked and destroyed; the Natarajapuram railway station and the Municipal Elementary School at Karaikudi were also burnt. the post office at Poolankuruchi was burgled, and a mail bus was waylaid and the mail bags in it were reduced to ashes.

Interference with the telegraph, telephone and the railway were here very common; so also were very common the defiance of authority and the intimidation of officials. No less than Rs. 2,93,428 were levied here as collective fines on villages, and the Ramanathapuram District Board and the Virudhunagar Municipal Council were superseded for 6 months for passing Quit India resolutions. In Salem, on the other hand, the movement, on the whole was peaceful, but, at times, some acts of violence were committed.

The village chavadi at Papparapatti was burnt, post boxes were removed, the telephone and the telegraph were dislocated and, in some places, fish plates were removed from the railway line. In Thanjavur, non-violent as well as violent measures were equally employed. Meetings were held, hartals were observed, anti-Government propaganda was carried on and students demonstrations were organised. But in some places like Tiruvaiyar, Thanjavur, Mannargudi and Kumbakonam people showed violence.

At Tiruvaiyar, hundreds of people marched through the bazaar forcing the shop keepers to close their shops, preventing students from attending schools, cutting telegraph and telephone wires, blocking up roads with stones, stopping buses and attacking public offices.

At Thanjavur a public meeting held in defiance of prohibitory orders ended in lathi charges and several arrests. At Mannargudi about 1,000 people armed with sticks, knives and swords cut telephone and telegraph wires, set fire to the railway station, stopped buses from plying, and burnt two public offices.

At Kumbakonam about 10,000 people gathered at Gandhi Park, defied the prohibitory order, cut off telegraph communications, barricaded the streets, surrounded the police and the District Magistrate and became threatening until at

last they were fired upon and dispersed by lathi charges. At Nachiarkoil an attempt was made to blow up a bridge and at Tiruthoraipundi an attempt was made to derail a train. Mannargudi and Tiruvaiyar were fined collectively Rs.38,715 and Rs. 1,903 respectively.

In Tirunelveli the students strikes that first began soon gave place to grave disturbances. The Salt Factory at Kulasekharapatnam was attacked by a large crowd carrying sticks, aruvals and battle axes and, in the struggle that ensued, the Assistant Salt Inspector was killed. At Kadaladi, a police party was attacked, at Kurumbur, the railway station was set on fire, at Kadalgudi a police station was burnt, at Tuticorin some toddy shops were damaged, and near Sermadevi fish plates were removed from the railway line. Extensive damage was done here to telegraph and telephone communications.

The Tirunelveli District Board and the Tirunelveli Municipality were suspended for a period of 6 months, for condemning the actions of the Government. In Tiruchirappalli, the students played an active part; they picketed schools and colleges, as well as courts, held meetings and organized hartals Attempts were however made here also to tamper with community derailed between Pugalur cations.

A passenger train and Noyyal railway stations, a goods train was derailed near Tiruchirappalli and fish plates were removed from the railway line between Lalgudi and Valadi stations.

The Quit India Movement remained active in Madras only for a few months, roughly from August to December 1942; there- after it gradually died down. The political atmosphere in the whole country, however, continued to remain dark and sullen, what with the detention of the Congress leaders in jail and the unhelpful attitude shown by the Viceroys, Lord Linlithgow and Lord Wavell and Sri M.A.Jinnah, the implacable leader of the Muslim League.

The Viceroys insisted on the solution of the communal and minority problems as a preliminary to the consideration of the grant of any reforms, while Sri M.A.Jinnah insisted on Pakistan. Gandhiji having been released in May 1944 From 1945, tried his best to solve the tangle, but in vain. however, the sky began to clear. The formation of the Labour Government in Britain, the end of the Japanese War, Lord Wavell visit to England for consultation with the Labour Government, the arrival first of the Parliamentary Delegation, and then of the Cabinet Mission to hammer out a new Constitution for India, all these, led to a succession of political changes.

Then it was that the ban on the Congress was lifted, the Congress leaders were released and they resolved to accept the reforms offered in good faith by the British.

This speedily led to the holding of general elections and the formation of the Interim Government at the centre (consisting of leaders drawn from major political parties) and the Congress Government in Madras.

During this whole period, from 1939 to 1946, when the Congress Party was fighting for freedom, the other parties in this State co-operated with the British Government and tried to strengthen their own position. Sri E.V.Ramaswami Naicker, now the recognised leader of the Justice Party, offered unconditional support of Tamilians in the prosecution of the war as a counterblast to the Congress attitude.

He also courted the Muslim League, supported the scheme for Pakistan, inveighed against the Congress and continued to stir up anti-Brahmin feelings in the Tamil Nadu. His violent anti-Brahmin attitude, however, sometimes annoyed the Government. For he threatened to start another agitation for the removal of caste and social distinctions in temples, restaurants, railway refreshment rooms, etc. Nor was this all. He convened a Justice Party Conference at Kancheepuram for urging the establishment of Dravidanad and at this conference unveiled a map of Dravidanad comprising the areas where Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam were spoken. But fortunately for the Government, his position in the Justice Party was soon challenged when he and his followers, among whom the most prominent was Sri C.N.Annadurai, began to insist on changing the name of the Justice Party into the Dravidian Association or the Dravida Kazhagam and calling upon all title holders to surrender their titles.

The orthodox Justicites now promptly assailed him, repudiated his leadership and met and elected first, Sri B.Ramachandra Reddy and then Sri P.T.Rajan, as their leader. But he was not discomfited; he continued to canvass support for the Dravida Kazhagam, holding meetings in the Tamil Nadu.

During the same period, the Communist Party, under its leaders like Sri Mohan Kumaramangalam, Sri P.Ramamoorthy, Sri M.R.Venkatraman and Sri Anandan Nambiar, cast its net wider and tried its best to secure a more permanent hold over the workers and the kisans.

It found the time and circumstances eminently propitious for its propaganda. In July 1942 the ban on the Communists was removed and in August 1942, as we have seen, the ban on the Congress was imposed. This gave the Communists a free field to carry on their activities, and their activities bore abundant fruit amidst the economic distress caused by the war, amidst the rise in prices and the scarcity of food stuffs.

The ban on the Communists was removed by the British Government in the hope that they would fully co-operate with the war effort since Russia, the home of Communism, had, by then, become a firm ally of Britain. In this hope the Government were not disappointed.

The Communists rendered whole hearted support to the British in their war effort. Thus, at a meeting held in July 1942 by the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Employees Union, Perambur, Sri Mohan Kumaramangalam said that, though the attitude of Britain towards Communism had until recently been hostile, it was now the duty of Indians to co-operate actively in the war; that, if Japan conquered India, it was not British Imperialism but Indians that would suffer most, and that, therefore, the people should join the army in large numbers.

This co-operation in war effort, however, did not prevent the Communists from strengthening their hold upon the workers and others. They carried on extensive under-ground propaganda and tried to seduce the students, the mill and factory workers, as well as the kisans, from the Congress into mathar the Communist fold.

They formed students cells, sangams and workers and kisans unions. They instigated the workers to make all sorts of demands and organized a series of strikes in mills and factories throughout the State. They instigated the kisans also in some districts to make unreasonable demands and to stop all kinds of cultivation work, if their demands were not compiled with by the landholders. In their struggle for getting control over the workers and kisans they often came into violent clashes with the Congressmen.

All this compelled the Congress in 1945 to expel them from the Congress Party. The Congress Party in Madras now attempted to recover its lost ground and to consolidate its position by forming associations called Samithis for dealing with problems connected with the workers, kisans, students, food, etc., and by making But the Communists put up intensive propaganda in all Districts, a stiff fight everywhere.

Then came the general elections and Sri C.Rajagopalachari, having, as we have already seen, left the Congress on account of his differences with the Congressmen over the Pakistan issue, the leadership in Tamil Nadu passed into the hands of Sri Kamaraj Nadar, There is the President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee. Plenty of evidence to show that he wielded at this time the most powerful influence in Tamil Nadu. He inaugurated a National Youth Federation in Madras for co-ordinating the activities of all youth organizations with the object of carrying on the constructive programme of the Congress.

And, as soon as the Congress High Command decided to contest the elections, he and his followers conducted strenuous tours throughout Tamil Nadu, addressing numerous meetings, explaining the Quit India Resolution and creating enthusiasm every where for the Congress. The opposition parties now more or less disappeared from the field, save the Communist Party. During the election campaign the Communists kept the labour situation tense and restless both in the City and in the Districts.

The elections held in March 1946, brought an astounding success to the Congress. The Congress Party obtained an overwhelming majority, securing 164 seats out of the 215 seats in the Legislative Assembly and 32 seats out of the 52 seats in the Legislative Council. Sri T.Prakasam was now chosen as the leader of the Parliamentary Party and he formed his Ministry in April 1946. His Ministry, however, had no easy task before it. For, the whole country was then passing through severe ordeals.

The times were out of joint. In the economic sphere, the after- effects of war, high prices, hoarding and black marketing, were causing unusually hard times for the poor. In the political sphere, the agitation for Pakistan and communal squabbles were creating menacing movements like the Rashtria Seva Sangh (the R.S.S.) directed against the Muslims, the Razakars directed against the Hindus and the Dravida Kazhagam directed against the Brahmins. In both the spheres, the Communists taking advantage of the troubled times were becoming a real danger to the country.

All over India they were organizing industrial and agrarian strikes, making anti-Congress speeches, disseminating inflammatory literature, terrorising their opponents and inciting the people to all sorts of violence. The economic distress produced by the war and the communal agitation created by the Dravida Kazhagam were more or less without much difficulty handled in Madras by the Congress Government. But it was not without great difficulty that they could tackle the political agitation created by the Communists.

The Communists vowed to discredit the Congress in Madras, to capture labour and to keep up a sustained agitation against the Government, even before the results of the general elections were announced. And, soon after Sri T. Prakasam formed his Ministry, they demanded nationalization of all industries, opened a "parliamentary office" in Madras to collect statistics about the grievances of the workers and organized a general strike in the South Indian Railway.

When this strike was scotched and killed, they openly accused the Government of being capitalistic, tried to capture labour in all fields, formed more and more labour unions in the City as well as in the Districts, set up village food committees, came into frequent violent clashes with the Congressmen, fomented a large number of strikes in mills, factories, dockyards and essential services and, what is more, incited agricultural labourers against the landholders, making it thereby difficult for the authorities to maintain law and order over large and dispersed areas.

The anarchy let lose by the Communists compelled the Government to take stringent measures to preserve public peace and safeguard public interests. Early in 1947 they issued the Madras Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance (Ordinance I of 1947) and followed it up by the Maintenance of Public Order Act (Act I of 1947).

In this Act, in order to deal with subversive activities, they provided for preventive detention, imposition of collective fines and censorship, control of meetings, processions, camps, drills and parades, requisitioning of property and control of essential services. Under this Act they detained a number of active Communist agitators, but they did not show to them any undue harshness.

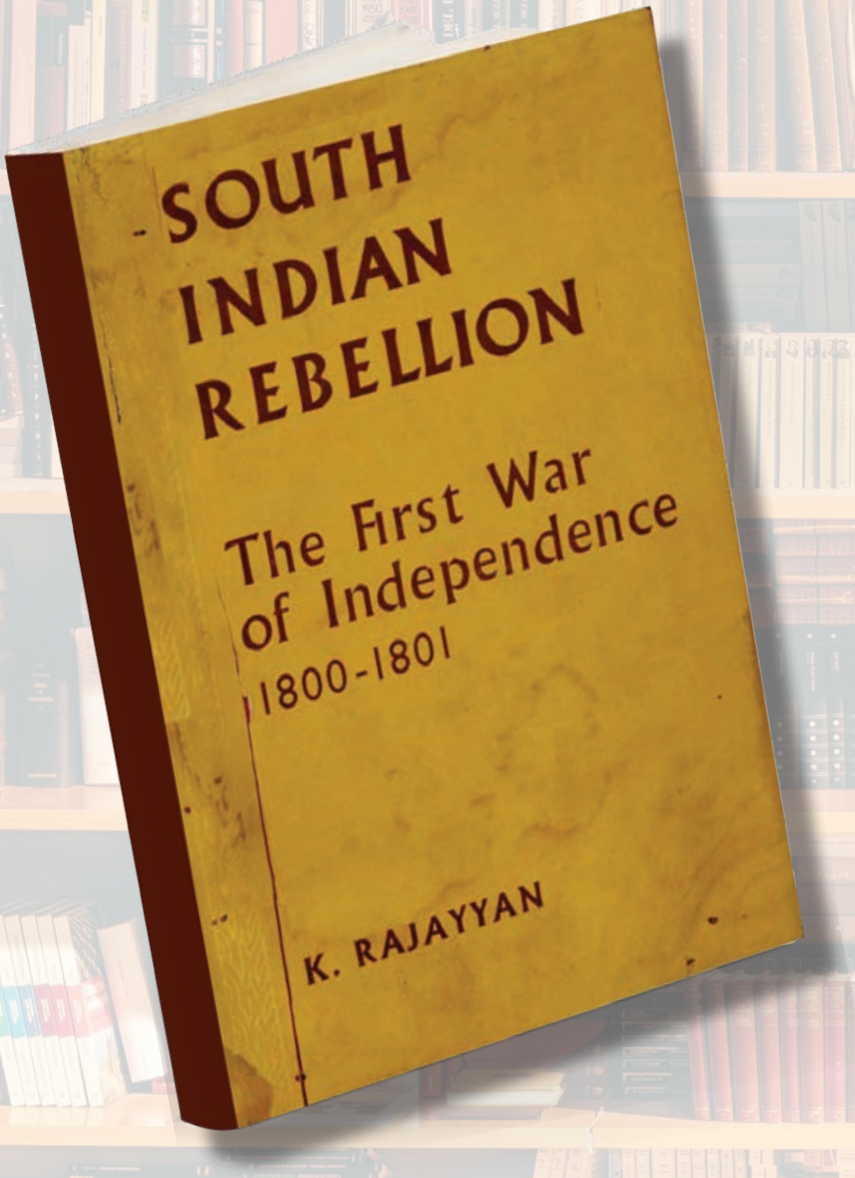
Their action in most cases of detention was upheld by the advisory boards set up to review such cases. yet they released all such detenus as gave an undertaking not to take part in subversive activities; they granted allowances to the families of many of the detenus and also released on parole a good number of detenus to attend on their sic relations, to perform obligatory ceremonies and so on.

All this time, in the All-India sphere momentous events were in the making. The prolonged parleys between the Congress leaders on the one hand and Sri M.A.Jinnah and the British Government on the other, at last led to the convening of the Constituent Assembly, the decision of the British to withdraw from India, the arrival of the new Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, the partition of India into India and Pakistan and, finally, Declaration of Independence (July 1947 with effect from 15th August 1947).

The dawn of freedom was greeted in Madras with great rejoicings. Everywhere there was jubilation that the cherished goal had at last been reached, and satisfaction that the British were departing as friends leaving no bitterness behind. The Independence Day was celebrated with not a little enthusiasm alike in the City and in the Districts.

SOUTH INDIAN REBELLION

Dr. K.Rajayyan



GALLANT STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU!

In the war for freedom Tamil Nadu played as remarkable a role as in the organisation of the anti-British Confederacy. The patriots engaged the enemy in wave after wave of a grim struggle. The early outbreaks coincided with the risings in Kannada, Maratha and Malayalam lands. Thus in May 1800 the confederates raised disturbances in Satyamangalam, Dharapuram, Talamalla and Coimbatore and the rebel formations in the hills portended the spread of the rebellion to vast regions. However the English sup- pressed these initial outbreaks with promptitude, leading to the public execution of forty-two of the confederates involved in the Dindigul Conspiracy. A period of calm followed these reverses, but it proved deceptive, for before long there broke out a more violent storm.

Lull and Recrudescence:

The collapse of the early insurrection initiated a period of lull in the freedom movement in Tamil Nadu. It lasted from July to December 1800. Evidently the patriots were baffled by an un- favourable turn of events, for the Coimbatore plot failed, the communications with the rebel leagues of the north had been cut off, the expected cavalry of Dhoondaji Waug did not appear and the British vigil over the rebel movements had been intensified.

Though the surface appeared calm, the currents of the rebellious movement were rumbling beneath. From Coimbatore the confederates shifted the centre of their activity to Tirunelveli. Already attempts had been made to revolutionise the province. Now they proceeded to work out the escape of the rebels imprisoned at Palayamkottai.

The chiefs of Dindigul and Manaparai seized the collection of revenue from the servants of the Company. Early in 1801 the much expected 'horse' from the north appeared near Coimbatore and raised disturbances. It was possible that it constituted the remnant of the cavalry of the vanquished confederates of the Kannada-Maratha country.

As the circumstances demanded energetic action, in January, 1801 Gopala Nayak of Virupakshi and Yadul Nayak of Delhi transmitted a secret message to other confederates urging the renewal of hostilities. Before long large columns consisting of the armed men of Dindigul, Tirunelveli and Malabar assembled in the hills of Virupakshi. The Tirunelveli rebels represented the hard core of the broken bands of Kattabomman's League. The leaders of Malabar extended their aid not only to sustain the rebel endeavour in the east but also to reciprocate what they received from the Tamils.

The chieftains of Mangalam, Periapatti, Metranti, Mewadi, Tondamattur, Tengaivady, Ayotaripatti, Vada- patti and Somandorai, the members of the Dindigul League-at the head of their followers, took their stand in Delhi. The confederates warned the people against payment of taxes and extension of aid to the Company under threat of chastisement.

On the 31st of January the rebels attacked and subdued a post set up by the enemy near Virupakshi, destroyed a cutcherry and expelled the sepoys who made an attempt to enforce collections. The rebels of Manaparai attacked the British posts and assumed the administration of revenue. The Poligars of Ramagiri and Kadavoor gave leadership to the rebellion in Tiruchirappalli.

Soon after the confederates renewed the war, the Company, determined to deal with the situation effectively, marched a considerable force against the Tamils. Lieutenant Colonel Innes, who was appointed to take the command of the detachment, was directed to combine his operations with Colonel Stevenson's in Malabar. Yet the confederates allowed no abatement to their defiant activity.

On the other hand, as Innes had reported to Madras, since the army was assembled, the insurgents made every exertion to support their rebellious disobedience and collected every armed man. The disturbances in Malabar encouraged the possibility of active co-operation among the rebels on either side of the Western Ghats.

He detached his Malay Corps and flank companies to storm a rebel stronghold in Virupatchi. Before this could be attained, he was directed to send his forces on a relief expedition to Malabar. In the absence of the main detachment, the Company suspended its offensive operations in Dindigul, restricting its activity to holding its positions at Dindigul, Karur, Collumbum, Dharapuram and Palani.

The enemy concentrated its power of coercion against the rebels of Malabar, but the spectacular turn of the struggle in Tirunelveli in the meantime came as a rude shock to them.

Exploit of 'Tiruchendur Pilgrims'

In 1799 upon the suppression of the Tirunelveli League the English threw into confinement at Palayamkottai seventeen of the defiant leaders. State prisoners of consequence, they were kept in irons in a small enclosure inside the fort. Two sentinels, who stood inside this enclosure, and a third at its gate kept a constant vigil over their movements, while the garrison maintained a strict check on the ramparts. In the course of their captivity, that lasted for fifteen months, two of the prisoners died; among the survivors were Sevathaiah and Oomathurai, the brothers of Kottabomman.

The confederates made repeated efforts to work out the escape of the prisoners. An early attempt was made by Marudhu Pandiyan, when he despatched his agents to Tirunelveli but they were apprehended and executed. Subsequently, the rebels of Panjalamkurichi appealed to Gopala Nayak. The rebel diplomat offered no specific aid immediately, yet agreed to shelter the prisoners if they made their escape and reached Dindigul.

In reply to their appeal for assistance, he sent a message: 'Let them effect their escape and come to my Hills they are very welcome here they can remain here in safety for ten years and shall participate with me in what I can afford', but cautioned

them to be 'very careful in avoiding dangers in the road as all the country between Palayamkottai and Virupatchi was under the Company's government'. After the formation of the rebel Confederacy, the leaders bestowed more positive attention on the issue, as the success of the design seemed.

The real name of Oomathurai was Kumaraswami Nayak. He was the only son by the first wife of the father of Vira Pandiyan and Sevathaiah.

A real necessity for the destruction of British influence in Tirunelveli. They employed Vira Pandya Nayak to gather armed men to make a surprise assault on Palayamkottai for releasing the prisoners. A probe was made late in 1800 but it was reported that the prisoners were afflicted with smallpox. Therefore the venture was postponed.

It is not possible to ascertain who formulated the stratagem aimed at the liberation of the prisoners. It represented an imaginative scheme which was carried into effect with a resolution that was equalled only by the daring of its conception. The history of India seldom presents so thrilling an episode. Late in 1800 the insurgents, establishing their base of operation somewhere in Panjalamkurichi, opened a secret correspondence with the imprisoned at Palayamkottai.

The captives, having been directed to subsist on their own resources, employed servants to cook food. Potti Pakada, one of these servants, frequented to the nearby jungle to gather firewood. Requested by the rebels, he served as the agent of correspondence, transmitting verbal messages and at times carrying palm-leaf letters, kept hidden in his footware. Through his instrumentality the two sides took each other into confidence for the successful implementation of the plan of action.

In January 1801 when the different provinces drifted into rebellion, the insurgents, 200 in number, led by Pandyan Sherogar and Gidivetti Nayak, started from Panjalamkurichi. To excite no suspicion with the enemy or its agents the veterans had disguised themselves as pilgrims, going to the sacred Temple of Tiruchendur. Clad in yellow robes, playing kavadi,12 chanting manthrams, blowing the conch shell, distributing the holy ash and receiving offerings from the votaries, they reached Palayamkottai.

The procession wended through the streets around the fort. On listening to the chanting of spells, the prisoners to their great relief, whispered each other that the relieving party had really arrived. Before long the 'pilgrims' dispersed and vanished. A few days later they reappeared in the town as hawkers, carrying loads of firewood, plantain leaves and fruits. The local inhabitants approached them for purchases but so exorbitant were the prices, they demanded, that all were dissuaded.

With all their loads unsold, the hawkers moved to the street of the fort, shouting aloud 'firewood', 'plantain leaves' and 'fruits'. The sepoys of the fort wanted to make purchases but turned away on learning the prohibitive prices.

Everything proceeded according to the predetermined plan. In anticipation of the arrival of the 'hawkers' Sevathaiah gained the sympathy of the wife of the Superintendent of the Fort and implored her to obtain permission to them for the performance of ceremonies for the dead. He represented that being in prison he could not perform them for long and promised to do them with fetters on his feet.

As he himself admitted subsequently, this white lady showed consideration and extended her assistance. At her intervention the Superintendent of the Fort granted the request and permitted the prisoners to purchase firewood, plantain leaves and fruits for the contemplated celebration on a grand scale. The prisoners having agreed to buy them at the high prices, as were demanded, the innocent looking hawkers entered the fort and walked towards the enclosure of captivity, evoking no suspicion.

In the meantime the women belonging to the prisoners and permitted to stay at liberty inside the fort, were sent away. Large parties of armed men with the consent and connivance of the residents of the town lay in wait with a few horses to assist in the escape and escort their leaders. Hundreds of them approached silently within a short distance of the south gate of the fort.

At the appointed hour, soon after sun set, on the 2nd of February, Sevathaiah gave the signal for escape. Immediately the hawkers, equipped themselves with the weapons, which they kept concealed in the loads, sprang forward. They overpowered the sentinels at the enclosure, seized the fire-arms and carried off the prisoners with fetters on their feet with lightning speed.

The enactment of the entire exploit, a major feat indeed, appeared so dramatic and the war hoop raised by them spread so great an alarm that the garrison was taken by complete surprise. All the veterans rushed to the Travancore Gate of the fort, disarmed more of the guards, seized their weapons and got safely off to their supporters, who were waiting impatiently with horses to escort their heroes. At this crucial moment the European community at Palayamkottai, about twenty men and women, were dining or dancing at the Garden House of Macaulay, protected by a single guard and the main British detachment had been cantoned at Sankaranainar koil, about thirty miles to the westward.

This remarkable exploit executed with no blood-shed, excited intense popular excitement. It altered drastically overnight, the political situation of the far South. It symbolised the triumph of a confederate strategy, unique in the annals of this insurrection. S.R.Lushington, the Collector of Ramnad, rightly reported to the Board

of Revenue that the escape was effected 'in consequence of a general confederacy and preconcerted plan'.

He asserted that the execution of the design was no less daring than rapid and that the sudden attack from the most unexpected quarter together with the war hoop raised by the veterans had deprived the guards of all reflection. At a secure distance from the fort the rebels halted for a while, put themselves in order and joined by thousands of armed men, pushed immediately to the Valnad Hills, a rugged terrain with thorny bushes in the eastern part of Tirunelveli.

For a time the liberated leaders appeared undecided where to proceed, whether to Panjalamkurichi or to Dindigul, but so spontaneous and extensive was the popular enthusiasm that their escape excited against alien imperialism, that it compelled them to stay on in Tirunelveli to spearhead the movement.

Now, advance parties moved in all directions, surprising and reducing the British posts. Instantly the entire country was in open rebellion and the Madras administration expressed its concern that it would be necessary 'to make extraordinary exertions for augmenting the force in the Southern Division.

Confederate Collaboration

After the main body of the insurgents reached the Valnad Hills, Vira Pandya Nayak, one of the leaders, rushed to Shevalaperi to give notice to his family, residing at Arsady, to join him, for fear that the English would take them into custody. From Shevalaperi he led a body of rebels to Panjalamkurichi and routed a British force, stationed at Ottapidaram. These desperate men soon engaged themselves in the reconstruction of the fort of Panjalamkurichi, completely demolished in 1799 at the orders of Bannerman.

After three days' halt in the Valnad Hills the rebel chiefs reached Panjalamkurichi but were surprised to see the tremendous progress made in the reconstruction of their former stronghold and to receive a tumultuous welcome from a large concourse of people. They decided to stay on and the rebels proclaimed Sevathaiah as their ruler.

The insurgents proceeded to consolidate their strength with the support of the people of Tirunelveli and the confederates of the north. Guided by the ideals of national unity and exigencies of the time, they left no stone unturned in bringing all sections of the population under the banner of revolt so as to present a united front against the common foe. They appealed to the chiefs and other inhabitants who had so long remained loyal to the Company.

Sevathaiah's letters to the inhabitants of Karcherry and the Poligar of Wootamalai reflected the liberal sentiments cherished by the insurgents. He wrote

to the inhabitants of Karcherry: 'It has been represented to me that in consequence of supplies of provisional articles having been collected and sent from your country for the Company, a party of the force from Valnad had marched and committed disturbances in your country.

As Dattappa Nayak and Sivasubramania Pillai (two rebel administrators) are in the Hills (Valnad Hills), I have directed them to settle everything to your wish. You would therefore fearlessly remain in your village trusting in me, paying your deshakaval and to attend to duties'. Maruthappa Tevar, the Poligar of Ootrumalai, fought on the British side against the Tirunelveli League. In spite of this Sevathaiah sought to conciliate him and win his alliance. On the 7th of February 1801 he wrote to Maruthappa Tevar: 'That by the mercy of Ninar (God), we have all made an escape from Palayamkottai and arrived at our place. You will now drop all thought of what you suffered from us in former times and co-operate in our business without any difference arising'.

So spontaneous was the patriotic fervour that the insurrection excited among the masses, that it drew into its ranks people from all communal and linguistic groups. The servants of the Nawab and the kavalkars of the villages rallied to the movement. The Paravas, the fishermen community of the coast, led by their Jatitalavan or head man not only joined the rebellion but supplied guns, wall pieces and powder for the promotion of the violent struggle. As the populous communities of the Marawas, Nadars and Totiens too rose in arms, the resistance assumed formidable proportions.

Hopeful that the Rajah Serfoji of Thanjavur and Rajah Raghunatha Tondaiman of Pudukkottai would identify their interests with the nationalist cause, the leaders sought their aid, but were disappointed; these princes entertained no sympathy.

The confederates, however, rushed to the assistance of their comrades at arms. A body of rebels from Sivagiri in the western region of Tirunelveli reinforced the armed column of Sevathaiah. Emissaries went to Sivaganga, Ramnad and Dindigul for the acquisition of arms and reinforcements. This was followed by a conference of the leaders at Kadalgudi.

Melappan of Ramnad, Nagaraja Monigar of Tirunelveli and Jatitalavan of Thoothukudi held a meeting but as their deliberations were held in secret, the details cannot be ascertained. Melappan visited Panjalamkurichi and was received with the presents of car-rings, necklace, bangles and cloths. He rode back escorted by a hundred men of Panjalamkurichi. On his return to Ramnad, a hundred loads of arms and twenty loads of ammunition, mostly powder and ball, were moved to Panjalam- kurichi.

The Amildar of Komeri reported to Collector Lushington that the rebels of Sivaganga from their jungles of Kalayarkoil sent armed groups and provisions to Tirunelveli. Sevathaiah had admitted subsequently that 30,000 insurgents of Ramnad and Sivaganga joined him soon after he entered Panjalamkurichi in triumph. For the promotion of co-ordination of the war effort, Marudhu Pandiyan stationed Subbayyan in Tirunelveli and Mandala Manikkam in Ramnad.

Oomathurai and Sevathaiah in their message to Marudhu Pandiyan conveyed their sentiments: 'The present time has given us hope of succeeding in our enterprises. We have placed entire confidence in them, and thus far effected our object, and wait to be responsible for whatever may hereafter happen'. They asserted that all the chiefs except the Poligars of Ettayapuram and Ootrumalai were ready to support the rebellion.

That so long they had seized from the enemy 200 muskets, cleven tents, numerous bullocks and 3,000 chakrams. As they needed gun-powder urgently, Sevathaiah appealed to Marudhu Pandiyan to send fifty loads without delay. A deputation sent by the in-surgents reached Dindigul and returned with the people of Tirunelveli who were serving with their allics. The confederate support greatly strengthened the cause of rebellion in Tirunelveli.

Leadership of Oomathurai:

Oomathurai, otherwise called Kumaraswamy, assumed the command of rebel operations in Tirunelveli. A unique phenomenon, that this popular movement found in this deaf and dumb man of very sickly appearance its undisputed leader. So great was his popularity that he was known by different appellations but of the same meaning: 'Oomce' or 'Dumb' among the common people, 'Mookah' among the Mohammadans and 'Dumb Brother' (of Kattabomman), 'Dumb Boy' or 'Dumby' among the English. The rebels reverentially referred him as Swamy, literally meaning deity. The personal appearance of Oomathurai seemed deceptive.

Though sickly, he possessed a masterful mind and commanded the absolute loyalty of his people. James Welsh, who had an intimate knowledge of this hero, had declared 'he was one of the most extraordinary mortals I ever knew.' He asserted 'the Oomec was adored, his slight sign was an oracle, and every man flew to execute whatever he commanded. No council assembled at which he did not preside, no daring adventure was undertaken which he did not lead.... Whatever undisciplined valour could effect, was sure to be achieved wherever he appeared'. An enterprising character and a restless spirit, he was a leader-violent and rough yet the gifts of his personal magnetism were such that he was passionately loved and affectionately adored.

A deadly enemy of the English, he master-minded the formulation and execution of those plans which were aimed at the annihilation of imperialism. Together with his brother Kattabomman he engineered the organisation of the Tirunelveli League against the Company in 1798. He accompanied his brother to Ramnad and when the sepoys appeared to arrest Veera Pandiyan he alerted his followers and manoeuvred the escape.

When hostilities broke out, he led his men in the successful defence of Panjalamkurichi. More conspicuous and colourful than Veera Pandiyan, Oomathurai was the de facto leader of the anti-British reaction of 1799. So profound was the affection of Kattabomman for his dumb brother that even when he was taken to the gallows, he expressed his anxiety for the life of Oomathurai. Subsequently, together with other patriots he was thrown into prison at Palayamkottai but made his escape in February 1801.

Since then he devoted himself to successive assaults on hostile positions and destruction of British authority. His method of representing the English was extremely simple. Oomec collected a few little pieces of straw, arranged them on the palm of his left hand to represent the British force; then with other signs characteristic of a dumb man and a whizzing sound, drew the other hand across and swept them off. This was the signal for attack. The exploits of Oomathurai imparted a real thrill and intensity to the struggle that followed.

Capture of Thoothukudi and Komeri:

The reoccupation of Panjalamkurichi from the enemy was a turning point in the movement, for the tide of rebellion marked by brilliant victories, began to sweep the country violently. The rebels established themselves in force and within a short space of six days reconstructed the bastions and walls of the demolished fort with mud, sand and husk, making them defensible. The principal inhabitants, the peasants, peons and kavalkars, as the English themselves had admitted, cheerfully obeyed the summons from their leaders and joined the insurrection. The parties equipped themselves with firclocks, which were seized from the enemy, attacked the British posts and rescued from prison Karutiah of Kadalgudi and Virabhadra Pillai, brother of Sivasubramania Pillai, who were involved in the organisation of the Tirunelveli League.

Their extensive ravages led to the complete annihilation of British authority in the eastern region of the province. The Company sent forces to the disturbed areas in an attempt to check the spread of the rebellion but were forced to retreat.

The pillaging parties spread themselves in all directions, surprised the British posts, released prisoners and seized the stores. Alwar Tirunagari, Srivaikuntam, Kulattur, Kadalgudi, Nagalapuram, Kolarpatti and Yezhayirampunnai fell to the

storming parties. The insurgents rebuilt the demolished forts, converting them into their strongholds. On the 3 of March they advanced to Thoothukudi, a commercial centre of considerable importance, and surrounded the fort.

Edward Ormsley, who commanded the garrison, ordered the sepoys to open fire, but the latter made common cause with the patriots. They handed over the arms to the insurgents and surrendered the fort. In spite of this victory the rebels showed magnanimity to the humbled foe. They permitted Edward Ormsley to gather all his properties and go away to safety. However they took Baggot, the Master Attendant, prisoner. Overcome with affliction, his panic-stricken wife followed the rebels, entered the fort unmolested and made entreaties. Taking pity, the rebel leaders Oomathurai and Sevathaiah, with no hesitation whatsoever granted her request; they not only released Baggot from custody but restored all his confiscated properties. In fact even in their attitude towards their deadly enemy the patriots observed the maxims of magnanimity and chivalry.'

They did no harm to the Dutch, for they considered them neutral. After consolidating their control over the coastal strip, they made preparations for the capture of Tirunelveli. They made ladders in the Valnad Hills and gathered the inhabitants for the expedition. However, before this could be attempted, they were confronted with a powerful British offensive against Panjalamkurichi.

The insurgents of Sivaganga and Ramnad during this critical period not only assisted their allies in Tirunelveli but engaged the English in their own lands. In February and March they gained more victories. Led by Melappan, a rebel column attacked and defeated the British forces, stationed at Abiramam and Kadamalur, leading to the reduction of these posts.

On the 8 of March the rebel chief led an expedition to Komeri, a strong fort, where the enemy maintained a powerful garrison under the command of Miller. He destroyed the massive gates of the citadel and stormed through the barriers. Finding the odds insuperable, the beleaguered evacuated it; and the fort fell under rebel control.

Miller, reinforced at Abiramam, moved on Komeri, seeking to regain possession of the fort. Determined to check the enemy, the armed columns of Melappan, moving to the bank of a tank situated between a jungle and a deep nulla, grouped themselves into a half- moon-shaped line in front of the British camp. The enemy crossed the nulla, formed into a line, advanced rapidly to the tank-bund and launched a fierce attack.

The insurgents, considering their position insecure, eluded the charge and retired to the jungles. On the 12 when they were on their march to Paramagudi the

detachment of Miller surprised and encircled the party. However Melappan proved equal to the task, he fought heroically, broke the hostile cordon and led his men to safety to the jungles. Joined by a considerable body of rebel troops, sent by Marudhu Pandiyan, Melappan emerged from the jungles and defeated the enemy in successive engagements. He liberated Sholagramam, Veravani, Chengalpadi and Paratawayal from the British control. An armed column of Sivaganga administered a severe blow to the Company's force stationed at Nettoor.

The rebels established their authority in most of Ramnad, but found it difficult to reduce the walled. Towns, to which the Company's administration had withdrawn, for want of fire arms and to sustain a prolonged campaign for shortage of grain in this famine-affected province.

Retreat of Macaulay:

As the tide of insurrection swept over the country, the English canalised all the resources at their command in their attempt to check its tempo. Colin Macaulay, the commanding officer of the forces in Tirunelveli, issued a proclamation threatening with death to all those who were found in arms or assisting the rebels with arms and provisions. He directed the loyal chiefs to gather information on rebel movements and concentrations.

To terrorise the inhabitants three of the rebel emissaries, who were on missions seeking support of the people but seized, were hanged to death. In his endeavour to weaken the will of the defiant population, he sent parties on raids to the rebel territories to capture the families of the principal inhabitants and to cut off their communication with the confederates of the north.

Macaulay initiated effective measures for a powerful offensive on Panjalamkurichi. He assembled 'the whole disposable force of the province' of Tirunelveli at Sankaranainarkoil. At his suggestion, Velu Thambi, the Minister of Travancore, rushed his troops in support of the enemy against the patriots. Advancing through Kayatar the forces under the command of Macaulay on the 8 of February reached Kadayanellore, six miles short of Panjalamkurichi.

In the evening the enemy pitched tents. Sooner did troops get ready to take their meal than they found their camp attacked by hordes of assailants. Determined to fore stall the threat to their reconstructed stronghold, the rebels, advancing under the cover of a deep ravine, made a sudden and simultaneous attack on three sides of the British camp.

The besieged charged the rebels and forty of the latter fell dead, yet their attempt to disperse the assailants failed. In the evening the Company's troops formed

themselves into a square with guns at the angles and baggage in the centre. In this position they lay on their arms, subjected to repeated alarms the entire night.

On the 9th morning the forces, resuming their march, took position near Panjalamkurichi. They decided to rout the rebels in a quick action but to their astonishment they found the citadel which had been completely demolished in 1799 raised, as it were by magic in six days: Macaulay reconnoitered the fort, but discovered to his dismay every part of it, well manned by thousands of insurgents. As a quick victory seemed highly dubious, he pitched his tent and decided on an assault in the night.

A body of troops advanced to capture the Pagoda of Ottapidaram in the meantime. As soon as this expedition had been sent, it found itself surrounded by thousands of armed men who appeared on the rear and flank. So daring and resolute was the probe made by the rebels that it convinced Macaulay of the magnitude of the lurking danger.

He reported to Madras that the fort in view was found heavily guarded by men beyond all calculation. Meanwhile a huge column of rebels assembled in the Valnad Hills. The shrewd enemy anticipated the possibility of simultaneous rebel thrusts, one from Panjalamkurichi and the other from the Valnad Hills against its camp. At the same time the Company's sepoys were found incapable of sustained operations either on account of demoralisation in their ranks on account of their repeated reverses at the hands of the rebels, or because of their sympathy for the patriots.

Considering his position extremely precarious, Macaulay ordered a sudden retreat. Under the guise of preparing for an offensive, the British army misled the rebels and began a humiliating withdrawal. When the enemy moved away, accomplishing a third of its journey to Palayamkottai, the mistaken impression revealed itself to the rebels. Soon they overtook the English with shouts and screams. There followed a running battle.

The patriots lost 110 of their men killed in a series of clashes, yet continued their chase of the enemy. After a long and severe march, which lasted all the night, the troops reached the protection of the batteries of Palayamkottai at nine in the morning on the 10th of February.

Anxious to retrieve the shattered prestige, Macaulay now decided to capture Nagalapuram and Kadalgudi, two important centres of the rebellion. These posts were of particular importance, for it was through them that the confederates of Tirunelveli maintained communications with their allies of the northern provinces, particularly of Sivagangai and Ramnad.

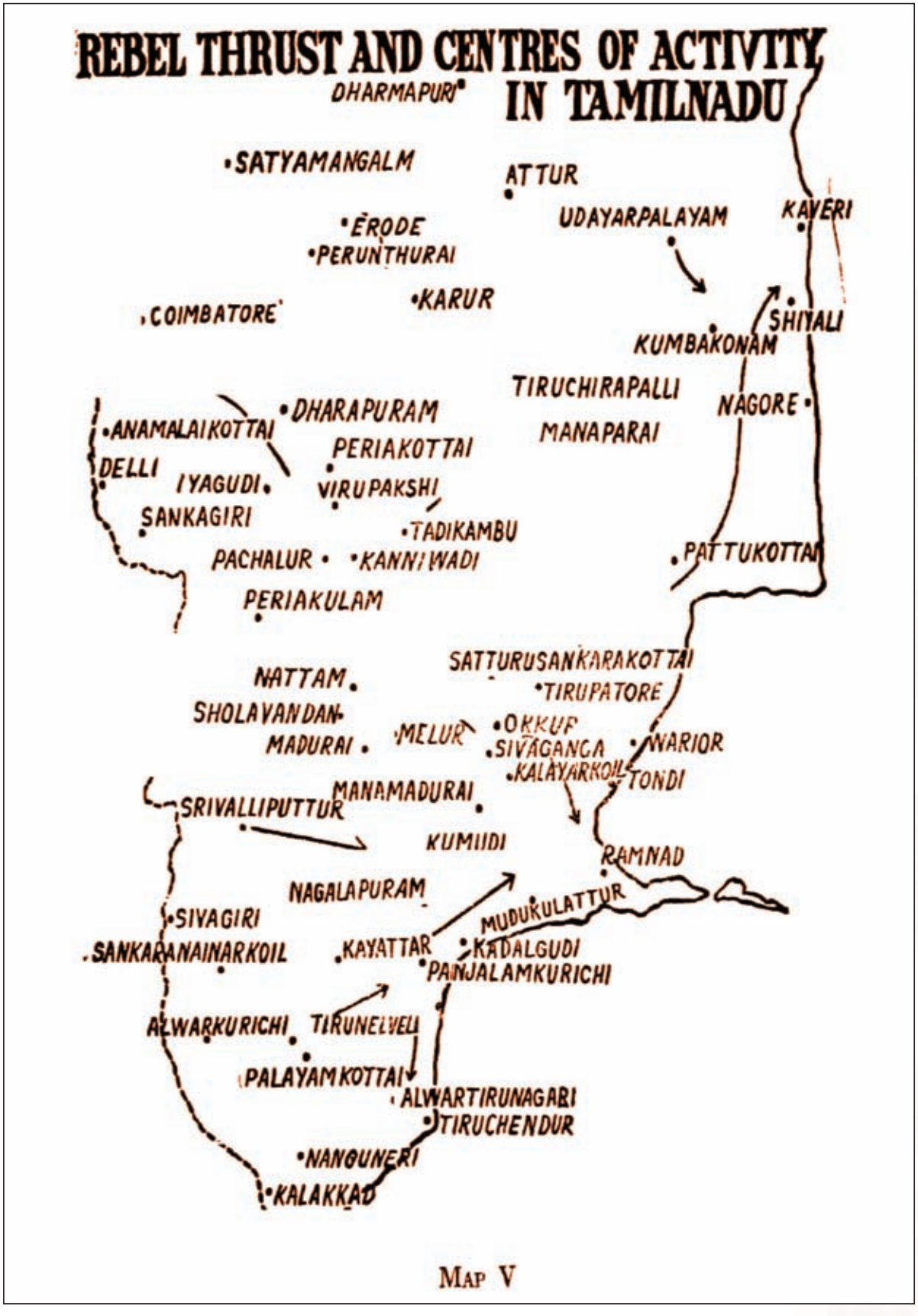
At the orders of Macaulay, Lieutenant Miller captured Nagalapuram and intercepted the rebels communication. Captain Hazard, reinforced by a detail sent from Madurai marched on Kadalgudi. Anxious to avert the threat of isolation from their allies, the rebels gathered in strength for the defence of this post and by a stubborn resistance repulsed the attack. A second assault was tried but that too failed. Consequently, English troops retreated to Nagalapuram, being harassed by armed men throughout the march. On the 15th of March the rebels, rallying in force, began a counter-attack on the British detachment, stationed at Nagalapuram, but without success. Subsequently on the 19th of March they directed all their effort for the reduction of the British post at Srivaikuntam to submission. They erected a mud work with considerable labour, gained a commanding view of the Pagoda and cut off the enemy's communication. Major Sheppard now led an expedition from Palayamkottai for the relief of the besieged post.

He succeeded in forcing his way into the Pagoda, but failed in beating the crowds. Finding it impossible to maintain the post, the garrison evacuated it, retreating to Palayamkottai. In fact, rebel unity and valour triumphed over British discipline and arms.

The Battle of Panjalamkurichi

Incensed at the repeated reverses and threatened with the destruction of their power, the English made a vigorous attempt for a fresh military buildup. At the orders of General Brathwaite, Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces of the Madras Presidency, detachments from the northern provinces moved into Tirunelveli.

On the 27th of March a grand army assembled at Kayattar. Commanded by Macaulay, it reached on the 30th at Pasuvanthanai, where the troops of Ettayapuram made their junction. Soon after this was effected, the advancing army was completely surrounded by a formidable force. The patriots, though ill-equipped, attacked the English with uncommon determination. In the fierce battle that followed, the besieging party lost ninety six men. Failing to capture the enemy's guns and subjected to more losses, these 'brave but unskillful pedestrians' as James Welsh described these crowds, withdrew to a nearby jungle.


REBEL THRUST AND CENTRES OF ACTIVITY IN TAMILNADU
DHARMAPURI
SATYAMANGALM
ATTUR
UDAYARPALAYAM
KAVERI
ERODE
PERUNTHURAI
KARUR
COIMBATORE
SHIYALI
KUMBAKONAM
TIRUCHIRAPALLI
NAGORE
DHARAPURAM
ANAMALAIKOTTAI
MANAPARAI
PERIAKOTTAI
DELLI
IYAGUDI
VIRUPAKSHI
SANKAGIRI
TADIKAMBU
PACHALUR
KANNIWADI
PATTUKOTTAI
PERIAKULAM
SATTURUSANKARAKOTTAI
NATTAM
TIRUPATORE
SHOLAVANDAN
MELUR
OKKUF
MADURAI
SIVAGANGA
WARIOR
KALAYARKOIL
TONDI
MANAMADURAI
SRIVALLIPUTTUR
KUMIIDI
RAMNAD
NAGALAPURAM
MUDUKULATTUR
SIVAGIRI
KAYATTAR
KADALGUDI
SANKARANAINARKOIL
PANJALAMKURICHI
ALWARKURICHI
TIRUNELVELI
PALAYAMKOTTAI
ALWARTIRUNAGARI
TIRUCHENDUR
NANGUNERI
KALAKKAD

Map V

On the 31st of March the enemy marched to Panjalamkurichi, now completely reconstructed by the insurgents. Built of mud of a very solid and adhesive quality, the wall was generally thirteen feet high. Macaulay concentrated his forces on the north-west angle of the fort, throwing out the cavalry to the south and the troops of Ettayapuram to the east. When all the arrangements were carried to perfection, he ordered the assault. The heavy guns, mounted on an elevated spot, opening a heavy fire, commenced breaking of the north-west bastion. The howitzers and field pieces enfiladed the western and northern faces of the fort.

A part of the wall collapsed, and at 3.00 p.m. on the 31st of March, the breach appeared perfectly practicable. The European details, supported by the native infantry, immediately moved forward in strength to the breach 'under the heaviest fire imaginable'. The gallant assault of the powerful enemy, however, did not deter the insurgents from their determination to challenge and contest. With intrepid firmness and unconquerable daring, they engaged the English in a fierce charge.

The moment the assailants advanced to the breach, they were piked or shot. Successive attempts were made to cripple the rebel resistance but were repeatedly thwarted. The troops of Ettayapuram, supported by the Company's batteries, attacked the east face of the stronghold but fared no better than their allies. During the entire duration of this battle, the defenders kept up the most unnatural yell, which ceased only with the complete repulse of the assault. Humiliated by this unexpected discomfiture, Edward Clive, Governor of Madras, reported to the Court of Directors that the English troops after sustaining an unequal conflict against a superior force, with unshakable bravery and discipline, were repulsed with heavy loss'.

Overwhelmed with sad recollection of this tragedy, James Weish, one of the officers who fought in the British army, had narrated in his Military Reminiscences: 'At length a retreat was ordered, and a truly dismal scene of horror succeeded, all our killed and many of the wounded lying left at the foot of the breach, over which the enemy (the rebels) immediately sprung and pursued the rear, while others pierced the bodies both of the dying and the dead.

As all had alike partaken in the dangers and discomfiture of the day, a dead silence reigned throughout our line (during the following night), the only tribute we could then pay to the memory of our departed brethren, and the enemy so far respected our grief, as to allow us its unmolested indulgence.

The 1st of April was ushered in with the painful recollection, that many of our late gay and cheerful companions were lying at the foot of the breach unburied; and a flag of truce was consequently sent to the fort to entreat permission to remove and

inter our dead. This was kindly and unconditionally accorded; and we then collected the disfigured and gory bodies and buried them in the evening, with military honours; the enemy setting us a bright example of humanity, made not the smallest attempt to disturb us and we enjoyed a good night's rest, that of the preceding having been anything but refreshing'.The complete failure of the British forces in this savage battle appeared to them perfectly inexplicable as the success of the insurgents in their defence of the breach seemed miraculous.

Previous to the assault a grove of pikes alone presented to the glance of the assailants. The rebels appearing on any part of the wall were instantly shot, though quickly replaced by others. But it was in the immediate defence of the breach that the defenders wrought havoc on the hostile columns. From the wonderfully sheltered and concealed enclaves, they keeping themselves hidden, wielded the pikes, eighteen to twenty feet long and as sharp as the razor, against the pressing aggressors.

The British could never reach the rebels and could seldom imagine from whence the blow was struck. Behind the lines of the pike-men, the insurgents standing on an elevated spot kept up a heavy fire, while others posted on the bastions engaged the advancing troops in a deadly contest. The gallantry and devotion that endowed them with what they lacked in discipline and striking power, enabled them to repulse the successive assaults.

Welsh declared: '... the system of defence adopted by these savages would have done credit to any engineers. Nothing could surpass it but their unwearied perseverence'. The attack having failed, the English instituted a blockade of the fort of Panjalamkurichi and waited for the arrival of reinforcements.

Reverses in Dindigul:

Though the insurgents held the English in check in the southern most region, they failed in attaining a similar objective in Coimbatore and Dindigul. As the operations in Malabar turned the scales against the confederates by February 1801, the detachment of Lieutenant Colonel Innes left Airriakotta near Kozhikode on the 27th of february for the south. Advancing through Palakkad and Erode, the forces encamped at Palani on the 15th of March.

A hircarrah, whom Innes sent in advance to Dindigul, reported to him at Palani that the confederates believing that the Company had withdrawn its forces and having no idea when they would return, sent away their armed men to other regions. As surprise appeared imperative for a quick victory over the rebels, Innes by forced marches reached Virupatchi, the headquarters of the Dindigul League.

On the 17th of March the detachment encamped before this defiant town. On the approach of the enemy the rebels in considerable number reassembled in the close junglecs near the town but all were ill-equipped and ill-disciplined. Immediately the confederates sent a mission to the far South. It reached Panjalamkurichi, gathered the armed inhabitants of Coimbatore and Dindigul who were serving with the rebels of Tirunelveli, and returned. After completing preparations for the offensive, Innes sent a summons to Gopala Nayak to surrender, but the latter ignored it. Thereupon he declared Gopala Nayak an enemy of the British circar. Early in the morning of 21st of March the detachment commenced a three-pronged operation against rebel posts at Cormandelli and Cowdelli. The insurgents led by Gopala Nayak, deserted their villages according to their preconcerted plan and took their position behind their barriers in the mountain ranges of Anamalai.

The chieftains of Mangalam, Periapatti, Chenchode, Jallipatti, Tondamattur and Somandorai with all the inhabitants of these Districts thronged to the rebel cause. The towns in the valley passed under British control while the rebels took their stand in the hills.The operations in Virupatchi continued from the 22nd to the 24th but the English found the lines of defence, as described by Innes, 'everywhere most astonishingly strong.'

After trying exertion the forces reached the northern and southern entrances to the hills of the western range in Virupatchi. Accompanied by 700 men, Gopala Nayak took his stand at Pachalur, the only stronghold left to him, but on the 27th of March it too fell. In the course of their precipitate retreat the fugitives left a great part of their baggage, and a good number of their horses and elephants at Woddacaud.

After the fall of their barriers in Virupakshi the patriots headed by Gopala Nayak, his principal adviser Muthu Vira, and his former emissary in Dhoondaji Waug's court Tomachi Mudali, moved to Delhi. Innes detached Major Leonard with a party of Malay Corps to Collumbum in a bid to cut off rebel retreat but without success.

The leaders of Delhi, Mangalam, Periapatti, Chenchode, Jallipatti, Tondamattur and Somandorai received Gopala Nayak in the hills of Manali and escorted him to Delhi. The peons and peasants deserted their villages, set them on fire and established themselves in the jungles for a desperate struggle.

After dislodging the rebels from Pachalur, Innes returned to Virupakshi on the 8th of April. After gathering information about rebel posts in the hills, he detached Lieutenant Frith in command of the King's Twelfth Infantry to Pollachi with orders to advance from thence to Marchenayakpalayam, then Anamalai Kottai and from there to penetrate to the hills running west of Delhi Kottai to make a diversion in that direction and to cut off the escape routes of the fugitives.

Successful in these operations, Innes directed Yadul Nayak of Delhi to attend on him on the 9th of April, but the rebel chief refused. In consequence he sent an ultimatum: 'You have still time to save yourself and family from ruins and disgrace by obedience. But by disobedience every misfortune will attend you. Consider well before you make your choice. Every drop of blood that falls will be on your head'.

A determined rebel as he was Yadul Nayak remained steadfast to the confederate cause. On the 9th the British detachment led by Innes advanced from Virupatchi and on the 12th morning reached Delhi Kottai.

Determined to carry the war to the hills, he procured the best information he could obtain of the rebel concentrations. In the meantime Frith, who was sent to make a diversion at Anamalaikottai, threatened Delhi from that quarter. On the 13th Innes, marching across four strong barriers in a close jungle, reached the foot of a hill where rebels had encamped. Led by Yadul Nayak, the confederates charged the enemy.

A smart fire from a brass three-pounder and small pieces helped to counter-balance the firelocks of the enemy. However their endeavour proved unequal to the British striking power. After suffering serious losses in the subsequent encounters the insurgents withdrew to the interior of the extensive woods. The enemy followed up its victory with the occupation of Jallipatti and Tondamattur.

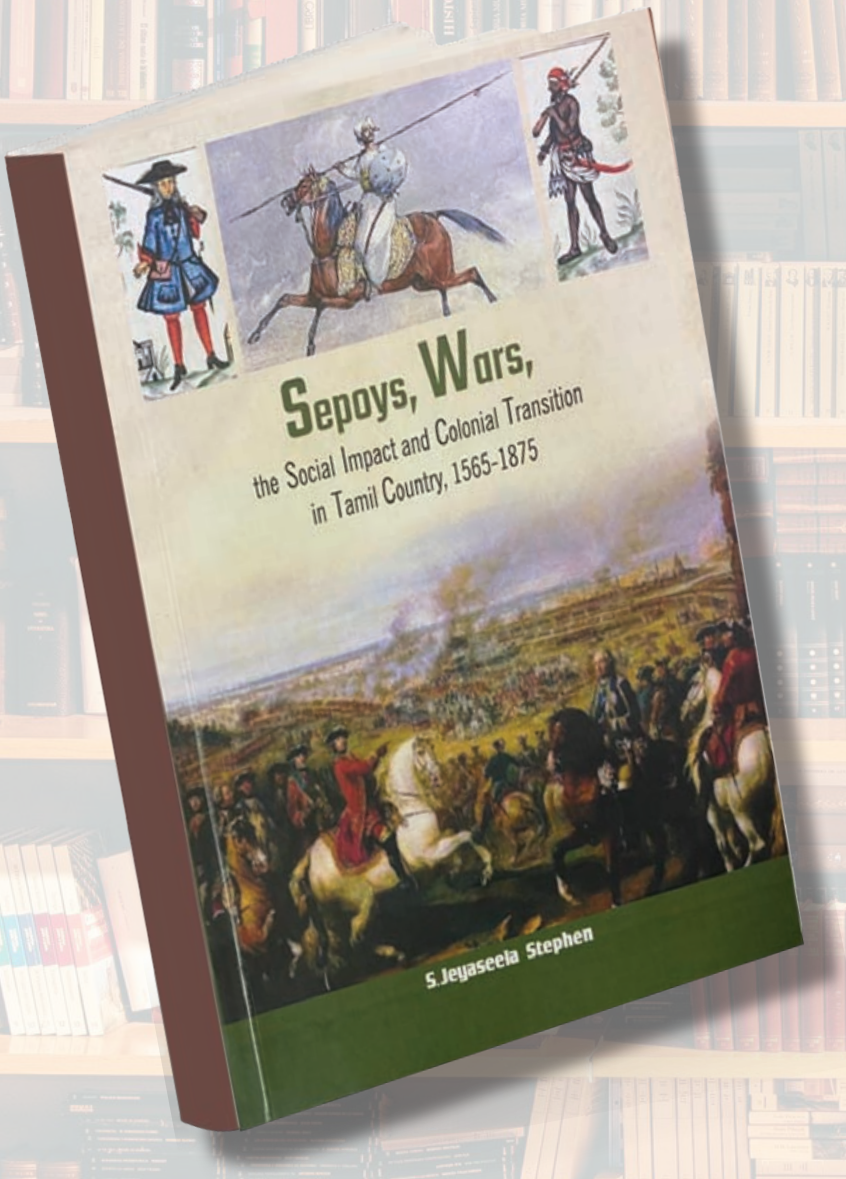
Anxious to terminate this difficult mountain war quickly, the invading forces decided to strike at the rebels in their strongholds on the hills. Commanded by Frith, the detachment began the arduous ascent to the summits, covered by the fire from a gun and howitzers posted below. The parties pushed on relentlessly, inclining to the left to turn to the right of a barrier but this leading them under a precipice, large stones were hurled on them and many were killed or wounded.

The entire detachment regrouped itself under a cliff of rock, receiving and returning a sharp fire for a considerable time; but without being able to move out on account of the constant shower of stones. The British position, however, commanded the view of the barrier, where the rebels had planted a brass gun. A reconnaissance having been made, Innes detached an advance party of infantry and Malays under Lieutenant Hodgson with direction to carry the road leading to the barrier, which the latter did. Commanding a company of troops, Innes himself joined the advance party at the occupied barrier. A six-pounder was separated into pieces and carried up the hill and a barrier was cut through to make a passage.

The thrust was now resumed. Receiving and returning a smart fire, yet pushing the insurgents from post to post, Hodgson gained the summit of the hill. An attacking party led by Major Pictor taking another route joined Innes. Driven to dismay by the surging forces of the enemy, the rebels took to flight in great confusion over the mountain ranges. The troops, much fatigued by this hazardous campaign and handicapped physically by the constant shower of stones and bullets, made no attempt to continue the pursuit.

SEPOYS, WARS THE SOCIAL IMPACT AND COLONIAL TRANSITION IN TAMIL COUNTRY, 1565-1875

S.Jeyaseela Steephan



The Army of the Native Rulers and the Impact of Wars on the People in Tamil Country, 1565-1875

The kings of Vijayanagar and their subordinate Nayaka rulers of the sixteenth century had large armies that consisted of infantry, cavalry, and elephant corps. The camels and bulls were used as auxiliaries in battle. Bukka I had been said to be highly skilled in the use of sword and said to have destroyed his enemies in the battle. Devaraya I was mentioned to be skilled in the use of bow. He also had maintained a large battalion of elephants. Madhura Vijayam composed by Ganga Devi the queen of Kumara Kampana refers to well trained war elephants used in battle as well as the heroic efforts of the warriors who fell to these mighty animals. The pathetic scene of numerous elephants died and lying on the battlefield had also been referred to.

The Army of the Nayaks of Vijayanagar in Tamil country

The nayak rulers of Tamil country imported horses and elephants and they only sought the assistance of the Portuguese traders on the Tamil coast. Ragunatha Nayak of Thanjavur had been referred to in Sahitya Sudha as an expert in training horses. Horses were valued by the Nayaks for mobility and striking power in war.

The Tirikh-i-Ferishti mentions that in AD 1368, Muhammad Shah Bahmani I had captured 300 gun-carriages in a battle with the king of Vijayanagar. It is mentioned that the ambassadors of the Sultan of Melaka who came to visit the Court of Devaraya II (1422-1446) were received by the Shahbandhar (harbour-master) of Nagapattinam with gun salutes, which clearly shows that Tamil country had developed artillery. Domingo Paes, the Portuguese traveller refers to the use of guns in the Vijayanagara army.

The Paalayakaarar (Chief of the Palayam) near the Portuguese settlement of Santhome of Mylapore in 1580 went out always being accompanied by many harquebusiers on foot armed with the cartridge belts slung across their flanks. The Pudukkottai plates of Sri Vallabha Pandya and Varatungarama Pandya dated 1583 mention Tirumalaraja, the chieftain of Cintalapalli used iron guns in wars against enemies which had been charged with leaden shots.

The use of firearms like cannon, harquebus and matchlock and later flintlock had been found common in the early modern age.Ambur and Gudiyattam region had gun foundries in AD 1477 and the individual manufacturers of cannon paid tax on them. An inscription records the remission of beerangi vari (cannon tax) from an individual belonging to the Anu Jathi Panchaalathaar (artisans of the five castes) of Kaliyettam Simai by Akkappa Nayak, the sub-ordinate ruler of Vijayanagar. Three Portuguese manuscripts mention the factor and captain of Coromandel Coast had purchased locally manufactured cannon balls in the hinterland of port of Pulicat. On 16th August 1524 the captain purchased 250 cannon balls and he sent to Cochin in the ship that sailed.

Nicholas Pimenta, the Jesuit who visited the court of Krishnappa Nayak of Gingee (1597-1624) in 1598 mentioned the availability of saltpetre and its use. He said that large volumes of powder and shot were available there. Weapons of warfare were not allowed to fall into the hands of the enemy by the native rulers. The Nayak of Gingee had manufactured guns and they were used in warfare. It is also reported that in 1751 all the guns in the fort in Gingee were pulled down from the hills by the French and these were convoyed to Pondicherry.

Muskets were mainly carried by the lower ranks of the army. Cannons were handled by mercenaries in the service of the rulers being heavy which could be moved and used for siege operations. Cannons were used in the battle of Toppur and it had been referred to in the literary work of Sahitya Ratnakara.

Rollant Crappe, the Danish officer in Tranquebar in 1624 brought from Denmark for Raghunatha Nayak two new and well polished bronze cannons and he presented them. Jesuits records in 1640 mention pieces of artillery of every caliber including one big cannon in the mouth of which one man could conveniently hold himself couchant.

The Nayaks in Tamil country maintained large number of foot soldiers. The most common armament of the soldiers was the javelin and the shield. There were archers armed with bows and arrows. The lances made of steel cast in the wootz process were used. The shields were made of cast iron. The Dutch East India Company records mention that Aravidu Rama Deva in October 1629 had 65,000 men at Tiruttani encampment. Aravidu Timmaraya in 1634 during his camp at Karunguli (near Chingleput) had 20,000 men. It is mentioned by Antão Proenca, the Jesuit that the Nayak of Thanjavur in 1656 had 40,000 footsoldiers.

Sriranga Raya III, the Vijayanagara ruler at Vellore in 1650 allied with the Thanjavur Nayak and he attacked the forts of Gingee and Madurai. His first step was the capture of Gingee, but Tirumalai Nayak of Madurai requested the Sultan of Bijapur to attack Vellore the capital city at that time in order to divert the attention of Sriranga Raya. The Bijapur Sultan therefore dispatched a large army and captured the fort of Vellore. Subsequently, the Madurai-Bijapur armies converged on Gingee and defeated the Vellore- Thanjavur forces. Eventually the Sultan of Bijapur succeeded and the defeat marked the end of the last direct line of Vijayanagar emperors.

The Nayak of Madurai in 1662 had 40,000 men. The Sethupathi ruler of Ramanathapuram in 1656 had 25,000 men. Pierre Martin, the Jesuit records in 1713 that the military had consisted of peasants and labourers. He states that all the villages in the Maravar country were assigned in return for a certain number of soldiers to be furnished to the king whenever he requested. The soldiers were mostly relatives and slaves cultivating the land who took arms when requested.

Portuguese mercenaries equipped with firearms were employed by the Nayak of Thanjavur and it is mentioned in Sahityaratanakara. Anotonio Boccaro the Portuguese chronicler in 1630s refers to Portuguese mercenaries employed in the army of the nayak of Thanjavur whom the ruler treated with great familiarity and they were allowed to sit down and also to wear hats in his presence.

The Soldiers in Military Service and Artillery in the Army of the Nayaks of Thanjavur and also under the Maratha Rulers

The ruler of Thanjavur had infantry, cavalry and elephant corps. Cannons were manufactured during the rule of Raghunatha Nayak (1600-1645) and they were used in war. A cannon manufactured in Thanjavur was put up inside the fort at the eastern gate and it still stands at the same location. This area is now a protected monument site of the Archaeological Survey of India. Sahitya Ratnakaram the Sanskrit text (vide slokas 15-20) composed during the rule of Raghunatha Nayak refers to the cannon that vomits fire through the pipe.

With regard to the description and design of the iron cannon of Thanjavur, it rests on three concrete supports on the ground, about 60 cm thick and 120 cm high and separated by 2.25 cm from each other. The cannon had been a muzzle (front end) loading type, wherein the gunpowder and the projectile object were loaded. It has 751.5 cm in length from end to mouth, including the 31.5 cm projection at the end of the barrel. The outside and inner diameters of the gun barrel are 93 cm and 63 cm, respectively. The distance from the fuse hole to the end of the barrel is 36 cm. The fuse hole represents the rear end of the hollow section of the cylindrical barrel. Counting the weight of additional supporting external rings, the minimum weight of the cannon adds to over 22 tons. The front end of the iron cannon indicates that there were a total of 39 iron strips, which had been folded out from inside the cannon. Each iron strip is about 1.5 cm thick and 5 cm in width. These iron staves continue longitudinally through the length of the inner bore of the cannon barrel.

At periodic intervals along the length of the cannon, additional external rings have been provided on the external surface of the cannon. These raised locations can be noticed. The iron cannon had not been cast, implying that the material of construction of the cannon is wrought iron. The cannon had been fabricated by forge welding, i.e., it has been manufactured by forging together rings of forge-welded iron. Forge welding has also been employed to join the layers of secondary and tertiary rings that further strengthened the entire structure.

The barrel of the cannon had to withstand the pressure of the exploding gunpowder as well as ensure the smooth passage of the cannon ball to reach its destination. The cannon had been divided into two distinct parts i.e., the chamber and the barrel. The construction of the main barrel and the method was that the long flat iron rods were placed longitudinally, over a mandrel, to produce the inner surface of the cannon barrel. These iron plates (staves) had been carefully pre-fabricated with iron rings, of the required dimensions. They were heated and placed over the staves such that the rings contracted on cooling and held the staves together. Usually, an additional one layer or two layers of rings were hooped over the first layer of rings

for further strengthening the barrel. The second layer of iron rings was placed such that the rings in this layer closed the gaps between the rings of the first layer. The rings of the third layer closed the gaps between the rings of the second layer. Thus the three layers had been noticed in the design of the cannon. The chamber and barrel of the cannon had been separately manufactured and later joined together. The material of construction was wrought iron and the method used to join the iron lumps and rings used in the fabrication of the cannon was forge welding. There is a minimum of 291 iron rings used in the construction of the cannon.

Saraba Raja Vilasam a literary text composed during the rule of Serfoji I (1711-1729) refers to cannon, the fire machine. The function of the large cannons were to protect the Thanjavur city in the eastern direction. The area is called Beerangi Medu (cannon-mound) in Tamil on which it was originally erected. It can be reached by climbing a flight of steps from the road level.

The cannons used by the artillery units were either made of iron or brass. It came in various calibres such as, 3, 6, 9, 12, 18, 24 and 32 pounders. Along with this, howitzers and mortars of various descriptions were also used. The native rulers paid attention on manufacturing cannons, gun-carriages and gunpowder. They had setup iron foundries for manufacturing cannons, shots and shells. Nicolau Manucci, the Italian traveller had mentioned that Europeans discharged cannon turning in all directions while the natives were not skilled so.

Tukkoji (1729-1735), the ruler of Thanjavur had encouraged Paraiyars in 1729 to join the army services and thereafter the Paraiyars emerged politically organized. This has been reported by the Danish-Halle missionaries of Tranquebar. In their opinion the Paraiyars had formed a very strong group by themselves linking with political necessities of the times with the corporate group of the right hand castes. This was mainly possible because they had become soldiers and generals in the army and through their accomplishments in war came to enjoy a respectable place.

It has been reported that Paraiyar males could voluntarily join military service as there was a heavy demand, irrespective of their inferior social background. Those who joined the army were also allowed to quit at any time. These details are mentioned by the Tranquebar missionaries. Further whenever there was an oversupply of army personnel, the Paraiyar soldiers were also occasionally released against their will. This has been also mentioned by the missionaries. There are instances of complaints of some Paraiyars about certain irregularities in military. It has been said that officers detained and kept, some portion of their salary, when the Paraiyars quit the army services voluntarily.

Documents mention several names of the Paraiyars in military services as soldiers and generals in Thanjavur and at Madevipattinam. Kallu Nayakkan (uncle

of Raayanayakkan, the Protestant Catechist) has been said to be a soldier. Later he became the general and official representative of Paraiyar community in Thanjavur. His position was disliked by his own caste members. They wrote complaints against him at times and reported their grievances to the military commander in Thanjavur.

Another important figure mentioned by the missionaries had been Rayanayakkan. He was posted as a Servaikaaran in Thanjavur. According to missionary records, his brother had gone to Ramanathapuram in 1727 where he joined the army of the Sethupathi ruler. He had participated in various campaigns against the ruler of Sivaganga. He was posted at various places like Sholavaram and Naalukottai. Thus members of various Paraiyar families and their relatives had entered into army services.

War and the Assistance Given by the Dutch and Danes to the Army of the Raja of Thanjavur

The countryside of Thanjavur was in troubles in 1759, occasioned by some Paalayakarars making an inroad. Manoji, the army general of the Raja went against them leaving behind only about 600 or 700 hundred horses in the city besides some footsoldiers. The news was reported to the English Governor in Madras.

Great quantities of arms were supplied to Thanjavur by the Dutch in Nagapattinam. The regular correspondence between them had also developed. The Danish military official from Tranquebar had arrived to train and discipline the army of Thanjavur in western style.

The Tamil diary of Rangappa Thiruvengadam Pillai of Pondicherry contains a wealth of information on the sale and purchase of muskets. The Komuti merchants in Pondicherry invested their funds and were trading in Thanjavur. It has been reported on 19th July 1763 that 444 muskets were purchased under the orders of the Raja of Thanjavur by Seshachala Chetti and Gurumurthy Chetti and these were sold to the raja. It is mentioned that the king had allotted muskets for each Simai region in his kingdom. Eighteen additional guns were taken by them and they were sold to the Raja at Thanjavur.

The Supply of Horses, Foot Soldiers and Food Provisions to the English during the War made by the Raja of Thanjavur, 1755-1767.

The English Company in Madras keenly observed the developments in Thanjavur region and the English Governor of Madras sent Mr. Palk to Thanjavur in October 1755 who successfully persuaded Pratapa Singh Raja (1739-1763) to send an army of 3,000 horses and 2,000 men under Manoji, the army general. This army reached Tiruchirappalli in July and it was of great help to the allies in successfully

withstanding the French assault. Meanwhile the raja also had sent food provisions for two months to Tiruchirappalli.

The Raja came to be much disturbed by the attack on Thanjavur in 1758 by Comte de Lally, the French commander of Pondicherry. In the next year (1759) he spared 600 horses for the assistance of besieged Madras, and Pigot, the English Governor had profusely thanked and acknowledged him for timely help. The forces of Thanjavur had continued to take part in the military operations and the English Governor himself in his letter to the raja dated 6 December, 1763 acknowledged raja's continued assistance.

In January 1764, Tulajaji II (1763-1787), the Raja of Thanjavur was approached for military help by the English. In answer to a letter written by the English he mentioned that a body of his horse had always attended the army of the company in expeditions. On 19th March the Nawab informed the English Governor of his scheme for dispersing the rebels in Tirunelveli. He observed that 300 horses from the raja of Thanjavur had arrived at Madurai. In a letter dated 25th April 1764 from the English Governor to the Raja it was again confirmed that 300 Thanjavur horses had joined the British Forces.

The English approached for military help and the raja of Thanjavur responded well. In his letter dated 1st October 1767 to the English Council he mentioned that 1200 horses had already crossed the Kaveri river and were ready to join the English army. This assistance, though had been very quick and encouraging, it did not prove of immediate value because of the heavy rains. The British army went into the cantonment at Tiruchirappalli, but the Raja was asked to keep his horses ready there. The English always sought the assistance only in the form of cavalry from the raja in wars. His sepoys were considered of little service and use. The soldiers were ordered to be sent to the area of the paalayakarar of Udaiyar palayam to maintain law and order there.

In February 1767, the Madras Council requested the Raja to furnish 4000 horses to fight against Hyder Ali. The position of the Raja at that time in February 1767, the Madras Council requested the Raja to furnish was made a difficult one. He reluctantly supplied cavalry in 1768. As a result Hyder Ali had remained posed for an attack on Thanjavur. However the situation was thwarted through payment of money and supply of provisions in early 1769.

The Payments Made by the English to the Raja of Thanjavur for Raising the Cavalry and Infantry, 1749-1775.

To enable Shahji the ruler to raise a body of troops from among his countrymen in April 1749, the English company lent him Rs. 5,500. The English East India

Company was militarily weak in Tamil country and it disbursed revenues to strategic groups outside its direct control when it hoped to wage successful wars. It could not afford to be discriminating in its choice of servitors. Any local ruler who could provide armed contingents or transport services had been welcomed into the fold. By becoming an additional source of patronage for armed warriors, the English Company also contributed to the militarisation and fragmentation of local Tamil society. The potential political and social problems that would result from such a policy were hunted to one side as the English Company officials directed all concerns towards toppling a rival ruler who posed a direct threat to their security.

On 3rd August 1749, Chanda Sahib defeated and killed Anwaruddin at the battle of Ambur. After the victory, Chanda Sahib with the assistance of the French attacked Thanjavur and demanded that the Raja pay a large sum of money as compensation for the expenses incurred during the war.

It became necessary for the raja to assign a portion of land for the maintenance of his troops and also for providing military stores. No greater a portion of revenues had to be assigned to the English Company. The Raja felt absolutely necessary for the support of his garrison. But if any unforeseen circumstances rendered, such revenue was found to be inadequate. The Raja decided to cause payment of the troops from his other resources. Thanjavur was given pride of place among the English Company's allies. It was decided that the Raja's proportional share of the cost of war should be one fifth of the whole amount of the military expenditure.

The Debts of the Raja of Thanjavur through Military Expense

The Raja of Thanjavur had been styled as friend and ally of the Carnatic in the treaty of 1769 with Hyder Ali. It was in this manner he was reduced to the position of a petty vassal, with no army and little revenue. The Raja was forced to incur heavy expenses by the English towards military and supplies to be made to the company. He therefore entered into debts. He was compelled in 1787 to agree to pay a sum of Rs. 60,000 annually towards the liquidation of his debts to individuals. The claims included to Alexander Brody 99,254 Star Pagodas, Duncan Baine with 30,000 Star Pagodas, Sir George Ramsay with 20,000 Star Pagodas, Colonel Maclellan with 72,000 Star Pagodas, Major Burrows with 26,000 Star Pagodas and Mr. Whyte with 4,706 Star Pagodas. It was agreed at that time that the interest on the above claims should be fixed at 12 per cent per annum. There was at that time interest already due for four to five years. The total amount was Four lakh at that time and the Raja agreed to pay an annual sum of Rs. 60,000 towards the interest and the liquidation of the principal sums.

War and the Sufferings of the People in the Kingdom of Thanjavur

Christian Frederick Swartz, the Danish Missionary mentioned that during the rule, the difficulties of the people of Thanjavur were greater, and consequently there was a large emigration of people for want of food and work. The scarcity of food and shortage of employment drove many people out of the country. Swartz also records that as famine was so great, and of so long continuance, those affected had been by it seemed beyond reach. A vigorous and strong man was scarcely to be met with. Hyder Ali had carried off so many thousands of people as captives, and that many thousands have died of want, it was not at all surprising to find not only empty houses, but also desolated villages. All these had added to the general distress of the people of Thanjavur. The price of rice per kalam rose from to time over the years as follows.

Year	Price in Rupees, Anna and Paise
1789	0-9-4
1790	0-8-3
1791	0-10-0
1792	0-11-3

Horses continued to play an important role in military of Thanjavur. It is interesting to note that Aswa sastra (the science of horses) was also compiled in Marathi by Salihotra during the rule of Serfoji II (1777- 1832), the ruler of Thanjavur

The Nawab of Arcot and His Army

The Mughals achieved the political and the economic autonomy through the territory emerged during the period from 1698 to 1801. The capital appointment of governors at the capital of Arcot. Later independent rulers became an attractive destination for Sufis, poets, scholars, administrators, artisans and military men under Sadatullah Khan, who was appointed subadar in Carnatic in 1710.

The Nawab rulers at Arcot maintained a large troop of foot soldiers. They also had trained sepoys used in cavalry. These sepoys in the native armies had advantages. They were on the spot, cheap, and acclimatized. The only question remained was whether they could be conditioned to the much more exacting discipline levels necessary to make them inter changeable with European troops in the line and also whether under alien European command they could be relied on to be fully committed in fighting fellow natives.

The First Carnatic War (1744-1748), the Second Carnatic War (1749- 1754) and other wars necessitated the import of horses on a large scale for the army, Mohammed Ali, the Nawab of Arcot purchased elephants at Tirupati that came via overland route from Rajasthan in north India since 1761.

The native superiority in cavalry had been mentioned often in English records. It had been stated that it could at times severely damage the English. The native cavalry had been divided into two categories such as Askar (national/regular) and Silhadar (mercenary/ irregular). In the first instance the Government owned the horses and supplied and it paid the riders. In the latter case, the horses were the property of the mercenary captains or the individual mercenary soldiers. The Government paid a monthly salary to these captains and paid for the loss of a horse while it was in service.

The Madras Military Committee on 24th December, 1765 said that the Nawab of Arcot became daily more dependent on the English company. The sepoys in his pay for want of discipline and proper officers, were of no other use than to assist the collecting of the revenues which obliged him to rely entirely on the English forces and protection.

Raising the Cavalry and the Debts of the Nawab of Arcot, 1777

The Nawab of Arcot became indebted to the English for a large amount of money during the course of the Carnatic wars. The debt in 1760-1761 was Rs. 22,25,373 and in 1761-1762 it was Rs. 25,98,801.

The Nawab continued to borrow funds and the cavalry loan taken by him in 1777 illustrates the fraudulent methods adopted by the English company officials who were the creditors. In order to discharge the arrears of pay to his cavalry detachment before he disbanded it, the Nawab contracted a debt for the sum of £160,000 from Taylor, Majendie and John Call, the three servants of the English Company. When the time came for actual payment by the creditors, the Nawab was told that as there was no ready money available, the creditors would make the payment in four months time. The Nawab managed somehow to pacify his soldiers with this promise.

Two years later (1779), the amount had not still been handed over to the Nawab. The interest on the loan went on mounting. The rate of interest was fixed at 12 per cent per annum. According to Edmund Burke, it computed at 20 to 24 per cent per annum in reality. On the promise of payment, the Nawab delivered up the revenues of some districts. The creditors had not begun the payment until after four months. They did not actually do so until after two years. Thus it is evident at first that their payments to the Nawab were made from the revenue. They received by assignment from the Nawab himself. Secondly, that the revenues drawn had been considerably greater than the amount originally lent. The Nawab received complaints from the Amildars of the assigned districts that the creditors had collected all the revenue. The section of troops of those whose salaries were to be disbursed from the revenues

of that particular province had been mutinying as they had not received their pay for seven or eight months.

The Ministerial Board added the arrears of 12 percent per year interest accumulated between 1777 and 1784. This made a new capital amount of £ 294,000 (from the old of £160,000) upon which they charged a new interest of 12 per cent per year. All this happened in respect of a transaction in which not a single rupee had in reality been advanced. The graphic description of this debt had been that bond was paid by bond. Arrear was returned into new arrear. Usury engendered new usury. Mutiny suspended in one place, started up in another place. All revenues and establishments were entangled into one inextricable knot of confusion from which they were only disengaged by being entirely destroyed.

Edmund Burke unveiled the profession of money- lending whereby the Englishmen with no property took whole provinces in mortgage, to make princes their debtors, and to become creditors for millions. He quoted from a letter written by an eyewitness stationed in Madras to the whole fraud. He mentioned that the English Governor was the cash-keeper, generally on good terms with the banker, who managed matters. The English Governor pressed Mohammed Ali the Nawab for the balance due from him; the Nawab flied to his banker for relief, the banker engaged to pay the money and granted his notes accordingly, which he put in the cashbook as ready money; the Nawab paid him an interest for it at three per cent per month, till the Tunkaws (an assignment on the revenue on land in favour of an individual) he granted on the particular districts for it were paid. Matters in the meantime. were so managed that there was no call for this money for the English Company's service till the Tunkaws became due. By this means, not a single rupee was advanced by the banker though he received a heavy interest from the Nawab of Arcot, which was divided as lawful spoil.

The Mutinous Sepoys in the Military of the Nawab of Arcot Demanding the Arrears of Pay, 1790

The Nawab of Arcot did not have the military means to bring the Paalaykaarars to heel. The state did not have a bureaucratic structure that could regulate the routine system of tax collection. Arcot's own sepoys refused to protect the Nawab unless he paid their wages on a regular basis. Resentments occasionally boiled over and in 1790 mutinous sepoys assembled outside the Nawab's residence and they demanded their arrears. The British were forced to dispatch troops to defuse the situation. After tense negotiations, those who agreed to lay down their arms were offered employment in the English Company's service.

Several months later another mutiny occurred with 400 troops surrounding the Nawab palace at Chepauk. Lieutenant-colonel George Campbell, the commander of Nawabi forces, attempted to disperse the mutineers. In the course of a heated exchange, he drew his sword and provoked the sepoys into attacking the palace. In the ensuing scuffle, the Nawab's own son was wounded in the arm. The mutineers later dispersed of their own accord when the British promised to make up their arrears in pay.

War and the Sufferings of the People

The English company finally paid £294,000. The Carnatic region was destroyed by the war with Hyder Ali in 1767-1769. The resulting depression was heightened by the nawab's inability to honour his promises to clear debts, resulting in an increase in revenue assignments. The smaller merchant creditors had large amounts locked up in bonds for which they could neither raise money nor sell, except at a heavy discount.

It is said that on top of all this, the Second Mysore War broke out in 1780 and it lasted for four years. Prices were so dear and people had no money to buy. There was no appearance or hopes of good times. In early 1782, David Young wrote, that no merchant had provisions either in his shop or at stores. People could not buy rice or any kind of grain. If at all it was sold anywhere at a price, there was no ready money.

The policies of Nawab Mohammad Ali Walajah(1749-1795) during the rule of 46 years had mainly aimed to absorbing subordinate vassals and imposed streamlined forms of revenue collection upon the populace. His decision to move his court in 1766 from Arcot to a lavish residence at Chepauk near Madras marked a symbolic turn in the development of the Arcot state. The employees and attendees of the royal court now found themselves in closer proximity to English officers and institutions potentially in need of their services.

British Warfare and Expansion: Resistance and the Army of the Paalayakarars in Southern Tamil Nadu.

The Paalayakarars had always enlisted the support of soldiers in their struggle against the Circar authority or Circar revenue agents and governors of the nawab of Arcot. Resentment towards the Nawab was one of the main issues that united nearly all Paalayakaarars in the Carnatic. Lacking an efficient army and bureaucracy, the Nawab resorted to demanding arbitrary financial contributions from local chiefs. Warrior elites protested by contending that they owed him no allegiance. A weak state demanding tribute from local strong men who jealously guarded their prerogatives resulted in perennial disorder. Chieftains were particularly prone to revolt in time of

war as the English Company regiments streamed out of the province to shore up the frontlines. The collector of Tirunelveli wrote that Paalaykaarars openly expropriated land, stole crops, and extorted protection money from cultivators.

Food Supplies Made by Some Palayakaarars to the English Army, 1782

The Military Department Services of the English East India Company were heavily dependent on some Paalayakaarars for maintaining food supplies in 1782. But the native chiefs seldom fulfilled the promises they made regarding procurements when English Company forces were found wanting in the battlefield. A victorious army marching through palayams was usually met by Paalayakaarar delegations proclaiming their submission to British authority in exchange for protection and the confirmation of existing privileges. Sir Eyre Coote did not care to know the details of the Paalayakaarar past allegiances. His main concern was to associate them with the English Company war effort for the duration of hostilities and thus augment military forces at his disposal. Lord Macartney the English governor of Madras (1781- 1785) had fully backed Coote on this issue. He also mentioned that everything seemed at stake, and it was not the time to dispute upon the rights of the Paalayakaarars.

Gifts Sent to Some Palayakaarars by the English Company, 1791.

The rights and privileges of some Paalayakaarars came to be protected in exchange for military service rendered to the English company during the wars. Cornwallis dispatched Alexander Read as his personal envoy to hammer out the details of particular arrangements made in the Dharmapuri and Salem areas. Alexander Read presented gifts such as shawls, pistols, and cloth to prominent chieftains as a sign of respect. He turned over the weapons and grain stocks found in a captured fort to a local Paalayakaarar who had induced its surrender. He also granted the chieftain temporary exemption from all financial contributions made to the English company in Madras. The Paalaykaarar in exchange agreed to garrison the fort jointly with English Company sepoys and provided the British with a consignment of livestock for the transport of military supplies.

Cornwallis took the side of local chiefs of Tirunelveli area when revenue officials pressed them too hard. When some Paalayakaaras in Tirunelveli resisted the exactions of British Collector, Cornwallis called for an inquiry into the conduct of the English Company officials. He claimed that he had never known Paalayakaarars to resort to violent resistance unless they had just cause.

The officials that provoked the discontent erroneously saw the dispatch of sepoys as the only solution to their problems. Cornwallis stated that even if the

Paalayakaarars were found guilty of shirking their obligations, he would still recommend the most lenient measures should possibly be adopted without betraying too much weakness on the part of the English Company.

Transport Bullocks Arranged for the Supply of Food Provisions to the English Army during War by the Collector of Tirunelveli, 1792

The English Company officials in Madras were fully convinced that the best way to dispatch supplies and protect minor posts was through a system of conventional forces. Confirming the rights and privileges of petty chiefs was the only way to obtain essential services. The Paalayakaarars of Tirunelveli in 1792 proved a constant source of irritation because they seized the livestock of local inhabitants only to restore them in return for ransom.

The absence of English Company troops during campaigns was felt by the Paalayakaarars, an ideal opportunity to increase raids on agrarian communities. When the levels of English company forces were reduced after the peace treaty of 1792, a number of unemployed troops even entered the ranks of the Paalayakaarars. The collector of Tirunelveli at that time managed to procure Pothi Maadu (transport bullocks) from this region by offering its chieftains the right price for the supply of bullocks.

Kattabomman Nayak and the Destruction of Panchalamkurichi Fort by the English, 1798-1801.

The English Company often had only itself to blame for instigating Paalayakaarar insurrections. This was particularly the case with Kattabomman Nayak, who long resisted British efforts to exact tribute from his domains. In 1798, he had been compelled to follow William Jackson, then the collector of Paalaykaarar peshkash, for 23 days on a progress through the palayams of lesser chiefs. When Kattabomman arrived at Ramanathapuram, he had been convinced it was the collector's intention to imprison him. Upon attempting to escape, a fight took place in which one of Kattabomman's attendants killed an European lieutenant. Kattabomman had then submitted himself to the English Company and an inquiry was held, which acquitted him of the murder. Yet, being held responsible for the conduct of his attendant, he was obliged to pay an annuity to the widow of the officer.

In 1799, Kattabomman was accused of refusing to attend the collector, delaying the discharge of his Peshkash, and making war on other local paalaykaarars. After protracted resistance and intrigue, he was betrayed to the British by the neighbouring Paalayakaarar Thondaiman. Kattabomman was hanged on 16th October 1799 in the presence of all the English company dignitaries of Tirunelveli district at Kayathaar.

The efforts made by the English to reduce Panchalamkurichi fort in Tirunelveli district were particularly bloody. After the first assault failed, reinforcements were dispatched under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Agnew. Thousands of rebels and civilians attempted to escape when the walls of the fort were finally breeched, but the English company cavalry and Ettaiyapuram peons had been posted to intercept them. While these contingents were unable to entirely halt the mass flight, they marked their course with slaughter, till their ammunition was exhausted, and their horses were fatigued with exertion.

The peons from Ettaiyapuram were commended for their zeal. 450 people were killed within the fort and 600 were be headed while attempting to escape in 1801. Patrick Agnew made active overtures to the Palayakaarar of Thondaiman for assistance. While there were a number of hardy veterans among the native infantry, the vast majority of sepoys under his command had only recently been inducted and were consequently of poor quality.

The Escape of Paalayakkarar Prisoners from Palayamkottai Fort and the Methods of Suppression by the English, 1800-1801

A major insurrection broke out in Tirunelveli when 14 Paalayakaarar prisoners who were the relatives of late Kattabomman Nayak escaped from the fort at Palayamkottai. Lax security procedures had allowed them to abscond. The servants who had acted as go betweens for the imprisoned and several of their clients who had gathered outside the fort had assisted in the break-out. The prisoners had successfully appealed to have their leg irons removed. A party of Paalayakaarars entered the fort disguised as coolies, bringing horses for the principal captives. During the escape, several guards were wounded and their firearms were taken.

Once free, the Paalaykaarars establishedthemselves in the Vallanadu hills nearby, before they could be overtaken by parties sent in pursuit. The insurgents engaged in widespread pillage and murdered locals who had served the English company since the death of Kattabomman. They based their operations in Panchalamkurichi fort, a stronghold whose walls were defended by thick thorn hedges. British officials had assumed that a number of other forts had been demolished during Bannerman's expedition. These forts had remained in a serviceable state. Orders to destroy such fortified positions had been neglected or ignored.

After establishing themselves at Panchalamkurichi, the insurgents proceeded to plunder the countryside of all the horses they could find. The British commanders realized that if the insurgency could be contained to a fixed location, like the fort of Panchalamkurichi, it could be eventually crushed. But if the insurgents managed

to gather enough horses, they could form flying columns and this would mean a protracted conflict against small, highly the Tirunelveli district, calling on them to provide men and arms, but not all mobile groups. The insurgents had sent out emissaries to other chieftains in Paalayakaarars were sympathetic to this appeal.

The Paalayakaarar of Ettaiyapuram, for instance, immediately professed his loyalty to the English company and agreed to provide assistance in any manner he could, albeit in part for his own reasons. However, allowing a warrior to openly bear arms, no matter how well-disposed he was to British rule, went against the general British policy of disarmament. But circumstances dictated a different approach.

Weapons Supplied to the Paalayakaarar of Ettaiyapuram by the English and the Methods of Suppressing the Native Chieftains, 1801

Lushington, one of the palayakaarar most vociferous critics, agreed that the great state of disorder in 1801 necessitated accepting aid from whichever quarter it came. A number of pikes were even dispatched from English company stores to Ettaiyapuram. However these weapons were as much for the Palayakaarar's defence as for offensive operations. The Paalayakaarar of Ettaiyapuram had little choice but to side with the English company because his previous demonstrations of loyalty to it had so antagonized Kattabomman Nayak's family that he would have been in great danger without English company protection.

British officials were careful to note in their communications with him that the weapons were to be returned once hostilities had ended. Moreover, the very fact that they assisted in arming his peons obligated him to continue his loyal service to ensure the protection of himself and his family. The British sent out parties of sepoys to act in conjunction with the Paalayakaarar's peons to halt any potential march by the insurgents on the Ettaiyapuram frontier. They would also interdict any arms and ammunition that might be transported through Ettaiyapuram to insurgents in the vicinity.

Even after the revolt in Tirunelveli had been suppressed, the Company retained the services of 600 Ettaiyapuram peons to guard army baggage on the march and for minor security operations, which allowed regular troops to be posted in the more disturbed areas. While the Ettaiyapuram Paalayakaarar stated that a reduction of his kists (instalments) would have been adequate compensation, British officials insisted that his peons would receive batta (field pay) for their services. The Ettaiyapuram Paalayakaarar peons continued to provide service in policing the countryside, guarding convoys of supplies and dispersing small parties of insurgents throughout 1801. The Paalayakaarar of Ettaiyapuram had renegotiated his relationship with the colonial state in order to perpetuate the privileges.

Paalayakaarars: Men and Weapons Described

The Native Warriors and Kaavalkarars under the Paalayakarars had indulged in warfare against the British. Subradeepa Kavirayar in his Kulappa Nayakkan Kaathal, the Tamil literary source of eighteenth century mentions Kundu Tunrun Kuzhlal (bullet that came from hollow pipe, musket) used in the region of Nilakottai in Ramanathapuram area. It is reported in English company records that the native chieftains commonly used bow and arrow, swords and lances. Among other weapons were daggers, pikes or bamboo spears, iron spears eighteen to twenty feet long. Clay-pellets, prepared by mixing the white of the egg with clay, served the purpose of bullets.

They used a peculiar weapon called Valaithadi (boomerang) which looked like a crescent shaped while one end of the weapon was heavy and the other edge was sharp. It was made of some hard grained wood or of iron. It measured about twenty four inches along the outer curve and eighteen inches along the arch. The Kaavalakarars held the weapon by the lighter end and hurled it with tremendous force against the enemy.

A whirling motion, imparted to the weapon, brought it back to the spot from where it was thrown unless it got stuck on its victim. Thus the traditional weapons were only used by the paalayakarars in battles while the English company used the well trained soldiers with the most sophisticated and modern weapons against the local powers.

It is reported that the native field army of 20,000 men fighting its own forces (6,700 men) in the Carnatic war of 1767-1769, judged the native infantry as the best among the country armies, to be no match for the English Company while only 4,000 of 12,000 cavalry were up to fighting a pitched battle, the other 8,000 being mercenary marauders capable only of foraging and harassing an enemy on the march. It is also mentioned that the armies of the native rulers were usually paid for only ten months of the year, and many peasant soldiers went home during the rains to cultivate their plots. The allied Carnatic armies were far too large for the funding available, either because state revenues simply could not support them, or because corruption in public finances filtered off so much money before it got to the soldiers.

The Paalayakaarars in 1801 were given fixed places of residence and the right to enjoy their landed property and social privileges by the English company. Minor chieftains who had allied with the British allowed to retain a greater number of armed peons than the more important Paalayakaarars. Such actions had reduced the potential threat to British power from more powerful warrior chiefs in the

future, while concentrating arms in the hands of groups that had less potential to organize widespread resistance. Azim ud Daula ascended the throne of Arcot and on 31.07.1801, he was compelled to sign the treaty of Carnatic by handing over the civil and military administration of the Carnatic to the English Company.

To conclude it may be mentioned that remaining very ignorant of the complexities of wars fought by the native rulers against the westerners in the early modern age is important to note. Some may opine that it is not likely to yield any benefit to society. The rulers of Tamil country did not blindly imitate the European military system but attempted, creatively, a selective assimilation of western elements of warfare. Their aim was to supplement traditional weapons with partial Europeanization of the forces under their control. The westernization programme of the Europeans had put a heavy strain on the economies of the rulers of the Tamil region and this was very true for the Nawab of Arcot and the Raja of Thanjavur.

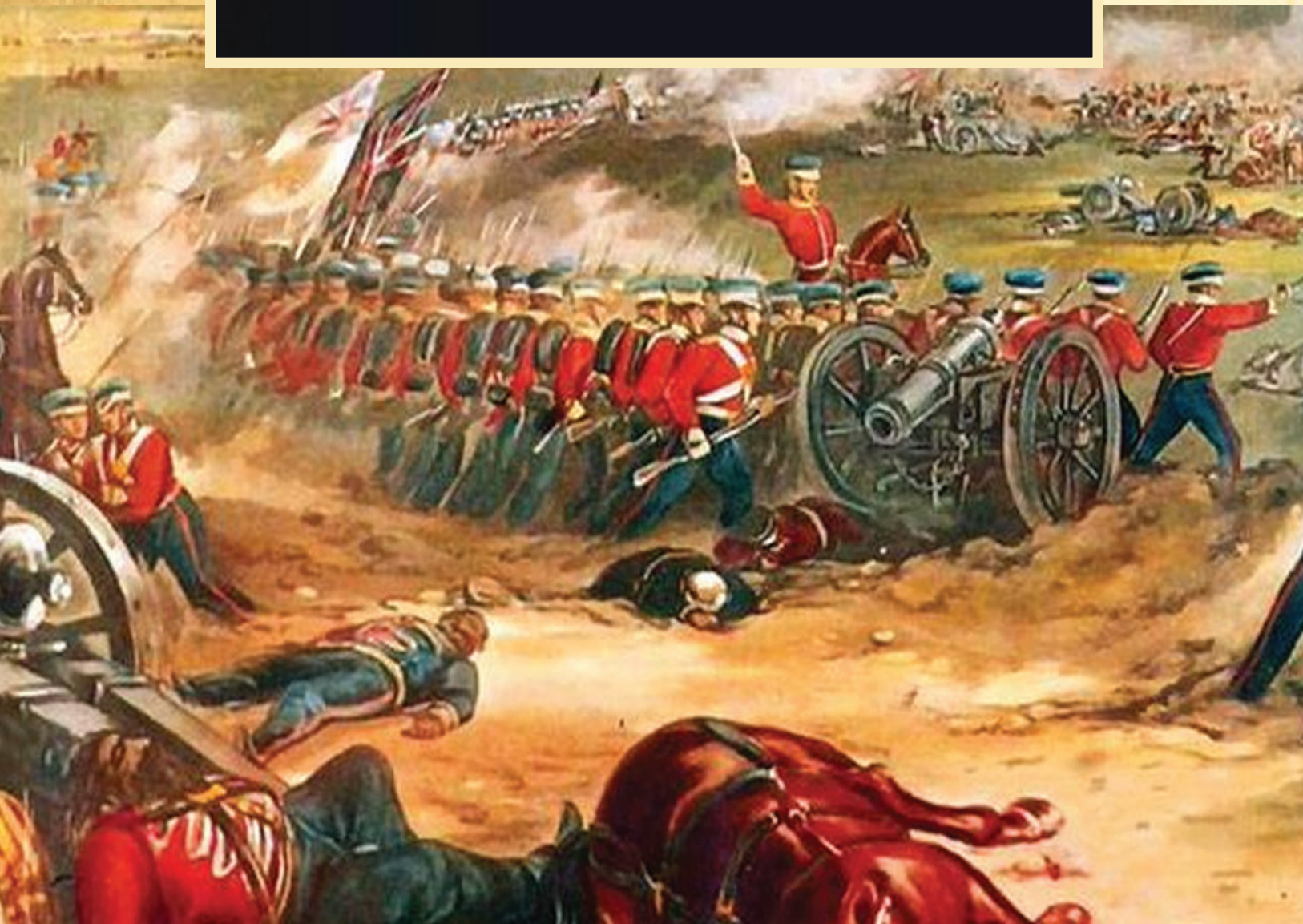
However, the principal problems were political and military. The native rulers were on the right track in maintaining irregular cavalry, which increased the operational reach of their armies, but failed to use it properly. They should have conducted both the Western and Tamil methods of warfare simultaneously. Pillage and plunder of the English Company settlements and territories would have reduced the English Company's intake of land revenue and this would have forced definitely the English company to stop the battles and wars. The native rulers of Tamil country failed to realize the importance of Western style cavalry and horse artillery for conducting pitched battles.

The soldiers of Tamil country had solemn attachment, affinity, and devotion to their kings. They sacrificed and died for a great cause in the battles, to defend their leader. They had an immediate and ultimate mission to perform and were fully aware of their mission. Being soldiers they were proud and earned dignity and had qualities of valour and courage. The relationship between the soldier and their leader was one of personal feeling of belonging to each other. Warfare affected production, trade and welfare of the people.

Deserted villages and depopulation appeared in rural Tamil country in the age of European expansion on a large scale compared to the previous periods. The use of hand held firearms and artillery in a systematic manner among the native rulers in Tamil country had occurred only as a reaction to the threat posed by the English company from the 1740s. This in a way might be categorized as firepower centric warfare, which was characterized by battles and sieges dominated by the use of firepower.

The rise of this new warfare resulted in spread of gunpowder technologies and transformation. The English company's superior fiscal system enabled it to maintain costly capital intensive armies and the native rulers of the Tamil region failed to build up a professional officer corps devoted to their cause. A lesson of history is that any society lagging in technology suffers collapse unless it is able to overcome the technological lag.





TAMIL NADU'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE





1

A Concise History of the Freedom Struggle in Tamil Nadu

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In the Indian freedom struggle, the role of Tamil Nadu was unique. In this great event, following the footsteps of Veerapandia Kattabomman, Pooli Thevar, Marudhu brothers and other patriots, Paalayakaarars rendered great sacrifices for their regions. Leaders like V.O.Chidambaram, Subramaniya Bharathiyar, Vanchi Iyer, Subramania Siva, Varadarajulu Naidu, E.V.R. Periyar, Sathyamurti, Captain Lakshmi, Ambujammal, Anjalai Ammal, Rajaji, Kamaraj and many others kindled the patriotic spirit of the people and sacrificed their lives not only for Tamil Nadu but also for the entire country. Regional patriotism in the late eighteenth century became strong nationalism later in a broader sense and it spread to other regions. Regional independence was not the goal of the later leaders and people. However, the nation's independence was their noble aim. For this, the patriots of Tamil Nadu already sowed the seeds.

The Poligar Rebellion (1799)

Tamil Nadu has the hoary tradition of fighting for justice, rights, and freedom. True to the tradition, the people of Tamil Nadu rose in revolt when the English East India Company threatened and violated their cherished rights. The Company's excessive direct control over the poligars provoked the Poligar Rebellion. *Puli Thevar* was a great revolutionary leader, born in the Tirunelveli District, which was the Southern part of the Pandiya kingdom. He was an incomparable warrior, who ruled over one of the Nayak kingdoms with Nerkkattan seval as his head quarters. Pooli Thevar is regarded as the first ruler who sowed the seed to expel foreigners from the native land.



The Poligar Rebellion was spearheaded by *Jagavira Pandiya Kattabomman*, Poligar of Panchalamkurichi. Kattabomman was a conscientious, god-fearing, law-abiding subject with a strong sense of duty, dignity, and discipline. Stung by the harshness, rashness, and ruthlessness of Collector Jackson, he had an interview with the Collector at Ramanathapuram on 19 September 1798 and escaped with his brother Oomathurai and his minister Sivasubramania Pillai. Encouraged and supported by Marudhu Pandiyan of Sivaganga, Kattabomman extended his help to the latter to rise against the British. The Madras Council viewed his move as a challenge to its authority. Once at the instruction of the Governor General Lord Wellesley, Major Banmerman mounted an assault on Panchalamkurichi Fort on 5 September. He pursued the rebel and due to the betrayal of Poligar of Pudukkottai, Kattabomman was captured, tried, and hanged to death at Kayattar on 17 October 1799. He was the first martyr of Indian Freedom Struggle.

South Indian Rebellion (1800 - 1801)

The South Indian Rebellion of 1800-1801 represented a violent reaction against the surrender of the rulers to the British and the loss of freedom. As a result of

diplomacy, intimidation, and wars, the aliens established their sway over the land. The horrors that attended to the growth of imperialism spread a wave of revulsion and led the inhabitants towards a united action. The outbreak of the Rebellion marked the climax of a determined endeavour, made by the common people of South India to free themselves from the British yoke and to forestall the fall of the rest of India under European authority, so that all the inhabitants of the land, as the rebels declared, could live "in constant happiness without tears". Marudhu Pandiyars of Sivaganga, Gopala Nayak of Dindigul, Khan-i-jah Khan of Coimbatore, Kerala Varma of Malabar, Krishnappa Nayak of Mysore, and Dhondaji Waug of Maharashtra, who organised a formidable confederacy for the overthrow of British rule, spearheaded the movement. They held a conspiracy at Virupatchi near Palani and rose in arms with an attack on Coimbatore on 3 June 1800. The insurrection spread over an extensive region from Sholapur in the north to Nanguneri in the far south. In this great struggle, the Tamils played the most remarkable role.



In May 1801, the Rebellion spread to the Northern provinces. Uniting themselves with every disaffected chief and drawing together all the inhabitants of their Districts, Marudhu Pandiyar and his allies assembled a powerful force. They proclaimed Muthu Karuppa Thevar as the ruler of Ramanathapuram and reduced the forts of Tirupatore, Natham, Melur, and Tirumelur to submission. Led by the chiefs, Melappan and Puttur, the insurgents established their sway over the Marava territory. In control of a long coastline, they employed large boats to bring supplies of grain, arms, and ammunition from Lanka and other territories through the port of Tondi. In July, Oomathurai commanded his followers to Palayanad near Madurai and captured it. The armed columns of Sivaganga and Ramanathapuram under the command of Sevatha Thambi, son of Marudhu Pandiyar, marched to Thanjavur. With the peasants voluntarily rallying to rebel ranks, they occupied Pattukkottai and established their posts at Arandangy and Adiarkudi. All the rebels made a common cause against the English. Their unity of purpose rendered a determined resistance. Aimed at the harassment of the enemy, the insurgents cut off communications, destroyed forts, took shelter in thick jungles, and depended on guerrilla tactics. By

their rapid and irregular movements, they laid waste the entire country, but eluded the pursuit of regular troops with ease. The British forces could neither obtain provisions nor establish their posts in security. In consequence, they found themselves constantly exposed to the assault by the rebels.

The principal rebels faced execution. Marudhu Pandiyar, the popular leader of the rebels, together with his gallant brother Vella Marudhu, was executed on the ruins of the fort of Tirupatore on the 24 of October 1801. Among the multitude, who faced their last day at the same spot were Sevatha Thambi and Sivagnanam - the sons of Marudhu Pandiyar, Karutha Thambi and Molly Kutty Thambi - the sons of Vella Marudhu, Muthuswamy - the young son of Sevatha Thambi and Muthukaruppa Thevar - styled the rajah of Ramanathapuram and the Poligar of Kadalkudi.

In fact, the vindictive Englishmen hanged grandfathers, sons and grandsons together in common gibbet. The head of Marudhu Pandiyar was severed and taken to Kalayarkoil, while the body was buried at Tirupatore - now in the Scottish Mission compound. Oomathurai and Sevathaiah were taken to Panchalamkurichi and beheaded in November. 73 of the principal rebels were condemned to perpetual banishment. Among them was Vengam Peria Woday a Thevar of Sivaganga, Bomma Nayak of Verappur, Dalaway Kumaraswamy Nayak of Panchalamkurichi, and Duraiswamy, the son of Marudhu Pandiyar.



The Rebellion of 1800-1801 was organised with the predetermined motive of destroying British imperialism. It spread over an extensive region and assumed the proportions of a mass movement. This South Indian Rebellion is claimed to be the First War of Indian Independence.

Vellore Rebellion (1806)

Undaunted by the suppression of the South Indian Rebellion, the rebels had shifted their theatre of revolt to Vellore. They regrouped themselves in strength, established contact with the disgruntled sepoys, conspired against the English, and on 13 July 1806 revolted against the Company rule. The sepoys were particularly incensed by the racist regulations. Hindus were prohibited from wearing religious marks on their foreheads. Similarly, Muslims were required to shave their beard and trim their moustache. At one stroke, both Hindu and Muslim sepoys were antagonized. Worse still, the revolting soldiers were sent to Fort St. George and two of them were given 900 lashes each and their services were terminated. 19 soldiers were given 500 lashes each and forced to seek pardon for their actions. The physically and psychologically wounded sepoys were more than willing to join the rebels to rise against the inhuman and insensitive alien rule. Though the Vellore Rebellion was repressed, it is regarded as a rehearsal on a small scale to the major rebellion of 1857, which is considered the Second War of Indian Independence.

Pre-Congress Political Associations

Thanks to its geographical location, its status as the Capital of the Presidency and the initial impact of European Civilisation, the educated elite of Madras played a prominent part in the formation of political associations in the latter half of the 19th Century. The landlords, rich merchants and service-minded savants of the Presidency, with their intellectual clout, social status, and inclination to articulate their interests and that of the people, came forward to form the Madras Native Association (1852), the Theosophical Society (1882) and the Madras Mahajana Sabha (1884). Besides these major political formations, the Muslims of Madras established the Madras Branch of the Central National Mohammedan Association of Bengal (1883). Similarly, the Madras Christians formed the National Church with the view of asserting their identity, free from the control of the European Mission artist.

The organisation of the Madras Mahajana Sabha in 1884 was of major significance in the history of the national movement. It made constitutional reform as of its principal objective and launched a programme aimed at the political education of the people. Before long, however, its activity was merged into the Indian National Congress. Rangaiah Naidu and G.Subramania Iyer, the prominent figures of the

Mahajana Sabha, associated themselves with the Congress. At its third session held at Madras in 1887, the Congress Party too recognised the need for the political education of the people and accordingly, it set up local committees. Moreover, it demanded administrative and constitutional changes for giving responsibility to the people.

Madras Delegates and First Congress Session (1885)

Of the total 72 'honest, loyal and earnest people' who attended the first session of the Indian National Congress, held at the Hall of Gokuldas Tejpal, Sanskrit College, Bombay on 28 December 1885, under the presidentship of Womesh Chandra Bannerjee, 21 delegates were from the Madras Presidency; of the 21 representatives, 16 were from the Madras Mahajana Sabha.

Third Congress Session at Madras, 1887

The first session of the Indian National Congress was "a ramshackle set of local linkages". A Contingent of 47 delegates from Tamil Nadu attended the second session of the Congress held at Calcutta in 1888. Madras had the honour of organising the third session of the Congress in 1887. It was held at Makkis Garden, now known as the Thousand Lights. 607 delegates attended the session. Badruddin Tyabji presided over the meeting.

The Tamil Nadu Moderates

The followers of Gopala Krishna Gokhale were known as the Congress Moderates. V.S.Srinivasa Sastri, P.S.Sivasamy Iyer, V.Krishnaswamy Iyer, T.R.Venktrama Sasthri, G.A.Natesan, author of 'Indian Review', T.M.Madhava Rao, S.Subramania Iyer, C.Vijayaragavachari, and S.A.Swaminatha Iyer were the distinguished Moderates of Madras. Most of them were Brahmin lawyers, constitutionalists, and supporters of the Government. Though they participated in the administration and welcomed measures like Montford Reforms, they also raised their voice against the draconian Rowlatt Bills.

The Tamil Nadu Extremists

The supporters of Bal Gangadhar Tilak were considered Extremists, Salem Vijayaragavachari, C.Rajagopalachari, T.M.Nair, S.Kasthuriranga Iyengar, A.Ramaswamy Iyengar, T.Rangachari were the well known Tilakites. V.O.Chidambaram Pillai was called Tilak of Tamil Nadu. Mandayam Srinivachari, Surendranth Ethiraj, Triplicane Krishnamachari, Sarkarai Chettiar, and Subramania Siva were the other distinguished extremists.

Swadeshi Movement (1905 - 1907)

The fire of the Swadeshi Movement that started in Bengal soon spread to Tamil Nadu. Swadeshism captured the imagination of the Tamil extremists. They encouraged the boycott of foreign cloth and products and supported Swadeshi goods. The Industrial Association established warehouses to store and sell Swadeshi products. The Swadeshi League carried the message of Swadeshism to the masses. The Balabharath Association arranged popular discussions and debates in support of the mass movement. Similarly, Swadeshivastu Pracharini Sabha popularised the sale of locally made goods. A national fund was raised in support of the movement.

Subramaniya Bharati's patriotic songs fanned the fire of Swadeshi nationalism and his articles in *'India'* demonstrated that the Swadeshi Movement had struck deep roots in Tamil Nadu, particularly in Tirunelveli District. More important, the launching of Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company by V.O.Chidambaram Pillai in 1906 challenged the maritime might of British imperialism and the Company "marked the most spectacular development in the history of the movement".

The widespread discontent against British imperialism found expression in boycott and swadeshism. The Congress volunteers and patriotic organisations launched an agitation to discourage people from purchasing foreign goods, particularly textile products, and promoted the sale of Indian-made goods. By 1906-1907, the nationalists established three organisations at Madras for the promotion of Swadeshism. The Industrial Association raised small contributions and established warehouses exclusively for storing and selling swadeshi goods. The Swadeshi League undertook the preaching of Swadeshism to the masses and the sale of swadeshi goods. The Balabharath Association or Young India Association issued pamphlets in Tamil and arranged popular lectures in support of the movement.

The creation of the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company marked a spectacular development in the history of the movement. Eager to revive the naval tradition of the Tamils, to provide practical training in shipbuilding to the people and determined to challenge the British monopoly of maritime traffic, V.O.Chidambaram Pillai (1872-1936) announced his decision in 1906 at Shiyali to create a Navigation company. Accordingly, with the subscriptions raised from merchant communities and nationalist organisations, he founded the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company at Thoothukudi . He raised a capital of Rupees ten lakhs, purchased two ships, Gallia and Lowoe, and launched them on the sea route between Thoothukudi and Lanka in competition with the British companies. The local company emerged as a rival to the British India Steam Navigation Company, a white concern operating between Colombo and Thoothukudi. This daring venture excited considerable enthusiasm among the nationalists.

The assassination of Ashe (1911)

Tamil Nadu was the home of moderates, extremists and revolutionaries. V.V.S.Iyer, T.S.S.Rajan, and M.P.T.Acharya were trained in revolutionary tactics in London, Home Rule League and India House, which were the nerve centres of revolutionary terrorism abroad. Vanchinathan, Neelakanda Brahmachari Madasamy, Gurunadha Iyer and Dr. Shenbagaraman were the other committee, revolutionary terrorists. Incensed by the brutal actions of the British, particularly at the firing order of Sub-Collector, Vanchinathan, on 17 June 1911 shot and killed R.W.Ashe, who was travelling with his wife from Tirunelveli to Kodaikanal, at Maniachi station. Then the assassin shot himself dead after discharging his duty as an Indian. Though Vanchinathan's impulsive action was condemned as 'dastardly and diabolical', he is still regarded as a patriot par excellence by the people of Tamil Nadu.



Home Rule Agitation (1916)

Madras was the home of Home Rule agitation. Annie Besant carried on a crusade against British imperialism. She formed what was called Madras Parliament and a cabinet with herself as Prime Minister and some Brahmins as ministers and held frequent meetings at Gokhale Hall, Madras, in her attempt to train the people in parliamentary practices. In 1916, supported by Arundale and Wadia, she organised the Home Rule League at Madras. It had a limited objective, for it wanted to achieve a rule through constitutional methods, to maintain an association of India as a 'free nation within the British Empire, and extend support to the Indian National Congress. She declared, "Life consists in liberty, in self-respect, in honour, in right ambition, in patriotism and in noble living, while these are absent, life is not, however, worth living".

On 24 July 1916, students staged a massive demonstration in front of the Egmore railway station protesting against exclusive reservations being made in the compartments for Europeans. There was a scuffle between students and Europeans at the Fort railway station. Rattled by the rapid development of the Home Rule agitation, Governor Lord Pentland banned the participation of students in the political activities of the League. Besant was asked to pay deposits for the journals she was editing. She was incarcerated in the Nilgiri prison. Government action had intensified the agitation. Thiru.V.Kalyanasundaram Mudaliar resigned from his job as Tamil Lecturer at Wesley College, Madras and plunged into the agitation. The workers in the Harvy Mills, Madurai, went on strike. Foreign goods were boycotted.

As the movement spread fast from Madras to mofussil areas, the Government released Besant from the Nilgiri prison. On her return to Madras, she was given a rousing reception en route. C.Rajagopalachari with a large gathering extended a warm welcome to Besant, the Heroine of the Home Rule Agitation, at Salem railway station. Besant became so popular she was elected as Congress President in 1917. In a way, Home Rule Agitation was responsible for the E.S.Montague's August 1917 Declaration.

Non-Co-operation Movement (1920-1922)

Non–Co-operation movement gained momentum in Tamil Nadu under the dynamic leadership of C.Rajagopalachari. It turned out to be a mass movement. The people of Tamil Nadu hoisted the national flag, installed photos of national leaders, and organised meetings, demonstrations and hartals. Several leaders like Madurai advocate George Joseph, S.Srinivasa Iyengar, N.S.Varadachari, S.Ramanathan and V.O.Chidambaram renounced their titles or resigned from their posts and joined the Movement. By the end of 1920, Tamil Nadu Congressmen boycotted the legislature and the election. The workers of the Buckingham Mills conducted strike on 27 June 1921. Toddy shops were boycotted. The visit of S.Satyamurthy to several places including Rajapalayam roused the patriotic feelings of the people. I.R.Arangasamy Raja laid a firm foundation for the historic Khadhi Movement in the town. Anti- liquor agitation was intensified by leaders like V.G.Vellingiri Gounder, N.S.Ramaswami Iyangar and E.V.Ramasamy Naicker. When the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Connaught, visited Madras he was boycotted though was given a rousing reception by the Justices. There was a spontaneous emotional upsurge in Tamil Nadu when Gandhi was arrested on 18 March 1922. Through the constructive programmes, popular agitations and self-sacrifice, the Congress proved itself acceptable to the masses. In the meantime, the internal conflicts in the ranks of the Brahmin elite as well as the Dravidian aristocrats weakened the communal forces. The Tamil Brahmins and the Telugu Brahmins came into conflict with each other over positions and

influence. The bitter rivalry between their respective leaders, S.Sathyamurthy and T.Prakasam represented this trend. Among the Tamil Brahmins too there developed dissensions, for a report of 1931 indicated that Sathyamurthy was very jealous of the influence of C.Rajagopalachari. Their rivalry ultimately contributed to the rise of K.Kamaraj, an ethnic Tamil. This trend helped in the transformation of Congress into a mass movement. Among the other Dravidian leaders Kalyanasundaram Mudaliar endeavoured to gain Dravidian support for the Congress. Popularly called Thiru. Vi.Ka, was an ardent patriot, a Tamil scholar and a well-known journalist. With more Dravidians in the Congress party, it became possible for E.V.Ramaswami Naicker to get elected as the President of the Provincial Congress in 1922.

The Swarajists (1923)

When the Swaraj Party was launched by Pro-change leaders like C.R.Das and Motilal Nehru on 1 January 1923, like-minded Congressmen such as Kasthuri Ranga Iyengar, Srinivasa Iyengar, Varadarajulu Naidu, Vijayaragavacharai and A.Rengasamy Iyengar joined the new party. In the election held on 13 November 1923 for Central Legislature, Swarajists A.Ranga Samy Iyengar, R.K.Shanmugam Chetty, N.Srinivasa Iyengar were elected from Tamil Nadu. Though the Swarajists won 41 seats in the election held for the Madras Legislature they were requested to form the ministry. They instead effectively non-co-operated with the Legislature led by S.Sathyamurthy, the silver-tongue orator. The Tamil Nadu Swarajist Legislators offered uncompromising obstruction to all Government-sponsored laws. They strongly supported the motion of no-confidence brought up by C.R.Reddy against the ruling Justice Party. By the then consistent legislature conduct, the Madras Swarajists rose up to the expectations of the Swaraj Party.

Justice Party

This was a period when the Tamil population continued to entertain bitter feelings against the Brahmins. Partly because of the ordeals that they suffered and partly because of new cultural influences, they became awakened to social evils.

Accordingly, in 1916, P.Theagaraya Chetty, an influential member of the Madras Corporation and other leaders founded the South Indian Liberal Federation, T.M.Nair. Raja of Panagal, K.V.Reddy, C.Natesa Mudaliar, and Raja of Bobbili joined this party. Two other organisations called the Madras Dravidian Association and the South Indian Peoples Association too came into existence. The three associations long combined themselves into the Justice Party. It condemned the Indian National Congress as a party of Brahmins, sought the attainment of responsible Government through constitutional methods, and demanded justice for the Dravidian communities.





The Government of India Act of 1919 had a mixed reaction. The nationalists condemned it as inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing. In view of this dissatisfaction, Congress refused to contest the election of 1920 that was held as per the provisions of the Act. The Justice Party on the other hand welcomed the reforms and decided to co-operate with the British, for it found an opportunity to capture the power and check the growing influence of the Brahmins.

Two major issues, nationalism and council entry, figured prominently in the political developments of the period. In fact, the Justice Party allowed its anti-Brahmin sentiments and pro-aristocratic leanings to blur its vision in adopting policy hostile to national interests. The leaders of the Justice Party asserted that they stood for the destruction of Brahmin domination and the promotion of the welfare of the backward communities to render progress towards self-Government possible.

The Justice Party remained in power for a period of thirteen years. Its administration was noted for the attempts it made to give representation to Dravidian communities in the public services, improvement of the status of depressed classes and reforms in education.

The Panagal ministry enacted The Hindu Religious Endowment Act of 1921. The devadasi system, which enabled the priests in temples to lead a life of indolence, was abolished. The party extended the benefits of primary education to depressed classes through fee concessions, scholarships, and mid-day meals, but made no attempt to widen employment opportunities. The administration reorganised the work of the University of Madras. Tamils and the Telugus demanded the creation of more universities. In consequence, Andhra University was established in 1926 and Annamalai University in 1929.

The Congress in the meantime offered an alternative to the discontented masses. With its programme of equal opportunity for all communities, removal of untouchability, use of swadeshi articles, and prohibition it proved acceptable to the common people. As a result, the Congress Party known as Brahmin organisation in Tamil Nadu transformed into a Dravidian organisation. Rajaji and Kamaraj represented these differences, if not opposite trends in the transition of this party.

Neill Statue Satyagraha (1927)

James Neill had served as the General of the Madras Regiment. He ruthlessly suppressed the Rebellion of 1857. Neill wrought inhuman vengeance on those whom he regarded as guilty; they were either humiliated or executed. When the British Government installed Neill's statue at a central place in Madras in honour



of his services to the Empire, the people of Tamil Nadu rose in revolt against the symbol of shame. A Satyagraha Committee was constituted under the presidentship of S.N.Somayajulu. It was decided to remove the statue. Madurai Srinivasanatha Iyengar and his wife Padmasani Ammal, R.Chidambara Bharati, Dr P.Varadarajulu, lent enthusiastic support to the Satyagraha. On 11 August 1927, the satyagrahis under the leadership of Subbarayalu Naidu and Muhammad Salia damaged the statue. They were arrested and sentenced to 6 months of rigorous imprisonment. Nellai Somayajulu, Gudiatham Swaminatha Mudaliar, and Panrutty S.A.Devanayaga Ayya, who were Satyagraha Generals in turn, were arrested and sentenced. The Neil statue Satyagraha that started in August continued till December 1927 and during this period volunteers from several districts came to the city and participated in the agitation.

Boycott of Simon Commission (1929-1930)

The Congress at its annual session at Madras in 1927 resolved to boycott the all-White Simon Commission. When the Commission visited Madras on February 1929, it was greeted with black-flag demonstrations. The boycott of the Commission turned into a mass movement. Behind the facade of official welcome, the Congressmen organised a massive mass agitation, which resulted in police firing, killing three people. T.Prakasam, Muthuranga Mudaliar and M. Bakthavatchalam were subjected



Boycott of Simon Commission, 1929-1930

to brutal lathi charges. Protest demonstrations were held against unprovoked attacks on unarmed agitators. The Simon Commission and the Justice Party were condemned in the Marina meeting. Ranganatha Mudaliyar and Arokyasamy Mudaliar resigned from the Justice Ministry in protest against Dr. P.Subbarayan who participated in the official reception given to the Simon Commission. Despite official support to the Commission, the boycott of the Simon Commission in Tamil Nadu was a significant success.

Poorna Swaraj Day (1930)

The Indian National Congress at its session at Madras in 1927 set complete independence (Purna Swaraj) as the goal of India. It appointed a committee that was presided over by Motilal Nehru to examine the issue of constitutional reform. However, in its report, called "Nehru Report," the Committee laid down Dominion status and not complete independence as India's political objective. This represented a climb down and came as a big disappointment to the politically conscious nationalists. Though the Congress members generally welcomed the decision, the ardent nationalists condemned it. Their demand for complete independence as the goal of India created a cleavage, stated the party. The Congress of Sitanagaram on 18 December 1928 deplored the defeatist attitude of the Nehru Committee. In no unambiguous terms it declared, "While the Madras Congress had clearly stated that complete national independence was the ideal of India, it is deplorable that the Nehru committee should have prepared its scheme having for its basis the ideal of dominion status. The youths in Congress can never rest content with the dominion status. Complete independence alone is their goal". In view of the dissatisfaction



that manifested itself among the nationalists, the Congress at its Lahore session in 1929 adopted a resolution on independence as the goal of India. It also decided to observe 26 January as the day of complete independence. Jawaharlal Nehru, the President of the Congress, hoisted the tricolour flag of independence at Lahore on the bank of the Ravi. This declaration; set India's goal in no uncertain terms. The Congress Working Committee called upon the people to organise and undertake civil disobedience for the attainment of independence.

Salt Satyagraha (1930)

Through Civil Disobedience Congress aimed at the destruction of dyarchy by means of power, generated through political agitation, and constructive work. In response to the decision of the party early in 1930, the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee constituted a council of action with S.Sathyamurty as President for staging the civil disobedience.

In March 1930, C.Rajagopalachari, President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, moved his headquarters from Madras and made Tiruchirappalli the centre of civil disobedience operations. The Congress Committee decided to defy the salt laws at Vedaranyam, situated in the sandy region of Point Calimere but favourably situated near a salt factory. As it was also a place of pilgrimage, the movement also assumed a religious colour. C.Rajagopalachari was made the chief of the movement while T.S.S.Rajan was placed in charge of a committee and C.Swaminatha Chetty was in charge of the organisation work. The idea was to defy the law and discredit the British authority, marking the beginning of civil disobedience in Tamil Nadu.



The organisers held a large public meeting at Tiruchirappalli on 13 March 1930. It was addressed by Rajagopalachari and T.S.S.Rajan. About a thousand volunteers came forward but the organisers selected only one hundred to be sent to Vedaranyam. An advance batch singing patriotic songs went around and collected donations. C.Rajagopalachari led the first batch. He decided to begin the march on the 13 April, an auspicious day, being the Tamil New year Day and Jallianwala Bagh Day. Joined by volunteers from Eelam, Burma, Madras, and Bombay, the satyagrahis marched from Tiruchirappalli on the appointed day to coincide with Gandhi's march to Dandi. Namakkal V.Ramalingam Pillai composed a song for the occasion:

"Here comes a war without blood, without a sword,
All those who believe in the eternity of Truth, join".

The British administration warned the people against providing hospitality to the Satyagrahis, yet did not seek to arrest the leaders before the actual breach of salt laws. The first batch consisting of 99 volunteers reached Kovilodi on the 14 evening. As the great chatram was found bolted, all rested on a river bed, while Rajaji stayed in the house of an Ayyangar. The march continued through Thiruvadi, Thanjavur and Kumbakonam. Those who extended hospitality were arrested. On the 30, the volunteers went through the process of collecting salt. There upon, Rajaji was arrested and sentenced to six months in jail, at Tiruchirappalli. Volunteers who collected salt at Rameswaram too were arrested. Attempts were made from April to June to make salt on the coastal areas of Ovary, Anjengo, Veppalodai, Thoothukudi, and Tharuvaikulam but were foiled at these centres. The patriots chanted:



"Let us march -
March to the seashore to make salt"

On 17 July 1930, the volunteers picketed the toddy shops at Madurai. As the mob attempted to set fire to shops, police resorted to shooting, as a result of which several volunteers died. On 6 August 1930 more people were killed at Madurai. At Tiruppur on 11 January 1932, the police attacked a procession, carrying a national flag and singing national songs. As the result of a lathi charge, Tiruppur Kumaran died. In the meantime, the British sought to create dissension among the people.

The Congress now launched individual Satyagraha through its volunteers. In different districts, the agitators formed committees that issued anti-war pamphlets, raised anti-war slogans, and organised pro-German meetings. Satyagrahis from the Tamil Districts went to Delhi to join the demonstrations. On 26 January 1940, the people celebrated Independence Day on a grand scale. They hoisted the national flag, burnt the effigy of British imperialism and held protest meetings. The administration faced the situation through lathi charges and arrests.

Individual Satyagraha (1940 - 1941)

Disappointed with the August Offer of Lord Linlithgow (8 August 1940), Gandhi preferred Individual Satyagraha instead of mass Disobedience Movement to demonstrate national disapproval in view of the war situation. At the national level, Acharya Vinoba Bhave was chosen by Gandhi as the first Satyagrahi. In Tamil Nadu, Dr. T.S.S.Rajan was the first individual satyagrahi to court arrest. K.Kamaraj assumed charge of the Tamil Nadu Congress, toured across the Presidency, and prepared a list of satyagrahis to lead the movement in turn. He was arrested at Goondur railway station, on his way to meet Gandhi to get his approval of the official list he had prepared, and lodged in Vellore jail. A large number of influential persons from several districts actively involved themselves in the individual satyagraha.

Quit India Movement, 1942

Following the failure of the Cripps Mission, Mahatma Gandhi came out with his clarion call mantra, 'Do or Die'. The Government arrested the top leaders of the Congress and on 9 August 1942, Mahatma Gandhi and other leading lights were arrested in a single sweep and shifted to an unknown destination. In Tamil Nadu, K.Kamaraj, Vellore V.M.Ubayadulla, Thiruvannamalai N.Annamalai, C.N.Muthuranga Mudaliar, M.Bakthavatchalam, and S.Sathyamurthy were arrested when they were returning to Madras after attending the Bombay meeting and sent to Vellore jail.

In Tamil Districts, the agitation was not only intense but widespread. The common people, workers, and students plunged into the movement. In Madras, they organised processions, raised Quit India slogans, observed hartals, picketed toddy shops, and burnt public offices. The workers of the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills, the Madras Port Trust, the Madras Corporation and the Electric Tramway struck work. The toddy shops in Choolai were set on fire. In the Arcot region, the demonstrations and disturbances were extensive, agitators cut off the telegraph and telephone lines, burnt the public buildings at Vellore and Panapakkam, and derailed a goods train near Adichanur. In Chengalpattu and South Arcot, there were similar outbreaks - the students of Christian College, Loyola College, and Annamalai University took a leading part. In Coimbatore, there were hartals, picketing, and strikes. The sheds in the aerodrome were destroyed and trains were derailed. The village offices and toddy shops were set on fire. However, it was in the southern Districts that the disturbances were the most serious. Besides the disruption of communication, the agitators raised barricades and attacked public offices as well as Government Servents. In the course of the outbreaks, municipal offices, school buildings, railway stations, and forest offices were set on fire. At Madurai, the Congress volunteers clashed with the military and in a firing P.M.Doraiswamy Nadar was killed. Police, firings at Rajapalayam, Karaikudi, Devakottai, Tiruvadanai and Poolankurichi caused more killings. In a bid to suppress the movement, the administration launched the worst form of repression.

In March 1946, a Cabinet Mission visited India, studied the political situation and discussed the question of independence with the leaders of the Congress and the League. It suggested the formation of a federation in which the provinces would have full autonomy. In July 1946, the election was held by the Constituent Assembly. On 2 September 1946, an interim Government headed by Nehru assumed office. After a great deal of persuasion, the League joined this Government, yet it refused to join the Constituent Assembly. Lord Mountbatten, the Viceroy, made an announcement providing for the partition of the country. Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru agreed to this formula. British Parliament passed the Indian Independence Act, which granted independence to the divided country on 15 August 1947. The party men held flag-hoisting ceremonies and meetings. The workers and students led processions in which the effigies of British imperialism were burnt. When India became independent on 15 August 1947, Tamil Nadu celebrated the event with gaiety, gust, and happiness. The *National Tri-colour flag* with *Ashok Chakra* in the middle was hoisted in St. George Fort replacing the Union Jack flag. The Madras legislature formally adopted a resolution welcoming the Transfer of Power to India.

Role of Women in Freedom Struggle

The role of women in the freedom struggle is a remarkable one. Around the completion of the nineteenth century, the Indian National Congress headed the Indian Freedom Movement and relied upon hostility countering. A part of some female political dissenters like Sarojini Naidu, Kamala Devi, Chattopadhyay, Raj Kumari, and Amrit Kaur worked closely in the chance of turn of events. The Tamil activists expected a basic part in these activities. Most striking women political protesters in Tamil Nadu were Rukmini Lakshmipathi, Ambujammal, Janammal, Padmavathi Asher, Vai.Mu.Kothainayagiammal, Padmini Ammal, and so on.

In the part played by women in the great outbreak of 1857, Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi emerged as a great heroine. Rani Velu Nachiyar (1780-1790), Queen of Sivagangai in the part of Tamil Nadu, was the first queen to fight against the British colonial power in India. The spirit of violent opposition, which had been suppressed with British success had not died out; in fact, it "smouldered in the hearts of many a people waiting for an opportunity to spread out like wildfire."

In 1885, the Indian National Congress was founded. In the 1889 Bombay Session, 10 women participated. With the spread of women's education among the middle class by the last part of the 19th century, several women became active in the social and political life of India. In the Indian National Congress and its activities, many women joined in the Swadeshi movement. Asalambigai Ammal and Agilandammal played a significant role in the Swadeshi movement in Tamil Nadu. The silent transformation of the Swadeshi movement into an immense national movement later merged itself into a successful struggle for freedom. Annie Besant started Home Rule Movement in Madras. She organised strikes, hartals and students demonstration for the awakening of Indian women through the Indian National movement.

The arrival of Mahatma Gandhi and his call to women and the large-scale participation of women in India's freedom movement brought about changes in the perception of nationalist leaders. Non-Co-operation Movement and Khilafat Movement described the anti-British activities of women under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in India as well as Tamil Nadu. Tamil women participated actively in the Congress programmes, such as picketing liquor shops, boycott of foreign clothes, and public meetings. Nagammal, the wife of E.V.R. and Kannammal, his sister, played a vital role in the non-co-operation movement in Tamil Nadu. Women also did their best to encourage men to participate in the struggle and were helping to carry on the non-violent Satyagraha. Meanwhile, Anjalai Ammal of the South Arcot District and Ambujammal of Madras also participated in the Congress programmes and anti- British activities. Anjalai Ammal and her daughter Ammakannu participated

in Neill Statue Satyagraha and were convicted and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

In 1930, the Civil Disobedience was started and it became clear that the women of Madras were willing to play a role in the protest movement. Rukmini Lakshmipathi, Lakshmi Bharathi, Ambujammal, Janammal, and Vai.Mu.Kothainayagi Ammal took part in the Civil Disobedience Movement. Padmavathi Asher played an important role in the Nationalist movement and in the individual satyagraha. Many women who participated gave rise to new enlightenment to participate in the Quit India Movement and INA (Indian National Army). In Tamil Nadu, most women who participated in the Quit India Movement like Ammu Swaminathan and Rukmini Lakshmipathi were convicted and sentenced to imprisonment. Netaji Subash Chandra Bose started INA in 1943. Lakshmi Saghal was an important woman of the INA. She was in charge of the Jhansi Army Corps, the women's wing of the INA.

The agitation resumed in Tamil Nadu when Gandhiji commenced in 1943. On 9 August 1944, the people of Tamil Nadu celebrated the second anniversary of the Quit India Movement. Further, in the freedom struggle of different phases up to the end of Independence, a large number of women were arrested, convicted, and sentenced for participating in different activities. India, which became independent would be incomplete without mentioning the contribution of women. Thus, the women of India especially the women of Tamil Nadu played a significant role in the Freedom Struggle of India and sacrificed their bodies, wealth, and soul.

A. Some Popular Freedom Fighters from Tamil Nadu

(i) Veerapandiya Kattabomman

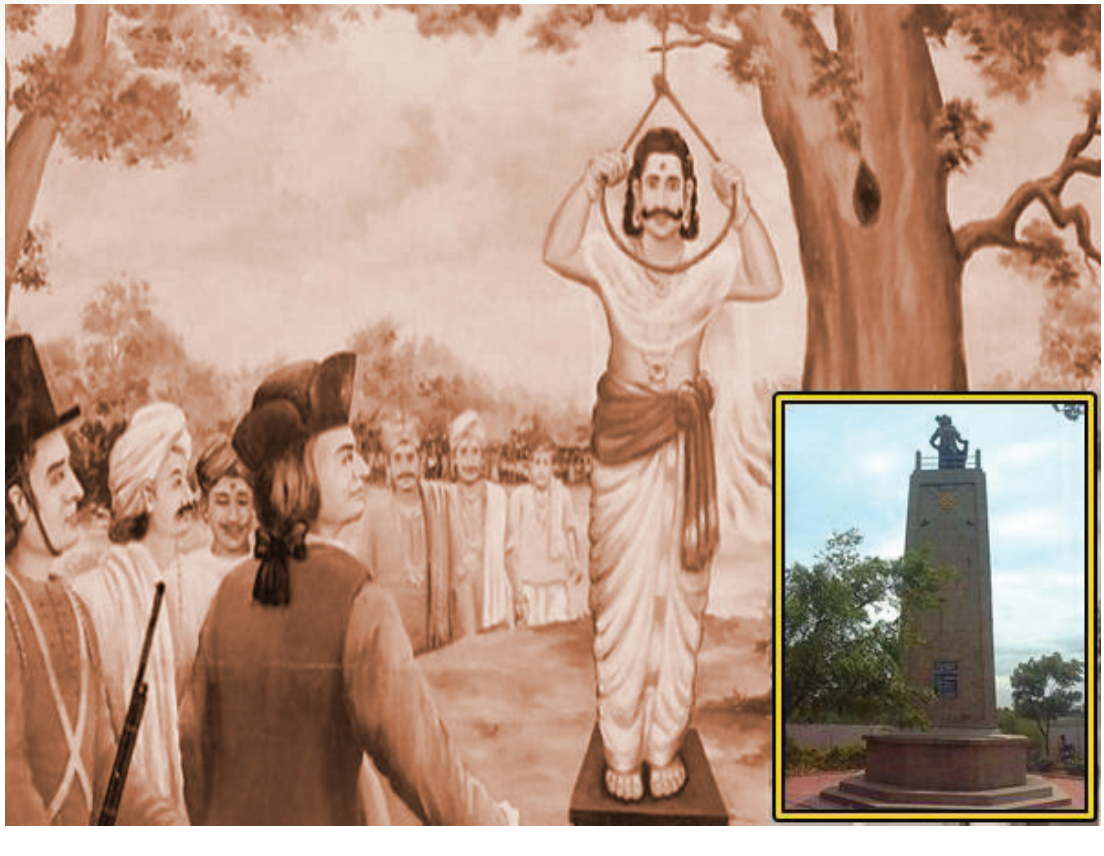
Veerapandiya Kattabomman also known as Kattabomman was an 18 century Indian Paalaiyakaarar Chieftain from Panchalankurichi and who was one of the earliest to oppose British rule. He waged a war with the British six decades before the Indian War of Independence, which occurred in 1857 in Northern parts of India.

Kattabomman refused to pay his dues and for a long time refused to meet Jackson, the Collector of the East India Company. Finally, he met Jackson at Ramalinga Vilasam, the palace of Sethupathi of Ramanathapuram. The meeting turned violent and ended in a skirmish in which the Deputy Commandant of the Company's forces, Clarke was slain. Kattabomman and his men fought their way to freedom and safety, but Thanapathi Pillai, Kattabomman's secretary was taken, as a Prisoner. The Commission of Enquiry that went into the incident fixed the blame on Jackson and relieved him of his post, thinking the Company's plan to take over the entire country gradually could be marred by Jackson's fight with Veerapandiya Kattabomman.

The new Collector of Tirunelveli wrote to Kattabomman calling him for a meeting on 16 March 1799. Kattabomman wrote back citing the extreme drought conditions for the delay in the payment of dues and demanded that all that was robbed of him at Ramanathapuram be restored to him. The Collector wanted the ruling house of Sethupathis to prevent Kattabomman from aligning himself with the enemies of the Company and decided to attack Kattabomman. The British also instigated his long-time feuding neighbour, Ettayapuram Poligar to make provocative wars over Kattabomman on their long-pending territorial disputes.

Kattabomman refused to meet the Collector and a fight broke out. Under Major Bannerman, the army stood at all four entrances of Panchalankurichi's fort. At the southern end, Lieutenant Collins was on the attack. When the fort's southern doors opened, Kattabomman and his forces audaciously attacked the corps stationed at the back of his fort, and slew their commander Lt. Collins. The British after suffering heavy losses decided to wait for reinforcements and heavy artillery from Palayamkottai. Sensing that his fort could not survive a barrage from heavy cannons, Kattabomman left the fort that night.

A price was set on Kattabomman's head. Thanapathi Pillai and 16 others were taken as prisoners. Thanapathi Pillai was executed and his head perched on a bamboo pole was displayed at Panchalankurichi to demoralise the resisters. Soundra Pandian



Nayak, another rebel leader, was brutally done to death by having his brains dashed against a village wall. Veerapandiya Kattabomman hid in so many places including Thirumayam, Virachilai and finally stayed at Kolarpatti at Rajagopala Naicker's house where the forces surrounded the house. Kattabomman and his aides fled from there and took refuge in the Thirukalambur forests close to Pudukkottai. Bannerman ordered the Raja of Pudukkottai to arrest Kattabomman. After a bloody war, he was captured by the British and hanged to death at Kayattar on 17 October 1799. Kattabomman became, thus, the pivot of the emerging feeling of Tamil nationhood. His story is celebrated in many legends and epic poetry in Tamil.

Kattabomman is today recognised by the Government as one of the earliest independence fighters opposing the British and has been hailed as the inspiration behind the first battle of independence of 1857, which the British called the Sepoy Mutiny. In 1974, the Government of Tamil Nadu constructed a new Memorial fort. The Memorial Hall has beautiful paintings on the walls depicting the heroic deeds of the saga, which gives a good idea about the history of the period.

(ii) Marudhu Pandiyar

The Marudhu Pandiyar brothers (Periya Marudhu and Chinna Maruthu) ruled Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu towards the end of the 18 century. The Marudhu brothers were the first to issue a proclamation of independence from the colonial British rule from Trichy Thiruvarangam Temple, Tamil Nadu on 10 June 1801.



The Raja of Sivagangai, a principal state near Ramnad, Muthu Vaduganadhar came to know of their brave and courageous deeds and requested the Ramnad king to assign them to serve the Sivaganga state army. They were appointed as Generals of the Sivaganga military and the brothers left an indelible impression on the military history of India. In the year 1772, the English military of the British

East India Company, under the command of Lt.Col. Bon Jour attacked the state at Kalayar Kovil. During the war, Raja Muthu Vaduganadhar lost his life in the battlefield.

However, the Marudhu brothers managed to escape along with Rani Velu Nachiar, wife of Raja Muthu Vadughanadhar and arrived at Dindigul, which was ruled by Hyder Ali – the Sultan of Mysore as refugees. Hyder Ali supported them in all respects. The Nawab of Arcot, the alliance partner of the British East India Company, was not able to collect any taxes from the people of Sivagangai State for eight long years. He entered into an agreement whereby the rule of Sivagangai was restored to Rani Velu Nachiar after he collected his dues from her. The Marudhu brothers with 12,000 armed men surrounded Sivagangai and plundered the Arcot Nawab's territories. The Nawab, on the 10 of March 1789, appealed to the Madras Council for aid. On 29 April 1789, the British forces attacked Kollangudi. A large body of Marudhu troops defeated them.

They were in close association with Veera Pandiya Kattabomman of Panchalamkurichi. Kattabomman held frequent consultations with the Marudhu brothers. After the execution of Kattabomman on 17 October 1799 at Kayattar, Chinna Marudhu gave asylum to Kattabomman's brother Oomaidurai. However, the British took this as a reason to invade and attacked Sivaganga in 1801 with a powerful army. The Marudhu Pandiyars and their allies were quite successful and captured three Districts from the British. The British considered it as a serious threat to their future in India and they rushed additional troops from Britain to put down the Marudhu Pandiyars' rebellion. These forces surrounded the Marudhu Pandiyars' army at Kalayar Koil, and the latter scattered. The Marudhu brothers and their top commanders escaped. They regrouped and fought the British and their allies at Virupatchi, Dindigul and Cholapuram. While they won the battle at Virupatchi, they lost the other two battles. The Marudhu Pandiyars and many of their family members were captured at Cholapuram and were infamously hanged on 24 October 1801.

(iii) V.O. Chidambaram Pillai

The title Kappalottiya Tamizhan was given to Vallinayagam Olaganathan Chidambaram Pillai (V.O.C.), an Indian Tamil freedom fighter and politician, who founded an indigenous Indian shipping service Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company that plied between Tuticorin and Colombo. This was the first such venture during the regime of the British professionally, where he followed the footsteps of his father who was a barrister and became a lawyer himself.

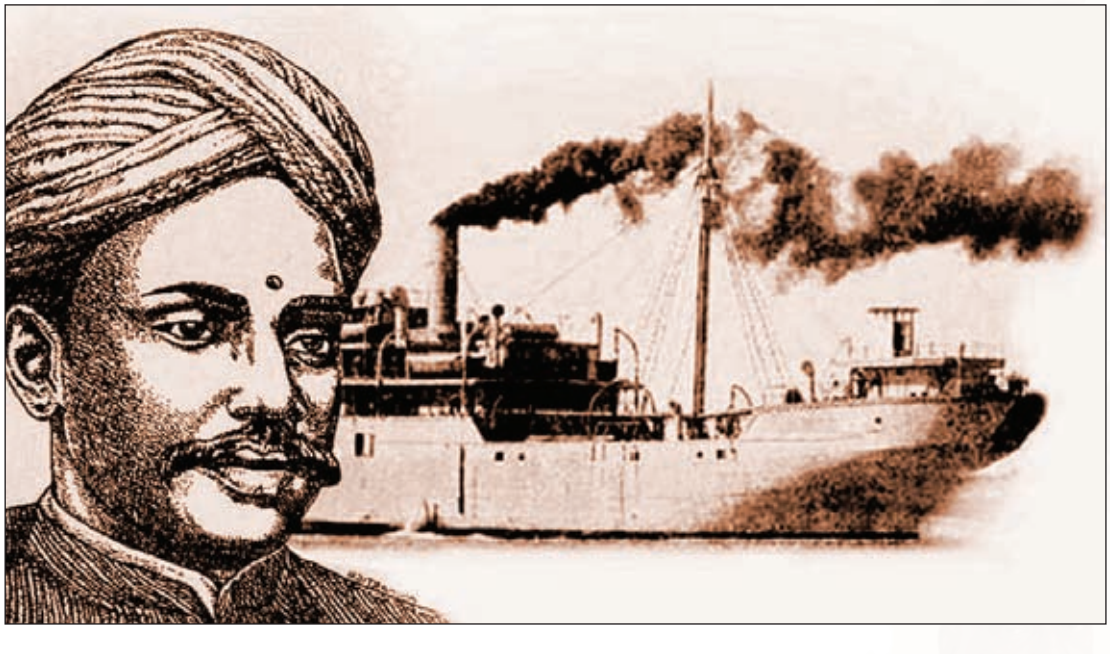
Apart from his legal activities, he was also a prolific writer and Tamil scholar. Until 1905, his professional and journalistic activities consumed most of his time.

It was the Partition of Bengal in 1905 that prompted him to enter the political arena. V.O.C. joined the Indian National Congress and embraced the Swadeshi movement nurtured by the Lal-Bal-Pal triumvirate. He considered Bal Gangadhar Tilak to be his guru and even wrote a biography in his praise in Tamil. It was Sri Ramakrishnananda of the Sri Ramakrishna Ashram who inspired him to think about breaking the monopoly of British shipping in the Indo-Ceylon waters. In 1906, V.O.C. started the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company, which regularly plied leased ships between Tuticorin and Colombo, thereby giving stiff competition to the British India Steam Navigation Company on the same route over the ticket prices. V.O.C. then decided to buy two vessels of his own. The success of his company irritated the British.

On 27 February 1908, V.O.C., along with his friends Padmanabha Iyengar and Subramania Siva, led a strike in the British-owned Coral Mills at Tuticorin to protest against the harsh working conditions of its employees. The nationalist leaders, with strong support from the people of Tuticorin, resolved to take out a mammoth procession on the morning of 9 March 1908 in Tirunelveli to celebrate the release of B.C.Pal from jail and hoist the flag of Swaraj.

The British authorities got wind of this, and on 12 March, V.O.C., Subramania, and Iyengar were arrested and imprisoned in the District jail. Infuriated by the illegal detention of their leaders, the people of Tirunelveli retaliated, and the District became engulfed in riots. Even to this day, the people of Tirunelveli observe the 13 of March as Tirunelveli Uprising Day (Tirunelveli Ezhuchi).

After the three leaders were released, V.O.C. and Siva tried again for sedition. The courts sentenced both of them to transportation, which was 20 years for



Chidambaram Pillai and 10 years for Subramania Siva. After several appeals, the duration was shortened to six years for V.O.C. and three for Siva. V.O.C. was treated inhumanely in the Coimbatore jail, where he was forced to draw and pull an oil press that is normally drawn by oxen. By the time V.O.C. was released in 1912, his shipping company had been taken over by the British. He was also deprived of his barrister title and reduced to an impoverished state.

(iv) Subramaniya Siva

Subramaniya Sivam, popularly known as Subramaniya Siva was born in Batlagundu Village, Dindigul District (Madurai Region) in 1884 to Rajam Iyer and Nagalakshmi. He showed great interest in spiritual enquiry even when young and became an ardent disciple of his uncle who was a sannyasi named Odha Swami. The strained circumstances of his family made him accept a job in the district court, which he left soon to plunge into the fight for India's freedom. He was a fine orator, who spoke his mind openly in every context. The principles of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who always advocated meeting the adversary with firmness and without compromise, appealed to him very much.

Some common friends introduced him to V.O.Chidambaram Pillai (V.O.C.) who had the courage and management skills to compete with British ship companies by starting his own Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company. Siva became a close friend and associate of V.O.C. and started speaking publicly in support of his shipping activities and his role as a Trade Union leader. Thus that Siva and another older Swadeshi enthusiast Padmanabha Iyengar, got together with V.O.C. when he organised a strike in the British Owned Coral Mills at Tuticorin. Closely following it on 9 March, 1908, they also held a well-attended rally in Tirunelveli to celebrate the release of Bipin Chandra Pal from prison at Calcutta of defying the orders of the District Collector Wynch. Wynch got all three arrested and tried in court. They were held in a jail in Palayamkottai and released around the end of March.



However, the British were stung by the fiery speeches of Siva and V.O.C. and

charged them again with sedition, unmoved by the support the leaders received from around the country, sentencing them to transportation for 20 years and 10 years, respectively. On appeal, they relented and reduced the imprisonment to 6 years for V.O.C. and 3 for Siva in the jail in Coimbatore, where they were treated harshly and inhumanely. Siva was unlucky to contract leprosy in prison. He had to curtail his travelling and his speeches, as a result though they continued to attract people out of his patriotism.

(v) Vanchinathan

It was in Travancore, where he was leading a happy family life, Vanchinathan came to know about V.O. Chidambaram Pillai, who was fighting the British for the rights of the oppressed. In 1906, V.O.C launched the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company, India's first shipping enterprise, which operated two steamships between Tuticorin and Colombo, thus putting a full stop to the British monopoly in shipping in the region. A year or so later, with the help of Coral mill workers, V.O.C. staged a Strike against the management firm A&F Harvey, which was paying very low wages to its labourers. These works of V.O.C. inspired the young man who turned into a serious follower and made the dreams of the freedom fighter his own.

Between 1906 and 1908, when the two navigation companies were pitted against each other in a fierce battle, Ashe was posted in Tirunelveli/Tuticorin either in the capacity of a collector or as a district magistrate. It is said that Ashe did everything in his power to kill the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company. He also fully backed A&F Harvey throughout the protest. It is also said that Ashe issued a shoot-at-sight order during the agitations that followed V.O.C.'s arrest. These must be the reasons, Ashe was targeted. The mastermind behind the assassination was Nilakanta Bramhachari who went around the Madras presidency in 1910 recruiting cadres and hatching plots against the British.



In this venture, he was accompanied by Shankar Krishna Aiyar, Vanchinathan's brother- in-law, who introduced the men to each other. This was when Vanchinathan was initiated into a militant struggle for freedom. Along with a few other men, Nilakanta Bramhachari, Vanchinathan and Shankar Krishna Aiyar found an organisation called Bharatha Matha Sangam, which plotted the assassination of influential British men. The preparation for the murder began in early

January 1911, when Vanchinathan took a three-month break from his job and visited V.V.S.Aiyar in Pondicherry. V.V.S.Aiyar who was allegedly involved in many other conspiracies against the British trained Vanchinathan in firing a revolver among other things.

It is said that Vanchinathan confessed to V.V.S.Aiyar his plans to assassinate Ashe for his role in the arrest of V.O.C. and the agitations that followed. A couple of months later, Vanchinathan's infant daughter died, whose funeral he did not attend, and Ashe was promoted as the acting Collector of Tirunelveli. The stage was set. The date was decided - June 11, 1911. It coincided with the coronation of George V. For some reason, there was no attempt on that day. The second one was planned for June 17, 1911. On that day, Ashe with his wife Mary left Tirunelveli for Kodaikanal in a train to visit his children. Vanchinathan and three others from Bharatha Matha Sangam boarded the same train at Tirunelveli. At 9.30 a.m. the train reached Maniyachi. As soon as the train came to a halt, Vanchinathan boarded the first class in which Ashe and his wife were travelling. He shot Ashe with his browning, jumped out of the train and ran into the platform lavatory. There, he shot himself to death. By the time police arrived, both Ashe and Vanchinathan were dead. The police discovered a letter in Vanchinathan's pocket signed "R.Vanchi Aiyar, Sengottai".

(vi) Kodi Katha Kumaran

When Gandhi led a demonstration in Bombay in 1932, the British decided to lock up the leader. There were riots and protests about this all over the country, including a patriotic march by Thiyagi P.S.Sundaram in Tiruppur. The protests had people carrying out the national flag, which was banned at the time, in honour as well as in revolt. One of the participants holding the flag was Tiruppur Kumaran.



OKSR Kumaraswamy Mudaliar was a native of Chennimalai, which is presently in Erode, Tamil Nadu, in a weaver family. While the independence movement was gaining momentum in the country, Kumaran too found himself influenced. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's principles and ideals, Kumaran began to participate in the demonstrations announced by Bapu. He was one among the young participating revolutionaries but made his mark. He was fondly called Tiruppur Kumaran. He was the founder of the Desa Bandhu Youth Association. On 11 January

1932, when the British started lathi charges against the protestors, Kumaran did not leave the premises. The British cops went down hard. They started thrashing all the protestors, and Kumaran was caught in the beatings. He succumbed to injuries and was found dead holding the flag.

(vii) C. Vijaya Raghavachariar

When the Indian National Congress was started in 1885, he was one of the special invitees. He was a close associate of A.O.Hume, the founder of the Indian National Congress. He attended the Bombay session of the Congress and in 1887, he was one of the members of the committee, which drafted the constitution of the Indian National Congress. From then on Vijayaraghavachariar became an ardent freedom fighter. His counsel and leadership were much sought after by the Congressmen of the early days.



In 1895, he was elected to the Madras Legislative Council, where he served for 6 years, till 1901. In 1913, he was elected to the Imperial Legislative Council with which he was associated till 1916. When Lord Birkenhead, the Secretary of State for India threw out a challenge whether Indians could draw up a Constitution for India Vijayaraghavachariar took up the challenge and drew up the Swaraj Constitution for India.

With the advent of Mahatma Gandhi, there was a rift in the Congress ranks between the old moderates and the new radicals. Even earlier, the ideas of the moderates did not appeal to him. He kept aloof from active party work for a period after the Surat split of the Congress and later joined with redoubled vigour to carry the message of the Mahatma. The climax of his political career came in 1920, when he was elected to preside over the Indian National Congress Session at Nagpur, where Mahatma Gandhi's advocacy of 'Poorna Swaraj' through non-violent, non-co-operation was debated and accepted. He was also in the vanguard of the opposition to the Simon Commission that toured the country in 1929. He took an active part in the Committee that met under Motilal Nehru to frame the Constitution for India.

(viii) Varadarajulu Naidu



Varadarajulu Naidu entered politics at an early age and joined the Indian National Congress. In 1917, he gave up his medical practice. He participated in the Indian Home Rule Movement and was President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee at the time of the Cheranmadevi school controversy.

Varadarajulu joined Periyar and Kalyanasundaram and strongly opposed the practice of separate dining for Brahmins and non-Brahmin students in Cheranmadevi Gurukulam, a national school run by V.V.S.Aiyar. The issue was brought to the notice of Gandhi and Aiyar later resigned. When Tamil Nadu Congress Committee met in April 1925 to discuss the issue, the recommendation of C.Rajagopalachari and Rajan that Congress should not interfere and that the school should instead be advised to eliminate the practice was swept aside. The resolution, which prevented gradations of merit based on birth should not be observed, of nationalist parties was brought by Ramanathan and passed. Rajagopalachari and six of his associates resigned from TNCC citing that caste prejudices could not be overcome by coercion. However, Varadarajulu Naidu stayed in the Congress even after Periyar left the party. In his later years, Varadarajulu Naidu actively participated in the temple-entry movements in Madras Presidency.

(ix) E.V.R. Periyar



At the beginning of 1920, E.V.R. enrolled himself as one of the members of the Congress Party in Tamil Nadu. His joining Congress in 1920 did not occur either accidentally or suddenly. Right from his early days, he was aware of the Congress work and the nationalist feeling it engendered among the people against British colonialism. From 1914, he conducted, participated, and spoke at several of the Congress meetings in Erode and Madras. His sympathy towards the Home Rule Movement and subsequent enrolment

as Member of the Madras Presidency Association in 1917 marks the beginning of his political activism in the Indian National Congress.

E.V.R.'s association with the Congress Party formally took place in 1920. He had his leaning towards it earlier, because its nationalistic ideal coupled with the social reform activities against the Justice Party's pro-British attitude appealed to him. He was also one of the founder members of the Madras Presidency Association (a sister organisation of the Congress) whose members were ardent Congressites. Later, he joined the Congress Party after its dissolution. This gives an impression that, for all practical purposes, he was a Congress member since 1917, the year in which he became a member of the Madras Presidency Association. Within a short period after his formal inclusion in Congress, he was made the President of the Tamil Nadu Branch of Congress in 1920.

From 1920 to 1925, E.V.R. served in the Congress Party in Tamil Nadu as a recognised member and as a devoted activist. During the short period of five years, he rose from the position of an ordinary member to one of the dynamic front-rank leaders of the Tamil Nadu Congress, by sheer dint of merit and by his significant contribution to the growth of the party. In 1920 and 1924, he was elected as the President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee and held the past of Secretary for two consecutive years 1921 and 1922. He was the President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Conference held at Tiruvannamalai in 1924. Besides, he presided over the deliberations of many district conferences. At the time of intensive Khadar propaganda, his election to the post of the President of the Tamil Nadu branch of All India Spinners Association was meant to boost the sales of the Khadar and to discourage the wearing of foreign clothes by the people. His work in the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920-1921, Temperance Movement in 1922, Khadar Movement in 1922-1924, and Vaikom Satyagraha in 1924-1925 had not only helped the growth of the Congress Party in Tamil Nadu but had in the process developed his image and status in the party as an important leader.

V.V.S. Ayyar, a confirmed and selfless nationalist, started a gurukulam first at Kallidaikurichi in 1922 and later shifted it to Cheranmadevi. In fact, both these places were noted for Brahminical culture and learning in the Tirunelveli District. The institution came into being in defiance of the foreign rule during Non-co-operation and Swadeshi movements. It was aimed at imparting religious education to the youths, inculcating patriotic fervour in them, and shaping them as broad-minded useful citizens of the country. In this institution, separate dining was arranged with the permission of the President, V.V.S.Ayyar for Brahmin and non-Bhramin students. As the Secretary of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, E.V.R. had received several complaints about this injustice and discrimination.

A committee constituted by his efforts to enquire into the charges against the gurukulam had confirmed the prevalence of this practice. E.V.R.Varadarajulu Naidu, S.Ramanathan, Thiru. V.Kalyanasundaram and other non-Brahmin leaders argued that since the institution's finance was largely augmented by the donations of the non-Brahmin patrons and the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee and since it stood for noble ideals, it was not fair to encourage such social differences, which would develop inferiority complex in the minds of the non- Brahmin students studying in the institution. C.Rajagopalachari, T.S.S.Rajan, K.Santhanam, Vijayaragavachariar, and others came to the rescue of V.V.S.Ayyar, but he refused to revoke that practice. He countered the charge explaining that as "The total abolition of such age-old practices in the society would not be feasible within a short span of time and as it required drastic social reform activities, which should help in changing the attitude of the people or the communities in question. Until such time in the best interests of the party the non- Brahmin leaders should bear with the trouble". When attempts made by several non- Brahmin congress members like S.Ramanathan to bring out a consensus on turning all organisations that were partaking in the national movement to be non-sectarian and non-communal were thwarted by the opposition. The compromise formulae put forth by Mahatma Gandhi and Rajagopalachari to patch up the differences among the quarrelling parties failed to avoid the imminent split in the Congress. The inevitable split thus occurred over this issue among the uncompromising Brahmin and non- Brahmin Congress and it made the way for E.V.R.'s parting from the Congress Party in the near future a certainty.

(x) S. Satyamurti

"He was a born freedom-fighter, a leading fighter as the Scots say to whom the fight was the thing." - The Hindu.



Satyamurti had plunged into politics early after he had won college elections. His political career started in 1919, officially, when he was made the secretary of the Congress delegation that went to the Joint Parliamentary Committee in the UK to protest the Montague-Chelmsford reforms and the Rowlatt Act. In 1926, he was again sent to UK to present the Indian point of view to the British public. While he was there, he had also been the London correspondent of The Hindu newspaper. Just like many other patriots and freedom fighters, Satyamurti was not left

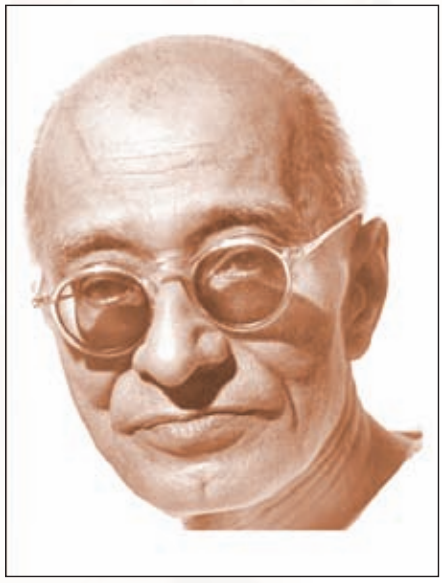
out from landing behind the bars on several occasions. It was in 1930 that he was arrested for lifting the Indian flag on top of the Parthasarathy Temple in Madras. Along with C.R.Das and Motilal Nehru, he was one of the leading Swarajists who laid the foundation stone for the parliamentary democracy in India. In 1937, it was a result of Sathyamurti's persistent efforts that Congress romped home in elections to the Madras Legislative Assembly. He was also actively involved in the Swadeshi Movement and in 1940 he was arrested and imprisoned again for a period of eight months following his participation in the Individual Satyagraha. On his way back to Madras from the Congress Committee Meeting in Bombay, he was arrested yet again before he could reach back. This was in 1942 during the time of the Quit India Movement.

Satyamurti, during his lifetime, had been the mentor of Kumaraswami Kamaraj, who happened to be the Chief Minister of the state of Tamil Nadu between 1954 and 1963. He considered Kamaraj, "as an efficient, loyal, indefatigable worker and skilful organizer". The two of them grew fond of each other with each passing day and their bond became stronger and tougher. Moreover, they complemented each other's skills. In 1936, when Satyamurti was elected President of the Provincial Congress Committee, he appointed Kamaraj as the General Secretary. Four years later, they swapped positions. Such was their passion that the party base was strengthened with their relentless effort. Kamaraj's devotion towards his mentor was such that when India gained independence, he first went to Satyamurti's house and hoisted the Indian flag there. On his election as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Kamaraj went to Satyamurti's house and garlanded his photo and paid his respects to the leader's widow. Additionally, he got the headquarters of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee named after him as Satyamurti Bhavan in recognition of the tireless work done by the latter for the Tamil Nadu Congress and for India's independence.

(xi) Rajaji

C.Rajagopalachari, popularly called Rajaji who entered into active politics at the early stages of his life, derived his inspiration from various sources. His exposure to the writings of western scholars and his contact with Swami Vivekananda and other emerging leaders of Congress had a tremendous impact on his young mind towards the freedom of India. In the beginning, he was attracted towards the Extremist fold and was against the Moderates' methods of achieving freedom. His participation in the Congress sessions held in various parts of India, and his contact with statesmen like C.Vijayaraghavachariar, V.O.Chidambaram Pillai, and Tilak appeared to have affected his views towards the freedom struggle.

While looking for ways to liberate the nation, Rajaji nevertheless, thought about the downtrodden people and tried his best to elevate their position. He had practised



tolerance and had his own views on the abolition of untouchability before Gandhi's arrival on the Indian political horizon. Though he was occupied in his legal Profession at Salem, he maintained a close link with national politics and tried to contribute to it. However, to suit the changing political atmosphere and his active commitment to the national cause, Rajaji shifted his residence to Madras, thereby focusing his attention fully on the liberation of India.

From active support to the Extremist ideology in attaining freedom, his thoughts steadily blossomed into the Gandhian way of achieving national liberation. Rajaji was one man among all the lieutenants of Mahatma Gandhi who followed the Gandhian path of life in thought, word, and action. Gandhi's policy of truth and non-violence could not be followed easily, but Rajaji had taken up Gandhi's principles at once in the Madras Presidency. Rajaji found that Gandhi alone could guide India, steer the nation through the political turmoil, and lead the county to freedom. At that time, Gandhi was deserted by the country. Gandhi was also deserted by the Moderates and nationalists in turn. and desperate he was in need of loyal lieutenants in Madras. By opting for Rajaji, when all the established politicians were against him, Rajaji received a unique opportunity to assume a central position in the politics of the Madras Presidency. He had been among front-rank politicians of the Gandhian era, and on every occasion, his contribution had been unique and magnificent. It was an unintentional coincidence that the first idea for an All India hartal was mooted against the Rowlatt Act, on April 6, 1919, at Rajaji's residence in Madras. It was the first organised mass expression against the British Government, which brought about a real national awakening among the people. He joined the Khilafat Movement and worked hard to promote Hindu-Muslim unity, which was then thought of as an essential element for attaining freedom. He emerged as a freedom fighter and actively participated in all stages of the freedom struggle in the Madras Presidency. Through the freedom struggle, C.R.'s intellectual support was more to Gandhi than the other leaders during the Non-Co-operation Movement, Civil disobedience movement, etc.

As an ardent nationalist, he was the first to respond to Gandhi's call in Tamil Nadu - the relinquishing of the lucrative practice of law for the non-co-operation Movement, he was the first to be arrested as a freedom fighter in Tamil

Nadu. After his release from jail, he assumed the role of leadership for 'no-changers' and favoured the role of leadership for a no-change boycott of the Legislative Councils. While there was a continuation of the boycott, he was a staunch non-co-operator and fervent nationalist. He got a victory against the council entry. However, later when the Swarajists entered the Council, Rajaji devoted himself to a constructive programme, which paved the way for further national awakening.

Rajaji's famous Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha March similar to Gandhi's Dandi March had a strong impact on Madras Presidency. His dynamic role in the Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha march had won him national recognition. He also played a role in the Gandhi – Irwin Pact. Boycott of foreign clothes and goods at Madras in 1932 and at Tiruchengode in August 1933 were his innovative methods against the British.

When Mahatma Gandhi started the individual Satyagraha Movement in October 1940, Rajaji organised it in the Madras Presidency and was imprisoned as a satyagrahi for the last time. Coming out of prison, at the critical political situation in India, he favoured the acceptance of Cripps after an effort to end the political deadlock. He had also ceaselessly worked for the wartime settlement with Britain. He was an important negotiator of Gandhi's at the time perspective Macdonald's Communal Award (September 1932). He also played important role in bringing the Poona Pact. His active part in the Harijan temple entry programme was significant. Rajaji was always ready to take a firm stand at the national or provincial level for one cause or another that was against his conscience.

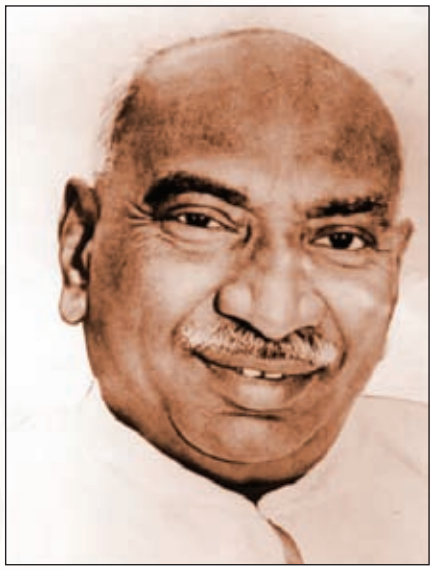
(xii) K. Kamaraj

The massacre of thousands of people at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar was a turning point in Kamaraj's life. It made him realise, at the age of 16, the importance of attaining national freedom. He joined the Congress party as a volunteer. At the age of 17, he was totally involved in Congress activities and his main pre-occupation was organising Congress meetings in his hometown. At times, the affluent people of Virudhunagar including his own caste men were pro-British and were against his national activities. He was branded as a traitor and attacked. He was forced to leave Virudhunagar, but continued his nationalistic activities at Thirumangalam among other community members.

After Vaikom Satyagraha, Kamaraj became more and more vigorous in the National Movement for independence. The great success of his satyagrahis at Vaikom opened new vistas. The authoritative regime of the British adopted repressive measures one after another and that added fuel to the already burning nationalist spirit in him. Kamaraj devoted himself fully to the cause of the national struggle.

In 1925, Kamaraj had the opportunity to become a regional level volunteer from a local level volunteer. The British Government in India banned carrying Congress flags through the streets where the Britishers lived in Nagpur. It was opposed by the Congress, which planned for the Flag March. To support the movement, Congress volunteers were sent to Nagpur from different parts of India and Kamaraj reached the destination.

The British Government also banned the carrying of arms like dagger, spear, and other items by the Indians. This was also opposed vehemently all over India. It was decided to start satyagraha in Madras. On June 16, 1927, the movement was started. The satyagrahis marched through the streets, carrying aloft swords, and propagating among the people the inalienable right to bear arms. In this struggle, Kamaraj and his friend K.S.Muthusamy of Virudhunagar helped the sword satyagrahis by supplying about half a dozen swords specially made for this purpose. The year 1927 happened to be another successful year in the political career of Kamaraj. The event was known as the removal of Col. Neil's statue. Col. Neil was one of the haughty commanders of the 1857 Revolt. The Madras Mahajana sabha and Madras District Congress committee passed a resolution calling for the removal of Neil's statue, as it was a reminder of his barbarous acts.



The Madras Congress took up the issue and organised a demonstration for the removal of Neil's statue. Somayajulu of Tirunelveli was appointed the leader of the struggle. Soon, batches of volunteers joined the struggle. They were arrested and given deterrent punishments ranging from one-year rigorous imprisonment to simple punishments for a few weeks with fines. With the arrest of frontline leaders of the struggle like Somayajulu and Swamynathan Mudaliar of Gudiyattam, Kamaraj was chosen to lead the struggle in September 1927. For this purpose, Kamaraj secured permission from Mahatma Gandhi at the residence of S.Srinivasa Ayyangar in Madras. However, the struggle was given up in view of a proposed countrywide boycott of the Simon Commission.

Nevertheless, 1927 was significant in the political career of Kamaraj. The annual session of the Indian National Congress was held at Madras under the presidentship of Ansari, and Kamaraj took part in the deliberations of the Congress session. Various organisations such as the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League, the Hindu

Mahajana Sabha, and the Liberal federation condemned the non-inclusion of Indians in the Simon Commission. It was decided by the Indian National Congress in the annual session, held in December 1927 at Madras, to boycott the commission. In accordance with the decision of the Indian National Congress, the leaders of the Tamil Nadu Congress also resolved in the legislative council to boycott the Simon Commission, which was supposed to visit Madras on 18th February 1929. There was a total boycott and tension prevailed.

In the same year, when the Commission visited Madurai, the police made elaborate arrangements to prevent the black demonstration against the commission members. However, George Joseph and Kamaraj were able to mobilise thousands of volunteers near Thirumalai Nayakkar Mahal and carry out the demonstration. Kamaraj's organising ability became quite evident from such incidents. The Congress Working Committee, which met at Sabarmati Ashram from February 14 to 16, 1930, authorised Mahatma Gandhi to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement. Mahatma Gandhi engaged in the Historic Dandi March on 12 March 1930 and thus the Civil Disobedience Movement was set in motion. Soon, the Movement gained momentum. The entire country responded effectively.

In Tamil Nadu, Rajaji, a close lieutenant of Mahatma Gandhi was in charge of Satyagraha March to Vedaranyam, a salt-producing centre in Tanjore District in the Madras Presidency on April 1930. However, he was arrested under Section 74 of Salt Act. While Rajaji and other leaders were arrested for their participation in Salt Satyagraha, Kamaraj was arrested for enlisting volunteers for the movement. The charges made against Kamaraj were: (1) he was responsible for exhorting an audience of 300 people to enlist themselves as volunteers and (2) he incited them to proceed to Vedaranyam in thousands to prepare salt is a violation of Section 74 of the Salt Act. Kamaraj, during the trial, did not refute the charges and consequently, he was sentenced on 9 June 1930 to two years of rigorous imprisonment, and was first sent to the central prison, Tiruchirappalli and, later, shifted to Bellary Alipuram Jail. He refused to come out on parole even to see his ailing grandmother - Parvathiammal.

The signing of the Gandhi - Irwin Pact on 4 March 1931, led to the suspension of the Civil Disobedience Movement on the part of Congress and an assurance on the part of the British Government to effect constitutional changes to improve the political conditions in India. As a result of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, all the prisoners were released. Kamaraj was also released on 12 March 1931 before he could serve his full term imprisonment. Lord Irwin, who was determined to crush the challenge of the Congress succeeded Lord Willington as Viceroy. The attitude of the Viceroy and his official machinery left Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress working committee with no option, but to revive the Civil Disobedience Movement.

In Virudhunagar, under the inspiring leadership of Kamaraj, there were picketing and processions. The volunteers were inhumanly attacked. In spite of the inhuman atrocities, the volunteers carried on the processions and demonstrations almost daily in Virudhunagar. Realising that Kamaraj was the main force behind the volunteers, the police arrested him on January 10, 1932.

His contacts with the revolutionaries like Jaidev Kapur and Kamalnath Tiwari in the prison at Vellore made the British implicate Kamaraj in a number of alleged conspiracy cases. In the years 1933-1934, Kamaraj was accused in an inter-provincial conspiracy case. It was known as the 'Madras Conspiracy Case'; Kamaraj was accused of conspiring with his friend Arunachalam to assassinate the Bengal Governor Sir John Anderson, known for his repressive policies against freedom fighters when he came to Ooty for summer. The police charge-sheeted Kamaraj for supplying two pistols to Arunachalam. The police investigation failed to prove the involvement of Kamaraj. However, the British Government again implicated Kamaraj in another conspiracy case known as the 'Virudhunagar Srivilliputhur Police Station Bomb Explosion Case'. It was reported that bombs were thrown on the night of 21 September 1933 at the post office and police station buildings at Virudhunagar resulting in an explosion, but nobody was injured. In this case, K.S.Muthusamy, Kamaraj Mariappan, and Thiru. Narayanaswamy Naidu were arrested on 9 November 1933. When the case came to trial, the local Sub-Inspector Ananda Krishnan refused to produce evidence. The police superintendent of Sivakasi, Parthasarathi, and Thothathari Ayyangar of Madras CID took special efforts to prove the role of Kamaraj in the conspiracy by coercing Venkatachalam to become an approver in the case.

During the course of the trial of the conspiracy case, the police frequently harassed Kamaraj, his friends, and relatives. On one occasion, they wanted to search his residence. His mother protested, but later allowed the police to search only in the presence of her neighbours. The failure of the English Government to prove charges in the conspiracy cases relieved Kamaraj from the latches of law, otherwise it would have been difficult for him to continue his work for the cause of Congress. Though he was acquitted, Kamaraj had to spend a considerable amount of money by selling much of the ancestral property to conduct the case. He was able to retain only his house at Virudhunagar. The August offer of 1940 was a great setback for the Nationalist leaders. The appeal made by Congress for the active association of Indians in the formation of Government was turned down by the Viceroy. The hour of struggle came nearer and on 15 September 1940. The AICC (All India Congress Committee) decided to give Mahatma Gandhi the mandate for immediate and appropriate steps to face the crisis. Accordingly, Mahatma Gandhi decided in favour of Individual Civil Disobedience.

Under this novel plan of Individual Satyagraha, every Satyagrahi, selected by Mahatma Gandhi, had to inform the Magistrate of his intention to defy the law. The magistrate would announce the date, time, and place of Satyagraha. He was expected to explain to those present there not to donate to the war or supply materials for war. On arrest and subsequent release, a Satyagrahi was supported to repeat the Satyagraha. In the Madras Presidency, the authorities severely dealt with Congressmen undertaking Satyagraha. T.S.S.Rajan, Satyamurti and Rajaji were arrested. Kamaraj, President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee (TNCC), left for Wardha to secure approval for the list of Satyagrahis from Mahatma Gandhi. However, while he was on his way to Wardha, police arrested him at Guntur and seized the list of Satyagrahis from him on 20 December 1940.

Kamaraj was arrested in December and at the time of his arrest, the police could not give a reason for his arrest. It was mentioned that he was detained under the Defence of India rules and kept along with other Sathyagrahis and Indian leaders in Vellore Jail. Later, the police charge-sheeted him accusing him of making anti-war speeches and preventing the people from contributing to the war. The Governor of Madras, Arthur Hope made an extensive tour of Tamil Nadu to collect war funds. However, Kamaraj also made a whirlwind tour of the places proposed to be visited by the Governor for the collection of the war fund and successfully prevented people from making contribution to it. It was cited as a Major reason for his detention under the Defence of India rules. It was for the third time that Kamaraj experienced the horrors of jail life. Kamaraj was released from Vellore Jail on 3 November 1941. While he was still in jail, with a view to honour him, the Virudhunagar council unanimously elected him as the Chairman.

After the failure of the Cripps Mission in April 1942, the working Congress Committee met at Wardha on 6 July 1942. The epoch, making a resolution demanding the British to Quit India was passed on July 14. The pressure from the internal community to meet the demands of Indians for independence did not succeed. Hence, the final decision on the Quit India call was to be made by the All India Congress Committee (AICC), which met in Bombay. The Bombay Session of the AICC endorsed the July 14 Resolution of Wardha on 8 August 1942. Mahatma Gandhi congratulated Kamaraj (AICC) when the resolution was passed by an overwhelming majority and he requested the people to plunge into the struggle with the determination either to 'Do or Die'. Kamaraj followed this principle up to his last breath.

B. Prominent Women Freedom Fighters

(i) Velu Nachiyar

A warrior queen, a gallant female military commander, and an army of 5,000 together gave the British a tough time. This was a historic event that gave India not



only its first female warrior, but it also is said to be the first-ever instance of suicide bombing in India. The turning point in Velu's life was when the British, led by the son of the Nawab of Arcot, killed her husband Muthu Vaduganatha Thevar in the Kalaiyar Koil War. Velu and her daughter, Vellachi, were then forced to flee from Sivagangai. Velu reached Dindigul, a distant land from Sivagangai where she spent eight years under the sanctuary of the then ruler of Dindigul Gopal Naicker.

It was at Dindigul that she also met Hyder Ali, the Sultan of Mysore, in whose eyes she found favour as she had impressed him with her fluent Urdu and intellect. In 1780, with the unwavering support of Gopal Naicker and the allied forces of Hyder Ali, Velu Nachiyar set out to avenge her beloved husband's death and regain control over her kingdom.

While the British had taken complete control over the Sivaganga Fort, in Dindigul, Velu along with her military commander, Kuyili, devised a suicide plan. For the plan to be successful, it was important to know where the British had stored their arms and ammunition. With Velu's excellent sources of intelligence, she gathered agents who helped her find the armoury chambers in the fort and soon the plan was set to action.

(ii) Captain Lakshmi

Captain Lakshmi came into the limelight in India towards the end of World War II for her role as the commander of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment of the INA (Indian National Army) and her role as a Minister in Subhas Bose's Azad Hind Government. In 1942, during the historic surrender of Singapore by the British to the Japanese, she worked hard in serving the prisoners of war who were hurt during the skirmishes. In the process, she met many Indian Prisoners of War (POWs) who were thinking of forming an Indian liberation army.



Subhas Chandra Bose arrived in Singapore on July 2, 1943. In the next few days, at all his public meetings, Netaji spoke of his determination to raise a women's regiment, the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, which would also "fight for Indian Independence and make it complete". Lakshmi wasted no time in joining the new regiment. The unit had the strength of a Brigade. In a regular army, this women's army unit was the first of its kind in Asia. The army fought on the side of the Axis powers against the British.

Lakshmi was active both militarily and on the medical front. She played a heroic role not only in the fighting, but also became the Minister-in-charge of the Women's Organisation in Arzi Hukumate Azad Hind (Provisional Government of Free India) later, led by Subhas Chandra Bose. Lakshmi Sahgal held this portfolio over and above her command of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. Lakshmi was captured and brought to British India on March 4, 1946, where she received a heroine's welcome. The British realised that keeping her a prisoner would prove counter-productive and hence released her later.

(iii) S. Ambujammal



She was a committee member of Sarada Ladies' Union from 1929 to 1936. She worked closely with Sister Subbulakshmi. In 1929, she was nominated Treasurer of the Women's Swadeshi League, Madras. This League was a non-political wing of Congress, implementing Mahatma Gandhi's social and economic programmes. After she joined, a number of women donated their jewellery to support the national movement at Mahatma Gandhi's request. She was a strong proponent of Swadeshi and embraced khadi. Her entry into political life was in 1930, during the Civil Disobedience Movement. She joined the Salt Satyagraha and courted arrest. In 1932, she was hailed

as the "Third Dictator" of the Congress and led the Satyagrahis to boycott foreign clothes. She was arrested and sentenced to six months imprisonment.

(iv) Anjalai Ammal



Anjalai Ammal was a prominent freedom fighter in the Indian Freedom Struggle for independence. She was born in 1890 in a simple town called Mudhunagar, which is located in Cuddalore. She was born into a simple family and studied up to fifth grade. Her husband was Murugappa who was an agent in a magazine. She started her political life by joining the non-co-operation movement of Mahatma Gandhi. She was the first woman from South India to take part in the non-co-operation movement in 1921. She sold her family lands and her house and spent the money on India's struggle for freedom. In 1927, she participated in the protest for removing Neil's statue. She also made her nine-year-old child, Ammakannu to participate in the protest and went to jail along with her daughter. She raised her nine-year-old child in the prison. Mahatma Gandhi visited Ammakannu and Anjalai Ammal often in the prison. He renamed Ammakannu as Leelavathi and took her with him to Vaardha Ashram. She was badly wounded during her participation in the Salt Satyagraha in 1930.

In 1931, she presided over the All India Women Congress Meet. In 1932, she took part in another struggle for which she was sent to Vellore prison. She was pregnant at the time and was released on bail on account of her delivery. Within two weeks after her son was born, she was sent back to the Vellore prison. Once when Mahatma Gandhi came to Cuddalore, the British Government prohibited him from visiting Anjalai Ammal. However, Anjalai Ammal came in a horse cart wearing a burqa and visited him. Because of her courage, Mahatma Gandhi called her 'South India's Jhansi Rani".

(C) Nationalist Poets in Freedom Struggle

(i) Subramaniya Bharathi

Bharathi's political campaign started with his composition of national songs. He wrote many poetical works during his stay in Pondicherry during 1908-1918.



He translated Gita into Tamil. The Panchali Sabatham, the Kuyil Pattu, and the Kannan Pattukkal were written during that period. The first published poetical work on nationalism in Tamil was made by Bharathi in 1907. The collection Swadesha Geethangal was published free of cost. It runs to four pages consisting of three songs. The first song is 'Vande Mataram', the great slogan which inspired the freedom fighters. The second song is in praise of this great motherland. The third song is also on Bharat.

Bharathi's nationalist songs were inspiring in content, say in style, and interesting to read. During the days of freedom struggle, arousing the nationalist sentiment in the minds of the uneducated masses was essential. Bharathi's songs were easy to sing, his verses were simple and many freedom fighters were able to get them by heart. They sang them to those who were unable to read. Bharathi gave a clarion call to his countrymen as follows:

"No fears! No fears! No fears at all
Even if the heavens fall over our heads.
No fears! No fears! No fears at all!
The cosmos may crumble. But we won't be cowed.
The ocean may rise in rage and flood the land. But we won't wink"

These lines drove fear from the minds of the freedom fighters.

(ii) Namakkal Kavignar Ramalingam



Namakkal Kavignar Ramalingam Pillai was attracted by the Gandhian methods of struggle. In those days, drama played a remarkable role in propagating the ideas of freedom struggle. His songs were sung on stages. The *Tamilan Idhayam, Sangoli, Kavithanjali* and the *Tamilthen* are his important works. These songs are mostly political in content, lyrical in sound, and capable of capturing the lips easily. He is remembered still for his acclaim as a nationalist poet.

(iii) Kavimani Desiga Vinayagam Pillai



Desiga Vinayagam Pillai was born in 1876 at Terur Kanniyakumari. In 1895, he composed his poetical work namely Alagammai Asiriya Virutham. He started his career as a teacher in an elementary school at Kottar. A lot of students underwent political apprenticeship under him. In a short period, he got the job of a lecturer at Maharaja's College for Women at Trivandrum. During his career at Trivandrum, he started his Gandhian way of life. He wrote poems to the journal Tamilan.

His collection consisted of about 220 songs. Among them seven songs are on the greatness of the National Flag, the Congress, khaddar, the Round Table Conferences, Independence, and Republic. Some songs are in praise of Mahatma Gandhi, Kasturibai, Sarojini Naidu, Rajaji, and V.O. Chidambaram. His poems on khaddar, plead with the people to purchase khaddar clothes and provide means to meet the needs of the needy. The poem reveals the hard labour of those who work to weave khadar clothes. In another song, he sang about the Second Round Table Conference held in London in 1932. He got the title 'Kavimani'. He died on 26 September 1954.

(iv) Bharathidasan



He composed small verses with simple words and pleased his fellow students. He was a very good singer and sang folk songs. Once he sang some of the songs of Bharathi at a wedding function. Bharathi himself was there listening to his singing. That was the first occasion when he met Bharathi, who inspired him to write songs on nationalism. He composed songs on khaddar and Swadeshi.

He wrote many poems on nationalism, khaddar, and national unity. His songs were on Bharathi, Aurobindo, V.O.Chidambaram, and such other leaders. His poems appeared in many of the nationalist journals of the time. Like

Bharathi, he also appealed to God in his initial years of nationalistic aspirations. He prays to Lord Muruga of Mayilam to make India a free land and provide bliss to the people. He laments the pathetic condition of the Indians and pleads to God to drive away all the ills. He helped Bharathi at Pondicherry. He also gave asylum to Madasamy, a wanted criminal in connection with the murder of the Collector Ashe at Maniyachi. He admitted that he had to suffer a lot to do these.

(v) Thiru. Vi.Kalyanasundaram



The editor of Navasakti and Desabaktan, Thiru.V.Kalyanasundaram rendered his might to inculcate nationalist fervour among the public through his literary works. He wrote his first set of poems on nationalism during Tilak's visit to England in connection with a case. In 1919, he met Gandhi at Arakonam. He took active part in organising satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act and was more interested in trade union activities. His efforts towards certain social reforms are noteworthy. He had certain differences with some Congress leaders. His important poetical contributions for the cause of nationalism are Urimai Vetkai Allathu Nattuppadal and Suthanthira Namavali. The first is collection of his songs on nationalism. The first song is one of 'independence' and the second song is in praise of Bharat, the mother land. There are songs on Tamil and Tamil Nadu. He sang on the second memorial day of the Punjab massacre in 1920. In it, he laments the pathetic condition of Bharat. He slashes at the intention of the rulers to introduce the Rowlatt Act. In his poem, he visualised independent Bharat with so many good features. He died in 1953.



(vi) Suddhananda Bharathi

Suddhananda Bharathi was a nationalist poet. He had training in teaching at a missionary institution at Pasumalai near Madurai. After the completion of the training, he got an appointment in a school at Kattuputtur in Thanjavur District. He got training as a scout instructor at Vellore. During his school service,

he composed several poetical works. Bharatha Sakthi Maha Kaviyam, his magnum opus was composed while serving at Kattuputtur. He tried coining technical terms in Tamil. He served for sometime in a High School at Devakottai. Later, he joined V.V.S.Iyer who was running a Gurukulam at Cheranmadevi. At the tragic death of V.V.S.Iyer in an accident, he left for Pamani in Thanjavur District, engaged himself in rural reconstruction, and spared his time on writing on nationalism and Indian politics.

Bharatha Sakthi Maha Kaviyam is an epical work, which runs to one thousand pages. He also published a collection of poem titled Indhiya Charitira Kummi. In it, he traces the history of India. In a set of poems on the Company India, he exposes the way in which the British established their political power in India. There is a song on Indian National Congress, which depicts the rise of the Congress and the contribution of the leaders to the national movement. In another song, he praised Gandhi and did hope for the success of Gandhian struggle for independence. His Singanatham traces the patriotic fervour of the Tamil society.


இந்தியா.

சகிக்கிறமைதோறும் வெளியாகும்.


இந்தியா.

சகிக்கிறமைதோறும் வெளியாகும்.


சுதேசமித்திரன்.

The Swadesamitran.

[தினப்பதிப்பு.]

Regist—No. M. 89.

Vol. XL பு—40. சென்னை—சனத்தி-ஆம் மார்கழி 1உ. 15th December, 1920 [கந்தி-1339-ஸ்ரீமுகவரிஷ 4-உ.]

[இ—203

மகா யுத்த சரித்திரம்.

726 படங்கள்.

225 யுத்த படங்கள்.

32 பூகோளப் படங்கள்.

விலை ரூ. 1—14—0.

கதராத்துணிகள்.

டாட்டா நிலக்கரி சீங்கம் லிமிடெட்.

அதிகரித்த மூலதனம்.

ரூபா 12,00,00,000.

ரூபா 7,58,72,400.

ரூபா 1,50,81,268.

இருப்புத்தொகை (Reserve fund)

ரூபா 8,50,000.

D. J. டாட்டா, Kt.

சுருஜ்மல் லல்துாராம்

அண்டு கம்பெனி,

டயமண்ட்

வர்த்தகர்.

51, சரஸ்தூர் தெரு,

பம்பாய்.

ஆர்டர்கள்—அனுப்பவும்,

நீர்ரோகம் கூடாது!

(TRYPSOGEN)

டிரிப்ஸோஜன்

இந்த உயர்ந்த மிகவும் சக்தி வாய்ந்த ஜலதோஷத்தைக் குணப்படுத்தும் மருந்தை வேறெங்கும், எவரும் தருவதில்லை. ஆனால் இதை மட்டும் பயன்படுத்தினால் எவ்வளவு பெரிய ஜலதோஷமும் ஒரு நாளில் நீங்கிவிடும்.

G. W. CARNRICK CO,

New York.

"தண்ணான்" பாட்டி.

சுதேசமித்திரன் புத்தகசாலை

புதிய புத்தகம்,

ஆதர ரூபிகர.

"சுதேசமித்திரன்" சந்தா விபரம்.

தினப் பதிப்பு.

	ரூபா	அ	பை
வருஷம் 1-க்கு	12	0	0
மாதத்திற்கு	1	0	0
3 மாசத்திற்கு	3	0	0
6 மாசத்திற்கு	6	0	0
உள்நாட்டிற்கு மாதம் 1-க்கு	1	4	0

"சுதேசமித்திரன்" சந்தா விபரம்.

முப்பாள பதிப்பு.

	ரூபா	அ	பை
வருஷம் 1-க்கு	12	0	0
மாதத்திற்கு	1	0	0
3 மாசத்திற்கு	3	0	0
6 மாசத்திற்கு	6	0	0
உள்நாட்டிற்கு மாதம் 1-க்கு	1	4	0

2

Indian Nationalism and Classical Tamil Literature

- Dr. Rajesh Venkatasubramanian

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Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
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The role of culture in a broad sense in the national liberation struggle against European colonialism has been a subject of investigation among scholars and activists. In the context of Africa, one of the important thinkers who theorised the role of culture in the anti-colonial liberation struggle is Amilcar Cabral (1924-1973). For Cabral, if imperialist domination involved cultural oppression, national liberation is necessarily an act of culture. Noting that culture is not uniform and that it is necessary to recognise the diversity of cultures in a colonised society, Cabral argued that the definition of national culture in the liberation struggle involves identifying positive aspects of elite culture as well as teasing out positive cultural values from every well defined social group.

As he put it, "As on the political level and without minimizing the positive contribution, which privileged classes or strata may make to the struggle, the liberation movement must, on the cultural level, base its action on popular culture, whatever the diversity of cultural levels in the country."[1] The implications of Cabral's theorisation of the role of culture in national liberation struggle have not been fully explored in the context of anti- national liberation struggle in India. Whatever has been commented on the culture in the modern Indian history largely revolved around nationalist engagement with classical Sanskrit texts and traditions. On the other hand, the nationalist interpretations of regional and popular culture and the extent to which they are incorporated or ignored in the anti-colonial resistance had to be examined. Here, an attempt is made to study the nationalists, based in the Tamil speaking districts of the colonial Madras Presidency, and their engagement with classical Tamil literature.

The Indian National Congress, founded in 1885 in Bombay, had representatives from Madras Presidency right from the beginning. Many of the prominent freedom fighters from Tamil Nadu were Tamil scholars. Salem Ramaswamy Mudaliyar, who encouraged U.V.Swaminatha Iyer, constantly to carry out research and publish classical Tamil literary works, was a moderate Congressman. After completing B.A., B.L., he was appointed as a district munsif, before becoming an advocate at the Madras High Court. When the general election was held in England in 1885, he was elected from Madras Presidency to visit England to observe the proceedings of the election. He served as a councillor of the Madras Municipality and a member of the Senate of Madras University. He extended scholarly and material help to Swaminatha Iyer to publish literary works like the Silappatikaram, Sivakachintamani, Pathuppattu, and Purananuru. He addressed a gathering in Cosmopolitan Club in Madras on the Sivakachintamani, a Jain epic in Tamil, and spoke highly of Swaminatha Iyer's editorial activities.[2] A number of Tamil scholars participated in a meeting convened at the death of Ramaswamy Mudaliyar and contributed poems in his memory. Justice Muthuswamy Iyer convened a special meeting in the Cosmopolitan Club to condole the death of Ramaswamy Mudaliyar.[3]

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1 *Amilcar Cabral, 'National Liberation and Culture', in Unity and Struggle: Speeches and Writings, Monthly Review Press, 1979, pp. 138-154.*

2 *The obituary note of Salem Ramaswamy Mudaliyar appeared in Swadesamitran. It contains his short biography. See Swadesamitran, 12 March 1892, p. 81. See also the letters received by U.V. Swaminatha Iyer from Salem Ramaswamy Mudaliyar in Tamil Karuvoolam, vol. C, U.V. Swaminatha Iyer Library, Madras, p. 106 and pp. 110–11. The autobiography of U.V. Swaminatha Iyer also contains interesting accounts of Salem Ramaswamy Mudaliyar; see U.V. Swaminatha Iyer, En Charitram, U.V. Swaminatha Iyer Library, Madras, seventh reprint, 2008.*

3 *Swadesamitran, 22 March 1892, , p. 95.*

The contribution of the freedom fighters to the Tamil language and literature not only enriched Tamil, but also served the cause of nationalism. The loyalty of the nationalist leaders was twofold, viz., the Indian nation and Tamil region. G.Subramania Iyer (1851–1921), founder of The Hindu and Swadesamitran, emphasised the need to communicate in the regional language. He founded a society called 'The Society for the Dissemination of Useful Knowledge' as early as 1883 to encourage the use of Tamil in scientific discourses. Subramania Iyer also published pamphlets in Tamil highlighting the aims of Congress and the national movement. He also published pamphlets in question answer format on Congress and its activities for the benefit of the masses.



The Tamil newspaper Swadesamitran regularly carried articles on Tamil language and literature. It advertised the activities of the Madurai Tamil Sangam and lauded the efforts of those individuals and institutions who worked for the growth of the Tamil language and literature combined with the spirit of nationalism. When the British colonial Government entrusted the work to compile a lexicon for Tamil to G.U.Pope with a grant of 30,000 rupees, the Swadesamitran criticised the government for encouraging a foreigner without considering indigenous Tamil scholars.[4]

It regularly carried articles highlighting the discriminative attitude of the colonial state towards Indians. The publication of advertisements and the review of classical Tamil literary works figured in the columns of the Swadesamitran regularly. The publication of classical Tamil literature inspired the nationalists in the Tamil speaking Districts. They were inspired by the theme of heroism and love represented in the classical Sangam poetry. A Tamil weekly, India, edited by Subramaniya Bharathi, invoked the Thirukkural and criticised the colonial Government for deviating from the path expounded by the author of the Thirukkural on the subject of the State. It is appropriate to quote the invocation of the Thirukkural in the criticism of the colonial Government by the editor of India here: "Tiruvalluvar, the great Tamil poet, has said: "The duties of a king are fourfold, viz., - 1) to increase his sources of income; 2) to accumulate the wealth acquired thereby; 3) to guard it from being taken away by others; and 4) to divide it equitably among his subjects". Now one must see how far the British Government has been discharging these duties of a king. As for

4 *Puthiathor Tamil Agarathy', Swadesamitran, 16 October 1906, p. 2.*



guarding its wealth against the inroads of others our Government is the weakest here. Instead of the robbers taking its wealth by force, it will invite them and pay them any amount as tribute. This has been clearly illustrated by the recent Zakkakhal expedition and by the way in which it is treating the Afridis who have until now committed countless robberies in Peshawar. Then again many of its countrymen, who are not fit for any work in their own country, are brought over here and paid high salaries. Though there are abler people here, they are not cared for by the government. Even if, by chance, some of them happen to be given higher posts, they are not paid the same salaries and they are not treated with the same respect as these foreigners. Moreover, it confers the highest and most responsible appointments on youngsters coming out from England; but it does not trust the Indians with the same posts. Thus, these whites take away enough money from the country, both openly and secretly. As if all this was not enough, the police, who have been employed to guard the wealth of the country, out do their master in iniquity. Whenever any dacoity or murder takes place, they quietly abscond from the place for a month and then leisurely step into wreak their vengeance on particular people for having refused to bribe them of any time. Regarding the last duty of dividing the wealth among its subjects, the government never does this. It always distrusts its subjects and so does not think it is necessary to spend much on them. Even the few pleasure resorts built by it, apparently for the use of the public, are really intended only for the benefit of the whites."[5]

The Thirukkural was a revered literary work among the nationalists in the Tamil speaking region. Leaders like V.O.Chidambaram Pillai, V.V.S.Iyer, and C.Rajagopalachari spent considerable time editing, translating, and publishing the Thirukkural for the benefit of a larger audience. Their engagement with classical Tamil literature was dictated by their nationalist concerns. V.O.Chidambaram Pillai (1872–1936), the hero of the Swadeshi movement in Tamil Nadu, a militant

5 *'Four Fold Duties of a King', taken from India, 25 April 1908, cited in Extracts from Report on English Newspapers, 1908, pp. 299–300.*



nationalist and the founder of the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company, spent considerable time in editing and publishing classical Tamil literary works.

He communicated with Tamil scholar S.Vaiyapuri Pillai from 1913 onwards when he came to know that the latter had in his collection the palm-leaf manuscript copy of Ilampuranar 's commentary to the orthography (Eluttatikaram) section of the Tholkappiyam. Together with Vaiyapuri Pillai, V.O.Chidambaram Pillai published the Tholkappiyam with the commentary of Ilampuranar.[6] Chidambaram Pillai was concerned with popularising the classics, and he understood the simplicity of the medieval commentator Ilampuranar 's commentary on the Tholkappiyam.

Chidambaram Pillai's urge to democratise classical Tamil literature and grammar can be attributed to his involvement in the mass-based Indian nationalist movement. He also published the first section (Arattuppal) of the Thirukkural with the commentary of Manakkudavar in 1917. While searching for the palm-leaf manuscript copies of Manakkudavar's commentary to the Thirukkural, Chidambaram Pillai realised that one of the copies was in the collection of U.V.Swaminatha Iyer. He wrote to Iyer requesting him to send the copy, which yielded him a useful source. The democratising urge of Chidambaram Pillai can be found in the preface to his Thirukkural edition as well. He made an appeal that everyone should read the Thirukkural and scrutinise the work independently without the influence of anyone.[7] A year before his death, Chidambaram Pillai published the Thirukkural with his commentary for the first section (Arattuppal).[8] The preface



6 *V. Sarojini, Vaiyapuri Pillai Valkaikkurippukkal, Tamil Puthagalayam, Madras, 1957, pp. 80-81.*

7 *See preface in V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, Tiruvalluvar Tirukkural Manakkutavarurai Arattuppal, Perambur, Chennai, 1917.*

8 *Tevyappulamait Tiruvalluva Nayanar Tirukkuralum Tesapimani Va. Vu. Chidambaram Pillai Virut- tiuraiyum, Mutarpakam Cirappuppayirattutan Aratuppal, 1935. It is to be noted that*



explains that he completed the work while living in Tuticorin. The research he did on the orthography (Eluttatikaram) section of the Tholkappiyam with the commentary of Ilampuranar was published in 1928. In the preface to the grammar, Chidambaram Pillai underlined the uniqueness of the Tamil language and its grammatical conventions, which are not found in the 'Aryan languages'. Pillai observed, nevertheless the author of the Tholkappiyam introduced the 'Aryan words, habits, and ideology' in grammar, it still could be considered an honest work in Tamil.[9] The uniqueness of Tamil, Chidambaram Pillai found in the Tamil grammatical and literary tradition did not lead him to join the league of non-Brahmin Dravidian nationalism. His loyalty, like that of the other nationalist leaders of Tamil Nadu, was two-fold, viz., to the Indian nation and Tamil region.

Similarly, V.V.S.Iyer, another militant nationalist belonging to the extremist wing of Congress, engaged in a close study of the Thirukkural. In 1915, he published a translation of the Thirukkural titled The Kural or the Maxims of Thiruvalluvar. He studied the Thirukkural and started his translation while in Pondicherry, as a refugee, after the outbreak of the First World War. He began translating the Thirukkural on 1 November 1914 and completed the task on 1 March 1915 while still being a refugee in Pondicherry.[10] In the preface to the translation, V.V.S.Iyer noted: "In undertaking this translation, my object has been not only to spread the knowledge of Thiruvalluvar 's grand work as widely as possible in the world, but also to induce my own countrymen speaking languages other than Tamil to retranslate it into their different vernaculars, so that the words of a great moral teacher, who intended his message for all the world and for all time, may not fail at least now to reach the ears of the poorest of the poor and the simplest of the simple of his own countrymen, and to sow in their hearts the seeds of a noble, dignified, virtuous, and manly life."[11]

there is no mention of the publisher or the place of publication of this volume. Instead, it has been stated that the paper, ink, thread for binding were Swadeshi products.

9 *V.O. Chidambaram Pillai, Tholkappiyam Ilampuranam Eluttatikaram Patavurai, Victoria Printing Press, Tuticorin, 1941, p. 1.*

10 *See the preface written by V.V.S. Krishnamurthy in V.V.S. Iyer, The Kural or the Maxims of Tiruvalluvar, third edition, V.V.S. Krishnamurthy and Co, Tiruchirapalli, 1952.*

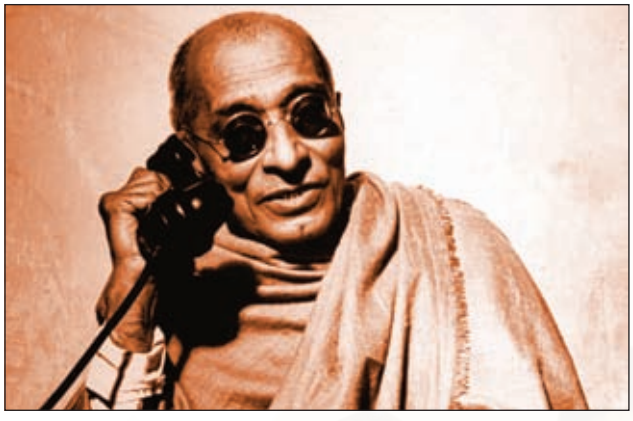
11 *V.V.S. Iyer, The Kural or the Maxims of Tiruvalluvar, third edition, V.V.S. Krishnamurthy and Co, Tiruchirapalli, 1952, pp. xlviii– lix.*



The democratising urge noted in V.O.Chidambaram Pillai's scholarly ventures in Tamil can be found in the writings of V.V.S.Iyer as well as in the passage quoted above. Though nationalists like V.O.Chidambaram Pillai and V.V.S.Iyer identified the unique elements of Tamil culture, they never resorted to secessionism. The loyalty to the Indian nation remained, while at the same time, loyalty to the Tamil language and literature can be found in their writings. C.Subramaniya Bharathi (1882–1921), an extremist Congress nationalist and a fiery Tamil poet who laid the foundation for modern Tamil poetry, took inspiration from the heroism represented in the classical Tamil literary work Purananuru. He showered praises on U.V.Swaminatha Iyer for recovering and publishing rare literary works in Tamil. Bharathi infused the social message in his poems and fervently critiqued the colonial state for its exploitative nature. In one of his poems, he paid a glowing tribute to the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917 and described the fall of the Czar (old regime) as a 'collapsing wall'. His journalistic writings reflect his wide knowledge of contemporary history and world politics. Like the other Tamil scholars of Congress, Bharathi too underlined the uniqueness of Tamil. In one of the poems, he wrote, "Of all the languages I know, I have not heard a sweeter language than Tamil". Yet this underlining of the uniqueness of Tamil did not prevent him from forming a devotion and loyalty to the Indian nation, which he described as 'Bharatha Desam'.

Unlike V.V.S.Iyer and V.O.Chidambaram Pillai, Bharathi invoked the Thirukkural and used the couplets to critique the colonial state. Bharathi also directed the criticism at the colonial state in his essay titled The Ancient Tamil Conception of a "State" published in India. Citing a couplet, from a chapter called 'Nadu' (the couplet reads "that a state, which has no enemy, no hunger and no disease is a real state'), Bharathi argued that the colonial state was a direct anti-thesis of the Thiruvalluvar 's description of the state. He argued that under British colonial rule, the population of the country was affected by diseases like cholera, plague, and other communicable diseases. Further, he argued that the country was reeling under famines, a cause for widespread hunger and poverty because of the exploitative nature of the parasitic British government. The colonial state, according to Bharathi, had created both internal and external enemies because of its inept rule.[12]

12 *'Puratanat Tamilarkalin (Ennam) Rajyam Allatu "Natu'", India, 22 June 1907, pp. 2–3.*



Subramaniya Bharathi's inspiration from Tamil literature did not stop with the Thirukkural. He wrote an essay praising the article of Mu.Raghava Iyengar on 'Veera Thaimargal' (Heroic Mothers) which appeared in one of the issues of the Senthamizh literary magazine in 1907. In the article on heroic mothers, Raghava Iyengar cited a number of verses from the Purananuru, one of the eight anthologies that constitute Sangam literature, to highlight the heroic qualities of mothers in ancient Tamil Nadu.

The heroic mothers gave birth to men who waged wars, displayed valour and heroism, and protected the Tamil population. India not only reproduced the article of Mu. Raghava Iyengar, but also showered praises on the scholar. Bharathi wrote a letter to Raghava Iyengar praising the 'Swadeshi' spirit in the essay: "Having felt extremely happy after reading your essay 'Veera Thaimargal' that appeared in Senthamizh, I decided to write this letter to convey my happiness to you. I did not come to praise your scholarship. The world knows about it. I only salute the new fire of 'Swadeshi' that has risen in your faultless heart.



You have referred to the spinning of the wheel of time at the end of your essay. Yes, the wheel of time is indeed spinning. From a low-lying position of the wheel of 'Iumpen Bharatam', the time has come for the birth of 'Great Bharatam'. The fire that has risen in your heart is one among the light that is showing the way to great Bharatam for the inhabitants of this country who are now sunken in the lumpen state. I salute that fire. Let the fire envelop. Om!"[13]

This essay is reproduced in Seeni Viswanathan, ed., Kalavaricaippatuttappatta Bharathi Pataippukkal, volume 2, Chennai, 2001, pp. 1070–71.

13 *Seeni Viswanathan, Kalavaricaippatuttappatta Bharathi Pataippukkal, volume 2, 2001, p.1117. The translation of the letter is mine.*

Bharathi stood for the development of the Tamil language and literature in the Indian nationalist struggle. He vehemently criticised those indigenous intellectuals who encouraged English at the expense of the Indian language like Tamil. He wrote in the Bala Bharata that those who take genuine pride in the nation should make it a point to acquaint themselves with the spirit of the inherited language and culture and put forth their efforts towards the revival, improvement, purification, and cultivation of the 'mother literature'.[14] After citing parallels from Bengal, Maharashtra and Andhra, where the leaders had worked for the development of their respective regional languages, he criticised the Tamil people for their craze of English at the expense of Tamil.

He highlighted the richness of the Tamil language and literature in the following words: "About 20 centuries, Tamil literature and thoughts were so highly developed as to contest the palm of excellence with the Sanskritists or any other people in the world. A poet like Kamban and a teacher of humanity like Valluvar have found in the Tamil Language an efficient vehicle of their thoughts, dreams, and heart-throbbings".[15] Bharathi then made an appeal to the educated countrymen to work towards the development of national literature and culture. He paid tribute to U.V. Swaminatha Iyer for constantly working towards the enrichment of the Tamil language and literature at a time when the craze for English had gripped the population.[16]

14 *Bala Bharata, January 1908, pp. 61–61. This article titled 'Vernacular Literature' is reproduced in Seeni Viswanathan, ed., Kalavaricaippatuttappatta Bharathi Pataippukkal, volume 3, Chennai, 2001, p. 13.*

15 *Bala Bharata, January 1908, pp. 61–61; Seeni Viswanathan, ed., Kalavaricaippatuttappatta Bharathi Pataippukkal, volume 3, Chennai, 2001, p. 14.*

16 *Bala Bharata, January 1908, pp. 61–61; Seeni Viswanathan, ed., Kalavaricaippatuttappatta Bharathi Pataippukkal, volume 3, Chennai, 2001, p. 15.*



3

Tribal Freedom Fighters in Tamil Nadu: An Unexplored History

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I) The Argument

Let us begin with, what is the meaning of 'freedom fighter'? Freedom fighter means a person who is protesting against an oppressive and illegitimate Government. In the Indian context, freedom fighter means those who stood up to oppose the colonial rule and if at all they belonged to tribal communities, they are exclusively referred as Tribal Freedom Fighters. A few tribal revolts might have gone unnoticed during the pre-colonial era since external intervention was very limited during that period. Given the relative abundance of forest resources, instances of violent reactions against the State could have been fewer and probably less in intensity (Singh, 2004:46).

Singh rightly pointed out: "While in the long pre- colonial period there were conflicts between the state, peasants, and pastoralists on the one hand, and the forest dwellers on the other. It was during the colonial period, particularly from the latter half of the nineteenth century, when the commercial exploitation of forest intensified, that the forest-based protests, uprisings, and movements began on a larger scale" (Singh, 2004:47). Indeed, several tribals' revolts occurred during the colonial period. According to Ragavaiah, between 1778 and 1947, nearly 80 major tribal revolts erupted in India (Ragavaiah, 1971:261-266). However, several revolts have not been chronicled and one such was the tribal revolt in the Kolli hills of Salem District in erstwhile Madras Presidency and the present Tamil Nadu during the late eighteenth century (Saravanan, 1999: 67-81). Invariably, all these revolts were protests against the high revenue demand with a strong underpinning to retain their uniqueness of political, administrative, and cultural identity and the subsistence economy (Raghavaiah, 1979:14).

The tribal movements and revolts of the colonial era could be classified into three broad categories. According to Srivastava, until 1857, during the rule of the East India Company, the agenda of these movements was confined only to availing certain concessions. In the second half of the nineteenth century, they were held against the land revenue system, civil, and criminal regulations, and wide prevailing official apathy during the widespread famines. In the early twentieth century, the target of these movements remained against the moneylenders, traders, and administrators (Srivastava, 1986:5). Interestingly, the early tribal revolts were not for the cause of independence from the British Rule, unlike that of the Poligars of Panchalamkurichi and elsewhere in the early nineteenth century or the national movement that was yet to emerge later on periods in the 1880s (Saravanan, 1999:78). Whether it is native Indian rulers or the colonial power, tribals have marked their imminent struggle against the erosion of their unique identity and to retain their age-old traditions and indigenous way of life.

In the Indian context, the colonial Government (1792 to 1947), for more than one and half centuries, was exploitative and oppressive in nature and this has triggered the consciousness and surface of the Indian subcontinent at different phases, periods, locations, perspectives, and with variations in magnitudes. The grudge against colonial rule invariably started getting noticed or demarked as protests, revolts, and rebellions from the late eighteenth century onwards to the end of the colonial rule (1947). It is to be noted that until the late nineteenth century or until the formation of the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1885, there was no national-level freedom fighter movement in the Indian subcontinent. Moreover, several protests, revolts,

and rebellions were undeniably being witnessed conspicuously in different parts of the country from the late eighteenth century to the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Historically, tribal communities too have been revolting against the rulers to ascertain their traditional rights, retain socio-economic and cultural systems, and were struggling hard against the vesting systems that were of exploitative in nature, especially that of empowering colonial rule to safeguard their livelihood. This resistance is not confined to any region though there might be area-specific variations in its nature and form.

In the Indian subcontinent, the present Tamil Nadu, a part of the erstwhile Madras Presidency, was a pioneering group to protest against colonial administration. The Protests were not only by the upper class of zamindars and rulers in general, but also by the tribals, in particular, from the late eighteenth century onwards. For instance, the antiquity of ground-breaking revolutionary regional leaders such as Periya Marudhu, Chinna Marudhu, Veerapandiya Kattabomman who fought bravely against the British Raj during the late eighteenth century are well known in the annals of history. Such great efforts should be sustained toward an unbiased revision for a comprehensive regional coverage across the Indian subcontinent. It should strictly adhere to the historical evidence without digressing from the facts and not in any condition tilting towards ideologies or lineages of any sort or any philosophy that is imposing in nature!



In the different parts of south of India, the density of the tribal population was invariably very low. Human habitation and density in the hill areas were sparsely distributed. For instance, in the famed Kolli hills, which had been the subject of many poems of the Sangam period (BC 3 to AD 5), the population density has remained indisputably very low right from those days. It was about 500 during the tenth century (Rajanan, 1992:131-132). Even at the time of colonial intervention, there was no dramatic increase in the size of human habitation in the hill regions. Compared to the plains, it has always remained low. In the Salem District of the erstwhile Madras Presidency, the density of the tribal population was only 174 persons per square mile even towards the end of the eighteenth century. Given the scenario, this chapter attempts to capture the tribal freedom fighters in Tamil Nadu during the colonial period. The main objective of this chapter is to capture the role of tribals in the freedom struggle and as to disclose how the tribals have resisted against the British, from the late eighteenth century to the mid-twentieth century in Tamil Nadu.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The second section gives a brief account of different tribals in Tamil Nadu. The third section analyses the socio-economic conditions of the different tribal communities during the pre-colonial period (1792). The fourth section explores on how the colonial intervention was fought by protest and by raising challenges through the legal mechanism in the different hill areas of Tamil Nadu (1792-1947), and the last section ends with the concluding observations.

II) Sketches of different Tribals in Tamil Nadu

In Tamil Nadu, there are 36 tribal communities spread over different parts of the state and again each tribal community is confined only to a few Districts. The list of tribal communities constitute Adiyan, Aranadan, Eravallan, Irular, Kadar, Kammara, Kanikaran/Kanikkar, Kaniyan/Kanyan, Kattunayakan, Kochu Velan, Konda Kapus, Kondareddis, Koraga, Kota Kudiya/Melakudi, Kurichchan, Kurumbas, Kurumans, Maha Malasar, Malai Arayan, Malai Pandaram, Malai Vedan, Malakkuravan, Malasar, Malayali, Malayekandi, Mannan, Mudugar/Muduvan, Muthuvan, Palleyan, Palliyan, Palliyar, Paniyan, Sholaga, Toda, and Uraly.

III) Socio Economic Conditions of different Tribal Groups in Tamil Nadu (upto 1792)

There are 36 tribal communities in Tamil Nadu spread over different parts of the state, but are largely confined to certain Districts (see Table 1). Not only are they confined to certain Districts, but their occupation are varied such as cultivators and shifting cultivators, pastoral, hunters, bird-catchers, shepherds, nomads, labourers,

slaves, basket-makers, astrologers, gold-smith, brass-smith, carpenter, stone-mason, watchman, washer man, and barbers. In other words, the tribals in Tamil Nadu do not depend only on the forest but have specialised in a wide range of economic activities (Table -1). Their languages are not common, but different from each other as some of the tribes have dialects, most of the tribes speak the Tamil language and several tribes speak mixed languages such as Kanada, Tamil, Malayalam, Tulu, Telugu and Urdu to name a few (Table -1). In short, different tribals settled in different regions with diversified occupations, and languages in Tamil Nadu as per the Edgar Thurston and K.Rangachari's account of the early twentieth century.

Table 1: Tribal Concentration, Occupation and Languages in Tamil Nadu

S. No.	Name of the Tribes	Concentration	Occupation	Language
1	Adiyan	Kannur District of Kerala and Kodagu in Karnataka Thrissileri, and Vemam villages of Mananthavady Taluk (Kerala). In addition, Adiyan Community is also found in Tamil Nadu, Tirunelveli District	Slave	Adiyabhasha
2	Aranadan	Ernad Taluk of Malappuram District and Ernad Taluk of the Malabar District	Hunter	Tamil
3	Eravallan	Pollachi and Udumalpet Taluks of Coimbatore District		Tamil/ Malayalam
4	Irular	Chennai, South Arcot, Salem, North Arcot Ambedkar, Dharmapuri, Tiruchirappalli, and Thanjavur	Cultivators	Tamil/Irula
5	Kadar	Anaimalai, Coimbatore	Nomads	Kada, Tamil, and Malayalam
6	Kammaras	Kerala, Karnataka and East and West Godavari Districts of Andhra Pradesh	Blacksmith, goldsmith, brass smith, carpenter, stone-mason	

7	Kanikaran	Kannniyakumari District and the Shencottah Taluk of Tirunelveli District	Shifting cultivators	Malayalam and Tamil
8	Kaniyan	Kanniyakumari District	Astrologer	Malayalam/ Tamil
9	KattuNaickan	Nilgiris, Nilambur and Wyanad hills	Bird-catching	Kannada, Tamil, and Malayalam
10	Kochuvelan	Pathanamthitta Taluk, Kottayam, and Idukki Districts.	Hunters	Malayalam
11	Konda Kapus	Vizagapatanam	Cultivators	Telugu
12	Konda Reddy	Godavari	Shifting cultivators	Telugu
13	Koraga	South Canara	Basket makers	Koraga, Tulu or Kannada
14	Kota	Nilgiris	Service providing communities	Kota and Tamils
15	Kudiya	Mysore and its nearby areas	Slaves	Tulu
16	Kurichchan	Dharmapuri District	Hunters	Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu
17	Kurumbas	Nilgiris District	Shepherds	
18	Kuruman	Dharmapuri District	Wood cutting	Kannada/ Tamil
19	Maha Malasar	Pollachi and Udumalpet Taluks of Coimbatore District	Cultivators	Malayalam
20	Malai Arayan	Meenachi and Chenganasaree Taluks of the Kottayam District Kerala	watchman	Malayalam
21	Mala Pandaram	Kerala		Tamil and Malayalam
22	Malai vedan	North Arcot	Hunters	Malayalam/ Tamil
23	Malakkuravan	Kanniyakumari District		Malayalam/ Tamil/ Kuravan Malayalam
24	Malasar	Pollachi Taluk of Coimbatore District	Cultivators/ labourers	Tamil/ Malayalam

25	Malayali	North Arcot, South Arcot Salem, Tiruchirappalli and Dharmapuri	Cultivators	Tamil
26	Malayekandi	Throughout Tamil Nadu		Tamil
27	Mannan	Kanniyakumari and Tirunelveli Districts	Washermen/ Barbers	Tamil
28	Mudugar	Coimbatore, Erode, Madurai and Matheswaran peak of Attapadi area	Cultivators	Malayalam, Kanada and Tulu
29	Muthuvan	Idukki District, Kerala, and the adjoining Madurai and Coimbatore Districts of Tamil Nadu		Tamil and Malayalam
30	Palleyan	Palani Hill		Tamil
31	Palliyan	Dindigul District and in Western Ghats	Cultivators	
32	Palliyar	Madurai, Dindugul, Tirunelveli and Virudhunagar Districts		Tamil
33	Paniyan	Tamil Nādu, Kerala, and Karnataka.	Slaves	Tamil and Malayalam
34	Sholagar	Western Ghats	Cultivators/hunters	Kanada
35	Toda	The Nilgiris	Pastoral	Toda dialect
36	Uralis	Erode District	Cultivators	Tamil/Kanada

Sources: Edgar Thurston and K. Rangachari, Castes and Tribes in South India, 7 Volumes, **Chennai:** Cosmo Publications, 1909 and Tribal Welfare Department – Tamil Nadu (tn.gov. in)

IV) Colonialism and Tribals Protest (1792-1947)

The colonial exploitative and commercial venture has begun with the controlling of natural resources such as forest, which largely had been an integral part of the livelihood of the tribals for several centuries. The colonial administration not only had attempted to control the natural resources but also had questioned the tribal communities traditional administration, judiciary, and other cultural practices that were being practiced distinctly with sectarian differences specific to each of the tribal community of the erstwhile Madras Presidency in general, and the present Tamil Nadu in particular.

As mentioned earlier, the credit of being the pioneer freedom fighters of the Indian sub-continent though rests with tribals, it somehow was hijacked by the

European-educated Indians, and this information is available in the public domain from Andhra Pradesh to Gujarat and elsewhere of the Indian sub-continent. Suprisingly, the Indian freedom-fighting history begins only from the late nineteenth century onwards, which has undermined the voices of the subalterns like tribals and others from the beginning of the late eighteenth century. In other words, the history of India's freedom fighters is only a reflection of a part or partial narration, but certainly not in totality of the broad spectrum of the revolts and struggles that the Indian sub-continent has witnessed. To put it differently, in India's freedom movement the voices of the capitalist, feudalist, elite were documented, but the subaltern's contribution went mostly unrecorded in the Indian Freedom Fighters' history.

Hence, the voices of the subalterns like tribals have to be reflected in the public domain as freedom fighters of the Indian sub-continent with an urgency of the pending need to update and appropriate the records. The colonial Government misappropriating the traditionally managed hill areas at the end of the nineteenth century has led to many movements and revolts in the tribal regions of the Madras Presidency. The Government of Tamil Nadu's initiative to document the voices of the subaltern in the freedom struggle is highly appreciable. Though late but it is with sincere apologies we are going to analyse some of the important cases of the tribal revolts against the British administration from the late eighteenth to mid - twentieth century.

a) Late Eighteenth Century

Kolli Hills popularly known as Kolli Malai in Tamil is a small mountain range located in central Tamil Nadu and spread over two Districts viz., Namakkal and Tiruchirappalli. The height of the mountains is about 1300 metres and spread over about 280 square kilometres. The tribal inhabitants of the hills are known as Malayalis.

In Tamil Nadu, the first revolt against the colonial administration was launched by the tribals/Malayalis of Kolli hills during the late nineteenth century. Here it has to be mentioned that the article, 'Tribal Revolts in India with Reference to Salem and Baramahal Districts of Madras Presidency During the late 18 Century', in Artha vijnana (Saravanan 1999), was the first to explore the unexplored terrain of tribal resistance during the early colonial period. A summary of the underlining causes of tribal revolt in the Kolli hills of Tamil Nadu and the erstwhile Madras Presidency during the late eighteenth century would help to understand the issue.

Tribals of the Kolli hills were managing the Kombe villages until the introduction of survey and settlement by Colonel Alexander Read in 1797. During the survey, revenue for the Kombe villages, viz., villages on the hill slopes were settled independently like other villages in the plains without any consultation with the Malayali tribal headman. This invited strong resentment from the Malayali communities, who were unwilling to give up their traditional control over the Kombes. After initial representations to the authorities, which failed to yield the desired result, the tribals then refused to pay further revenues and boycotted the revenue settlement meeting. In the end, the colonial Government suppressed the revolt and brought the hill regions under its control (Saravanan, 1999).

The Kombes being an integral part of their socio economic living conditions in addition to their prestige and identity, plucking it away from their domain was unacceptable for them. However, the revolt was suppressed by the colonial administration, which had been one of the pioneering not only in terms of the history of freedom fighters in general, but also of the tribal freedom fighters of Tamil Nadu in particular.

b) Nineteenth Century

During the nineteenth century, the tribals, viz., Kurichiyar and Kurumbar of Wayanad and Malayalis of Shervaroy Hills and Kalvaroyan Hills of Salem District revolted against the colonial administration.

i) Wyanad

Though the Kurichchan and Kurumbas are largely settled in the Wayanad District of present Kerala, they are also present in the Districts of Dharmapuri and the Nilgiris in Tamil Nadu. Kurichchan's by occupation are hunters and Kurumbas are shepherds. The Kottayam Raja brought Kurichchan into Wyanad to fight against the Vedar rulers Arippen and Vedan and later settled in Wyanad itself as agriculturists, a century back.

However, their revolt in 1812, met an unsuccessful end against the British East India Company due to the loss of their ancestral lands and growing interference in their internal affairs, and that was supported by the Kurumbar, another tribal community of the Wyanad region. The revolt was culminated in April 1812; the Kurichchans and Kurumbas rose against the colonial administrations, for reasons including the British Government's decision to confiscate their land. The rebellion started as the result of the Company's opposition to the meeting of Kurichchan and Kurumbas, and hence they attacked the Company's military establishment in

Sulthan Bathery and Manathavadi with bows and arrows. However, the colonial administration suppressed it.

ii) Shervaroy Hills

The Shervaroy hills are located in the Salem District of Tamil Nadu. The height of the mountains is about 1600 metres and it is spread over about 400 square km. The tribals living in the hills are known as Malayalis.

The coffee plantations were established in the Shervaroy hills during the third decade of the nineteenth century and more than 10,000 acres was brought under coffee cultivation by the colonial administration. The colonial power took away the ignorant tribals' land without their consent and the voices raised over the annexation were vehemently curbed. It is not only their voices that were suppressed but the dissent was also met with a grave injustice of not being registered in the records of the colonial administration. Here, it has to be mentioned that the article, 'Colonialism and Coffee Plantations: Decline of Environment and Tribals in Madras Presidency during the Nineteenth Century' in the Indian Economic and Social History Review (Saravanan 2004) was again the first to explore the not so familiar anecdote of this tribal resistance unseen by the outer world that occurred during the early colonial period.

The colonial administration alienated the Malayalis from there occupied land and stripped the tribal headmanship and guruship during the nineteenth century.



For instance, the Government has exchanged 'muchilika' with the headmen of different Nadus of Shervaroy hills for the collection of land revenue in 1822/23. Each Nadu was leased out to more than one person and the headman of each Nadu had agreed to pay the fixed amount regularly (BOR 1769, 23 Sep. 1841, pp.12127-129). The annual revenue settlement made in the hills was about 38.63 per cent, less than the amount fixed during the permanent settlement (BOR, Vol. 1769, 23 September 1841, p.12093). About Rs. 4,831-12-0 was found to be the balance in the annual settlements between 1822/23 and 1839/40, which was 8.4 per cent of the total amount. There were no dues between 1833/34 and 1839/40. Land - rent remission was granted to the Shervaroy hills between 1822/23 and 1834/35 with an average remission of Rs. 301-0-2.

The remissions were mainly availed by the British coffee planters and other non-tribals. Between 1822/23 and 1834/35, the total demand outstanding per annum comes to 32.62 per cent and this was mainly due to the British coffee planters. About Rs.1,913-10-0 (51.77 per cent) was to be paid by M.D. Cockburn, a former Collector of Salem (1820–1829), and Rs.122-8-0 by the others. The tribals owed only Rs.122-13-0 (BOR, Vol. 1769, 23 Sep. 1841, pp.12082-89). The British settlers did not pay the land–rent to the tribal headman. Instead of taking action against the British defaulters, the colonial administration forced the tribal chiefs to remain prompt in revenue payments. Ultimately, the headmen were stripped of their traditional and hereditary rights over their domain, by the colonial Government. Though the tribals did not revolt like those in Kolli hills, the subaltern dissent was occurring and their voices of discord were reflected at random in one or another form.

iii) Kalvaroyan Hills

The Kalvaroyan hills are spread over two Districts, viz., Salem and Kallakurichi in Tamil Nadu. The height of the mountains are about 4000 metres and it is spread over about 1095 square km. The tribals living in the hills are known as Malayalis. The Malayali tribal headman controlled the Kalvaroyan hills.

The article, 'Colonial Commercial Forest Policy and the Tribal Private Forests in Madras Presidency: 1792-1881', Indian Economic and Social History Review (Saravanan 2003) brought out how the Malayali headman revolted against the colonial administration and the way it was being suppressed during the late nineteenth century. For example, The Jagirdar of Chinna-Kalvaroyan, who was reluctant to accept the permanent lease proposed by the Government, evaded meeting the officers for a long time (BP, Nos.172-74, 22 Nov. 1872). However,

he was arrested on a magisterial warrant and forced to execute the lease under custody (BP, No. 1015, 3 March 1877). Was it not a revolt!?! Yes, it is one of the pioneering examples of freedom fight by the tribals in Tamil Nadu. Though unarmed at individual level, the voice of dissent of the headman represents the pulse of his entire tribal community.

c) Early Twentieth Century

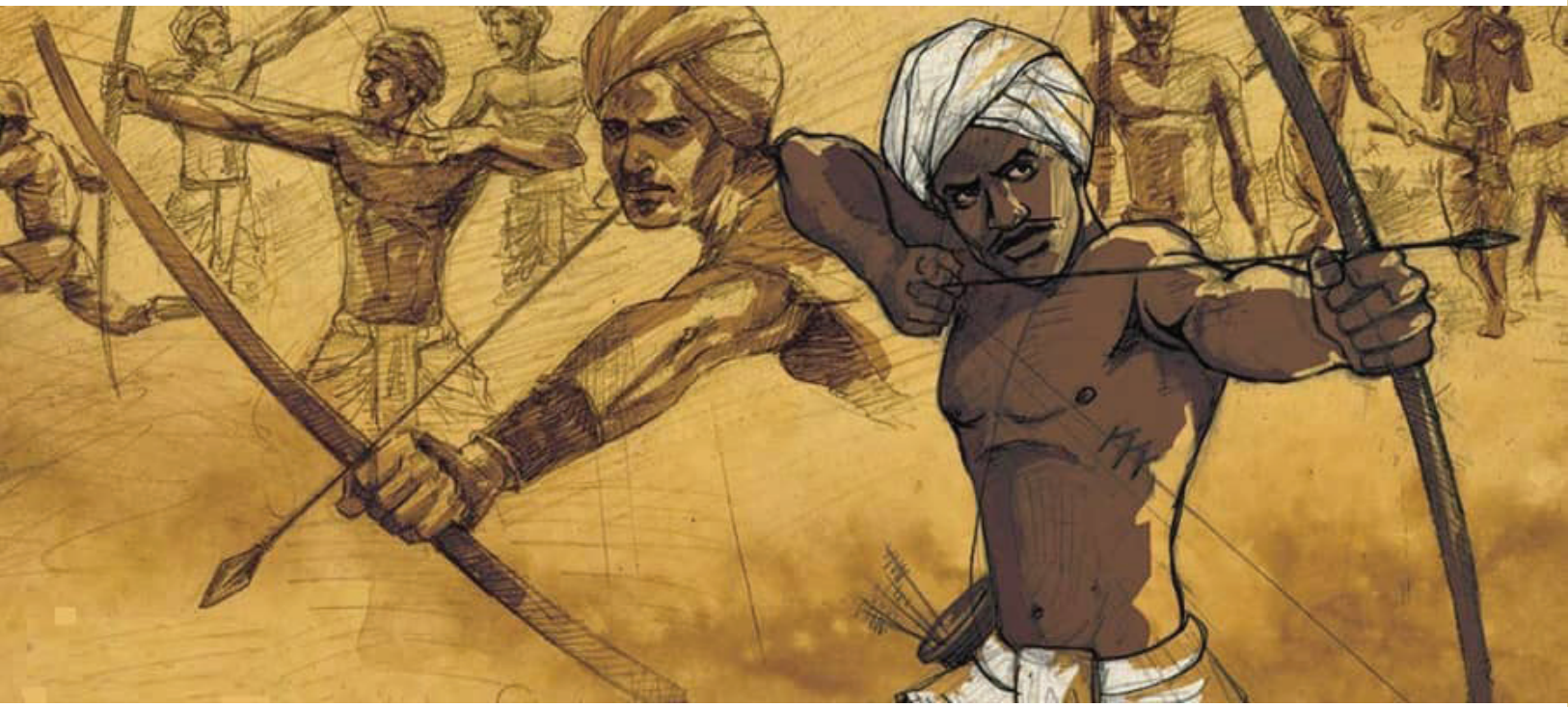
Even after the colonial intervention, the revenue was settled with the tribal headmen, who used to collect it from the community on behalf of the Government. They were later stripped of these powers when the administration brought each of the hills under its direct management on one pretext or the other between 1829 and 1854 (Saravanan, [a]). During the early twentieth century, when the actual survey and settlement were introduced in the hilly areas, a large extent of land was brought into account, and the assessment was fixed based on the extent of land holding. For example, in the Salem District of the erstwhile Madras Presidency, about 16,855.12 acres, or 65.82 per cent of land (more than the revenue account), was identified under the survey. The assessment was hiked by about 16 per cent, while the land brought under the survey has increased to 66 per cent (Saravanan, 2006, pp. 63-85). It meant that after the settlement, the tribals were required to pay enhanced rent for the same extent of cultivated land.

Tax incidence on land increased due to the survey and settlement (Saravanan, 1994). In 1936, land rent was further hiked under the resettlement. It was justified on the pretext of recovering investments made for extending infrastructure facilities in the hill areas. No visible improvement in infrastructure was evident in the hill areas during this period (Saravanan, 1994). What was evident was traditional tribal administrative machinery being crippled because of colonial intrusion squeezing the space for resistance among the tribals.

Meanwhile, in 1946, A.M. Somasundaram of Dakshina Bharata Adivas Seva Sangh, Musulipatnam, appealed to the colonial Government to form an 'Aboriginal Tribal Enquiry Committee' to formulate policies and developmental measures (GO. No.2222 [Mis], Public [Political], 17 October 1946, p.3). In response, the Government constituted a committee under the Chairmanship of Vanmelakanti Raghavaiah. The Committee, after visiting the area, prepared a detailed report on tribal economic and social conditions, customs, habits, mode of worship, marriage, and rules (GO. No. 2516 [Mis], Public [Political], 19 November 1946, pp.77-79). However, continuing with and hiding behind its policy of non intervention, the colonial Government did not initiate any welfare measures of a practical nature.

Conclusion

The Tamils were pioneers when it came to fighting against the British in the Indian sub-continent since the late eighteenth century. More importantly, the tribals of Tamil Nadu were the foremost forerunners who protested against the British from the late eighteenth century onwards and it was the tribals who have been vocal in questioning the British rule, though within their capacity to protect their rights and privileges. Thus, the Tamils / Dravidians raised their voices against the colonial administration from the beginning of the colonial era. We must appreciate that the tribals of Tamil Nadu stood above as torch bearers in the Independence struggle, though it's consolidation is somehow missing from the fervour of a nationalistic outlook. This does not undermine the standalone fight of the Tamils against the colonial rule in general and the tribals in particular, as forerunners of Independence struggle. This actually remains an undeniable fact in the history of the Indian freedom struggle. We must salute them!



4

Peasant Uprising in Tamil Nadu 1920-1947

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Peasant uprising was a part of social movements against the British atrocities and the landlords. The British rule adversely affected the agrarian class, protecting the landlords and money-lenders while they exploited the peasant. They raised in revolt against the British Government on the issues of poverty, drought, famine, and rack rent. Neither the Government nor the landowners entertained the peasants to lead a better life. The change of ownership in lands and overcrowding the land increased debt among the peasantry. The peasants were ruined for a long gap. During the colonial period, the peasants joined the revolutionary movement in India in general and particularly in Tamil Nadu. The socialists and communists dominated among them. This work attempts to analyse the oppressive attitude of the Government and the landowners and the reflection of the peasant organisation in Tamil Nadu.

Peasantry and Starvation

The nightmarish poverty, humiliation and oppression inflicted upon the lower caste peasantry by a minority of rich landlords and moneylenders culminated into the establishment of peasant organisations in different parts of India. The first peasant uprisings against the foreign oppression came in the wake of plunder and tyranny of the British in Bengal. In the Great Bengal Famine of 1770, thirty five per cent of the total and fifty per cent of the agricultural population died of starvation. The subsequent series of famines that broke out in 1784, 1787 and 1790 drove the peasantry against the landlords, planters, moneylenders and the British rulers.[1]

Intolerable Rack Rent

Between 1770 and 1790, the peasants rarely obtained full crops in the Madras Presidency. The severity of the succeeding drought, in fact, ruined the conditions of peasantry.[2] Inspite of it, the peasants were hit hard by intolerable revenue settlement. In this connection, many cultivators were left impoverished. The tenants as such suffered from rack rent. The high rents not only impoverished the cultivators but also destroyed all his incentive for agricultural improvements.[3] In 1802, the peasants of Madras Presidency in general, North and South Arcot Districts, in particular revolted against the Company's revenue policy. Moreover, in the villages of Dankanicottah and Ottoor near Baramahal, about 1,500 peasants resisted Cockburn, the District Collector of North Arcot against the excessive revenue collection.[4]

On the other hand, the Governor-in-Council of Madras Presidency ordered the march of cavalry from North Arcot and suppressed the peasants with an iron hand. In the pre-mutiny period, the original assessments in Madras was roughly 4/5 of the estimated net produce. The Land Revenue in Madras Presidency, in fact, was higher than Bengal and Bombay.

Peasant Demands Against High Revenue Assessment

In 1810, the peasants of Dankanicottah resisted against high revenue assessment and atrocious behaviour of the revenue officials. Furthermore, they put forward specific demands in a vigorous manner. Their demands were:[5]

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1. *Shive Kumar, Peasantry and the Indian National Movement 1919-1933, Meerut,1979, p.19.*
2. *Brian J.Murton, "Land and Class: Cultural, Social and Biophysical integration inInterior Tamil Nadu in the late Eighteenth Century" in Robert Eric Frykenburg (ed.), Land Tenure and Peasantin South Asia, New Delhi,1977, p.90.*
3. *Ira Klein, "When the rains failed: famine, relief, and mortality in British India" in The Indian Economic and Social History Review, A Quarterly volume XXI, No.2, April-June, 1984, p.187.*
4. *A.K.Kalimuthu,Colonial Economy and the Lower Peasantry –Tamil Nadu Scene 1801-1947, Tiruchi, 2004, p.46.*
5. *Ibid., p.47.*

i. Refund of money collected for lands not cultivated during the Jamabandy (the Annual settlement of revenue accounts in an estate, village or District) of 1209 (1810 A.D.).

ii. Punishment of village officials who received Takkavi[6] loans but failed to advance them to the peasants.

iii. Repayment of money in excess of the fixed Teerva (Revenue assessment).

iv. Revenue dues to be collected only on the cultivated areas.

v. Full Teerva should not be collected on dry grains cultivated in wet areas.

The Peasant against Higher and Inequitable Revenue Assessment

The peasants who launched this type of protest had demanded repeal of the excessive payment of land revenue. In consequence, the Revenue Board in Madras ordered the Collector to look into the just grievances of the peasants. However, the administrators resorted to outright ruthless coercion in dealing with the peasants. In the event of complaints that went unheeded, the peasants immediately decided to migrate en- masse to some other region.[7] In 1819, Thackrey, the District Collector of Tanjore pointed out the pathetic condition of poor peasants because of higher and inequitable assessment. In 1803, the introduction of a system that required the payment of tax/ rent in cash in the Tirunelveli District deteriorated the conditions of peasants. In this regard, the Revenue Board put pressure upon the Districts to collect rent in the form of money. The Districts of Tanjore, Chingleput, Tiruchirappalli, Madurai, Salem and North Arcot were asked to fall in line with the system. The peasants of Madras Presidency in general and Tanjore in particular resisted the money assessment.

Between 1807 and 1810, the price of paddy fell heavily in the Tanjore District. However, the Government used coercive measures upon the peasants in collecting the money for rent. The revenue record of Tanjore in 1816 revealed that the peasants of about 150 villages protested against the introduction of money assessment at a time when prices fell sharply.

Famine and the Prevalence of Torture

In 1822, Sir Thomas Munro, the Governor of Madras sanctioned the reduction of assessment. However, his measures provided little effect to improve the condition of peasants. Sir Thomas Munro calculated that out of Rs.100/-, the Government's assessment over the value of gross produce represented by Rs.45-12-0 and

6. *Loan issued by the Government.*
7. *R.P.Rana, "Agrarian Revolts in Northern India during the Late 17th and Early 18th Century" in The Indian Economic and Social History Review, Volume XVIII, Nos.3 and 4July-December1981, p.306.*

the expenses of cultivation by Rs.40/- leaving a profit to the peasant as low as Rs.14-4-0. The profit as a matter of fact, turned into loss not only in bad seasons but also in good seasons. In a span of 24 years, four famines occurred in 1799, 1804–1807, 1811–1812, and 1824, which drastically ruined the peasants of Madras Presidency. [8]8 Among others, the cause of the famines was attributed to the failure of harvests in succession, that resulted from erratic rainfall. The Government nevertheless took the least care to ameliorate the condition of peasants.[9]

In 1832, about 392 villages of Tanjore District were severely affected because of a shortage of rain. In consequence, the peasants of the villages reacted against the Government for the reduction of assessment based on the actual production of crops. On the other hand, the Government turned down the demands of the peasants and forced them to stop harvesting crops.[10]

In 1845, the Collector of South Arcot observed that two-thirds of lands laid waste owing to heavy and unequal assessments. The Collector of Chinglepet in 1854, reported that the land revenue in the District was excessive and unequal in its incidence. The peasants of Chinglepet District petitioned to the Government about their inability to meet the overburdened taxes, the neglect of construction of canals and the imposition of 12 per cent interest on the arrears of ***kist*** and tax on salt.[11] The prevalence of torture administered by the revenue officials upon the poor peasants for their failure to pay the revenue demands continued to be horrifying. In 1854, the Governor-General-in-council instructed the Government of Madras to constitute a Commission of Enquiry to investigate all the torture related cases. Some of the tortures were as follows:

"Keeping a man in the sun; preventing his going to meals or other calls of nature, confinement, preventing cattle from going to pasture by shutting them in the house, quartering a peon on the defaulter who is obliged to pay his daily wages, pinches on thighs, slaps, blows with fist or whip, twisting the ears, tying the hair of the head to a donkey or a buffalo's tail and placing the necklace of bones or other degrading or disgusting materials round the neck".[12]

The victims of torture, in fact, were poor and medium-sized landowners. On the recommendation of the Torture Commission, Departments of Revenue, Police and Judiciary were separated with provisions for any legal proceedings against any citizen

8. *S.Srinivasa Raghavaiyangar, Memorandum on the progress of the Madras Presidency During the Last Forty Years of British Administration, Madras, 1988, p.27.*
9. *C.D.Maclean (ed.), Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency, Volume1, New Delhi, 1987, pp.298-299.*
10. *A.K.Kalimuthu, op.cit.,p.48.*
11. *S. Singarajan,Agrarian Movements in India with Special Reference to Tamil Nadu 1857 -1947, Madras,(n.d)p.208.*
12. *A.K.Kalimuthu, op.cit.,p.50.*

only through the 'Court of Law' and for the dismissal of Government servants who dared to employ torture either in Revenue or Police cases. The functioning of Law courts hardly secured the peasants on the grounds of certain unscrupulous lawyers, the connivance of the court officials and the laxity of the Native Judge resulting in a massive loss of peasants' landownership.[13]

In 1857-1858, the land revenue collection in the Madras Presidency was about Rs.361.81 lakh. In 1865–1866, seven years later, the land revenue collection rose to Rs.429.17 lakh. This period witnessed a great famine in which about six million people died of starvation. Furthermore, in 1867-1868, the revenue collection was raised to about Rs.423.97 lakh. In 1875-1876, eight years later about four million people in the Presidency died of starvation. The large increases in land revenue collection caused several violent uprisings of the peasantry against the Government in many parts of the Madras Presidency.[14]

The Madras Mahajana Sabha's Voice to Peasants

The Madras Mahajana Sabha in 1886 pressured Lord Dufferin to improve the conditions of peasants. It also pointed out the peasant's position of irrecoverable burdens due to heavy assessment. The increase in the price of salt and heavy, numerous and harassing penalties imposed under the Cattle Trespass Act aggravated the condition of peasants. However, the Government did not seriously attend to the representation of the Sabha.[15]

Drought and the Coercive Methods of Collecting Tax

The famine of 1876-1878 drastically affected the Indian economy in general and the Madras Presidency in particular. During the calamitous situation, the area suffered in the Madras Presidency was 74,000 square miles containing a population of 16 million.[16] The famine owing to drought was the severest since the beginning of the century. It is due to this calamity, the progress of agricultural classes especially, the lower strata of peasants received a severe setback and the landless agricultural labour had no employment. Moreover, the tenants could not pay rent to the landlords. The prices of food grains rose to exorbitant levels. The poor peasants who had no stores of grain became pauperized. The calamity, however, spared the big peasants and grain merchants. They hoarded food grains, which resulted in the rapid rise of prices. The Government on the other hand, adopted coercive methods to collect arrears from

13. *Abani Lahiri,The Peasant and India's Freedom Movement 1919-1933, Meerut,1979-80, p.65.*
14. *S.Krishnaswamy, The Role of Madras Legislature in the Freedom Struggle 1861- 1947, New Delhi,1989, p.15.*
15. *S.Singarajan,op.cit.,p.208.*
16. *S.Srinivasa Raghavaiyangar, op.cit.,p.42.*

the peasants. The revenue authorities seized the properties of the defaulters.[17] In the District of Coimbatore, the total value of land transfer amounted to Rs.6.3 crore in 1882-1883. In the Madras Presidency, for the years 1891-1892, the total value of documents registered was to the tune of Rs.15.66 crore. The marginal farmers were presumably driven into debt trap. They resorted to borrowing from landlords and moneylenders. Nearly 80 per cent of the money-lending business was in the hands of the big landowners. The terms and conditions of money loans varied in different Districts. A 12 per cent was the usual rate of interest for loans amounting between Rs.100/- and Rs.500/-. For the loan amount between Rs.500/- and Rs.1,000/-, the interest rate varied from 9 to 12 per cent. In case of the loan amount exceeding Rs.1,000/-, the rate of interest decreased between 9 and 6 per cent. If the amount of loan increased then the interest rates also decreased considerably. Ironically, for loans below Rs.100/-, a high rate of interest was charged between 12 and 18 per cent.[18] On the contrary, the poor peasants obtained small sums of money from moneylenders at an interest varied from 25 to 50 per cent as the usual rate.[19]

During the Governorship of Lord Curzon, he was forced to adopt the Land Revenue policy that was meant to protect the tenants at the cruel hands of ***zamindars***. Romesh Chandra Dutt, the former President of the Indian National Congress challenged the Government demanding more protection for the tenants. On the contrary, the land revenue in the Madras Presidency increased from Rs.637.01 lakh in 1908-1909 to Rs.708.17 lakh in 1917-1918. The increase of 11 per cent in the land revenue was vehemently protested by the peasants of Madras Presidency.[20]

Peasant Struggle and the Non-Co-operation Movement

During the Non-Co-operation Movement of 1920, the peasants seemed to have gained some political consciousness. The Indian National Congress raised a slogan of non-payment of land revenue, which had a great effect. The peasants in other words, interpreted the political struggle for Swaraj in terms of a struggle against heavy land tax. Sections of them sympathised, supported and participated in the movement. As a matter of fact, it was the first participation of a section of Indian peasants who made it an organised political movement. The peasants of the Madras Presidency also rose under the banner of the Non-Co-operation Movement. The peasants refused to pay taxes to the Government. On the contrary, the Government levied fresh taxes in order to compensate for the loss of revenue owing to non-payment of taxes. In this regard, the Government passed the Rent Recovery (Amendment) Act (1922), a

17. *A.K.Kalimuthu, op.cit.,p.93.*
18. *Srinivasa Raghavaiyangar,op.cit.,p.255.*
19. *B.C. Mehta and Awadh Prasad, Agrarian Relations and Rural Exploitation, New Delhi,1988, p.21.*
20. *S.Krishnaswamy, op.cit.,p.60.*

special legislation that compelled the peasants to pay land revenue with a penalty or threatened of confiscation of their lands. Hundreds of rural folks in the Presidency, who refused to pay taxes were arrested by the Government.[21]

In August 1922, the Government of Madras Presidency announced the increase of land revenue rates in the Tanjore and Tiruchirappalli Districts by as much as 18 per cent on dry lands and 25 per cent on wetlands. The peasants as well as mirasdars threatened to launch civil disobedience if the new rates were not modified. Consequently, the Government had to scale down the higher rates in August 1924.[22]

The Activities of Landlords during the Economic Depression

In 1930, the economic depression in the Madras Presidency aggravated the condition of landlords in general and poor peasants in particular. It forced down the market price of agricultural products. The landlords as such could no longer sell the agricultural produce profitably. Nor did they have anything to grant credit to the tenants and poor peasants.[23] Between 1901 and 1931, the number of cultivating owners per thousand persons supported by agriculture declined from 512 to 390. On top of all, the depression badly hit the agricultural sector.[24]

Peasantry and the Civil Disobedience Movement

The independent organisation of the peasants, as a class, gathered momentum after the end of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The peasant movements began to gather strength in the 1930s. In 1932, the tenants of the ***zamindar*** of Udayarpalayam in Trichy District pressured the Government by placing following demands:

i The zamindars to look after the welfare of ryots and lessen the collection of tax from Rs.3,00,000/- to the original collection of Rs.27,000/-

ii. Make surveyor settlement and fix the rent.

iii. Classify lands and not collect rent on the uncultivated lands.

iv. Exempt tax on petty cultivation such as greens, roots and other minor produce.

v. Repair tanks and other water sources and grant remission of tax on failure of crops[25]

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21. Ibid. p.84.

22. David Arnold, The Congress in Tamil Nadu:Nationalist Politics in South India 1919-1937, New Delhi,1977, pp.97-98.

23. Eugene FIrschick, Tamil Revivalism in the 1930s, Madras,1986, p.207.

24. Tamil Nadu Economy Performance and Issues, Madras, 1988, p.30.

25. S.Singarajan, op.cit.,p.213.

The Government of Madras hardly considered the above demands of peasants. The Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-1933 further radicalised the peasants. The excessive tax burden hit the poor peasants hard. According to the survey of rural credit and debt situation in Madras, in 1934 and 1935, those paying a tax between Re.1/- and Rs.100/- fared worse than those who paid more than Rs.100/-. The cultivators who paid a tax between Re.1 and Rs.100 were in debt to the extent of Rs.29 per hundred or less tax, paid. In other words, the landholders who paid more than Rs.100/- as tax, were only in debt to the extent of Rs.8/- per hundred or more tax they paid. Above all, the calculations made by the Madras Banking Enquiry Committee in 1930 put the entire rural debt of the agrarian population of the Madras Presidency at Rs.1,500,000,000/-. In other words, by 1939, the debt had increased to Rs.2,719,000,000/- which amounted to an increase of about 100 per cent in the decade.[26]

Ryot's Day and No Tax Campaign

In 1934, the ***mirasdars*** of Shiyali Taluk in Tanjore District withheld payment of ***kist*** to the Government. On the other hand, the Government took coercive action against the defaulters.[27] In Mangalam village of the Sivaganga ***zamin***, the peasants who failed to pay rent were attacked by the police in May 1934. Moreover, the police also indulged in firing. In the firing, one peasant was killed and two were injured.[28] The peasants of Salem District reacted against the Government for the enhanced rate of ***kist***.

The All India Kisan Sabha, 1935

They observed 'Ryots Day' on 17th March 1935 and launched a no-tax campaign.[29] In April 1935, the South Indian Federation of Peasants and Agricultural Labourers decided to organise peasants of Andhra, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka.[30] The first All India Kisan Congress, which met at Lucknow in 1935 decided that the Congress should be established as the supreme kisan organisation in the country. Jawaharlal Nehru extended his support to this Congress. The All India Kisan Sabha carried on wide educative propaganda work among the Indian Kisans. The Sabha asked for the collective affiliation of Indian National Congress. On the contrary, Congress did not agree to the suggestion of the All India Kisan Sabha.[31]

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26. Eugene FIrschick, op.cit.,p.232.
27. Fortnightly Report for the first half of March, 1934.
28. Ibid. the second half of May, 1934.
29. Ibid. the first half of March, 1935.
30. Abani Lahiri,op.cit.,p.177.
31. A.R.Desai, Rural Sociology in India,op.cit., p.394.

Formation of the Lordless Agricultural Labourers, 1939

In 1930s, the Madras Government received a number of complaints about the recalcitrant attitude of Dalit labourers. Moreover, the caste assemblies in Tanjore lent their support to the ***pannaiyals***. In view of this, the agricultural labourers were ready to show their collective strength against landlordism. Consequently, an independent ***Vivasaya Tholilalar Sangam*** (Association of Landless Agricultural Labourers) was formed in 1939. This union comprised of militant Dalits waiting for an opportunity to launch a mass movement. In 1940, the ***Dalit*** tenants[32] of Lalgudi in Trichy District were encouraged by the Justice Party to rise against the atrocities of Brahmin landlords. However, this agitation came to an abrupt end with the arrest of important leaders including M.K.Gupta.[33]

Formation of Tamil Nadu Agricultural Association, 1943

The forces of the left especially the Communist Party, were instrumental in organizing peasant movement in Tamil Nadu. The Communists were responsible for the formation of ***Kisan Sabha*** at Thenparai in Mannargudi area towards the end of 1942 and chose Tanjore District as the base for the movement. Subsequently, ***kisan sabhas*** were formed in places like Ramapuram near Kaveripattinam of Salem District. With the formation of a regional level peasant organisation in a broader way, (***Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangham)*** Tamil Nadu Agricultural Association was formed on 14 June, 1943.[34] The share croppers and small peasants who were organised by the Communist Party brought qualitative change in the peasant movement. The first organized peasant movement took place in Thenparai village of Mannargudi Taluk against the ***mutt*** authorities of Uthrapathi, demanding one-third as tenant's share as against the existing 20 per cent. On the other hand, the mutt authorities turned a deaf ear to the demands of peasant organisation which resulted into a clash between the two.[35]Without intimating the ***mutt*** authorities, the peasants harvested paddy crop and took out their share of produce. In the meantime, the District Collector of Tanjore intervened in this matter and assured a slight increase in tenant's share.

The Revolt against the Demand for Higher Waram

The tenants of Ramapuram and the surrounding villages of Salem District revolted against the landlords demanding higher ***waram*** (quitrent). Similarly, the

32. *Agricultural labourers belonging to Scheduled Caste community of Tamil Nadu.*
33. *S.Singarajan,op.cit.,p.215.*
34. *R.Nallakannu,Thozhar Srinivasa Rao Vazhkkai Varalaru,(Tamil) (The Life History of Comrade Srinivasa Rao)Chennai, 2002, p.48.*
35. *A.Shantha Kumari, "Role of Communist Party in Enhancing the Economic Status of the Agricultural Labourers in Thanjavur District (1940 - 1950)" in Quest Historica,AJournal of History,Vol.IV, No.2, Rajapalayam, October2005,p.46.*

tenants of Kattanur village in Ramnad District resisted the higher ***warams***. Realising the gravity of the tense situation, the revenue officials temporarily settled the problem. However, in order to wreak vengeance on the peasants, ***mirasdars, inamdars,*** and ***zamindars*** of Tamil Nadu left vast tracts of land into fallow. In Alampatti and Thenparai villages of Tanjore District about 1000 acres of land were left fallow.

Kalapal Agreement,1944

Kalapal, a village in Mannargudi Taluk of Tanjore District witnessed a strong base of Communist-sponsored Agriculturist's Association. K.Kuppusamy, a prominent leader of this association organised a large chunk of Harijan ***pannaiyals*** against the atrocities of Brahmin and non-Brahmin ***mirasdars***. The ***pannaiyal*** or ***padial,*** mostly the landless labourers were bound to the landlord, from whom they have borrowed money at a high rate of interest.

As a matter of fact, the borrowers never had the means to return the money and hence they had to work always in the fields of their masters compulsorily. The ***pannaiyals*** when committed minor faults, caused delays in work, and came late for the work in case of sickness, the ***mirasdars*** took the matter seriously and punished them mercilessly. Such ***pannaiyals*** were tied to a tree or a pole at a public place and were subjected to rigorous punishment by a horsewhip, and sometimes were forced to drink the diluted cow dung solution.[36] In 1943, the Tanjore District Agriculturists Association took up the matter with the ***mirasdars*** and condemned them for indulging in the act of ill-treatment meted out to ***pannaiyals***.

Besides, it appealed to the Government of the Madras Presidency to intervene immediately in this matter and put an end to this heinous practice. Undeterred by the opposition of the ***mirasdars,*** the peasant association staged several demonstrations and agitation, brought the representatives of landowners and peasants to the negotiating table, and was responsible for these two parties signing an agreement in May1944.[37]

Kalapal K.Kuppusamy, Serangulam R. Amirthalingam, and Vaali Odai D.Rajagopal represented peasant association. On the other hand,V.S.Thiagaraja Mudaliyar of Vadapathimangalam, a ***mirasdar*** of Tirukalar ***mutt***, and Karuvakkudi Naidu represented the landowners. This agreement was signed at Kalapal in the presence of Mahadevan, the Assistant District Superintendent of Police, Tanjore. The terms and conditions of the Kalapal Agreement were as follows:[38]

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36. N.Ramakrishnan, Pannai Adimaithanathirku Ethirana Porattathil P.S.Dhanuskodi (T) (P.S.Dhanuskodi in his Crusade against Agrestic Slavery), Chennai,1997, p.72.

37. Kathleen Gough, Rural Society in Southeast India, Cambridge,1981, p.147.

38. K.C.Alexander, Peasant Organisations in South India, New Delhi,1981, p.97.

i. The practice of whipping peasant workers and forcing them to drink cow dung solution should be stopped;

ii. The wage rate for a ***pannaiyal*** (attached labourer) would be two small measures (two ***padis***) of paddy a day;

iii. For harvesting, casual labourers should be paid three small measures of paddy out of each ***kalam***[39] and four small measures of paddy a day; and tenants could use threshing floors at a place of their own choice near the field.

The Kalapal Agreement as such abolished corporal punishments upon the attached labourers. It fixed the daily wages of the labourers as two small measures of paddy. During harvest, three measures of paddy for each kalam and four small measures a day was fixed. Above all, the tenant's option of using the threshing floors depending on the place of their choice was welcomed by tens and hundreds of tenants to speed up the harvesting work.[40] Earlier, the tenants had to use the threshing floor owned by the landowners only.

The Kalapal agreement was indeed a boon to the attached labourers, casual labourers, and tenants. On the other hand, the landowners of Tanjore District hardly responded to the terms of agreement.

The Mannarkudi Agreement (1944)

Mannargudi, a Taluk headquarters in Tanjore District contained a base of peasant organisation. This Taluk was the first in Tamil Nadu to respond to the Communist Party's appeal to form an organisation of tenants and agricultural labourers.A large number of Harijan ***pannaiyals*** of this Taluk joined the ***Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangham*** and launched a struggle against ***mirasdars.***

It was due to the constant pressure exerted by Manali C.Kandaswami, the leader of ***Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangham,*** the Second Agreement was signed in December, 1944 at Mannargudi. In the presence of Ismayil Khan, the District Collector of Tanjore and Varadhan, the District Superintendent of Police, the Mannargudi Agreement was signed.[41] The terms of the Agreement were as follows:

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39. A Dry measure equaling 12 marakkals (48litres) or half a bag.

40. G.Veeraiyan, Sangam Padaitha Charithiram, (T), (History as created by Farmers' Association) Chennai, 2000, pp.10-11.

41. K.C.Alexander,op.cit.,p.97.

i. The daily wage rate of ***pannaiyals*** (attached labourers) should be three measures (litres) instead of two measures of paddy;

ii. During harvest, the attached labourers should be paid a ***Kalavadi***[42] of one-seventh of the produce of a field in which they were engaged to till;

iii. The measurement of wages should be paid in kind regarding standard measures; and after receiving the rent, the landowner should issue receipt to the tenant at the threshing floor itself.[43]

The Mannargudi Agreement improved the conditions of the attached labourers. In comparison with Kalapal Agreement, the daily wage of attached labour was increased to one ***marakkal*** of paddy. In harvest time, one-seventh of paddy was paid to attached labour.

The wages in ***kind*** were paid by using standard measures. The landowners after receiving the rent, agreed to issue receipt to the tenant at the threshing floor itself. The landowners on the other hand, hardly co-operated in the enforcement of the Mannargudi Agreement. The daily wages were increased to the attached labourers only at the mercy of landowners.

The attached bonded labourers rarely received wages in kind that was supposed to be used as standard measures. Above all, the landowners were reluctant to issue the receipt to the tenants after receiving rent at the threshing floor. Only a few landowners issued a receipt to the tenants.

42. Harvest bonus of paddy paid to a labourer usually five kalams per couple.
43. G.Veeraiyan, Sangam Padaitha Charithiram, op.cit.,p.13

Conclusion

In 1944, Kuppu of Kalappal organised peasants in the surrounding villages of Mannargudi in Tanjore District.[44] The peasants revolted against the ***mirasdars*** for wage increase, increase in ***waram*** payment, and the abolition of corporal punishments. The peasants of Watrap region in Ramnad District and Kalakkadu and the neighbouring villages of Tirunelveli District resisted against landlords demanding higher wages and waram. The share croppers demanded 50 per cent of the produce as ***waram***. In ***zamindari*** areas of Papanad, Mathukur, Athivetti of Tanjore District, Kannivadi, Neikkarapatti and Bodinayakannur of Madurai District, Tirupathur and Manamadurai of Ramnad District, the peasants strongly revolted against the atrocities of ***zamindars*** in an organised manner.[45]

In 1945, the Imperial Government banned all ***Kisan sabhas*** in the country and the axe fell on Tamil Nadu also, under Section 56 of the Defence of India rules. However, the repressive measures of the Government could not continue for long. In spite of the ban, the widespread peasant revolts were prevalent across the country in 1946. In the same year, the peasants revolted against ***mirasdars*** demanding 50 per cent of ***waram*** as against their usual demand of 33.5 per cent of ***waram*** in Nannilam, Mayavaram and Kumbakonam Taluks of Tanjore District.[46] Consequently, a clash between peasants and the servants of ***mirasdar*** took place.

In this connection, two servants of the latter were murdered resulting into a ban on ***kisan*** and Communist meetings in the Mannargudi division of the Tanjore District.[47] In the meantime, the Government evolved on to a temporary settlement to lessen the tension between the two sides. The ***mirasdars*** as a matter of fact did not concede to the demands of peasants. As a result of this, Tamil Nadu had to witness a series of peasant movements since 1947 and they challenged the authority of Government on the one hand and the landlords on the other.

44. *Vaiimainathan,Thiyagi Kalappal Kuppu, (T), (Martyr Kalappal Kuppu), Chennai,1998, p.125*
45. *Ibid., p.169.*
46. *A.K.Kalimuthu, op.cit., p.167.*
47. *Fortnightly Report for the second half of the December, 1946.*



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Nationalism and the Working Class in Tamil Nadu

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In the decades since 1830, Western Europe was in the midst of insurrections, often localised and marked by violent confrontations between the masses and the forces of the regime. While all these were marked by a common thread, against monarchy, the masses constituted the dispossessed peasantry, the workers in the factories, and the vagrants whom the regimes sought to treat like maggots. Not with standing the sense of purpose that carried these insurgents against the regime and their determination to fight, these seemed to lack a sense of direction or any clarity on their strategic goals. It was then, that several leaders approached Karl Marx, who had sketched the context in the form of random notes,[1] to draft a manifesto for the struggle. It was a project the young Marx was commissioned to do and he took it up. Along with his partner, Frederick Engels, Marx delivered the Manifesto of the Communist Party in February 1848.

1. *These random notes came to be published later on under the title 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844' wherein Marx set out the several aspects that warrant deeper study in order to understand the times he lived in as well as to chart out the course that were necessary, in his view, to make sense of their portends.*

The Manifesto, as did Marx and Engels in most of what they wrote since then (and they wrote quite a lot!), did not pretend to be a poetry or prose. It was categorical that the regimes in Western Europe were haunted by a spectre, the spectre of communism; and hence it was necessary that the communists "should openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their views, their aims, their tendencies, and meet this nursery tale of the Spectre of Communism with a manifesto of the party itself."[2] It was to this end that "Communists of various nationalities have assembled in London and sketched the following manifesto, to be published in the English, French, German, Italian, Flemish and Danish." It is necessary to stress here that the Manifesto was adopted by 'communists of various nationalities' and in this sense they were yet to locate themselves in the larger context of 'nation' and 'nationalism' that would come to haunt the regimes in Western Europe by the turn of the Century. In other words, India and the several parts of Asia, Africa and Southern America were yet to emerge into nations, and nationalism as an idea was yet to take shape.

The Manifesto made a bold declaration: "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle" and "our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinct feature: it has simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other - Bourgeoisie and Proletariat."[3] It must be stressed, from the scope of this essay and its concerns, that this was done less than a decade before the rebellion of 1857[4] and half a decade after the Vellore Revolt of 1806.

Marx, meanwhile, commented on India in 1853 and there are hints of his understanding of India in the articles he wrote for the New York Daily Tribune beginning June 1853. In his despatch on 25, June 1853 Marx told that:

> "England has broken down the entire framework of Indian society, without any symptoms of reconstitution yet appearing. This loss of his old world, with no gain of a new one imparts a particular kind of melancholy to the present misery of the Hindu and separates Hindustan, ruled by Britain… from the whole of its past history".[5]

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2 *See Preamble to the Manifesto of the Communist Party, 1848 (hereafter Communist Manifesto).*

3 *Communist Manifesto, Chapter 1.*

4 *I consciously choose the word 'rebellion' against other usages to describe the events of 1857 in India such as 'sepoy mutiny' or 'the first war of Indian independence'. See Biswamoy Pati, Historians and Historiography: Situating 1857, in Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 42, No. 19 (May 12-18, 2007), pp 1886-1691 for an intense discussion on the usage of the various words/phrases to describe the event in history and by historians and their implications.*

5 *New York Daily Tribune, 25 June 1853. Reproduced in Iqbal Husain (ed), Karl Marx on India, New Delhi, 2006. p. 12. It may be stressed here that Marx's perception in this was guided by his approach of the Eastern world belonging to the 'Asiatic Mode of Production'. This was*

Even while some elements of this perception persisted in Marx's subsequent despatch on India to the same newspaper on 8 August 1853, when he wrote of the "double mission" that England had to fulfil in India. As he put it, "one destructive, the other regenerating - the annihilation of the old Asiatic society, and laying of the material foundations of Western society in India" Marx also told, in the same despatch, the following:

> "The Indians will not reap the fruits of the new elements of society scattered among them by the British bourgeoisie, till in Great Britain itself the new ruling classes shall have been supplanted by the industrial proletariat, or till the Hindus themselves shall have grown strong enough to throw off the English yoke altogether".[6] (Italicized for emphasis by the author)

Although Marx did not use the words such as Imperialism or Colonialism in these despatches, the prescience of this part of the despatch is not lost. It ought to be noted here that an analysis of Imperialism and an understanding of colonialism and its effect on the colonised society had to wait until the dawn of the 20 Century.[7] The point here is that Marx did talk aloud, as early as in 1853, on the inevitability of an overthrow of the 'English yoke' as necessary to the regeneration of the Indian society. It is also necessary to stress here that India had witnessed spontaneous revolts against the British rule and rulers from as early as the early 19 Century in the form of tribal revolts beginning the Kol rebellion in Chota Nagpur.

While it is not our purpose here to interrogate Marx and his writings, it is profitable to delve, in as brief a manner as one can, with a certain feature of the world - revolts across the world - beginning from 1880s, about which time Marx had completed his corpus of works and died in 1883. As Benedict Anderson puts it:

> "During the eight decades between 1815 and 1894 the world was largely at conservative peace.… Europe had such vast superiority in industrial, financial scientific, and financial resources that Imperialism in Asia, Africa and Oceania forged ahead without much effective armed resistance, except in

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found fault with subsequently; the society in India was NOT one that remained without change from the diatant past as Marx had understood it to be. A comprehensive critique of Marx and his conception of the Indian society as belonging to the Asiatic Mode of Production is found in Irfan Habib, Essays in Indian History: Towards a Marxist Perception, New Delhi, 1995. This point is made here only by way of clarifying a certain understanding of Marx that plagued sections of Economic Historians and is not central to the scope of this essay.

6 *New York Daily Tribune, 25 June 1853. Reproduced in Iqbal Husain (ed), Karl Marx on India, New Delhi, 2006. p. 49.*

7 *See J.A. Hobson, Imperialism: A Study, London, 1902; Dadabhai Naoroji, Poverty and Un-British Rule in India, (1901), New Delhi 1962. It is interesting to note here that Hobson and Naoroji dealt with Imperialism and Colonialism respectively at about the same time.*

> the case of the Mutiny in India. And capital itself moved quickly and pretty freely across existing national and imperial boundaries. But beginning in the early 1880s the preliminary tremors were being felt of the earthquake that we remember variously as the Great War or the First World War. Tsar Alexander II's assassination in 1881by bomb-throwing radicals calling themselves. The People's Will was followed over the next twenty-five years by the killing of a French President, an Italian monarch, an Austrian empress and an heir-apparent, a Portuguese king and his heir, a Spanish Prime Minister, two American Presidents, a king of Greece, a king of Serbia, and powerful conservative politicians in Russia, Ireland and Japan. Of course, a much larger number of attendants failed. The earliest and most spectacular of these assassinations were carried out by anarchists, but nationalists soon followed in their wake. In most cases the immediate aftermath was a mass of draconian "anti- terrorist" legislation, summary executions... But the assassins, some of whom could well be described as early suicide-bombers, understood themselves as acting for a world-audience of news agencies, newspapers, religious progressives, working class and peasant organisations and so on".[8]

Although Anderson does not mention the same tendencies in India about the same time, India too witnessed a host of such attempts against colonial administrators and those who carried these assassinations (as much as the several attendants that failed have been studied and historians address them as Revolutionary terrorists). These happened across India, beginning at the same time and in some ways as a consequence to the repression meted out by the colonial administration to the rebels of 1857.[9]

The purpose behind this long excurse is to underscore those historical events in India in the 19 and 20 Centuries, indeed, were not isolated ones; they were, instead, integrally linked with and even entangles into the complex web of events across the world, and in this sense, with the part of the globalisation process of industrial capitalism as it emerged in Western Europe in the beginning the mid -18 Century. In this very sense, it is necessary to see events involving the struggle for independence in the then Madras presidency (of which Tamil Nadu of the present was a part) as the consequence of the flow of ideas from all over, as much as these ideas were influenced by the material changes in the economic transformation brought about by the colonial rule in India.

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8 *Benedict Anderson, The Age of Globalisation: Anarchists and the Anticolonial Imagination, London, 2005. pp 3-4.*

9 *See Bipan Chandra et. al, India's Struggle for Independence, New Delhi, 1988.*

The Rise and Growth of Industries in Tamizhagam and the Colonial Context

Conflicts in an industrial society are predominantly structured by the overall productive relations into which men are born or entered involuntarily.[10] While this can explain the overall basis of class contradiction, it is useful to note the specificities – the context - before we attempt to arrive at any generalisation on the causality of events in history; the most important detail necessary in this regard is the context of industrial development in the region. This can be done taking into account the number of industrial workforce employed in the various industries as well as across centres in the Presidency.

Industrial growth in the Madras Presidency was not very different from the general trend of colonial economic development in India. In terms of the number of workers employed, the Presidency was third, next to Bengal and Bombay and accounted for over 10 per cent of the total number of Industrial workers in colonial India.[11]The major industries in terms of the work force employed in the Madras Presidency can be identified in the following order:

- Textiles [(including Cotton Spinning and Weaving and Jute) employed 38% of the total work force
- Food, Drink and Tobacco (including Sugar mills, but predominantly paddy boiling and rice milling and tobacco curing) employed 24% of the total workers
- Gins and Presses, predominantly a seasonal industry, accounted for 12%;
- Engineering industry employed 10% (predominantly Railway workshops)
- Industries connected with wood, stone & glasses constituted 5% (largely the numerous tile factories)].[12]

In terms of their geographical location within the Presidency, the textile industry was spread over Madras, Madurai, Tinnevelly, Coimbatore, Malabar, Salem, Vizagapatam, and East Godavari. While the factories in Vizagapatnam and East Godavari manufactured Jute products, those in the other centres accounted for cotton spinning and weaving; Madras had 3 mills, Madurai had 2 mills, and Tinnevelly with one concern, and Coimbatore was the largest with 9 major mills. Apart from Coimbatore, the other centres were engaged in cotton spinning and weaving whereas in Coimbatore it was predominantly spinning alone and restricted

10 *E.P. Thompson, Making of the English Working Class, London, 1971, pp. 9-10.*
11 *Indian Labour Year Book, 1946, Delhi, 1948, p.9.*
12 *The percentage calculation has been done of the years 1940 and 1941. These years have been taken since the trend is the same in all the years.*

to yarn manufacture. The engineering industry was concentrated in the Districts of North Arcot, Chinglepet, Coimbatore, Trichnopoly and Madras. Here again it is to be noted that apart from Madras, the rest -- Chingleput (Perambur workshop of M & SMR) and Trichnopoly (Goldenrock workshop of SIR) – were because of the location of the two Railway companies.

The Food, Drink and Tobacco industry was widespread all over the Province, but the Districts of West Godavari, East Godavari, Kistna, South Kanara, Guntur, Coimbatore, Malabar, and Vizagapatam accounted for most part of the labour employed. The predominantly seasonal industry of Gins and Presses was spread mainly in Coimbatore, Bellary, Guntur, Kurnool, Ramnad, Tinnevelly, Madurai, Kistna and Anantapur. It was evident that while industrial development in the presidency was taking place in a scattered manner, Madras, Coimbatore, Trichnopoly and Madurai were developing into centres with a large number of industrial workers.

In terms of the condition of work, in which the wages are most important from the scope of our concerns here, there is evidence of wages increasing (both in money terms as real wages) during the two Wars, but falling significantly immediately after the World War I; it is also evident that in the years after 1918 there were retrenchment of workers in a big way and employment remained lower than in the war years at least until 1937 and wages too shrank during this period. This trend changed in the beginning of the mid-1930s and what is noticed are the rise in wages, money as well as real wages in the decade after 1935, and both employment as well as wages registering significant increases during World War II. In other words, the general trend in these two areas across the Presidencies is also true of the Madras Presidency.

In so far as the conditions in which the workforce lived, there was a lot left to desire. As late as in 1946, the industrial workers lived in abject squalor. As put by the Labour Investigation Committee that went into conditions of the industrial workers in Madras city, which accounted for 10 % of the industrial workforce in the Presidency and thus the largest in its report:

> "The Madras Corporation provides housing for only 35% of its employees in the conservancy Department. ...The tenements are thatched or tiled with mud or brick. In most of the tenements, no separate water taps are provided for men and women by the corporation… In some places where the workers have erected their own huts, no provision has been made for sanitation in such huts with the result that they present the most dismal picture of dirt and squalor".[13]

If this was the case with the corporation, things were only a little different with the workers in the private industries. The Rege committee report said: "With regard

13 *Labour Investigation Committee, 1946, Main Report, Delhi, 1948, pp. 308-9 (hereafter Rege Committee Report).*

to the private industries, we do not have evidence of any provision made in this regard except for the limited one by the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills in Madras where about 10% of the workers in the mills lived in the quarters provided by the mills. In both the cases (the Corporation as well as the mills) nominal rents were charged for these dwellings."[14]

Describing the condition of these dwellings, which were largely one-room tenements, the Director of Industries, Madras reported earlier, in 1938, as follows:

> "The rooms are almost devoid of ventilation, and the entrance to some of these is so low that one has nearly to double oneself for entering them. The rooms have also very little light, and things inside can be seen only with the aid of a lamp even during… than the street and rainwater would find its way into the house and render the floor damp and unfit for habitation... washing and bathing are done in the streets or lanes..."[15]

This report also pointed that other than the limited number of workers, privileged with the above facilities, the relatively underprivileged lived in cheris, predominantly on the banks of the Cooum, in huts built of mud walls or small mats and roofed by palmyrah leaves or old tin sheets. "These huts" the report said, "are air proof and light proof but by no means water proof. There are no latrines and no water supply on the premises, the inhabitants using public latrines and taps. The cheries are dirty, damp and unhealthy..."[16]

As for the other major centres of factory industry -- Madurai, Coimbatore, and Tinnevelly - one finds some other patterns from the scanty information available. In the A & F Harvey Mills, Madurai, a Housing Co-operative Society constituted in 1938, the society constructed about 600 houses, called the 'Harvey Pati' colony in which the workers were provided with houses "...built of pucca material with tiled roofing and cement flooring"[17] and the finances for the project "amounting to about 8 lakh was advanced by the Mills, free of interest".[18] The workers could own the dwellings after repayment of Rs.600 per house in monthly instalments of Rs.4 only. The grant of this house, however was subject to conditions such as the worker must be married, at least two members of the family should be working in the mill, and the workers should have completed at least five years of service in the mill.[19]

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14 *Ibid.*
15 *Report of an Enquiry into the Family Budgets of Industrial Workers City, Madras, 1938, p. 37.*
16 *Rege Committee Report, p. 309.*
17 *Labour Investigation Committee, Sub – Report for Cotton Textile Industry, 1946, Delhi, 1948, p. 50.*
18 *Report on the Working of the Factory Act in the Madras Presidency, 1938, Madras, 1939.*
19 *Ibid.*

Though this provision was disproportionate to the needs, it was a unique feature in the Presidency. This, however, does not mean that Madura was less congested than Madras. As for instance, in the case of the Meenakshi Mills in Madurai, "The workers of the mill lived in huts or in rented buildings in the vicinity of the mills. The conditions in these… are extremely unclean and unsanitary."[20]

The condition of housing in Coimbatore was even more deplorable. The Court of Enquiry, constituted in 1937 after the advent of the Provincial Ministry, stated in its report, on the condition of housing in the city as follows:

> "I visited some of the areas where the workers are put up in Coimbatore. The conditions are unsanitary and unhealthy. The description given by the Royal Commission on Labour in 1931 is as true today as then but in a more intensified degree owing to the increase of population".[21]

This deplorable condition, not withstanding the fact that the growth of cotton industry in Coimbatore was relatively at a later stage, but still, lack of concern by the employers regarding the housing of workers employed, led to the rise of slums as in other industrial centres in the country. The fact that housing was a neglected area both by the Government agencies as well as the private industries and that the expenditure on house rent in the case of those provided with living quarters stood at "10.77 per cent of the total expenditure of the family, in 1937-1938 and that expenditure on rent increased as the income increased."[22] In the case of the cheries, where "the huts are erected by the workers themselves with borrowed money on a site for which they pay ground rent",[23] the situation was worse, due to the very fact that the rent in this case was in accordance to the whims and fancies of the owner of the ground, who in most cases was somebody from the supervisory category of the industry.[24]

The point here is that with the industrial growth[25] in Tamizhagam, there emerged localities where the industrial workers lived and shared their life experiences.

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20 *Labour Investigation Committee, Sub – Report for Cotton Textile Industry, 1946, Delhi, 1948, p. 53.*

21 *Report of the Court of Enquiry Constituted to go into the Question of Wages in Textile Industries of Coimbatore, 1938, Madras, 1938, pp. 9-10.*

22 *Ibid. p. 308.*

23 *Ibid. p. 309.*

24 *B.P. Wadia, Labour in Madras (Madras, 1921), p.47.*

25 *It must be stressed here that though there was growth in industry across India and in Tamizhagam too, beginning the late 19th Century and this growth intensifying in the early decades of the twentieth, this was distinct from a capitalist development (as in Western Europe beginning the mid-18th Century). See Aditya Mukherjee, Colonial "Industrialisation" : The Indian Experience in the Twentieth Century, International Journal of South Asian Studies, Vol. 4, 2011. This fact of history had implications for the emergence of the working class politics in India and was subject matter of intense debates in the COMINTERN over the years.*

Thus emerged the working class, as a class in itself and this shared experience, in interaction with the ideas that were conveyed to them by the leaders of trade unions, predominantly communists, beginning in 1918 impacted on their consciousness. In this process, the nature of the industries and the issues that the workers employed in them confronted contributed to the making of the spheres of conflict between them and the employers, i.e., between them and the colonial state.

Course of Industrial Growth and the Emerging Spheres of Conflict

The section begins with a detailed case study of the course of events in the textile industry, which had the largest workforce in its employment. It is pertinent, from the scope of this paper, to look into the crisis in the spinning industry all over India, by 1939, leading to the retrenchment of a large number of workers employed; this, indeed, reflected the inherent nature of the rise of industry in India in a colonial context. The general situation can be explained as one with increasing cost of production, (due to the rise in prices of raw cotton – Indian and Imported) keener competition due to the dumping of Japanese yarn and a sluggish market thereby necessitating an inevitable restriction in production. While this trend of retrenchment was witnessed earliest in Bombay and Ahmedabad, where more than 30,000 and 12,000 mill hands were thrown out of job respectively, by July 1939, in Coimbatore, thirteen mills decided to abolish night shifts from August 1939.[26]

The depression in the Indian Textile industry was primarily the result of overproduction, dumping done by foreign manufacturers, and the low purchasing power of the masses. A preliminary analysis of the data available on the total quantity of cloth available (or yarn available for production) against the average per-capita consumption of cloth in the triennium ending 1938-1939 (calculated as 15.9 yards for a total population of 365 millions), show that there was a surplus of about 669 million yards of cloth or its equivalent in yarn, including the quantity of cloth for cotton piece goods, which India had to import compulsorily, in pursuance of the Indo-Japanese and the Indo-Britain Trade Agreements.[27] This import stunted the scope of a marginal increase in the size of the home market, which could have taken place considering the fact that the total quantity of cloth available for consumption, from indigenous production only, was marginally below the aggregate per-capita consumption.

With these general explanations of the crisis and its basic causes, one can take a look into the specifications of the industry in the Madras Presidency, specifically in

26 *The Hindu (Madras), 28 July 1939.*

27 *Letter No.C.4.4187/39 dated 3 August 1939 from Commissioner of Labour to the Secretary, Development Department, Govt. of Madras. G.O. No. 2287 of 19.09.1939 (Confdl), Development Dept. (TNA).*

Coimbatore in the context of yarn production.The yarn available for consumption was far in excess of the internal demand after providing for the compulsory imports of cotton piece goods from Britain and Japan under the trade agreement. Data on this informs that the rise in production of yarn was heavily disproportionate to the marginal increase in weaving by mills and thus, contributing to the huge surplus stock of yarn in the presidency. Though a portion of this yarn was consumed by the handlooms industry, this could not help in subsiding the crisis that was in the offing, as one does not have evidence for, and the steep rise in the Handlooms Industry.

The point is that the roots of the textile crisis in 1939 remained in the structure of Indian industrial development and since its manifestation took the form of a need for large scale retrenchment of labour. One may locate the colonial structure as an essential sphere of conflict in one of the major industries of the province, the cotton spinning. Beginning from this understanding, one proceeds to discuss the impact of war on industry, in general, and on the conditions of living, in specific. The incidence of this crisis, though inherent in the colonial nature of industrial development, was intensified in the wake of the World War II.

With the outbreak of the war in September, 1939, Indian industry was assigned a different role. While on the one hand it led to a drastic fall in the standard of living of the working class on the whole, even though the period witnessed a rise in the average daily number of workers employed in the presidency, the employment was increased by about 17% in the presidency, between 1939 and 1940. Of this, the rise in employment in the textile industry was by around 9%. Thus, the war helped the industries from a severe crisis necessitating a large-scale retrenchment. Notwithstanding this fact, the crisis began to manifest in a different form with the falling standard of living caused by rise in prices, disproportionate to the increase in wages. In other words, though the number of workers increased and their money wages increased, there was a fall in real wages.

The effect of this with the wartime shortage of food stuff was to be felt by the working class in the presidency. The falling standard of living acted as a major factor in determining the relationship between the Capital and the Labour as much in that between the working class and the colonial state.

Early Stirrings of Labour Movement in Tamil Nadu

It is of importance from the scope of this essay that the first ever trade union in India was founded in Madras. Foundation of the Madras Labour Union in 1918 is variously attributed to the theosophists, good Samaritans, and similar influences. However, there is no denial of the fact that Singaravelu Chettiar, probably one among the earliest communists in India, was a fellow traveller with others who

contributed to the setting up of the Union (in April 1918) and he picked up the torch in the years since then.[28] It is necessary to point out here that it was Singaravelu Chettiar who organised a May Day meeting on the beaches (somewhere around the place where the Madras High Court is located presently) on 1 May 1923. The Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan was founded at this meeting and this outfit was also the nucleus of the Communist Party of India, founded in 1924. That Singaravelu Chettiar brought the May Day into India is also a fact that is relevant. Chettiar, unlike others who were instrumental in the making of the Madras Labour Union, was drawn towards the ideas that Marx had elaborated (and discussed briefly in the early parts of this essay) and all these led to his arrest and trial subsequently in the Kanpur Conspiracy Case, 1924.[29] It may be pointed here that this case, beginning in May 1923, was preceded by the Peshawar Conspiracy Case in 1921 where a host of persons were charged under Section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code. Singaravelu Chettiar was among the 13 persons from across India arraigned in the case; the list later was reduced to 8 persons. Singaravelu was arrested from Madras on 6 March 1924 and sent up for trial.[30]

The arrest of Singaravelu, as much as the various other repressive measures by the colonial state, seemed to cause a quietus in the couple of years after 1924. This, however, was apparent and given the colonial context in which industries developed in India as well as in the Tamizh region, the impact of the global crisis at the beginning of the mid-1920s began to be felt in the region as well. This was happening in the larger context of the surge in mass nationalism[31] manifested

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28 *See DilipVeeraraghavan, The Making of the Madras Working Class, New Delhi, 2013. While Veeraraghavan's account is perhaps the only comprehensive book on the subject hitherto and it treats the subject – the working class – in the context of the times it evolved (the colonial context), and thus makes it different from the several accounts by the communist party and its leaders. Meanwhile, it is worthwhile mentioning a short write-up in The Hindu by its Reader's Editor on the various people who played a role in the making of the Madras Labour Union. See https://www.thehindu.com/ features/metroplus/society/madras-labour-and-may-day/article5975331.ece*

29 *R.S. Yadav, Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy Case, New Delhi, 2021.*

30 *Apart from SingaraveluChettiar, the others sent up for trial were: Shaukat Usmani, Muzafar Ahmed, Ghulam Hussain, Nalini Gupta and S.A. Dange. While Ghulam Hussain confessed and hence was not presented for trial, Singaravelu obtained bail on health grounds. See http://cpiml.org/library/ communist-movement-in-india/introduction-communist-movement-in-india/peshawar-and-kanpur- conspiracy-cases/*

31 *I use this expression 'mass nationalism' to describe the stage in Indian national movement beginning the Swadeshi agitation in 1905 followed by the arrival of Gandhi on the stage at Champaran as distinct from the nature of the movement beginning 1885 and until 1905 when the nationalists' concern were predominantly that of seeking participation of Indians in their governance from within the terms set by Parliament in London. This does not mean that the rupture was one of suddenness in 1905; for the period between 1885 and 1905 also witnessed*

about the same time in the demonstrations against the Simon Commission's visit in 1928.[32] The economic crisis in the Western world was beginning to show its impact on colonial India and Tamizhagam as well about the same time. One of its manifestations was felt in the railway companies across India; the two railway companies in Tamizhagam - the South Indian Railway (SIR) and the Madras & South Maratha Railway (M&SMR) with large workshops in Golden Rock (Trichnopoly) and Perambur (Madras) - set in motion such measures as downsizing its workforce and retrenchment as a consequence and freezing wages of the workers employed.

On 28 June 1928, the South Indian Railway Labour Union (SIRLU), led by communist-leaning workers demanded the withdrawal of a circular detailing retrenchment proposals and they also demanded rise in wages across the board. The company, however, stuck to its proposal on retrenchment and was met with a stay-in-strike by the workers that began on 29 June 1928. The company ordered a lock-out throwing as many as 8,000 workers out of employment across the lines in Nagapatnam, Podanur, Golden Rock and Trichnopoly. The colonial state's might was also let lose on the workers the same day. A significant part of this strike action was a hartal in Trichnopoly on 6 July 1928, which led to a shut-down of all shops and business in the town in solidarity with the striking workers and a 3,000 people procession went through the town that day. The strike was called off, without any of the demands met, on 30 June 1928; and after that, as many as 106 workers were sent to jail, sentenced to anywhere between two and six months.

There was evidence that the leaders of the SIR Labour Union were in touch with S.S.Jhabwala, a then prominent member of the Communist Party of Great Britain and among those who were in constant touch with the unions in colonial India.[33]

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such nationalist assertions by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Shri Aurobindo and such others who spoke of swaraj in the sense that Gandhi would fine tune subsequently and the Indian National Congress adopted in its Karachi session in 1931 in the name of the Fundamental Rights Resolution.

32 *See Sumit Sarkar, Modern India, New Delhi 1983; Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India, New Delhi, 2014; Bipan Chandra et. al, India's Struggle for Independence, New Delhi, 1988.*

33 *A short account of this strike is available at https://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/sections/britain/periodicals/labour_monthly/1928/10/india.htm (accessed on 4 December, 2022) Jhabwala had confirmed that the workers from SIR had communicated with him as early as in June 1928 and that a similar strike action in railway companies such as the Great Indian Peninsular Railway, the Bengal Nagpur Railway, whose workers were also rallied behind communist leaning unions along with the SIR workers are organized. Jhabwalla's response to them to hold on until July 1928, by telegram, however, seem to have been intercepted by the colonial state and this led to the communication not reaching the leaders of the SIR Labour Union. Also see: V. Krishna Ananth, Trade Union Movement in the South Indian Railway (SIR) and the Madras & South Mahrata Railway (M&SMR), Unpublished MPhil*

There is evidence, as well, to suggest that a schism had developed between the communists in the trade unions and the non-communists during this strike. While this is beyond the scope of the essay here, the point to stress is that the communists would, in less than a decade, workout on establishing an organic relationship between the battle for wages and working conditions (which dominated the trade union movement they led in the 1920s) and the colonial state. This would have happened due to the shared experience of the industrial workers whose agitations were met with the repression of the colonial state (acting on behalf of the industrial establishments) and as much as with the Communist Party of India adopting the United Front's line set by the COMINTERN at its VII Congress in 1935.[34]

The Trade Unions and the Indian National Movement in Tamil Nadu: 1934-1946

The strike wave in early 1920s had subsided between 1929 and 1935, and it reached an all-time low. Among the reasons, the most important one was the conspiracy cases against the communists as much as a split in the AITUC that began in 1929. Though labour was relatively quiet during this phase, the conditions that contributed to the rising strike wave earlier such as the impact of the Wall Street Crash remained to affect the working class in India. Meanwhile, there was a recovery of industry in 1934 and along with this the strike wave too intensified. By 1937, we can find a sharp increase in both the number of strikes as well as the man-days lost and the trend lasted until independence, barring the period between 1943 and 1945.

As put by Manibhen Khera, then General Secretary of AITUC:

"A new wave of awakening is sweeping through the country and the workers at every place are girding up their loins... They have regained enough confidence to resist every offensive of the capitalists even to go forward for winning back what they have lost during the last few years..."[35]

Furthermore, the period also witnessed the reversal of the splits in the trade union organisations. The Red Trade Union Congress, which broke away from the AITUC in 1932 merged with the organisation in 1935. Similarly, the NTUF

Dissertation submitted to the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 1987.

34 *See Sashi Joshi and BhagwanSingh Josh, Struggle for Hegemony in India (Three Volumes), New Delhi, 2011 for a detailed treatment of the history of the communist movement in India for an informed understanding of the United Front strategy, the COMINTERN and the Indian communist movement.*

35 *Report of the General Secretary, 16th Session of AITUC, Delhi, 1938, AITUC Papers, Reel No. R. 3382 (NMML).*

merged with the AITUC in 1940. Alongside, the Indian National Congress too was radicalised in this period; the Karachi Resolution of 1931, the elections to the Provincial Assemblies under the Government of India Act 1935, and Jawaharlal Nehru's election as President in 1936. It is pertinent to cite a portion of the Karachi here:

> In regard to industrial workers, the policy of the Congress is to secure to them a decent standard of living, hours of work, and conditions of labour in conformity, as far as economic conditions in the country could permit, with the international standards such as, suitable machinery for the settlement of disputes between employers and workmen, protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment, and the right of workers to form unions and to strike for the protection of their interests.[36]

The point here is that by the mid-1930s, labour issues had begun to attract the attention of the Congress, the largest force against imperialism. As a consequence, it is to be noted that the Congress candidates won in all the six labour seats.[37] This overall background is essential to study the aspects of trade union movement.

Of the 179 strikes reported for the whole of India in 1937, involving about 650,000 workers, Madras presidency accounted for 61 disputes, involving 60,980 working people.[38] In other words the workers who went on strike in Madras presidency in 1937 accounted for about one tenth of those in the whole country. The Government of Madras reported this as follows:

> "The very large increase in the number of strikes during the year under report has been a cause of considerable anxiety to the Government... of the several causes for misunderstanding and the consequent conflict between capital and labour, the most outstanding concern were wages and conditions of employment..."[39]

Of the 107 such strikes in the presidency, 60 happened in the textile industry and it terms of the man-days lost, the textile industry accounted for 94% of the total. In other words, Madras, Coimbatore and Madurai, the textile towns then, turned into stormy centres of working class protest. Interestingly, the single largest number in the loss in the man-days during the period was because of strikes against suspensions

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36 *P. Sitaramayya, History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. 11, 1947*

37 *The candidates elected were as follows: N.G. Ramasamy (Coimbatore and Malabar), S.R. Veradarajalu Naidu (Madura), P.R.K. Sarma, (Press Labour Union, Madras) Subba Rao (Chittivalasa Jute Mills), G. Krishnamurthy (Railway Trade Union, Madras).*

38 *ChamanlalRevri, The Indian Trade Union Movement: An Outline History 1880-1947, New Delhi, 72 p. 218.*

39 *Report on the working of the Factories Act in the Madras Presidency for 1939, G.O. no. 1557, dt. 25 June 1938 (Tamil Nadu Archives)*

and dismissal of workers, which accounted for about 50%. It is evident that in the years 1938 and 1939, the workers struck were the most to resist suspensions and dismissals. Meanwhile, it is necessary to stress here that the Provincial Government under the Indian National Congress (with C.Rajagopalachari as Premier) treated labour agitations with an iron hand. Working class protests were met with repressive measures of as much intensity as the imperialist rulers in the past. The dreaded provisions of the Criminal Law Amendment Act were used frequently to suppress the activities of the Communist trade unionists. Lathi-charges and prohibition orders under Section 144 Cr. P.C. were used in almost every instance of a drawn-out strike. In other words, the period when the Congress Ministry held office, the expectations of the working class were belied.

With the World War II and the resignation of the Congress Ministries in September 1939, the world of labour confronted new challenges. The immediate effect of the war on labour was in the prices front; the rise in prices was disproportionate to the wages of the workers. The Home Department, of Government of India, in its appreciation of the political situation in February 1940, said:

> "In the world of labour the rise in prices of necessities and signs of increasing industrial prosperity, both due to the war have prompted a demand for higher wages; and here and there where forces are at work which desire upheaval for their own political ends, threats have been made of organized strikes".[40]

In Madras Presidency too, there was a spurt in strikes and this persisted throughout the War. Like in the pre-War period, the strike wave now was most marked in the Textile industry accounting for 68 or about 29 per cent of the total number of strikes and these accounted for 75% of the man-days lost. There was a dip in this from 1943 onwards and from then on, the hitherto unorganised section of labour -- those employed in the Food, Drinks, and Tobacco as well as the other peripheral industries -- dominated the strike wave. It is to be noted that these sections put together, accounted for 134 of the 162 strikes between 1943 and 1945 and about 77% of the man-days lost during this period. An important aspect to be noted was the entry of the scavenging staff, working under the local bodies, that came out on strike for the first time in their history.

Thus, it can be safely concluded that the working class of Madras, like their counterparts all over India, fought the effects of the war with massive strike actions; the strike wave that broke out ever since 1935, continued to intensify, and during the period of the war, it spread into the peripheral industries with great vigour.

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40 *40 Home Department appreciation of the Political Situation in India for 1940. E.C.O. proceedings, F.No. 11 (24) – p (Sec.) / 40 of 1940 (NAI).*

The following conclusions can be drawn on the character of the strike wave; that the strike wave was predominantly caused by the economic effects of the war manifested in the rising prices disproportionate to the wages; while in the initial stages, it was caused more by suspensions and dismissals of workers. It can be seen that 59% of the total strikes during the period was caused by demands for wages, dearness Allowance, etc., (accounting for 71% of the man-days lost) while suspensions/ Dismissals accounted for 15% of the strikes (14% of the man-days lost).

The end of World War II, rendering the colonial authority weaker than never before, and the rising surge of nationalism impacted the working class in multiple ways. The War-induced boom burst in the industries and retrenchment of workers became the norm by this time. As earlier, the resistance to this was most pronounced in the textile industries. Strikes here accounted for a loss of 75% of the man-days lost during the period, followed by the Engineering industry with a loss of about 17 lakh or 6% of the total man-days lost.

Among the large number of strikes in this period, the heroic struggles fought by the scavenging staff of Madras Corporation, the workers in the South Indian Railway, the Textile workers of Coimbatore, and the workers of the Buckingam and Carnatic Mills at Madras City are important. While the first three strikes took place between August and November 1946, the one at B&C Mills lasted over for a long period between March and June 1947.[41] It is interesting to note at this stage that all these strikes had taken place when Sri T.Prakasam and nine of his colleagues were sworn in to govern Madras. [42]

The strike action by the workers of SI Railway, whose trade union was led by the communists, was an important phase in the history of the trade union movement in Madras Presidency. Though the strike began on 24 August 1946 throughout the lines, the prelude to this was laid from an earlier date in conformity with the decision of the All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF) for an All India General strike when "the Railwaymen held strike ballots which revealed an overwhelming majority in favour of strikes."[43]This proposed strike on 27 June, 1946, however, was called off by the AIRF, before it had begun and in conformity with this decision, the Railwaymen' s Union of M &SMR and SIR withdrew the strike notices, the latter did this only at the last moment thus keeping the authorities in suspense.[44]

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41 *See V. Krishna Ananth, Working Class and the Indian National Movement: A Case Study of Madras Presidency (1937-1947), Unpublished PhD Thesis submitted to the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 1991.*

42 *Fortnightly Report from Madras Presidency, II half of April, 1946. F.No.18/4/46, Home Political (NAI)*

43 *Fortnightly Reports, II half of June, 1946. F.No. 18/6/46, Home Political, (NAI).*

44 *Ibid.*

The withdrawal of the strike notice by the AIRF, however, was not a unanimous opinion of the General Council of AIRF and the reservations in general had come from the Communist sections of the Council and of specific relevance was the note of dissent given by M.Kalyanasundaram, President of SIRLU, along with the representatives of the unions of the G.I.P. Railway, BB&C Railway, B & A Railway and the N.W.Railway, wherein they stated:

> "The battle is not yet over. It is only suspended. The question of retrenchment of three lakh; the question of revision of scales of pay are yet to be settled. They can be decided in our favour only if the Board and the Government know that the ten lakh are ever ready to give a fight if the demands are not granted. We call upon the workers therefore to utilise the coming six months... strengthening themselves and marking those leaders who are afraid of strikes".[45]

The 'six months' period, seemed to be taken by the administration of S.I.R, for its own preparation for the offensive and suspension orders were served on certain individual activists of the union in the Goldenrock Workshop to which the workers responded with a stay-in-strike in the Goldenrock workshops since 23 July 1946.[46] In response, the General Manager of S.I.R., issued a notice, on 29 July, 1946 stating that "... from Thursday, the 1 August, 1946, only those workmen who have been actually working at their jobs during these days, will be permitted to go into the workshops. To enable these men to be identified at the gates, admission cards will be issued to them by the Foremen of the shops concerned on ... the 31 July 1946."[47]

The SIRLU leadership while condemning this action by the administration resorted to a peaceful picketing of the Workshop gate and on the 2 August, 1946, "The number attending work were only about 100, mostly foremen, Charge men and a few Anglo-Indian labourers, ... The strikers (had) succeeded in closing down the workshops and offices in Goldenrock for all practical purposes."[48] It was at this stage that the SIRLU issued a strike notice to the administration on 1 August 1946.

The General Strike commenced on the midnight of 24 August, 1946, and as a preventive measure to avoid the apprehended trouble, the S.I.R, administration cancelled all trains from the previous evening.[49] The strike carried on until the end

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45 *People's Age, Bombay, 30th June, 1946.*

46 *Confidential note by special Branch C.I.D. Madras to all District Magistrates dt. 7 August 1946. G.O. No. 2040, Public (Gen.) Deptt. (MS), dt. 26.9.46 (T.N.A.).*

47 *Notice to the Workmen at Goldenrock issued by the G.M. of S.I.R. dt. 29.07.46. G.O.No. 2040 Public (Gen.) Dept(MS). dt 26.09.46 (TNA).*

48 *Letter from the District Suptd. of Police Trichy to the Inspector-General of Police, Madras, dt. 02.08.46. G.O.No.2040, Public (Gen.) Dept.(MS). dt. 26.09.46, (TNA).*

49 *Statement on Strikes in the Madras Presidency for the fortnight ending 30th August 1946, G.0,-No.4426 dated 28.11.1946, Development Dept. (MS) (TNA)*

of August, only then the Railway administration was able to run some passenger trains, and on the whole the traffic was restricted to daylight hours only.[50] This had continued throughout the period of the strike until it was called-off by the labour union on the 23 September, 1946 and normal running of trains was resumed from the morning of 24 September, 1946."[51]

The strike in S.I.R. witnessed massive repression in the Goldenrock Railway Colony area, which reached its highest mark on 5 September 1946 when the police opened fire on the striking workers, all assembled at the headquarters of the Labour Union five men were killed and scores of others including leaders of the Union were injured. Those workers killed in the police firing were Thiagarajan, Krishnamurthy, Thangavelu, Ramachandran and Raju.

During the general strike on the S.I. Railway, more than 1,500 workers were arrested including 50 women, five were killed in police firing and hundreds were wounded in bayonet and lathi charges by the po1ice. The building of the S.I.R. Labour Union was occupied by the Malabar Special Police and its furniture, mike, etc., were broken. The total loss due to this destruction and damage amounted to Rs.50,000.[52]

50 *Ibid.*
51 *Statement for fortnight ending 30th September 1946*
52 *Report of the General Secretary to the 22nd session AITUC, Calcutta, 1947, AITUC Papers, Reel No. R.3382 (NMML).*

Conclusion

The long excurse here, in the preceding sections, reveal the story of the steady growth of the communist influence among the working class in the Madras Presidency and the militant strikes that began in 1918, reached its peak in the post-World War years. It is to be noted, that Madras Presidency, was an area, in which, prior to the war, the Communist influence was extremely low in relation to Bombay and Calcutta. This changed drastically after the War. The communists fielded two candidates in the Labour Constituencies in the Presidency; Guntur General Labour and the Railway Trade Union Constituencies, both won the elections. K.Anandan Nambiar, the Communist candidate and the General Secretary of the SIRLU, defeated the local President of the same union, Adikesavalu (a conservative trade unionist), in the Railway Trade Union Constituency spreading over the lines of S.I, Rai1way and the Madras of South Maratha Railway (M & SMR).[53] This however was only a part of the process and more important in this context was the decisive radicalisation of the AITUC during this phase. Evidence to this was found in the declaration of the main objective of the AITUC in its session held at Calcutta in the beginning of 1947, which read as follows;

> "The AITUC reiterates its objective of socialism and declares that the aim of the working class movements to work for a Socialist State ... At the same time the AITUC realises that the immediate objective before the country is that of national freedom from British rule. Recognising this immediate objective and the need for a constitution for the transitional period, the AITUC declares that a democratic constitution really embodying the will of the people can only be framed by a Constituent Assembly based on adult suffrage. The AITUC calls upon the working class to agitate for such a constitution and not to pin their faith in promises of British Imperialists or the vested interests".[54]

To sum up, the trade union movement in Tamizhagam, as in India, grew organically with the anti-imperialist mobilisation and the contributions of the working class for the freedom struggle was indeed as important as the various campaigns carried out by the Indian National Congress.

53 *AITUC - Review of the Elections to the Legislatures, 1946, File No.226, AITUC Papers (NMML).*

54 *Report of the General Secretary, 22nd Session of AITUC, Calcutta, 1947. AITUC Papers, Reel No. R. 3382(NMML).*



6

Independence Struggle and the Silver Screen in Tamil Nadu

- Dr. Theodore Baskaran
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An entirely new art appears in a society that is as old as over a thousand years and a completely technology-oriented performing art at that. The art of moving pictures grows fast. It attracts the masses. Within a few years of its arrival, it evolves into a pastime that people love. The arrival of Cinema in Tamil Nadu and the Indian Independence struggle began simultaneously. While 1915 saw Gandhi's return from South Africa and his spearheading of the Indian Independence movement, it also saw the beginning of Tamil Cinema (1912) that well extended into the 30s. The 124 full-length feature films were more or less made in Madras then.



Cinema, being a visual medium, was used to spread political propaganda. One has to keep in mind that although many national leaders had not endorsed cinema, directors and cinema artists in Tamil Nadu, it aided the independence struggle in many ways. The Punjab massacre by the British Government at Jallianwala Bagh, near Amritsar, had deeply shaken the Thennaattu Company drama artists. They began resisting the British in their drama. Many of these actors entered the cinematic space along with their politics. Thus, political propaganda began on-screen as well.

Gandhi in his comments about cinema in 1972 mentions it as "the evil has done its patent". Rajaji, who had been the Chief Minister of the erstwhile Madras Presidency considered cinema an evil to be eradicated. E.V.R.Periyar had opined that cinema was useless. Educated people dubbed cinema for the general public's pastime. The writers of Tamil Nadu did not pay attention to the advent of cinema either. Lenin in 1972 made the historic statement, "The cinema is for us the most important of the arts". The significance of the art form was understood in Britain, Germany and France, alongside Russia. The Governments, the writers and the academia showed interest in cinema from its nascent stage. However, Cinema had a different formative phase in India.

The National Congress employed all the facets of Tamil Cinema for political purposes. They believed that cinema was the art form to champion the nationalist cause. Congress leader Sathyamurthy brought all the artists within the party's fold and supported them. He was an artist himself. He had engaged with vocational drama troupes and bridged performing arts and politics. Many artists directly supported the movement under the influence of Sathyamurthy. Thus, the relationship between cinema and politics began since as early as 1930s.

Origins of the Touring Talkies

Films were initially screened in rented buildings and tents. The first permanent Cinema Theatre in Chennai was inaugurated in 1900. A lot of other cinema theatres across Tamil Nadu followed suit. Cinema theatres opened up in talukas as small as Dharapuram in 1927. It could be said that the Touring Talkies began a social

revolution in the Tamil Society. It was a place where people gathered irrespective of their caste or class. This served as an opportunity for political propaganda. Films have been used for political purposes since the time of motion pictures.

Political Campaign in Motion Pictures

Nataraja Mudaliar marked the beginning of Tamil Cinema with his silent film Keechaka Vadham (Extermination of Keechaka) in 1916. Since he named his company India Films, it was a token of his patriotic spirit, during a time when foreign companies imported and extensively screened western cinema.

As already mentioned, the Indian nationalist campaign in Tamil cinema had begun early during the era of silent films (1916-1930). Ideas of social reform, as stressed by Gandhi had found their way into films. The first contemporary film of South India, Dharmapatni, directed by A Narayanan is about the destructive effects of alcohol on family life. Following this, a few films campaigned for abstinence from alcohol consumption. Director Narayanan, expressed his ideological stance of supporting the freedom struggle in his films. Nandanar (1930) directed by Raja Santo emphasised abstinence from the consumption of alcohol. Such notions held a positive place in the Nationalist movement.

Film Censorship

The British Government had brought into effect censorship in 1918 when it realised that motion pictures provided an opportunity for the spread of the Nationalist cause. Film censorship in India, was initially vested with the police force. It was not mandatory, to screen the movie for the censor board then. Supervisors from the force joined the audience during the screenings occasionally and watched movies. They would take action if there were any objectionable sequences in them. Bhaktha Vidurar was one such movie that was banned in Madurai for Vidurar appearing in a Gandhi cap. The supervisors were on the lookout for elements that could cause a rise of patriotic feelings like scenes that showed the British in a bad light, defamed the rulers of the princely States for they were the closest allies of the British, bringing in left-leaning ideology, or hurting religious sentiments.

Talkies Come to Town

The introduction of sound made cinema popular among the people. Films replete with songs came out. The songs analysed the social and political scenario of the day in detail. These songs took after other popular songs by writers like Madhura Kavi Bhaskara Dhas and many others. Film songs like these were used to spread ideas about the nation among the populace. Though Kaalidas, was the first Tamil

talkie that was a story based on Puranas, it featured a song titled, Gaandhiyin Kai Raattinamae (Oh spinning wheel at the hand of Gandhi) that sang Gandhi's praise.

Methods and Activities of Propaganda on Screen

Thanks to the intense political scenario, stable economic platform coupled with artists, and a group of directors who supported the Independence movement, Tamil cinema began reflecting the people's role in politics. Songs were made in tune with the ones written by renowned poets across the nation.

Saadhi Madhangal Anandham undaaiyinum

(Despite numerous castes and religions)

Thaayin vilangai thagartheriya

(To break our mother's shackles)

Oru manadhodu ezhuvome

(Let's rise together in unison)

Baarata maata paripoorana suthanthiram eithuvale.

(May mother India attain complete independence.)



Anaadhaipenn (1938)

After filming puranic ideas for a while, the Talkies took up contemporary issues in 1935. Dambaachaari portrayed the misfortunes of a minor who lost his health and wealth as he visited the brothel houses of Chennai. The film was succeeded by *Menaka* (1935), a social drama. Being a movie that advocated the upliftment of the Adi Dravidar community and the abstinence from consumption of alcohol, it gave momentum to the nationalist movement. Having argued for a better position of women in society, it also included a song by Bharathi. One should bear in mind that Congress frequently used songs of Bharathi.

Alcohol abstinence was core to company dramas like *Pathibhakthi.* Hence, this play became famous. Movies like Sathi *leelavathi* and *Pathibhakthi* were made based on this play and those enjoyed wide reception. It is about a young man, who is raised in a comfortable family, later goes on to become an alcohol addict. He drags himself and his family into misery. He eventually goes to work at Tea Plantation in Sri Lanka, whereas his wife spins clothes using a Charkha. Alongside introducing national symbols, this film comprises songs that praise the independence movement. The film also highlights the plight of Tamil labourers in the Sri Lankan tea plantations. The film *Santhiya mohan,* also known as, *Samooha thondu,* (1930) shows Chandrasekhar, a young graduate who resigns from his Government job and returns to his village where he builds an ashram and works for the rural development. The film directly refers to Gandhi's call for people to quit their Government jobs during the Non-Co-operation movement. This movie points to Gandhi's development of rural economy along with including a song in praise of Bharath matha. Nationalist symbols were showcased even in Puranic movies. This trend continued, despite the former being artificial and irrelevant to the sets and the films. The movie *Naveena Sarangadara* (1936) featured people of Hastinapur in Gandhi caps as they rose against the tyranny of their king Narendiran.

Songs

Songwriters like Bhaskardas, M.S.Balasundaram and many others who had participated and risen to prominence during the nationalist struggle had begun working in the field of cinema. Cinema censorship remained with the provincial Government back then. The press, the stage and the big screen were thoroughly scrutinised. However, nationalist ideas were spread on and off-screen through songs. Gramophone records helped these ideas reach the masses as well. Patriotic songs were later released on records and added to the strengthening of the nationalist movement. For instance, *Namathu Janma bhoomi, namadhu janma bhoomi* from the film Matrubhumi (1939) was one such song that became famous. Affordable, inexpensive records were imported from Japan, making music common to everyone

beyond caste and class markers. It became impossible to ban this music from being played at political events and gatherings. The songs were sung in schools and by beggars in trains alike. Single tracks of folk songs were initially released by Odiyan company and later by Saraswati stores.

Artists' Political Involvement

Film artists were engaged in politics in two ways namely, by spreading patriotism on screen and directly working in politics. Sathyamurthy had endorsed such a relationship. He brought all the actors into the Congress's fold and supported them. He even sent Actor Nagayya as one of the representatives at the Guwahati Congress meeting. The Congress was the first to put all dimensions of Tamil cinema to use in politics. Sathyamurthy who was actively involved in Tamil Nadu politics was also a great patron of the performing arts. He insisted that art forms like dance and drama had to be used in politics. No sooner did the Talkies emerge, than, Sathyamurthy realised the potential the medium possessed to convey Nationalist ideas. He believed that cinema would establish itself as a strong medium in the next thirty years and such form of entertainment needed to be actively taken up to portray contemporary societal, and political concerns.

Sathyamurthy was quite influential in the cinematic field. He was elected as the first head of the South Indian Film Chamber of Commerce. He had written the rules of the organisation. His support to cinema shone a new light on the field at a time when educated elites thought of it as an uncultured medium. He continuously wrote in English and Tamil emphasising the role of cinema. He has urged other leaders to scrupulously approach cinema. He gave the famous musician Maharajapuram Vishwanathan his big break in the movie Nanthanar (1935). It is noteworthy that K.P.Sundarambal acted in the film as well.

Kalaivanar N.S.Krishnan, who had been a stalwart in Tamil cinema over 20 years, was deeply involved in the non-co-operation movement. He chronicled Gandhi's salt satyagraha into a story and tuned it into a *villuppaattu* that was introduced in various plays and performed as solo events.





K.P.Sundarambal deserves a historical mention among artists who were directly involved in politics. Having acted on stage and screen, Sundarambal released patriotic song records. She had actively campaigned for Congress during the 1937 elections. Sathyamurthy, her mentor had organised multiple concerts and employed her vocal talent for campaigning purposes. She served as the crowd-puller when she opened his campaigns with songs. Her songs were followed by Sathyamurthy's speech. His song *Ottudaiyorellam kettiduveer* (everyone with a vote, listen up) became popular during electoral gatherings. Congress came out victorious in that election. It had secured 159 out of 215 constituencies.

It was during this period that Sundarambal began her rise to stardom in cinema. She became famous because of her acting in films like *Nandanar and Manimekalai*. Her most memorable movie is Avvaiyar. This film is a musical featuring many songs on the Tamil poetess Avvaiyar. Sundarambal was the first Indian artist to have a seat at the Legislative Assembly and went on to become a member of the Upper House of the state in 1958. The entry of cinema artists into the Legislative Assembly is a tradition that stands until this day.

Inbasaagaran is a successful play written by Kovai Ayyamuthu, who had worked alongside Gandhi in the Swadeshi movement. The play is an allegory of the resistance that emerged when Pandya king attacked Sri Lanka. Director K.Subramaniam made a movie out of the play with the original title. However, the film reels were lost as they were burnt during a fire accident in the studio.

Congress Rule in Madras Presidency

Censorship rules were relaxed when the Government under Rajaji took charge of the Madras Presidency after the elections of 1937. The censor board was reorganised under the new Government. Directors who had previously resorted to covert film tactics to dodge censorship wished to make full use of this new found freedom of expression. Patriotic films in Tamil Nadu peaked during the period of the interim Congress Government that spanned up to two and a half years. Direct propagandist

movies like *Vaalibar Sangam* (1938), *Harijanapenn* (1938), *Aanandashramam* (1939) and *Desabakthi* (1939) were released. *Maatrubumi* (1939) showcased an allegory of Alexander's invasion and the resistance put up by kings here. Such movies were explicit. Among such movies, *Thyagaboomi* holds a special place. A copy of the movie is preserved at the National Film Archives in Pune.

Thyagaboomi

The movie was made by K.Subramaniam, a nationalist. Born into a conservative Brahmin family at Kumbakonam in 1904, Subramaniam studied to become a lawyer and dropped out of it in 1928 to work at Madras Associate Films. He later started the firm Madras United Artists Corporation and made many films. All his movies, especially Balamohini (1936) are critical of priests. Once he joined Congress, his films were greatly impacted by patriotism. His movies urged the rethinking of certain rooted social practices. He questioned the beliefs of middle-class people at a time when his peers did not dare it. The plot of his most unforgettable film Thyagaboomi is set in a village, Nedunkarai near Thanjavur. A poor priest Sambu Sastri, his daughter Savitri and a Dalit landlord Nallan are the important characters. A pregnant Savitri returns home on account of marital strife only to know that her father had left the village as he could not put up with the troubles caused by other Brahmins



for Sambu having supported the Dalit cause. She then arrives at Madras looking for him and when she does coincidentally, she drops her child near her father without his knowledge and leaves. She returns rich and wealthy a few years later and learns that Sambu is fighting for the upliftment of Dalit people in the slum. Meanwhile, her husband litigates to get her back in order to claim her wealth and property. The court rules in his favour. However, Savitri joins the freedom movement and goes to jail.

Dubbed *Tamilagam's Gandhi*, Sambu Sastri spreads the message of freedom everywhere he went. Dalit and Brahmin people join hands and march forward in the rallies he leads. He begins his campaign to change lives in the slums. Liquor shops are vandalised. Roads are swept clean. A scene features throngs of people spinning the yarn referring to Gandhi ritualising the activity. There was another scene that featured Sastri similar to Gandhi spinning yarn on a raised platform as the people of the slum sit around him doing the same. As the camera moves towards Sastri, newsreels of Gandhi are shown. The anti-caste stand in this movie created a great impact. Papanasam acted as Sivam Sambu Sastri and Kalki Krishnamurthy had written the story. It is to be noted that *Thyagaboomi* was not banned when it was initially released. It was when Congress under Rajaji, was the ruling Government in the Madras Presidency. Five years later in 1944, during wartime censorship, *Thyagaboomi* along with five other movies were banned. As soon as Indian freedom was imminent, the censorship was completely relaxed in 1945.

Saints and Nationalism

Many films were made on the lives of saints during this time. These films earned respect for the cinema medium besides being a source of support for the national movement. These movies put the national leaders on par with saints, citing the former's social reforms that went hand in hand with the matters envisioned for the society. As a result, the reform movement gained approval from religions. The film *Jothi Ramalinga Swamigal* (1939) speaks of Vallalar's stand against casteism. Vallalar lived in Tamil Nadu during the eleventh century.

Bhaktha Ramadas (1935) extols the Gandhian idea of religious harmony where the Hyderabad Nawab donates land in order to build a Ram temple. *Lakshmi alladhu harijanapenn* (1937) talks about untouchability and the religious conversion of Dalits to Christianity.

Among movies that were made based on ancient classical texts and texts by reformist playwrights, *Nandhanar* (1939) is a significant film. Gopalakrishna Barathi had vehemently protested against untouchability even before it became a concern in the Gandhian social development ideas. This film employs narration of the story through music, making it musical. Gopalakrishna Barathi held sway in this film. M.M

Dhandapani Desikar's songs added some mettle to the film.



Action movies were one genre that lasted from silent films well into talkies. One scene or song praising the nationalist movement was ushered into these movies as well. *Bombay Mail* (1939) begins with a scene where Congress supporters come carrying a tri-coloured flag. *Maayamaayavan* (1938) also includes a song in praise of Gandhi.

Documentaries and Propaganda

In an effort to consolidate the general faction of the nationalist movement, many producers made newsreels of the Congress events and screened it along with feature films as short films. The documentary wave that began during the silent film era observed a full-fledged development in terms of reach and impact during the time of the talkies. Visuals of the national movement, speeches by leaders and Congress meets were screened to reel in the public into the nationalist movement. A.Narayanan, a pioneer among directors back then, made a campaign video in support of the Congress candidate Sathyamurthy during the 1937 elections. It was a short film where Sathyamurthy and Phulabai Desai campaigned alongside.

Amongst such efforts, the most exceptional one was the film 'Mahatma Gandhi' made by AK Chettiar in 1940. Chettiar was a writer and a Nationalist who lived in Madras. He made a film of scenes containing footages about Gandhi. P.V.Padhi, teamed up as the technical director and made it into a four-hour-long documentary. Chettiar gained the co-operation of the Congress leaders. T.N.Guruswamy wrote the screenplay. Novelist V.M.Kodainayaki Ammal, Actor Serukkalathur Sama, and the leader of the Nationalist movement K.Ganesan had worked as voice-over artists. D.K.Pattammal and Suryakumari performed the playback singing. Chettiar had also managed to purchase a few visuals related to Gandhi from news firms in the form of reels. He made a few visuals into a film with the help of V.V.Pathi. One among these is a rare footage of Nehru spinning yarn. Yet another is the footage of hundreds of women spinning yarn in Neykkarappatti in Tiruppur. All of this footage was edited and released as a single documentary by him. Despite strict censorship,

Chettiar's film was permitted to be screened without any cuts. The loss of this rare Tamil film is a colossal deprivation. The newsreels he had purchased to make the film are still available and can be seen. I was able to see them at the Gandhi Museum in Madurai. The search for the four-hour-long documentary, 'Mahatma Gandhi' by Chettiar, continues.

Second World War

The Ministry of the Congress Government in the Madras Presidency resigned in1939 in protest against India's participation in the Second World War. This resulted in stricter censorship on media, press and the stage. This put an end to the films that championed the nationalist cause. The British government choked the film industry. The producers had to rely on imported raw materials. Due to wartime rules, importing raw film reels became difficult, affecting the production of films. The production process got stalled because of the wartime power cuts, regulations on the distribution of petrol and other frightening rumours. The political discord with Japan forced the shutting down of the Tamil Cinema Market in Burma. This situation prevailed in a few other East Asian countries as well. Tamil Cinema which had produced 36 films in 1940 ended up producing only 15 movies in 1943.

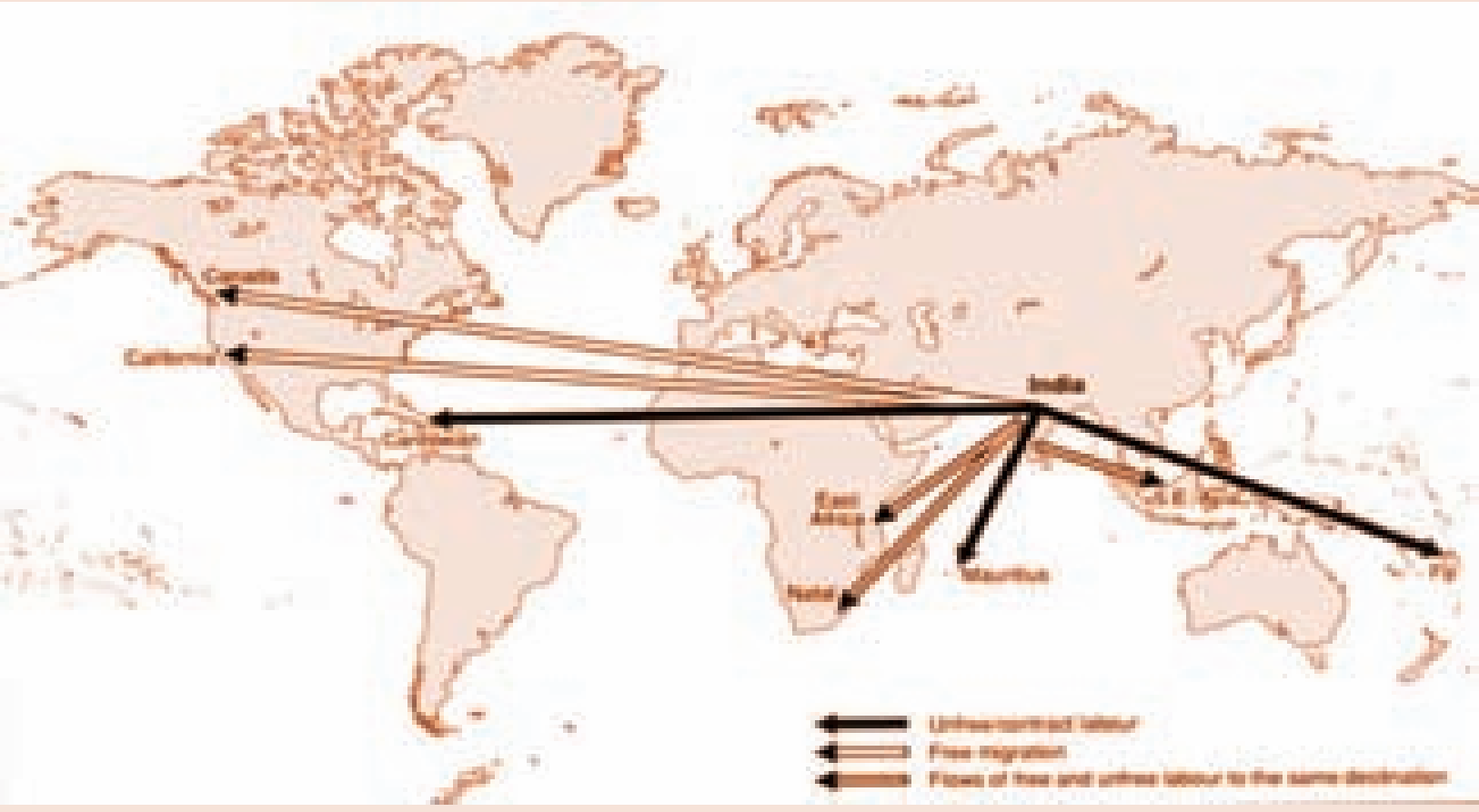
In an attempt to combat raw film scarcity during wartime, the British government ruled that a film should not exceed the length of 11,000 feet. It was easier to procure reels if films endorsing the war were made. Hence, movies like Burma Rani were released. Ironically, directors who made nationalist movies made movies supporting the war as well.

Sathyamurthy's Death

Tamil Cinema lost its relationship with political leadership after Sathyamurthy's death in 1943. What could have been a productive relationship between the literate class and cinema, disappeared with the nation's independence.

Tamil films after 1947 were distinctly different from the nationalist films during the 1930s and 40s. A few films like Naam Iruvar and Thaainaadu (1947) encouraged nationalism. Patriotism had by then become a sellable commodity on screen.




India
Unlawful labour
Free migration
Flows of free and unfree labour to the same destination



7

Connecting with India: Tamil Diaspora and the Indian Freedom Struggle

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Indians are ubiquitous, and they are a consequence of a long and persisting tradition of migration. With 18 million people abroad, Indian Diaspora is the largest in the world.[1] The geographical spread of the Indian Diaspora is phenomenal, making its presence in more than 200 countries.[2] Its contribution covers diverse fields and the impact is an ever growing one. The 2021 Indian Diaspora Government Leaders List stated that more than 200 Indian-origin people occupy leadership positions in as many as 15 countries-over 60 of them hold Cabinet positions. The latest to arrive on the political arena is Rishi Sunak, United Kingdom's first Prime Minister of colour and the youngest in 200 years.[3] Behind these success stories there is a long history of emigration from India. The scale and spread, initially, was not remarkable. States, apparently, played a marginal role in structuring the emigration process, not because of their incapability but because of the lack of felt-need.

1. *https://www.un.org/en/desa/international-migration-2020-highlights accessed on November 4th 2022*
2. *https://%20mea.gov%20in%20%3Eattach%20%20pdf/ accessed on November 4th 2022.*
3. *India Today, October 26th 2022*

That was to change with the arrival of Europeans. A surge in the scale and momentum came with the British colonial rule in India. As India became integrated with the new international economic order, it became a principal source colony for several resources. Labour was only one among them. Britain, indeed, was poised to reap India's demographic dividend. Others Dutch and French were not far behind the British. Historic political events in Britain and elsewhere in Europe had a cascading economic effect on colonies. As pointed out by Etienne Balibar, in a sense, every modern nation is a 'product of colonization'[4] as the dominant force, British in India, thoroughly overhauled the existing systems and steered India to serve its needs.

The establishment of plantation economy in several colonies and the abolition of slavery in 1833, together, created a colossal demand for labour, especially for the labour-intensive plantation work, which could not be satisfied with the locally available labour force in the regions of expansion. Indian emigrants, along with the Chinese became the Principal sources.

The main objective of the paper is to present the role of expatriate Tamils in India's freedom struggle. It begins with a brief discussion of the concept of diaspora. The first part of the paper contextualizes the Indian emigration under various categories; the second one presents, briefly, the scale and the direction of Tamil Migration. The third part focuses on the role of Tamil diaspora in the freedom struggle by analysing the diverse forces, factors and personalities in imparting robustness to the freedom struggle. The conclusions form the final section. Due to limitations of time and space, the spectrum of the theme covered and the sources consulted are, inevitably, representative and not comprehensive.

Discussion on Definition of Diaspora

The word diaspora comes from the ancient Greek word dia speiro, meaning - to sow over, originally referred to Jewish diaspora. The term became a travelling term, acquiring multiple meanings over the years. Diasporas are constituted by populations, such as members of an ethnic or religious group that originated from the same place but dispersed to different locations and sustain some relationship to an actual or imagined homeland and more importantly selfawareness of the group identity. Diasporic communities are-consciously part of an ethnic group; this consciousness binds the dispersed people not only to the homeland but to each other as well.[5] Diasporization begins with the home orientation. To simplify, emigration perse does not create diasporas. It is the home orientation that does. To simplify

4. *Quoted in Radhika Mongia, Indian Migration and Empire: a Colonial Genealogy of the Modern State, Duke University Press, 2018, P-112.*

5. *Kim.D.Butler,—Defining Diasporas, Refining a Discourse‖, Diaspora10-2, 2001, p-192.*

further, not all emigrants are part of a diaspora. However, all the diasporans are emigrants. Membership in a diaspora implies potential empowerment based on the ability to mobilize support both at the National and International level.

Indian Emigration: Types, Numbers, Nature and Characteristics

Under the colonial regime, two basic types of Indian emigration emerged, namely the indenture system and the free or passenger migration. Indenture system was informally known as coolie trade taking its name from Tamil word 'coolie' meaning wages. Over the years the term acquired pejorative meaning denoting lower status.

'Indentured' or 'coolie' migration constituted a contractual agreement, colloquially known as Girmit,[6] which the migrant workers signed at their place of origin. These contracts defined the duration and terms of employment including the estate that the labourer would be working on. Labourers could not change the terms of the contracts and since the cost of the individual passage was borne by the employers and hence it was not in their interests to terminate the contract. Emigration from India, for the first time, became organised, commercialised and subjected to elaborate Government regulation.[7] Under this indentured system labourers were denied occupational and territorial mobility rooting them to the estates and plantations. Hugh Tinker characterised it as a New System of Slavery.[8]

The system became operative with the first ship of indentured labourers leaving for Mauritius in 1834. Interestingly, two Tamil estate owners in Mauritius, Annasamy and Tiroumoudy, mooted the idea of importing Indian labour. In fact, both were among the first importers of Indian labour.[9] The first ship, Atlas from Calcutta, brought indenture Indian labourers to the shores of Mauritius on November 2nd 1834. The arrival of Indian labour has been memorialised at Apravasi Ghatat St. Louis.

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6. *Brij V.Lal,—Fiji‖ in The Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora,(Ed.) Brij V.Lal, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, p.370.*
7. *K.L.Gillion,—A History of Indian Emigration and Settlement in Fiji‖, Ph.D thesis submitted to Australian National University, 1958, page-II.*
8. *A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas, 1830-1920, Oxford University Press, London, 1974.*
9. *Marina Carter,—Mauritius,‖ in Brij v.Lal,(Ed) the Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, p.266.*

Table 1:

Number of emigrants to Mauritius from Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, 1843

State	Number	Percentage
Calcutta	16179	56.41
Madras	11000	38.36
Bombay	1500	05.23

Source: Stupati Das Dharand Chandrasekhar Basu Ghosh, Indian Emigration to Sugar Colonies: A Study through Calcutta Port, ICHR monograph, Primusbooks, New Delhi, 2017, Page-6.

The success of Mauritius in its recruitment drive proved to be momentous for the plantation colonies of the British empire[10] Other colonies also scrambled to seek indenture Indian labourers. Official permission was gradually granted to the following colonies: 1844 - Jamaica, Trinidad, British Guyana; 1856 - Santa Lucia; 1856 - Granada. By the 1870s, these labourers were taken to Seychelles, the Dutch colony of Surinam, Fiji, Reunion, Honduras, Martinique and French Guyana among others.

At the time of termination of the Indenture system, hundreds and thousands of Indians labourers have populated the British colonies.

The Kangani and Maistry Systems

In addition to indenture, labour recruiters adopted two other systems, Kangani and Maistry systems. Both the terms are derived from the Tamil words: Kangani, meaning 'headman', 'foreman', or 'overseer', Maistry, meaning supervisor. The Kangani system was employed in the case of Malaya. It began early in the first quarter of the nineteenth century and continued till its abolition in 1938. Maistry system was employed in the case of Burma and had its beginning in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. In contrast to indentured labour, coolies under the systems were legally free. There was no contract and fixed period of service.[11] However, both the systems had their peculiarities, but also shared similar features. Both used a network of middlemen and introduced a debt relationship to recruit labourers for the plantations in the colonies. Large per cent of Tamil labourers boarded from Madras port. During1856-1861, 29.6 per cent departed from Madras

10 *ibid.,*

11. *Prakash C.Jain,—Five Patterns of Indian Emigration‖ in Global Migration of Indians: Saga of Adventure, Enterprise, Identity &Integration, (Eds) Dr. Jagat K. Motwani and Jyoti Barot-Motwani, released as a Commemorative volume at The First Global Convention of People of Indian Origin, New York,1989, p.7*

and during 1861-1871 it reached 31.3 per cent. The succeeding decades saw a dip in the percentage but went up steeply between 1907 and 1916 to reach 31.3 per cent. Between 1840 and 1942, under the Kangani and Maistry Systems, it is estimated that over 1.7 million Indians were recruited to work in Malaya (including Singapore), over 1.6 million to Burma, and approximately 1 million to Ceylon.[12] Majority of them came from Arcot, Madras, Chinglepet, Coimbatore, Madurai, The Nilgris, Salem, Tanjore and Tinnevelly and Tiruchirappalli.[13] Several factors stimulated this temporary, seasonal, and long–distance migration of working adults. Growing pressure on land, poverty, unemployment, adverse seasonal conditions, natural calamities and the proximity of prominent trading routes and ports all undoubtedly stimulated emigra tion.[14]

Table 2:

Major Colonies Importing Indian Indentured Labour

State	Number	Percentage
Mauritius	1834-1900	453063
British Guyana	1838-1916	238909
Malaya	1844-1910	250000
Trinidad	1845-1916	143939
Jamaica	1845-1913	36412
Grenada	1856-1885	3200
St. Lucia	1858-1895	4350
Natal	1860-1911	152184
St. Kitts	1860-1861	337
St. Vincents	1860-1880	2472
Réunion	1861-1883	26507
Surinam	1873-1916	34304
Fiji	1879-1916	60965
East Africa	1896-1921	39282
Seychelles	1904-1916	6315

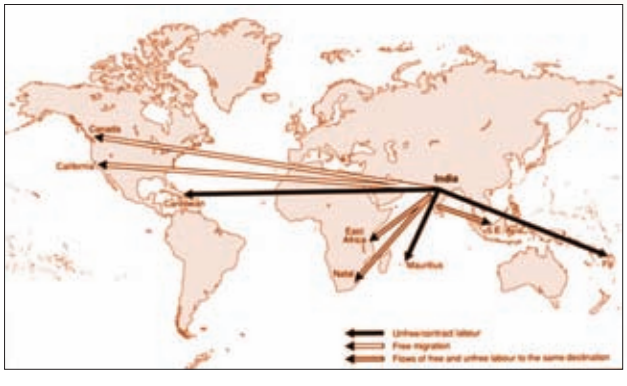
Source: Brijv. Lal, -The Indenture system. The Encyclopaedia of the Indian Diaspora, Brij V.Lal, (Ed) Oxford University Press, New Delhi, page - 46.

12. *Vijay Devadass,—The Kangani and Maistry Systems,‖ in Brij V.Lal, (Ed) The Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, Encyclopedia, p.53.*
13 *Bernard D'Sami,—Tamil Women in the Diaspora: Indentured to Independence‖ in A.Pande (Ed.),Women in Indian Diaspora, Springer Nature, Singapore, 2018, p.78*
14. *Adapa Satyanarayana,—Birds of Passage‖ Migration of South Indian Laborers to Southeast Asia,‖ Critical Asian Studies, 34:1, 2002, p.99*

Free or Passenger Migration

Passenger Indians were those who entered the country under the ordinary immigration laws, and at their own expense. The majority came specifically to trade or serve in commerce.[15] Pre-existing trading communities enlarged their presence in the British colonies. Perceiving new opportunities, new communities also made their entry. They came from several castes, religions and regions of India. Sikhs, Sindhis, Bohras, Memons, Chulias, Marakkayars and Chettiyars from Tamil Nadu became an integral part of the Indian diaspora. In the Southeast Asia - the most important community between the late 19th century and the mid-20th century was the Chettiyar. Nattukotai Chettiyars from the Ramnad District migrated in waves from the 1830's onward to Malaya, Burma, and the Straits Settlements, and subsequently to Siam, Java, Indo-China and northern Sumatra.[16] They held a predominant position in the trade and financial sectors. Their economic clout was such that they supplied credit to the - Chinese Miners, European planters, and sometimes even Malay royalty. Sir Harcourt Butler, the Governor of Burma noted in 1927: Without the assistance of Chettiyar banking system, Burma would never have achieved the wonderful advance of the last 25 to 30 years.[17] Evidently, the Indian economic diaspora added money to the muscle. Together, they propelled the project of the Indian freedom struggle. The following map depicts graphically the continental spread of the Indian diaspora.

Map:1 Flows of migrants from India before 1947



Source: Judith M. Brown, Global South Asians: Introducing Modern Diaspora, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2006P-XII

15. *Hilda Kuper, Indian People in Natal, Durban University Press, 1960: page-3, quoted in Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie,— enger Indian as Worker; Indian Immigrants in Cape Town in the Early Twentieth Century ‖ African Studies, 68:1,April 2009, p.113*
16. *Madhu Kudaisya, —Trading Networks in Southeast Asia‖ in Brij v. Lal, (Ed) The Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, p.59-60*
17. *ibid., Ashok. K, — Dravidian Voice Across the Seas- Periyar E.V. Ramasamy Tours to Malaya‖ in Contours of Culture: India and Beyond ,(Eds.) K.Mavali Rajan, Binary Barman, Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 2021, p.250.*

Tamil Emigration

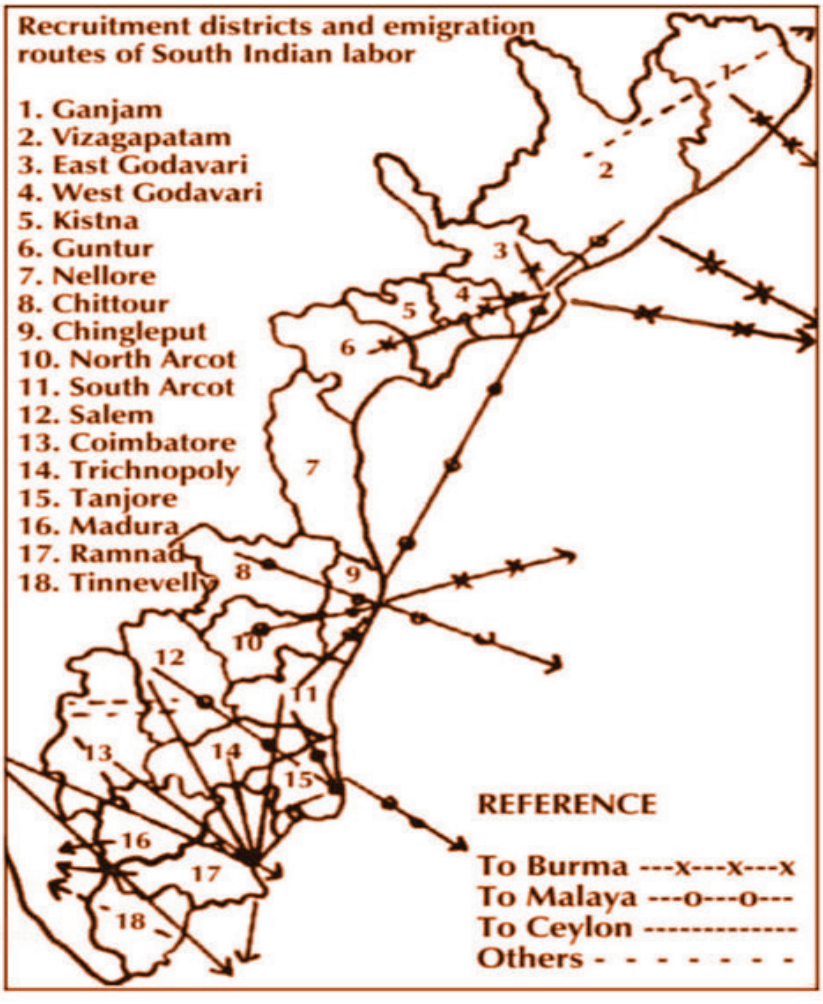
Tamils had a long tradition of emigration. Earliest references come from the Sangam literature. *"Thirai kadal odiyum thiraviyam thedu",* (seek the fortunes even by venturing overseas) so goes exhortation by Avvayar, the well known Tamil savant of 12th century.[18] For Tamils, for far too long, emigration remained one of the principal means to enhance the power and prosperity. Nevertheless, they remained sojourners and not the settlers, keeping their mobility transient and consequently, a circulatory one. Geographical position of Tamil Nadu, which gave access to the sea and the subsequent establishment of ports, which dotted the Coromandel Coast facilitated such mobility. Until the beginning of the 19th century, the scale of emigration of Tamils remained small and sporadic.

Colonial Compulsions and Changes in the Scale and Direction

Tamil Nadu is a migration-prone State. As Gillion remarked: In north India, there was great resistance to emigration and it was difficult to obtain recruits, but in Madras, there was less resistance to emigration.[19] Emigrants from Madras had some special features. They were drawn from a comparatively small area and the recruiting Districts were also nearer to Madras, the control over the recruiters was easy in comparison to the Calcutta recruiters. The people of Madras were also considered better-educated than those from other areas and the Natives of the Madras Presidency generally had little prejudice against crossing the sea and the feeling against emigration was not so keen as that of the upcountry Districts.[20]

18. *K.L.Gillion, A History of Indian Emigration and Settlement in Fiji, Thesis submitted to Australian National University for Ph.D., degree, 1958, p.III.*
19. *Sanderson, Report of the Committee on Emigration from India to the Crown Colonies and Protectorates quoted in C.Joseph Barnabus, From Madras to Mauritius 1800-1856: Studies in Emigration and Settlement, Thesis submitted to the University of Madras for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, September,1991, p.12.*
20. *The Indian Emigrant, Volume-1, Number-1st August, 2014.*

Map: 2 Migration of South Indian Labourers to South East Asia



Source: Judith M.Brown, Global South Asians: Introducing Modern Diaspora, Cambridge University Press, NewYork, 2006P-XII

The quantification of the scale of Tamil emigration is a formidable task, particularly, shifting data from the national data. What is presented is gleaned from the accessible sources, which generate, a partial picture. The embarkation data from the Madras, the most important Presidency is an indicator of the scale of emigration. The following map graphically details the source Districts of Tamil emigrants, ports through which they exited, and their migration routes.

Table 3:

Ports of Embarkation of Indian Indentured Labourers, Calcutta and Madras 1856-1916

Year	Calcutta Number	%	Madras Number	%
1856-61	14,533	66.5	6479	29.6
1861-70	1,22,241	67.5	56,356	31.1
1870-79	1,42,793	78.4	19,104	10.5
1800-89	97,975	76.0	21,653	16.8
1891-1900	106,700	63.3	28,550	16.9
1907-16	66,839	62.3	32,369	30.2

Source: Brij V. Lal, - The Indenture System in Brij V. Lal, (Ed) The Encyclopaedia of the Indian Diaspora, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, P-51.

However, if one were to take a regional perspective, very high numbers of Indian emigrants were concentrated in Ceylon, Malaya and Burma as Table 4 reveals.

In 1913 alone, 1,17,783 individuals went to Straits Settlements; 1,90,059 went to Ceylon and 1,30,725 to Burma. A great majority of those were labourers. Compared with other provinces in India, it shows that this presidency supplied almost all the agricultural labour in Ceylon and the Straits Settlements.[21] By the end of the indenture system, more than one million Indians have emigrated to different parts of the world.

21. *Quoted in Sunil S.Amrith,—Tamil Diasporas across the Bay of Bengal\ in American Historical Review, June, 2009, p.547.*

Table 4:

Tamil Population in Ceylon, Burma, and Malaya 1871-1946
(Figures in Thousands)

Colony	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931	1946
Ceylon	203.3	320.2	313.3	497.9	563.8	635.7	854.8	816.2
Malaya	27.5	36.3	62.7	98.0	220.4	387.5	514.8	461.0
Burma	-	35.1	71.4	99.6	125.7	152.3	184.1	90.0
Total	**230.8**	**391.6**	**447.4**	**695.5**	**909.9**	**1175.5**	**1553.7**	**1367.2**

Source: Christophe Z.Guilmoto, - The Tamil Migration Cycle,1830-1950, Economic and Political Weekly, January 16-23, 1993, Page-112.



Pic-1: Tamil indentured Labourers in Mauritius

Tamil Diaspora and Indian Freedom Struggle

Diasporic histories do not view migration as a linear journey from source to destination, but emphasise the enduring links - imaginative, familial, economic or political-maintained by the mobile people with their lands of origin. Adam McKeown points out that at the heart of a diasporic perspective on human mobility is attention to global connections, networks, activities and consciousness that

bridge... more.[22]

It is in this context, return migration assumes significance. Return migrants can, simultaneously, be an inspiration and a deterrence. They consistently renew their engagement with India, through their experiences, through their earnings, and the altered social behaviour. More importantly, they build new networks and infuse new life to the old ones. The sense of nationalism became acute, as an outcome of the exposure to new culture - of prosperity, poverty, discrimination, segregation and marginalisation at the edge of the host societies. Statistics show that large number of emigrants returned from many colonies to India every year.

Adapa Satyanarayana provides a detailed list of arrivals and departures of South Indian labourers to and from Malaya and Burma. In 1894, 15,016 labourers arrived in Malaya and14,012 labourers departed; ten years later, in 1904, 28,249 labourers arrived and 21,173 departed; there was a substantial increase in the next decade. There were 49, 028 arrivals and 59,038 departures. The excess of departure over the arrivals was repeated in 1921 too. Similar pattern of substantial return migration was recorded in the case of Burma too.[23]

The Press

The power of the press is inestimable. In the diasporan context it binds the segments of the community and highlights the commonalities. Gandhi recorded his view at the time of starting the *Indian Opinion* "newspaper: I believe that a struggle which chiefly relies upon internal strength cannot be wholly carried on without a newspaper. It is also my experience that we could not perhaps have educated the local Indian community, nor kept Indians all over the world in touch with the course of events in South Africa with the same ease and success as through the *Indian Opinion*, which therefore was certainly a most useful and potent weapon in our struggle".[24]

Precedent for this initiative came from P.S.Aiyar, a journalist from Madras who founded an Indian newspaper *'Indian World'* in 1898 but was short-lived. Subsequently, in 1901, he started *'Colonial Indian News'* but that too appeared irregularly in 1903 and was closed in the same year. Following these failed initiatives, Gandhi launched *'Indian Opinion'* as an English weekly on June 4, 1903. Tamil, Gujarati, and Hindi editions also began to come out around the same time.[25] Vriddachalam Pillai, who

22. *Adapa Satyanaraya, — Birds of Passage: Migration of South Indian laborers to Southeast Asia‖ CriticalAsianStudies, 34:1, pp.97-98.*
23. *Anand, Y.P ,—History of Indian Opinion, from www.mkgandhi.org/articles/history- of-indian-opinion.html accessed on November 15th, 2022.*
24. *Vijay Ramaswamy, —Gandhi's Satyagraha in South Africa and the Tamils, Economic and Political Weekly, September 25th-October1st, 2010, p.36.*
25. *Anand, Y.P, - History of Indian Opinion in https;//www.mkgandhi.org/ articles/history-of-indian– opinion.html accessed on November 15th 2022.*

had a small business in Durban and publisher of a Tamil weekly, *'Viveka Banu'* and scholars like S.M.Pillai and G.R.Naidu became the backbone of the Tamil edition of *'Indian Opinion'*.

'Indian Opinion' was founded in response to the growing need in South Africa to voice effectively the feelings of Indians against racial intolerance of the White regime. It sought to shape a national identity amongst Indians who were divided along various lines. It had boldly declared in an editorial: "we are not and ought not to be, Tamils or Calcutta men and Mohameddans, Hindus, Brahmanas or banyas, but simply and solely British Indians".[26] Gandhi emphasized that Satyagraha would probably have been impossible without *Indian Opinion.*

P.S.Aiyar brought out a newspaper, African Chronicle, in Tamil and English, which championed the rights of the under - privileged free, and indentured labourers. From July, 1908 the newspaper highlighted the intolerable 3 pound tax on the indentured labourers, and demanded its abolition.[27]

Malaya and the Tamil Press

Malaya had a brief period of publication of Tamil newspapers in which locally born Indian Muslims in Singapore played a vital role in the 19th century. However, a new beginning was made in 1921 with the publication of *Tamilaham* edited by Narasimha Iyengar. It expressed nationalistic sentiments and warned Indians not to come to Malaya to work in the rubber plantations. In 1924, Narasimha Iyengar left *Tamilaham to start the Tamil Nesan.*[28] First edition came out on September 10, 1924 and the paper became the strong mouthpiece of Malayan Tamils. From March 1929, the paper was published twice a week, from January 1934, three times a week and from February 20th 1937 it became a daily, an indication of its increasing popularity among the readers. In the message, Gandhi sent to Narasimha Iyengar on 27 February, 1928, "hoped that - your journal…. will stand out boldly for social and moral reforms and the emigrants that it is their duty to represent the best of Indian culture in the land to which they may migrate and to keep up the bond between themselves and the motherland by adopting Khaddar at least".[29] Eight

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26. Henning C.G., - The Indian South African (1860-1989),‖ in Global Migration of Indians : Saga of Adventure, Enterprise, Identity & Integration(Eds) Dr.Jagat K. Motwani, Dr. Jyoti Barot-Motwani, Commemorative Volume, The First Global Convention of People of Indian Origin, New York, August,1989, p.26.

27. Dinesh Nesan, The Power of Print: Tamil newspapers in Malaya and the imagining of Tamil Cultural identity, 1930-1940, Thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Arts, Department of History, National Universityof Singapore, 2008, p.7-8.

28. ibid, p.108.ibid, Dr.Ganesan Shanmugavelu, - A Short History of Tamil Newspapers in Malaya (Malaysia),1875–1960‖ https://grfdt.com/Publication Details. aspx?Type=Articles&TabId=8076 accessed on November 19, 2022.

29. SunilS.Amrith,—Tamil Diasporas across the Bay of Bengal‖ in American Historical Review,

years later, on November 3, 1936, Nehru sent another message to all Indians in Malaya through the Tamil Nesan. Writing of Tamil emigrants from South India and their hard life, he exhorted the need for them to remain engaged with India and work for a free India, "we should apply ourselves, whether we live in India or abroad, for the shadow of subjection with the economic consequences that fall from it pursue us wherever we go".[30]

Munnetram, yet another Tamil newspaper was started by G.Sarangapany in 1929. Later, he worked with *Seerthirutham* and later, the *Tamil Murasu* in 1935. These newspapers focused on social reforms and cultural identity among Tamils in Malaya, leading to a visit by Periyar in 1929. The visit left a lasting impact on the psyche of Tamils in Malaya and initiated the process of introspection within the Tamil community.



Pic-2: **A Self-Respect Marriage at the Kuala Lumpur TRA, TM, 5/2/1940**

June, 2009, p.561

30. *The Indian Emigrant' various issues starting from August, 1914*



***Pic-3:* Birthday Celebrations of Ramasamy Naicker at the MalaccaTRA, TM, 29/12/1939**

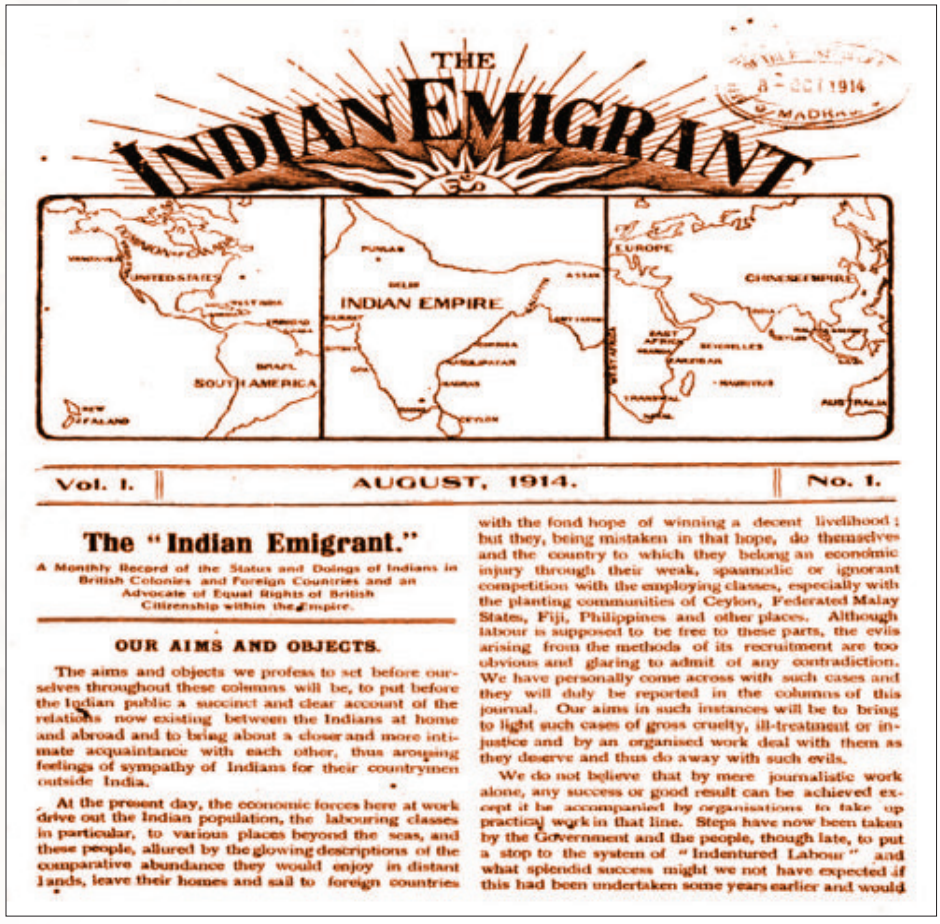
Suthandara India was the first newspaper published by Indian Independence League founded by Rash Bihari Bose. It also published two weekly newspapers in Singapore namely, *Yuva bharatham* and *Suthanthirothayam. Suthanthirothayam* was first published on 14 September 1942, while *Yuvabharatham* was first published on 9th March 1943. It, however, ceased its publication the very next year. The names of these newspapers themselves indicate their home orientation.[31]

The first of the worlds evoked in the Tamil press of urban Malaya and Singapore was the world of Indian politics. Almost every issue of every Tamil newspaper printed in Singapore, Penang or Kuala Lumpur in the 1930s published news and later, photographs of Gandhi: his travels, his speeches, his actions and his negotiations. The Penang-based Tamil Muslim newspaper *DecaNecan* matched extensive coverage of Gandhi with news of the All-India Muslim League.[32]

It is imperative to detail the role of a newspaper published in Madras, which focused exclusively on issues related to the Tamil diaspora. The Indian Emigrant was a monthly record of the status and doings of Indians in British colonies and foreign countries and an advocate of equal rights of British Citizenship within the empire. It began its publication in August, 1914 and was published by G.A.Natesan. It covered a wide spectrum of issues such as the colour bar in the colonies, the relationship between planters and Indian labour, return migration and reported

31. *https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/natal-indian-congress-nic accessed on November 3, 2022.*
32. *Sunil S.Amrith, —Tamil Diasporas across the Bay of Bengal ‖ in American Historical Review, June, 2009, p.51.*

major speeches of important leaders both in India and abroad.[33] After a brief respite, the newspaper was resurrected in 1941, with a new name of The Colonial Review, but the major objectives remained same and was edited by T.K.Swaminathan.



THE INDIAN EMIGRANT

Vol. I. AUGUST, 1914. No. 1.

The "Indian Emigrant."

A Monthly Record of the Status and Doings of Indians in British Colonies and Foreign Countries and an Advocate of Equal Rights of British Citizenship within the Empire.

OUR AIMS AND OBJECTS.

The aims and objects we profess to set before ourselves throughout these columns will be, to put before the Indian public a succinct and clear account of the relations now existing between the Indians at home and abroad and to bring about a closer and more intimate acquaintance with each other, thus arousing feelings of sympathy of Indians for their countrymen outside India.

At the present day, the economic forces here at work drive out the Indian population, the labouring classes in particular, to various places beyond the seas, and these people, allured by the glowing descriptions of the comparative abundance they would enjoy in distant lands, leave their homes and sail to foreign countries with the fond hope of winning a decent livelihood; but they, being mistaken in that hope, do themselves and the country to which they belong an economic injury through their weak, spasmodic or ignorant competition with the employing classes, especially with the planting communities of Ceylon, Federated Malay States, Fiji, Philippines and other places. Although labour is supposed to be free to these parts, the evils arising from the methods of its recruitment are too obvious and glaring to admit of any contradiction. We have personally come across with such cases and they will duly be reported in the columns of this journal. Our aims in such instances will be to bring to light such cases of gross cruelty, ill-treatment or injustice and by an organised work deal with them as they deserve and thus do away with such evils.

We do not believe that by mere journalistic work alone, any success or good result can be achieved except it be accompanied by organisations to take up practical work in that line. Steps have now been taken by the Government and the people, though late, to put a stop to the system of "Indentured Labour" and what splendid success might we not have expected if this had been undertaken some years earlier and would

***Pic-4: The Indian Emigrant,* A Monthly Record of Status and Doings of Indians in British Colonies and Foreign Countries**

Role of Organisations/Associations

Organised political activity carried out through the associations became a Principal channel of representation and communication. Though they were not successful in achieving all of their goals, they were chiefly instrumental in mobilizing the Indian diaspora. Of the many, Natal Indian Congress in South Africa took a preeminent position. The Natal Indian Congress (NIC) came into being in 1894 and was formed by Mahatma Gandhi along with his associates, to fight discrimination against Indians in Natal. The NIC, was the first of the Indian Congress followed by the formation of the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) and the Cape Indian Congress(CIC), the three later went on to form the South African Indian Congress

33. *ibid, p.561.*

(SAIC) in 1919.[34]



Pic-5: **Natal Indian Congress formed by Mahatma Gandhi on 22 August 1894**

According to Gandhi, in less than a month about three hundred Hindus, Moslems, Parsees, and Christians became its members. Recruitment drives were held and Indians throughout Natal were contacted. The NIC met at least once a month and discussed current affairs, accounts and other matters. Congress also had self - improvement as part of its programmes. Two of the most important campaigns organised by the NIC in the early years were the Gandhi campaigns of 1908 and 1913. During these campaigns, a large section of the Indian community demonstrated its willingness to participate in militant struggles.

Malaya

From the early twentieth century, Indian professionals, civil servants and merchants in Malaya had formed small associations, the first of which was the Taiping Indian Association, established in 1906, soon followed by the Selangor Indian Association in 1909. By the 1920s, Indian associations had proliferated across the peninsula, the largest and most active being formed in Singapore in 1923. The over-riding goal of the Indian Association - made up largely of English-

34. *Petervander Veer,—Introduction: The Diasporic Imagination,‖ in Nation and Migration: The Politics of Space in the South Asian Diaspora,(Ed,) Petervander Veer, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia,1995, p.3.*

speaking urban elites - was to increase the representation of Indians on the legislative councils of the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States.

Alongside these umbrella organisations of the Indian community, there were social reform organisations directed specifically at the Tamil population, commercial associations and associations based on the ties of the locality. More explicitly, political associations also emerged in 1924, connected with the assertion of semiskilled labour on the railways, leading to the first strike by Tamil labour in Malaya.[35]

Among the most significant outcomes of the blooming of associational life in urban Malaya was the emergence of diaspora as the subject of debate, and as a political project. Much of what was at stake emerges from a letter written to the Reverend C.F.Andrews by three Tamil railway workers from Sentul (on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur) in1924: "we live in a foreign country, hundreds of miles away from our motherland, among different races, with different culture and slowly but surely we lose our moral training". They echoed, directly, the language of Indian reformers who lamented the 'demoralization of Indian labour overseas. The writers asked their countrymen in India - not that they should help us materially, but morally. They asked for frequent visits, to this country, of some of our eminent countrymen of Congress fame. Reinforcing the concern of Indian reformers and nationalists, the condition of Indian labourers overseas reflected the dignity of India in the world, the Tamil railway workers wrote that their greatest shame lay in the fact that "not only to Europeans but to the Chinese, Malays, Eurasians and to a certain section of Ceylon Tamils, Indians (especially Indian Tamils) are nothing but a nation of coolies."[36]

The Tamils Reform Association was established in 1932 by G.Sarangapany. It aimed to uproot dated beliefs, overhaul attitudes towards the caste system, and put an end to vices and social problems. Commercial associations included the Nattukottai Chettiar Chamber of Commerce and the Penang Indian Muslim Chamber. Rash Behari Bose founded Indian Independence League to organise the people of India who were living in foreign countries. This organisation worked in South East Asia in organising the Indians to fight against colonial rule.

Indian Diaspora and Indian National Congress

International migration and transnational flows of information and goods are intimately connected to the discourse of nationalism. Imminent in the migration

35. *Gyanesh Kudaisa, —Indian Leadership and the Diaspora‖ in Brij V. Lal, (Ed.) The Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, encyclopedia, p.83.*
36. *ibid,*

is the unceasing dynamism that continues to act upon the migrants and the home country. This is particularly so in the colonial context as pointed by Peter van der Veer, who avers that colonialism and nationalism go hand in hand.[37] Leading the anti-colonial struggle Indian National Congress played a crucial role in addressing the issues related to Indians abroad. In his Presidential address, in 1926, at the Gauhati Congress, Srinivasa Iyengar declared "Swaraj for India depends… upon the brave and unfaltering spirit of our kith and kin across the seas".[38] Its concern was evident in the series of visits undertaken by the Congress leaders. C.F.Andrews, close associate of Gandhi, visited South Africa and Fiji in 1916; Hridyanath Kunzru visited Fiji in 1923; Sarojini Naidu went on a mission to Kenya in 1923; V.S.Srinivasa Sastri went to Fiji and Australia in the 1930s and Nehru visited Malaya, Ceylon, Burma in1936 and 1939.[39]

Another group of leaders focused on issues of identity and status of particular segments of the Tamil diaspora. Periyar made an impactful visit to Malaya in 1926 - to see face to face and study the inner forces of thousands of his brethren who are abroad.[40] His interactions made a stupendous impact and left a lasting legacy on Tamil community in Malaya.

Karumuthu Thiagarajan, born in 1893 at Sivagangai, was a nationalist, an industrialist, a journalist, and an educationist. With deep commitment to the welfare of Tamils abroad he, in his personal interest, undertook visits to plantations in Ceylon and highlighted the ill-treatment and sufferings of plantation labour. His efforts redressed two serious difficulties such as branding of emigrants at the embarkation points and overcharge experienced by Tamil emigrants.[41]

Role of the Leaders

Gandhi was the tallest among the leaders who stirred the conscience of the colonial authorities in support of Indian expatriates. His initiatives and persistence yielded positive outcomes for them in South Africa and became a precedent for others to emulate. As a founder of the Natal Indian Association, his work as a representational and mobilisational leader remains a benchmark, though he was only sojourning in South Africa. Community leaders drew inspiration and lent active support to Gandhi before they came on to their own in engaging the colonial

37. *Malaya Tribune, December 23,1929.*
38. *The Indian Emigrant, August,1914, p.5.*
39. *Narasiah K.R.A,—Thambi Naidoo of Gandhi's South Africa,‖ Madras Musings, September 16th-30th 2009.*
40. *https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/thambi_naidu.htm accessed on November 2nd 2002.*
41. *https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/dr-gangathura-mohambry-monty- naicker, November 2nd 2022.*

authorities. South Africa's official Who-is-Who list contains scores of Indian names, predominant among them being Tamil names. Though there were several of them only few personalities are presented here, due to space restrictions.



Pic-6: **Thambi Naidoo (1875-1933)**

Govindaswamy Krishnaswamy Thambi Naidoo was one of the earliest collaborators with Gandhi and working with him from 1906 to 1914. His parents migrated to Mauritius as indentured labour from Mattur in Tamil Nadu. The family remigrated to South Africa and prospered and took an active role in politics. Thambi Naidoo and his wife Veerammal joined Gandhiji in his satyagraha. During the picketing of Registration Offices in July 1907, Thambi Naidoo was the first to be arrested. He was given 14 days imprisonment. On December 28 that year he was charged for refusing to register and sent out of Transvaal. When he refused to obey the orders, he along with Gandhiji was arrested on 10 January 1908 and sent to jail.[42]

Gandhi wrote highly of his activities. "He had never been to India. Yet, his love for the homeland knew no bounds. Patriotism ran through his very vein. His firmness was pictured on his face. He was very strongly built and he possessed tireless energy. And none was more ready than he to sacrifice his all for the sake of the community". Further, he added that "the name of Thambi Naidoo must ever remain as one of the front rankers in the history of Satyagraha in South Africa".[43]

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42. My days in the Indian National Army by Lakshmi Sahgal‖https://www.ndtv. com/india-news/my-days-in-the-indian-national-army-by-lakshmi-sahgal-493887accessed on November 2nd 2022.

43. https://web.archive.org/web/20140512224210/http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v7/newsindex.php?id=1037245 accessed on November 3rd 2022.



Pic-7: **Dr. Gangathura Mohambry (Monty) Naicker (1910-1978)**

Dr. Gangathura Mohambry Naicker (more popularly known as Dr. Monty Naicker) was the eldest son of Papiah Gangathura Naicker, a well-to-do businessman, and his wife Dhanalutchmee Pillay. Monty's grandfather came from India to South Africa as a contract labourer. Qualified as a doctor in Edinburg, he returned to South Africa and established medical practice and became involved in social and economic issues.

In 1940, he joined the Liberal Study Group, a multiracial organisation, and was exposed to radical ideas. To a great extent, this group laid the foundation for his later political direction. Naicker's active political involvement started in 1941 when he became involved in the Indian trade union movement and associated himself with several strikes between 1941 and 1945. In 1943, he participated in Indian opposition to restrictions on their right to own land, which were imposed by the Pegging Act (Trading and Occupation of Land (Transvaal and Natal) Restriction Act of 1943). The ensuing modifications to the Act that the Government agreed to did not satisfy Naicker. In 1944, he was the co-founder and first chairperson of the Anti-Segregation Council and joined the increasing opposition to the moderate leadership.

By 1945, Naicker had built up a great Indian support for his programme of complete equality. In October 1945, he was elected as the President of the Natal Indian Congress, an office, which he held until 1963. Since 1946, he was an active participant in the Natal Indian Passive Resistance Campaign, against the Government's restrictive legislation, including the so-called Ghetto Act (Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act no.28 of 1946), which on the one hand restricted Indian land ownership and residence to specific areas in Natal, while on

the other hand tried to soften the drastic effects, by offering political representation to Indians through white Members of Parliament. Several times during the campaign, his actions led to his arrest and his imprisonment. In 1947, he served a six-month sentence for occupying land reserved for whites. Once again, in 1948, he was sentenced to six months imprisonment for leading a group of resisters into Transvaal at Volksrust. Dr. Naicker called for a "United Democratic Front" as early as 1948. He continued his public life until his demise in 1978.[44]



Pic-8: **Captain Lakshmi Sahgal (1914-2012)**

Captain Lakshmi Sahgal, an indefatigable fighter for freedom, was born in Madras in a politically active well-to do family. Educated as a doctor, she practised medicine in Madras before moving to Singapore as there was a rumour that British authorities were planning to conscript the doctors to serve in the army. In Singapore, she engaged herself in the social service in addition to her medical practice. She was one of the earliest to join the India Independence League founded by Rash Behari Bose. Arrival of Subhas Chandra Bose and the reorganisation of the Indian National Army (INA) energized the entire Indian community in South East Asia. Inspired by the leadership, she joined INA and was entrusted with the responsibility of heading the women's infantry regiment called Rani of Jhansi Regiment. After an arduous training for three months, small batches of the regiment moved to Burma on the way to Imphal. However, the British forces successfully defended their territory. The regiment was forced to retreat with heavy casualties. Nevertheless, they regrouped in central Burma and attacked the British army adopting guerrilla tactics. Subsequently, the regiment was disbanded. However, with total confidence in the leadership - all the members of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment sent a petition to Netaji, signed in their blood, saying that "they were willing to die in the battlefield and did not want to return".[45]

She returned to India, continued her medical practice and social service, and joined CPI (M).

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44. Thillaiyadi Valliammai: Girl who inspired Mahatma remembered ‖ The Hindu, February 23rd 2014.

45. https://www.gandhiashramsevagram.org/pdf-books/agony-of-valliamma.pdf) accessed on November 6th 2022.



Pic-9: **Janaky Athi Nahappan (1925-2014)**

Janaky Athi Nahappan was a founding Member of the Malaysian Indian Congress and one of the earliest women involved in the fight for Malaysian (then Malaya) independence. She was born on 25 February 1925, in Kuala Lumpur. Nahappan grew up in a well-to-do Tamil family in Malaya and was only 16 when she heard Subhas Chandra Bose's appeal to Indians to give whatever they could for their fight for Indian independence. Immediately, she took off her gold earrings and donated them. She was determined to join the women's wing, the Rani of the Jhansi Regiment of the Indian National Army. There was a strong family objection, especially from her father, but after much persuasion, her father finally agreed.

At the age of 17, she joined the Indian National Army (INA) and rose to the rank of Captain and Second - in - Command of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, the only women's regiment in the INA. During World War II, she fought against the British at the Burma-India border. After the war, Nahappan helped John Thivy to establish the Malayan Indian Congress in 1946, which was modelled after the Indian National Congress. The party saw Thivy as its first President. She remained politically active until the evening of her life. The President of India awarded Padma Shri in 2000 for her social welfare work and her service to the Indian National Army.[46]

46. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose:A Malaysian perspective; Kuala Lumpur, Netaji Centre,1992.



Pic-10: **Thillaiyadi Valliammai (1898- 1914)**

Valliammai's parents were the first generation emigrants to South Africa. Her father belonged to Pondicherry and mother to Thillaiyadi in Thanjavur District. She was born into a fairly well-off family. Her parents were politically active and participated in the non-co-operation movement there. As a child, Valliammai would occasionally accompany her father to these political meetings and rallies. Valliammai was initiated into political struggle by Gandhi, when South Africa declared null and void all marriages forged outside of the South African law or Church law.[47] As a result, thousands of marriages were annulled. Valliammai was rendered an illegitimate child in the eyes of the law. On October 23, 1913 when a women's march, to protest the law, started from Johannesburg, where her family was living, she joined her mother, Mangalam, in the March. As the women marched through Maritzberg they courted arrest in batches. Finally at Volkrust, Valliammai and her mother were arrested and were imprisoned at the Maritzberg prison, which also housed Kasturba Gandhi. Valliammai fell ill in the prison. Gandhi visited her in the prison. Realising the pitiable condition, Gandhi negotiated with general Smuts for an early release of Valliammai before the end of their prison term in February 1914. However, she was martyred after the order on 22 February, 1914. Gandhi praised her for staying in the course of fight for equality in South Africa. She became an iconic figure at the age[48]. The memory of the Child Martyr adorns the pages of the history of Tamil migrant nationalism.

47. *The Emigrant, Volume-I, No-1, August,1914, p.28.*
48. *Joan M.Jensen, Passage from India:Asian Indian Immigrants in North America,Yale University Press, New Havenand London,1998, p.279.*

Mass Participation in the Freedom Struggle

To focus on leaders alone in the narrative is to marginalise the marginalised sections of the Tamil diaspora. Indeed, they formed the sinews of the movement and lent their material and physical support unmindful of the dire situation, in which they were. They were inspired by the leaders and responded to their clarion calls. In South Africa, Apartheid became the unifying force. It brought together the motley groups of indentured labour, coolies, white-collar workers and prosperous professional categories like merchants and lawyers under the umbrella of discrimination. This banding together of the Indian community paved way for Gandhian Satyagraha. A former INA soldier, V.Samy had this to say: The arrival of Netaji Bose in South East Asia kindled a new spirit among all Indians who began to believe that India would be free soon. Netaji's call reached the hearts and minds of all Indians. His call generated a tremendous response. Janaki Athi Nagappan who was in the Rani of Jhansi regiment, said: "Our girls and women knew that in the battle hunger, thirst, fatigue, bombing, injury and death would be constant companions. Nevertheless, they were inspired by the vision of a free India".[49] The war years also brought a sense of Indian identity. This sense of unity of purpose cut across linguistic, regional, caste, and religious divides among Indians.

The epitome of sacrifice by a Tamil family for the service of the nation was narrated by none other than Mrs. Annie Besant. She wrote in her New India that "one of the most interesting gifts, which Gandhi received, on the eve of his departure to England enroute to India was the gift of four boys by Mr. and Mrs. C.K.T.Naidoo. As Gandhi intends to join the Servants of India Society, the parents intend that the boys too may be brought up to serve their motherland in the same capacity. It is noteworthy that Mr. and Mrs. Naidoo are veteran Passive Resisters and have gone to gaol as often as it was necessary or possible for them to do; and that they should be parted from their four children for the sake of India, shows the regard, which our South African countrymen have for India. As Mr. Gandhi pointed out at the time, their gift - was the most precious any person can give to a country".[50]

Conclusion

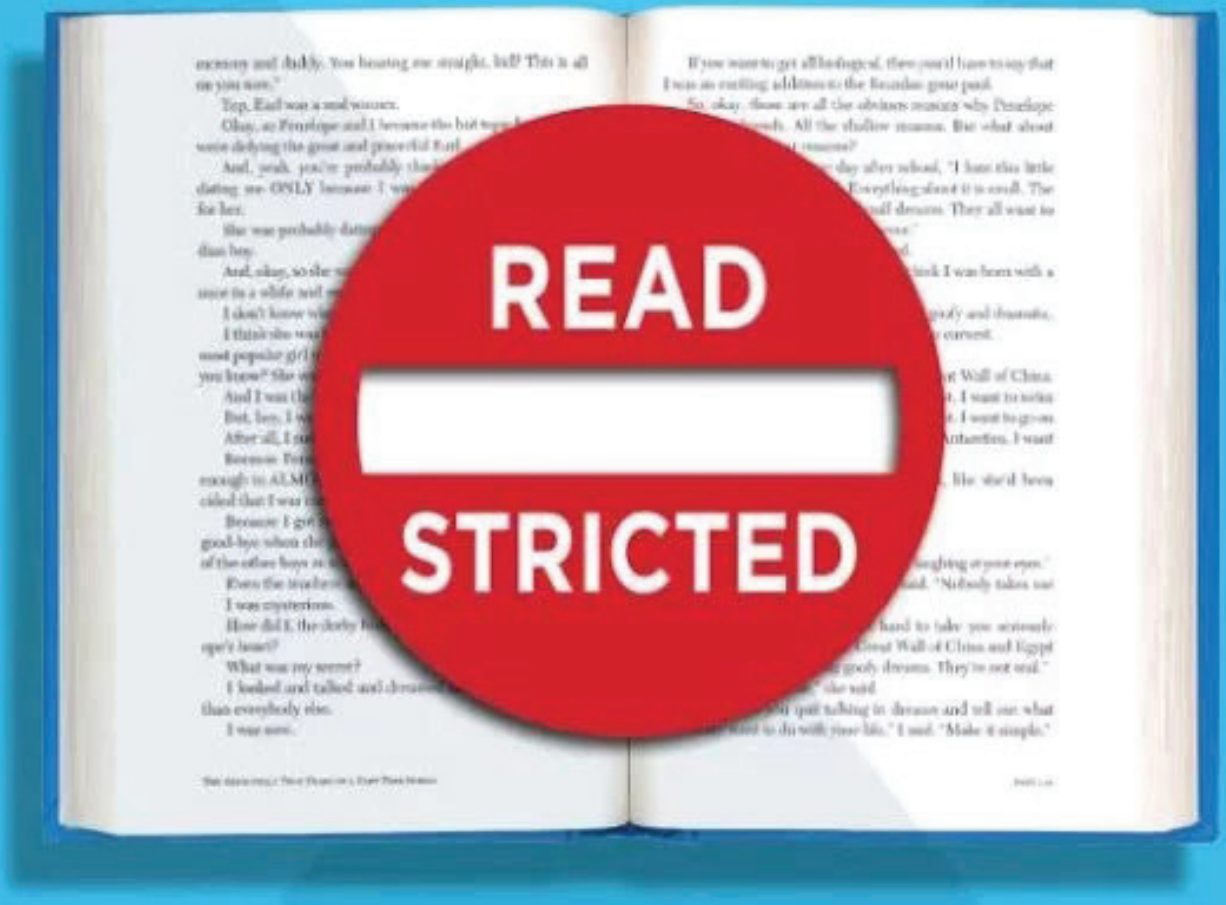
If the home is where the heart is then Indian emigration, for most, was only ephemeral than eternal. Distance did not diminish their care and concern for their former country. Immersed in the diurnal activities, India remained a crucial reference point at all times for them. They realized that nothing ensured their respect in foreign countries better than the independence of India[51]. No wonder, the

49. *ibid, p.57.*
50. *https://www.gandhiashramamsevagram.org/gandhi-/ literature / reception-in madras - 21-april-1915. php accessed on November 10, 2022.*

Ghadar protest song lamented thus, "The whole world calls us black thieves, the whole world calls us coolie".[52] Truly, their aspirations and activism transcended the realm of symbolism.

Surpassing the role of being a 'symbolic capital', Indians abroad played a significant role in the Indian freedom struggle. Discrimination, disadvantage and marginalisation in the host colonies did not deter their involvement. They, rather, reinforced their resolve to contribute to the struggle. Indian diaspora adopted several means and methods to pursue its objective. By name and by numbers, Tamils dominated the Indian emigration scenario. Though it is not a matter of pride, still one finds that colonial migration has been generally characterised as 'coolie trade', and it was used extensively by the colonial authorities and by the scholars who study the system. Again, two other words 'Kangani' and 'Maistry' are also derived from Tamil language, and became an integral part of migration lexicon. Not by the name but by numbers the Tamil migrants transformed the colonial economy both in the colonies and in Tamil Nadu. The role and contributions of Chettiyar community is a well - documented one. Simultaneously, the Tamil emigrants built cultural bridges as in the case of Periyar's visit to Malaya, a testimony to the usage that "one can take an Indian out of India, but one cannot take India out of an Indian". But, it was to the freedom struggle that the Tamil diaspora made a seminal contribution.

The role played by the Tamil diaspora in the country's freedom struggle cannot be overstated. Its role is not a small part in the large national project. Its size and location in the strategic colonies ensured a bigger role for the Tamils that manifests in the scale of mobilisation. Their crucial and emphatic efforts were enhanced several fold during the momentum of the struggle. Transcending the age, class and gender issues, the Tamil diaspora responded with alacrity to the National and International events, which impinged on their lives and that of their homeland. Led by several eminent leaders, the masses willingly accepted incarceration, underwent untold suffering and even laid down their lives. The Press and various organisations and associations mobilised the masses by highlighting important issues. For instance, the history of the Indian National Army underscores the scale of participation among the Tamil expatriate community in South East Asia. Leaders have showered encomiums on Tamils for their inspirational role in the freedom struggle. The Doyen of Indian diasporans, Gandhi, affirmed: "It was the Madrassees who of all the Indians were singled out by the great Divinity that rules over us for this great work. They realized the common danger, and they realized also what their destiny was as Indians, and it was they, and they alone, who matched the soul -forces against the physical forces".[53]


READ
STRICTED

8

Politics of Text and Nationalist Narratives: Proscribed Books in Colonial Tamil Nadu

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The anti-colonial struggles in the Indian sub-continent were as old as colonialism itself. The southern parts of the sub-continent witnessed, The southern part of the sub-continent in its initial days of colonialism witnessed responses from the hill tribes of Salem region, the struggle of local chieftons, namely Palayakars,[1] valiant opposition to Britain's colonial expansion from Hyder Ali[2] and Tipu and the Vellore sepoy Mutiny of 1806. More importantly, most of the above mentioned anti-colonial struggles were not an isolated events, they were inter-connected.[3]

1. *For details see, Velayutham Saravanan, Colonialism, Environment and Tribals in South India 1792- 1947, Routledge India, New Delhi, 2016.*

2. *The Book History of the Family of Hyder Ali was written and published. The details such as author, publisher and year of publication of the book was not known. The book was fortified by the Government in the year 1884 under the recommendation of Hindustani translator to the Government. For details see, G.O. No. 2617 (Miscellaneous) dated on 06.12.1884.*

3. *They had tried to form allies against the common enemy, East India Company. Velu Nachiyar*

Later, When the British took over the direct control from East India Company, thanks to the aftermath of Sepoy mutiny of 1857, there were also a change in the mode of resistance. The western - educated, drawn mostly from the upper caste men had started to negotiate with the British for the inclusion of Indians in the Government. Then the extremists phase was followed by the Gandhian Phase. There were revolutionary movements, there and then, who believed in armed struggle against British like that of Mapilah Rebellion[4], which possessed anti-Colonial and anti-feudal order, Hindustan Republican Army, INA, etc.

In his article, '*Quit India in Madras: Hiatus or Climateric?'*, David Arnold pointed out that Quit India Movement was not only bringing freedom closer, but also revealing the contradictions and tensions within the Movement as well as in the Congress[5]. Not just Quit India movement, but the whole Indian independence movement was not a homogeneous one. It was heterogeneous in its nature and character.[6]

One of the foremost contributions by these western - educated elites came through their writings with intellectual pursuit. They had exposed the economic drain of India to Britain, which had a Mundane impact on the Indian political scenario in general and the anti-colonial movement in particular. The contributions of Tamil Nadu in the domain of anti-colonial narratives are inevitable. There were many newspapers, Journals and Books in Tamil Nadu, like other parts of the country, that played a vital role in inculcating 'national' feelings, which had been new in the sub-continent,[7] among the people.

The colonial regime, in its response, took various repressive measures to curb these writings as well as the nationalistic sentiment. This article is an attempt to study about the in Tamil and English books proscribed by the colonial regime in Tamil Nadu for its national fervor and anti-colonial arguments and the politics behind it. We came across the works of Bharathi and Rajagopalachari, which were proscribed by the colonial regime and it became well-known in the academic domain, whereas this article has covered the works of lesser-known or unheard personalities.

The proscribed books, during the colonial regime, had try to construct the anti-colonial historiography of Tamil Nadu. They had attempted to historicise the anti-colonial war of Kattabomman, Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, Mapilah or Malabar rebellion, as

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had received a help from Hyder Ali in her struggle. Maruthu Brothers had also joined her. The Vellore sepoy mutiny of 1806 were masterminded by the sons of Tipu.

4. *V.D Savarkar was one of the first to try to potray the Malabar rebellion as an anti-Hindu genocide through his fictional novel Moplah, which was published in 1924.*
5. *David Arnold, Quit India in Madras: Hiatus or Climateric?, in a book The Indian Nation in 1942 ed., by Gyanendra Pandey, The Indian press pvt ltd, Calcutta, 1988, P. 207.*
6. *For details see, G. Aloysius, A Nationalism without a Nation in India, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1998.*
7. *The idea 'Nationalism' was invented by Europe and was transformed it to the other parts of world by colonial powers. For details see, Kedourie E, Nationalism, Blackwell, London, 1993.*

well as documented the contemporary struggles like that of extremists, revolutionaries and Gandhian in Tamil. They were written in both prose and poem. Apart from describing the movements and agitations in general, the themes of the books mostly concentrated on individual leaders and their heroic deeds. Leaders like Gandhi, Bhagat Singh, Subhas Chandra Bose, Jawaharlal Nehru, Motilal Nehru, Bala Gangadara Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and their struggles were introduced to Tamil readers.

Kattabomman

The Book *Kattabommu* which narrates the struggle of Kattabomman against the Colonial regime in 1790s was authored by T.M.Subramaniam and published by *Navayuga prasuralayam*, George town, Madras in 1940. The book was banned by the British in the same year.[8] The book was classified into 21 chapters. The author elaborately discussed the history of polygar system, political conditions of Carnatic region during the first half of eighteenth century and the failure of Kattabomman to pay the rent to East India Company and his struggle with the Colonial regime and his subsequent arrest and execution as well as the execution of his brother, Duraisingam, popularly known as Umaithurai. The author claimed that he had written this book with an objective of tracing authentic account of Kattabomman[9] and further states that he had avoided certain 'popular' version of the story of Kattabomman since it had no authentic historical records.[10]

Malabar Rebellion

The book Malabar Puratchi was a Tamil translation of the book Peasant Revolt in Malabar,1921. It was originally written in English by Saumyendranath Tagore in 1937[11] and was translated by A. Ilangovan and published in 1940 by Lokasakthi office, which was located at South Coovum Road, Madras[12]. The book claimed that the Malabar rebellion was a peasant rebellion against the exploitative feudal order as well as the Colonial order[13]. While criticizing the capitalism, colonialism and feudalism, the book praised the economic order of Communist Russia and further, the author claimed that both "capitalism and British Imperialsim as an obstacle in the ways of Indians leading a happy and peaceful life and that a socialist revolution alone can get rid of them and lay the foundations for a new era".

It seems that the author was greatly impressed by the Malabar Rebellion and he pointed out that no proper history had been written so far on Malabar Rebellion and only official version was available and it had portrayed the rebellion as communal

8. *G.O. No. 1782, Public dated on 06.09.1940.*
9. *Ibid.,*
10. *Ibid.,*
11. *https://www.rcpi-communist.in/p/saumyendranath-tagore.html.*
12. *G.O. No. 597, Public, dated on 18.03.1940.*
13. *Ibid.,*

aggression[14]. The book disapproved the Government's claim with the help of official data itself. First, the official data provided by the Government indicates that the people who got killed by the 'rioters' were between 500 to 600 and the rebellion lasted for months, whereas the total Hindu Population in the then South Malabar, where the rebellion took place, were nearly four lakh[15]. The number of victims were negligible compared to the total population. Moreover, as per the data provided by the Government, there were considerable number of Muslims, who were either Government officers or supporters of Army.

Secondly, the number of temples desecrated during the rebellion was less than 9% and many number of temples remained untouched and undisturbed. Thirdly, out of two resolutions passed in the Malabar District Political Conference held at Manjeri in 1920[16], one was in favour of non-co-operation Movement and the other was the reformation of tenancy[17]. This indicates the volume of tensions prevailed in that region over tenancy and other peasant - related problems. S.N.Tagore gave an account of the then leader of tenancy movement, Narayana Menon who said that "the Moplah rebels never attacked Hindus or robbed them out of communal considerations. When stray cases were brought down to the notice of rebel leaders, they severely punished the men who were involved in the looting of Hindu houses. Sometimes the punishment amounted to cutting off hands of such offenders and what had been looted was immediately returned to the owners"[18].

The book provided valuable information with data and argued efficiently to claim that the Malabar Rebellion was not on the base of communal grounds, but it was anti-zamindari and anti- colonial in character. The Government official who translated the Tamil version of the book and submitted his report to the Government says that the Tamil translator had interpolated with his own remarks here and there and mistranslated some of the paragraphs from the original version[19]. Both the English and Tamil version of the book were banned by the British[20].

Moderate View

The important work by V.Balaambal, the first women journalist in Tamil Nadu[21]

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14. *Kunnath Haji, who had spearheaded the rebellion, wrote to The Hindu newspaper in Madras that there were several attempts to paint this rebellion as communal from the administration and accused the colonial regime for desecrating several temples and spread the rumour that it were desecreted by Moplahs. For more details, see Saumyendranath Tagore, Peasant Rebellion in Malabar, 1921, P.59.*
15. *Ibid.,*
16. *Saumyendranath Tagore, Peasant Rebellion in Malabar, 1921, P.58.*
17. *G.O 597, Opcit.,*
18. *Saumyendranath Tagore, Opcit., P.59.*
19. *G.O 597, Opcit.,*
20. *G.O 597, Opcit.,*
21. *For details see, Ko Raghupathy, Balaambal - Mudal Pen Ithazhasiriyar, (Balaambal - The first Woman Journalist) panuval publications, Chennai, 2021.*

entitled Rajiasevaiyum Indiyarum (Government Services and Indians), written in Tamil and published by Srinivasa Varadachari press, Madras in 1917[22]. The book had shared the moderate views and was written when the Home Rule movement gained its momentum. The book rendered valuable information on various Government Departments, job opportunities in it as well as the discrimination faced by the Indian employees over their European counterparts, in terms of recruitment, salaries, promotions, etc.

In her book, V.Balaambal gave her recommendations to the Government, with the various data including the official one to support her argument and asked the Government to sort out the discrimination of Indians in Government services. Like the Moderate leaders of late nineteenth century, viz., Surendranath Banerjee and Dadabhai Naoroji, she insisted more share of Government jobs to the Indians, especially in the officers cadre[23]. In one of her argument, she was dissatisfied with the majority of the commissioners who had recommended the Government to reduce the age of civil service aspirants from 22 to 24 age bar to 17 to 19 slab.

When there was a rule from 1878 to 1891, the age slab was 17-19, she pointed out there were only 2% of Indians who got selected in the Indian Civil Services Examination[24]. Further, she indicated that while the age slab was between 22-24 during the years 1892 - 1912, 4% of Indians were selected. So, she pleaded that if the Government reversed the rules, as per the recommendations of commissioners, it would affect the job opportunities of Indians[25].

Similarly, she analyzed the discrepancies of various Departments of both central and provincial services such as Education Department, Police Department, Medical Department, Civil and Military Department, Sanitary Department, Survey Department, Jail Administrations Department, Mining Department, Minting Department, Postal and Telegram Department, Department for Research on Micro Organisms, Forest Department, and so on[26]. She had explored the recruitment and salaries of other colonies of Britain and compared it with India. She also compared the data of Madras Presidency with other Indian Presidencies[27]. While the lower grade jobs were alloted more to Indians, the higher grade jobs were occupied predominantly by the British",[28] she criticized.

She was a Moderate and a great admirer of Dadabhai Naoroji. She had expressed her wish to write the Biography of Naoroji in Tamil[29], but it was uncertain whether

22 *Balaambal, Rajiasevaiyum Indiyarum, (Government Services and Indians), Srinivasa Varadachari press, Madras, 1917.*
23 *For details see, Balaambal, Opcit.,1917.*
24 *Balaambal, Opcit.,1917, p. 153-154.*
25 *Balaambal, Opcit.,1917, 155-156.*
26 *For details see, Balaambal, Opcit.,*
27. *For details see, Balaambal, Opcit.,*
28. *Balaambal, Opcit.,1917. p.40*
29. *Balaambal, Opcit.,1917, p. 318.*

it materialized. She dedicated some pages in her book to praise Naoroji and his contributions. She pointed out the importance of his book, Poverty and Un-British Rule in India, which was published in 1902, and the way it exposed the economic drain of around twenty crore annually from India to Britain, during that period in the form of salaries and other measures[30].

She had expressed her disappointment over the split of the congress, the Moderate - Extremist debacle. She blamed the moderates for the debacle and the split of Congress, despite Naoroji's effort[31]. This book provides the insight over moderates' view on Extremists, particularly in this part of presidency and the Moderates' effort and their negotiation to include Indians in the Government Services and to sort out their grievances.

Extremist Leaders

The short biographical sketch written in Tamil on Lala Lajpat Rai, along with his articles, which was translated into Tamil under the heading *Lala Lajpat Rai* avargal Sarithiramum Katturaikalum (Biography of Lala Lajpat Rai and his articles) was published by Vivegabanu publishing house, Madurai in 1907[32]. The articles of Lajpat Rai was earlier translated by and appeared in *Swadesamitran,* a newspaper. The book had dealt with precisely on the early life, education, and political stand of Rai. It praised him for his courageousness and speaking skills. The articles written by the leader on Land Alienation Act Amendment Bill, and Citizenship Act and his critique on Moderates were included in the book.[33] Balagandhar Tilak's speech on the annual meeting of Indian National Congress at Calcutta in 1917 was translated into Tamil entitled Namadhu Korikkai (Our Requests), published by Sons of India Ltd., Madras in the year 1918[34].

Revolutionaries

The book on Bhagat Singh by C.S. Venu entitled Sirdar Bhagat Singh was written in English. The publisher of the book was not known[35] but the place of the publication is Vepery, Madras in the year 1931. The other works of the author were Jatin Das: The Martyr in English[36] and Unnavirathathal Uyir Neetha Jatin Das (Jatin Das - The Man Who sacrificed his life through Hunger Strike) in Tamil[37]. The book contains total of

30. *Balaambal, Opcit.,1917, p. 316.*
31. *Balaambal, Opcit.,1917, p. 317.*
32. *Lala Lajpat Rai avargal Sarithiramum Katturaikalum (Biography of Lala Lajpat Rai and his articles), Vivegabanu publishing house, Madurai in 1907.*
33. *For details see, Lala Lajpat Rai avargal Sarithiramum Katturaikalum, Opcit., 1907.*
34. *Tilak Namadhu Korikkai, translated into Tamil (Our Requests), Sons of India Ltd., Madras, 1918.*
35. *For details, see Venu. C.S., Sirdar Bhagat Singh, Vepery, Madras,1931.*
36. *https://archive.org/details/jatindasmartyr00venu*
37. *https://worldcat.org/identities/np-venu,%20c%20s/*

fifty pages, a short biography of Bhagat Singh. The book was classified into six sections viz., Childhood and Early influences, The Blast of Trumpet, The Trial and the Sentence, Ordinance Challenged, Sacrifice and lastly, Fundamentals.

The author has narrated the early life of Bhagat Singh and the way he was influenced by the incidence of Jalianwala Bagh massacre and its aftermath. The author has narrated that when Kishan Singh, the father of Bhagat Singh, sensed that his son has been deviated from the 'normal' path, he had a consultation with Lala Lajpat Rai, an extremist leader who had later died of police lathi charge during the protest of anti-Simon commission agitation[38], and as per his advice, Kishan Singh decided to arrange the marriage of his son with his lady love. But the proposal was turned down by Bhagat Singh as he had different idea. In the next chapter, Venu C.S had elaborated the events of blast in the Parliament by Bhagat Singh and Bhatukeshwar Dutt.

The revolutionaries of Hindustan Republican Army, the Organization Bhagat Singh belonged to, was inspired by the philosophers of French revolution. While Bombing the Parliament with low intensity bomb, which targeted none, a pamphlet that carried the quote of Vaillant, a French anarchist and martyr, was thrown:

"It takes a loud voice to make the deaf hear".[39]

Subsequently, he was arrested, along with his comrades and he underwent the worst kind of torture and ill-treatment by jail authorities, like other political prisoners. The author quoted the Newspaper based on Bombay, *Young Liberator,* which says, "Thrusting of a finger in anus and constant kicking at the buttocks"[40]

Bhagat singh and others had commenced the Hunger strike to protest the ill-treatment of political prisoners. It was a 116 days - long hunger strike, the longest hunger strike that surpassed the Irish Nationalist who had undergone 98 days of hunger strike and it had weakened the body of Bhagat Singh and his comrades, said the author[41]. Finally with the intervention of the Indian National Congress, which promised to take up the issue with the Government and passed resolution regarding the issue, says the book With the resolution, Kishan Singh went to Jail and met Bhagat Singh. Initially he was reluctant and the meeting was extended for more than two hours and the relentless persuasion by Kishan Singh finally made Bhagat singh to call off the hunger strike, temporarily, says Venu C.S[42].

Then the book elaborated the events immediately before and after the hanging of Bhaghat singh along with Sughdev and Rajaguru. The author says after the death of three martyrs, there were numerous protest marches in Punjab, Karachi and Lahore, where

38. *Venu. C.S, Opcit., 1931,p.6*
39. *Venu. C.S, Opcit., 1931,p.12*
40. *Venu. C.S, Opcit., 1931,p.21.*
41. *Venu. C.S, Opcit., 1931,p.27*
42. *Venu. C.S, Opcit., 1931,p.33*

the protesters echoed the slogan: "Bhagat Singh Zindabad" and "Down with Gandhi"[43]. Finally, the author concluded the book with the last letter written by Bhagat Singh to his younger brother, who was just 10 years at the time the letter adviced him not to lose the courage. The author had a high admiration for Bhagat Singh but disapproved his methodology. He claimed that Gandhian methods of non-violent struggle can be more efficient and effective than the violent methods[44].

Another book on Bhagat Singh was written in Tamil in the poetic form, entitled Sardar Bhagat Singh Desiya Sangeerthanam, published by V.R. Ezhumalai Pillai in his Sri Tambiran Press, Wall tax road, Madras, in 1931[45]. The author of this book was unknown and it was not mentioned in the book. The book starts with a note: Vandemataram and Mahatma Gandhiku Jey (Victory to Mahatma Gandhi), even though the book was titled Bhagat Singh. This small monograph contains 19 pages and was written with a style of Pathinangu seer Asiriya Virutham (Each para contains 14 stanzas) and Aru seer Asiriya Virutham (Each para contains 6 stanzas).

The initial two paragraphs had dealt with Gandhi and his ideals. The author blamed the Justice party for its support for Simon Commission and went on claiming that the Justice party had conspired with the British and accompanied the Simon Commission and the highhandedness of the police resulted in the death of Lala Lajpat Rai, which infuriated Bhagat Singh and led him to bomb the Parliament,[46] the author claimed. The poem mourned the hanging of Bhagat singh and his comrades. Then the author praised Gandhi and his struggles like non-co-operation movement, his call for boycott of foreign clothes[47] and Civil Disobedience Movement. He made a rhetoric of British with Ravanan[48] , and Gandhi and his associates with Rama Lakshmanan[49] and devars[50].

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43. Venu. C.S, Opcit., 1931,p.35

44. Venu. C.S, Opcit., 1931.p. 43

45. Sardar Bhagat Singh Desiya Sangeerthanam, published by V.R. Ezhumalai Pillai, Sri Tambiran Press, Madras, 1931.

46. Ibid., p.4.

47. According to the intelligence report submitted to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, dated 13th September 1920, the boycott of foreign goods, an important and most celebrated resolution, was not the original idea of Gandhi. It was Vijaya Raghava Achariya of Salem, who at first proposed the boycott of British goods during the special session of Indian National Congress, Muslim League and the Khilafat Conference held at Calcutta on 4th september 1920. Initially Gandhi was reluctant to accept the proposal since it was a 'kind' of hatred, says the report. But overwhelming support to the proposal in the meeting forced Gandhi to accept it with the change from British goods to Foreign goods. The report further states that Gandhi was accepted the proposal much against his own will, as he expressed.

48. Ravanan, the King of demons, according to the Hindu epic Ramayana.

49. Rama, the incarcenation of Lord Vishnu and Lakshmanan his younger brother, as said by the epic Ramayana

50. Sardar Bhagat Singh Desiya Sangeerthanam, Opcit., 1931, p.10

The author, through this poem, made a call for the mass participation in Gandhian way of struggle and concluded with the praise of Bharatha Matha[51]. Like C.S.Venu, the author had praised Gandhi and his poem was full of rhetoric comments. The author was an ardent critic of the Justice party and its politics and a staunch supporter of Gandhi and Congress.

Another book on Bhagat Singh in Tamil was Desabakthi Geethangal written and published by R.B.S.Mani in 1931 in Madras, and this work too, like the previous one, was written in poetic form and contains 19 pages.[52] The other books on Bhagat Singh in Tamil were, Sardar Bhagat Singh printed at Ganapathi press, Mannargudi by unknown author[53] Lahore Bhagat Singh Thookuthandanai[54] (Capital Punishment of Lahore Bhagat Singh), Bhagat Singh Kolaichindu[55] (Poem on Murder of Bhagat Singh) and Bahadur Bhagat Singh allathu Desabimana Thilakam Thookumalai[56] (The Hanging of Bhagat Singh Or the Patriot) and another book named Bhahadur Bhagat Singh - Desabhimana Thilakam[57] (Bhagat Singh - The Patriot). Besides all of the works on Bhagat Singh and by Bhagat Singh that were proscribed, there was an incidence near Nagapattinam, the picture of 'Bhagat Singh and his comrades being carried to paradise' was seized by the customs and fortified by the Government[58],[59].

The book on Subhas Chandra Bose entitled Babu Subhas Chandra Bose by T.S. Chokalingam printed at Lakshmi press in Madras at 1933 was fortified by the Government[60]. Besides, the copy of the speech by Subhas Chandra Bose read at the political conference held at London on 1933 was also fortified[61]. Both works were written much before he started the armed struggle.

Gandhi and his Associates

The huge number of works on Gandhi and works by Gandhi, which were later translated, were available in Tamil. The more number of works on Gandhi were written in poetic form. One such work, *Gandhi Pattu* (Songs on Gandhi) was written

51. *Sardar Bhagat Singh Desiya Sangeerthanam, Opcit., 1931, p.15*
52. *R.B.S Mani, Desabathi Geenthangal, Madras,1931.*
53. *G.O. No. 286, Public, dated on 19.02.1932.*
54. *G.O. No. 1187 Public, dated on 13.09.1932.*
55. *G.O. No. 1105, Public, dated on 19.08.1932.*
56. *G.O. No. 1181, Public, dated on 12.09.1932.*
57. *G.O. No. 1201, Public, dated on 19.09.1932.*
58. *G.O. No. 798, Public (confidential), dated on 09.05.1938.*
59. *Chaman Lal, former Professor at JNU in his lecture, on Proscribed Literature and Bhagat Singh in the webinar titled Proscribed Hindi - Urdu print and Colonial Historiography on 20th December 2021, says that the more number of works on Bhagat Singh proscribed by the colonial Government were Hindi, Tamil and Urdu. https://herald.uohyd.ac.in/international - webinar-on- proscribed-hindi-urdu-print-and-colonial-historiography/*
60. *G.O No. 976, public dated on 23.11.1933.*
61. *G.O No. 547, public dated on 26.06.1933.*

by N.K.A.Abdul Rahman Sahib and published by Nagai Saravana Mudaliar of Kalai Mahal Publishers, Tiruvottriyur, Madras in the year 1929[62]. This small work contains ten pages.

The author started with an emphasis on unity and praise Gandhi for his emphasis on non-violence, boycott of foreign goods, his fight for the forbiddance of forbidden the liquor, and so on. The author made the rhetoric of British as Kamsan and Gandhi as Krishnan. He had condemned, through this poem, the British for the arrest of Gandhi for six years. He had even praised Moulana Mohamed Ali and Shaukat Ali for their contributions.[63] In the last stanza, he stated that the foot soldiers of Gandhi, with khadhi dress as their tool were ready for being arrested to attain swaraj.[64]

Another small book in poetic form entitled Gandhiyin Virupam Niraiveruga (Gandhi's wishes to be fulfilled) was published by E.S.Sivaramalingam Pillai, Sri Ramakrishna Press, Ambasamudram[65]. The author of the book and the year of publishing was absent in the book. It was proscribed by the Government.[66] The other works on Gandhi in Tamil were Mahatma Gandhi Arresttu Pattu[67] (Songs over the Arrest of Gandhi) and Mahatma Gandhi Keerthanamurtham (Songs on Mahatma Gandhi) by V.Nataraja Pillai[68].

The work of Gandhi, entitled Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rules, which was translated into Tamil by Natesan & Co., Madras, was fortified[69]. The books on Motilal Nehru titled Pandit Motilal Nehru Geetham (Songs on Motilal Nehru) was published by Manoranjani Press in 1932[70] and on Jawaharlal Nehru called Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru - Swarajiya Thilagam (Hero of Swaraj) in the same year[71]. The author and the publisher of the book was unknown. Besides, there were number of works produced in Tamil on Gandhian method of struggles viz., Othuzhaiyamai (Non-Co-operation), Uppu Sathiyagraham (Salt Satyagraha), Congress Thondar Mariyal Paatu[72] (Songs on Picketing by Congress Volunteers), and so forth.

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62. *N.K.A. Abdul Rahman Sahib, Gandhi Pattu (Songs on Gandhi) published by Nagai. Saravana Mudaliar of Kalai Mahal Publishers, Tiruvottriyur, Madras, 1929.*
63. *Ibid., p.3*
64. *Ibid., p.7*
65. *G.O. No. 995, Public, dated on 19.07.1932.*
66. *Ibid.,*
67. *G.O.No. 958, Public, dated on 11.07.1932.*
68. *G.O.No. 1268, Public, dated on 30.09.1932.*
69. *G.O.No. 1260, Public (Confidential), dated on 10.07.1933*
70. *G.O.No. 1269, Public, dated on 30.09.1932.*
71. *G.O.No. 1254, Public, dated on 26.09.1932.*
72. *G.O.No. 1080, Public, dated on 10.08.1932.*

Conclusion

The above mentioned works provided a great source of information and some of the books, both proscribed and not proscribed, analyzed the then political circumstances carefully. Especially, Balaambal's work had taken much care with the data. She had analyzed the available data and had presented a lucid picture of colonial services. Saumyendranath Tagore's work was a much prominent one and he disregarded the official version of the communal agenda in Malabar rebellion and had substantiated his arguments with the detailed information and analysis. His Marxian interpretation of the rebellion was much plausible.

C.S.Venu, a Gandhian by ideology had produced a biography of Bhagat Singh and Jatin Das. As a Gandhian, he had defended Gandhi over his helplessness yet had documented the popular Anti-Gandhi mood that was prevailing in the then Punjab. T.M.Subramanyam's work on Kattabommu, not just talked about the Panchalamkurichi war, besides it had provided the historical background and the current political information of the period. The author had a historical sense and he says he did not include the information which had no historical evidence. While the rest of the above - mentioned authors had dealt with the contemporary events and recent pasts, he had chosen to historicise the event which had happened 140 years ago. Gandhi was the one who had had his name in the vast number of works, followed by Bhagat Singh. The poetic works were mostly exaggerated, yet provided the historic information.

The colonial regime on the other hand had taken steps to curb down the dissent voices. It was Lord Wellesley who imposed the pre-censorship for the printing press in 1799[73]. After 1857, when the British took the direct political control, the laws were intensified. The Press and Registration of Books Act of 1867 and the Vernacular press Act of 1878 and the Press Act of 1910 further tightened the law and increased the bureaucratic control of press freedom[74]. The proscribed books which were discussed in this article were fortified by the Government of Madras and the Government of India mostly under the Registration of Books Act of 1867.

Under certain kind of political pressure and censorship, the writers courageously had registered their dissent voices and had faced the consequences for their act. They had tried to create a sense of nationalism among the countrymen and a political platform for nationalists.

73. *https://herald.uohyd.ac.in/international-webinar-on-proscribed-hindi-urdu-print-and-colonial-historiography/*
74. *Ibid.*



9

Importation of Communist Ideology Under British Raj: Writings of Communists at Crossroads in Colonial Tamil Nadu, 1925-1945

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The concept of Communist ideology was not novel to the people of Madras Presidency. Subramania Bharathi had expressed this idea much earlier in his poems that were composed even before the October Revolution of 1917 in Russia, an ideology emphasised by V.I.Lenin. Bharathi stated, "even if one man does not have bread to eat, we will destroy the whole world, thirty crore of people will enjoy the produce of the Indian society. This society will be the novel example to the present world".

The Janasakthi, a Tamil Communist daily reproduced the essence of the poem of Bharathi in its issue dated 16th September 1939, which expressed love and admiration Bharathi had for the people of Tamil country. The dream of new world, which materialised in Russia gave Bharathi great joy and he expressed this joy in the following words, "The masses have earned out a life dear to them; justice for the people, the world has come to know this polity, the peoples' republic."[1]

The Janasakthi further stated that the world was unable to understand and accept the great change Bharathi had dreamt of, in his national songs and writings. After the October and November 1917 recounting of Russia, the Marxian ideology had exceeded in the writings of Bharathi and thus became a visualise to the people of this Presidency prompting them to know much about the Marxian ideology.[2]

Early Writings of the Communist Literature

The Communist International (Comintern) of Russia, originally started in Russia, decided to expand its principles throughout the world, including India. M.N.Roy, S.A.Dange and Singaravelu were the pioneers to spread Communism in India. The writings of Communist literature, supplied by U.S.S.R, were widely circulated in all parts of British India since 1922. S.A.Dange, editor of *the Socialist,* ane English fortnightly published from Bombay, was the first Communist generation newspaper in India that paved way for the importation of Communist ideals to India. S.A.Dange appeared to be the directing spirit of Communism in India and the list handed over by Ashliegh puts him in a position to co-ordinate throughout India. The Government of Madras knew the names of the Communist leaders in Madras, Calcutta and Lahore through their writing in The Socialist.[3]

The Vanguard, a Communist newspaper edited by M.N.Roy, was first imported to India in June 1922. About 100 copies were sent each fortnight to India, though the number intercepted in the post offices, was only about half of its total. There was no doubt that a considerable number did get through, and that their contents were carried on some of the Indian newspapers that had adopted a Communist tone in their leading articles. This was notably so in the case of the *Amrita Bazzar Patrika* of Calcutta, where many articles were adopted from The *Vanguard.* Pro-Bolshevick articles commonly appeared also in *The Independent* and *The Khilafat Bulletin* and frequently in *the Democrat, Servant* and *Vartaman* and occasionally in many other newspapers published in Indian provinces.[4]

1. *Janasakthi, Madras,16th September1939.*
2. *Public,G.O.No.1858,Confdl.,30th October 1939*
3. *U.S.S.File No.403,Confdl., 24th February 1939*
4. *Fortnightly Report, First Half of July 1922*

The Government of India had planned to arrest the easy flow of the Communist ideals through these newspapers and Communist literatures, which were supplied by M.N.Roy and others from Russia. Three Communist Pamphlets, written by M.N.Roy - *India in Transition, India's Problem* and *its Solution* and *What do We Want?* were proscribed under Section 12(1) of Indian Press Act, 1910 in all three major Presidencies of India in April 1922.[5]

This newspaper and Communist literature propaganda was supplemented by a voluminous correspondence from M.N.Roy, who sent letters each week to labour bodies, organised by the Communist organisations such as labour agitators, political agitators, trade unionists and ex-detenus, outlining his views and he even recommended Communist programmes, which were designed by himself from Moscow. In one the most important interceptions, M.N.Roy had recommended the formation of a regular Communist Party in India, with a "non-offensive name"-"in order that many available revolutionary elements should not be frightened". Hence, he suggested, - 'The People Party'. This party should have a dual organisation, "legal and illegal". M.N.Roy desired that an attempt should be made to establish the nucleus of the 'Legal Party' at the Gaya Congress session, where it was intended that a revolution, drafted by M.N.Roy, should be introduced.[6]

Communist activity, not directly traceable to Roy but which it would, no doubt, be brought under his direction, if it had not been so in the past, it would not have been very noticeable.*'The International Press Correspondence'*, a publication of the Third Communist International, was sent in large numbers to Indiain May 1922. Many copies were intercepted in the post offices in India, but many certainly got through and were handed over to Indian Communist sympathisers. The 'Red' Trade union organisations of India also sent Communist literature and private letters to the office bearers of Labour unions in India. In addition to these, stray copies of the 'Communist', 'Communist Review', 'Workers Dread naught', and various 'Red' Labour publications came to light during this period. All these 'Red' oriented Communist literature were widely circulated among the newly enlisted Communist volunteers in all provinces of India.[7]

Apart from these Communist publications, there were a number of other publications that came out with the same concept of supporting Communist ideology in India. *The Athma Sakthi, Dhumketu* and *Desar Bani* were regional language papers mostly run by ex-revolutionaries in Bengal; the Socialist of S.A.Dange; the Nava Yuga (English fortnightly edited by Krishna Rao, who was in correspondence

5. *U.S.S.File No.403, Confdl., 24th February 1939*
6. *Ibid, pp.45-46*
7. *Ibid, p.47*

with Sylvia Pankhurst, Madras) and the Inquilab (daily newspaper, Lahore) were the prominent early Communist newspapers, published in India. *The Dhumketu* was prosecuted for its seditious writings; the editor of the paper had tendered an apology. His locumtenens during his arrest was a well-known ex-revolutionary and the tone of the paper continued unimproved even after the stern measures, taken by the Government of British India in 1923-1924. Its sale was later said to be rapidly increasing; and it became the torch bearer of the Communist Movement in the later part of 1930's.

In Madras, the *Avoilent*, a Communist pamphlet appeared in 1922, written by Nalini Kanta Iyer, who, when arrested, attempted to shoot a policeman. The pamphlet narrated the story of the British and their atrocities over the colony countries and their labour unions, trade unionists etc. Hence, the Government of India prosecuted the same pamphlet under Section 99A of Cr.P.C of 1898 in May 1922.[8]

Dr.Manilal, a noted Communist leader, who was deported from Fiji in1920 for his share in the labour troubles, made Bolshevick speeches in New Zealand and was deported from there, and was later refused permission to stay in Ceylon and came to India. He was a regular contributor of S.A.Dange's *Socialist* and he appeared to be a professed Communist, who later organised labour organisation in Madras province between 1924 and 1928. He had been a motivator to the workers unions in the Malabar region. His writings, were in the form of support to the labour struggles, trade union movements and Communist organisations. The C.I.D. of Madras was keenly watching his activities and his writings in the Communist literatures.[9]

M.N.Roy's letters to S.A.Dange and Singaravelu of Madras were the prominent columns of The Socialist. Between 1924 and 1928, a number of articles on Communist International were published in the paper. The visit of the Indian Communist leaders to Moscow and their contributions to the evolution of Communist Movement in Madras Presidency occupied major columns of this paper.

Communist International and Its Publications

The Government of India issued a notification through the Department of Commerce, No.2026, 22 April, 1922 to prohibit the entry of any copy of any publication issued by or emanated from the Communist International or any organisation affiliated to or connected with the Communist International or sponsored by the U.S.S.R. into British India. Those Communist publications were placed under Section 19 of Sea Customs Act of 1878 for Prohibition.

8. *FNR, First Half of June 1922*
9. *U.S.S.File No 403, 24th February 1939*

Based on the above notification, the Finance Department of the Government of India issued another Notification No.105 (customs) dated 22 October 1927. It instructed all the Customs Collectors to seize the publications, which were being imported into British India through Seaports of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta that were supplied by the Communist International, London.[10]

In 1925, the Government of Madras pointed out that this notification was general in terms and was apt to be overlooked as it was always impossible to know whether the particular publication, which came to notice, was issued by the Communist party. The Local Governments were there upon supplied with a list of publications and newspapers issued by the Communist International and were informed that additions to the list would be communicated from time to time.

The Director of the Intelligence Bureau seized the following Communist literature, published by the affiliated organisation of the Communist International, Great Britain.

1) *The Workers Life* (formerly the workers weekly from London)
2) *The Working Women* (a Communist publication from London)[11]

The above works were surely Communist oriented in character. The Government of India instructed the Customs authorities to take action against these importations of such Communist literature from London under Section 1907, the Sea Customs Act of 1878. The Customs authorities of Madras Seaport on 26 November, 1927[12], seized the above Communist literatures.

General Communist Notification (1932)

The Government of India, by its Finance Department Notification no. 28, dt.28.05.1927, proscribed the entry into India under Sea Customs Act of 1878 of any copy of publication or document issued by, on behalf of, or also circulated with the Communist International of Russia. By which a number of Communist Literature were confiscated or banned under the Sea Customs Act, 1878. The Customs Authorities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras were directed to take similar action against the importation of such Communist literature, supplied by the Communist International, Moscow to the Indian provinces since May1927 to September 1932.[13]

In the Madras Presidency, the confiscation of such Communist literature was sparse between 1927 and 1931. However, in the year 1932, especially from March

10. *Home (Pol) Dept File No.84/1927*
11. *FNR, Second Half of December 1927*
12. *Home (Pol) Dept File No.84/1927.*
13. *Home (Pol) Dept File No.29/6, 1932*

to August there was free flow of Communist literatures, which were being imported from Moscow to the Communist organisations of Madras Presidency. In Bombay and Calcutta, the Customs Authorities of these two provinces were not able to control the importation of Communist publications in the form of books, pamphlets, posters and pictures of Karl Marx, V.I.Lenin and others.[14]

Irked by this political development, the Government of India came forward to arrest the free flow of Communist literature and Communist movement in major places of India and decided to add strict control on the importation of such political literature from Russia to avoid the room for the emergence of Communist Party to Indian providers. On the basis of the advice of the Secretary of State for India, Lord Wellington, the Viceroy of India decided to revise the Finance Department's Notification no.28, which was passed on 28th May 1927 to proscribe the entry of such Communist literature sponsored by the Communist International, Russia into British India.[15]

The Government of India issued a 'General Communist Notification' on 10 September 1932 and ordered the Finance (Central Revenue) Department and the Customs Authorities of all the British Indian ports to prohibit the entry of following into British India:

1) any document issued or emanating from

a) the Communist International,

b) any organisation affiliated to or controlled by or connected with the Communist International,

2) any document holding office in any such organisation,

3) any document containing substantial reproductions of the matter contained in any such document[16]

A.H. Lloyd, the Joint Secretary of Government of India, forwarded the notification to all Collectors of Customs and the Collectors of Salt Revenue, Bombay to take necessary action on the importation of such literature from Russia and other European countries to British India, without delay, under Section 19 of Sea Customs Act of 1878. This notification was super session of Notification No.28, dtd. 28 May1927.[17] Lord Wellington, the Viceroy intimated the issue of 'General Communist Notification' to the Secretary of State for India by a telegram on 20th September 1932. After the implementation of the notification, there was a strict vigilance, the

14. Finance Dept. Notification No.28, 28th May 1927.
15. General Communist Notification–1932,10th September1932.
16. Home (Pol) Dept File No.29/6-1932.
17. FNR, First half of October 1932.

Customs Authorities confiscated a large number of Communist literatures, which were being imported into the British Indian provinces.[18]

The Customs Authorities prohibited the Communist publications such as

1) *The Communist International;*
2) *International Press Correspondence;* and
3) *The Labour Monthly,* emanated by the General News service, London England on 4 June 1937 under Section 19, Sea Customs Act, 1878. The Home Department instructed the Government of Madras to take action against the importation of the above publications to Madras, through Madras port. The Government of Madras directed the customs authorities to prohibit these Communist publications and to confiscate them.[19]

Another notification, issued by the Government of Madras, prohibited the following Communist publications that contained substantial reproduction of Communist ideology.[20]

1) A book entitled *World Revolution,* 1917-1936 - *The Rise and Fall of Communist International* by C.L.R. James, published by Martin Secker and Warburg, London;
2) *The Communist International* published by Modern Books Ltd., London.
3) *The International Press Correspondence,* a weekly published by H.R.G.Jefferson, London;
4) *The Labour Monthly* - a magazine on International labour–edited by R.Palme Dutt and published by proprietors of Trinity Trust, London.

The Government of British India directed all the Provincial Governments to take action against these Communist oriented publications, which were published and printed in London; and instructed the Chief Secretaries of all Provincial Governments to inform about the action taken against the importation of such literature.[21]

Indian Post-office Act and Communist Literature

C.J.W.Lillie, Director General of Indian Post and Telegraph Dept., New Delhi wrote a D.O.Letter No.41 – 43-38 (political) to A.Dibdin the Secretary, P & J

18. *Lord Wellington's Telegrame to the Secretary of State for India on 20th September 1932.*
19. *The Hindu, Madras, 6th June 1937.*
20. *The Indian Express, Madras,12th June 1937.*
21. *Home (Pol) Dept File No.41/12/1937.*

Department, India Office, London, which mentioned about the importation of 60 post packets through post, from the exporters M/s. John Clark, 12 Ludgate Square, Ludgate Hill, London to one M.V.P.Loundo, Negociante De Roupa, Nova Goa, that had come to notice during the course of interception. These packets were found to contain a total of over 200 Communist books, which, with very few exceptions, were objectionable and liable to ban. As the packets were addressed to a destination outside British India, they could not be with held under Section 25 of the Indian Post Office Act and were returned to the British Post Office of origin under Article 46(3) of the Universal Postal Convention of 1934.[22]

The Postal Authorities thought that this was a new method of despatching Communist literature to an address not actually in British India. This method was deliberately adopted in order to introduce the Communist propaganda in the British India, especially in Bombay and Madras provinces through Goa, so as to avoid the risk of interception. Further, the Director General requested to take action against the exporter M/s. John Clark, London to avoid the such Communist propaganda reaching India in this way. He returned all the following titles, sent by the London-based Communist establishment.[23]

Sl. No.	Title	Author	Published	No. of. copies
1	Anti-Duhring	Frierich Engels	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., London	7
2	April Conference	V.I.Lenin	Martin Lawrence Ltd., London	3
3	Biology and Marxism	Malcent Precent	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd.,	1
4	Charles Dickens	T.A.Jackson	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd.,	2
5	Civil War in France	Karl Marx	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd.,	1
6	Civil War in U.S.S.R.	Jospeh Stalin	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd.,	3
7	Civil War in U.S.A.	Karl Mark and Angles	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd.,	2
8	Class struggle in France	Karl Marx	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd.,	2

22. *The Director General of Post &Telegram D.O.Letter No.41-43-38(Pol) to India Office, London, England.*
23. *Home (Pol) Dept File No.41-43-38.*

Sl. No.	Title	Author	Published	No. of. copies
9	Coming Struggle for Power	J.Strachey	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd.,	4
10	Correspondence of Marx and Angels	J.Strachey	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd.,	1
11	"Critique of the Gotha programme"	Karl Marx	--do--	1
12	"Dialectics: The Logic of Marxism"	T.A.Jackson	--do--	2
13	"Dictatorship of the Proletariat." (Readings in Leninism No.3)			2
14	"Dimitroff's Letters from Prison"	Completed by Kurella	--do--	2
15	"Fascism and Social Revolution"	R.P.Dutt	--do--	2
16	"Fundamental problems of Marxism"	G.Plekhanov	--do--	2
17.	"German Ideology,"I & III	KarlMarx	--do--	3
18	"Germany:Revolution and counter Revolution"	Fred, Angeles	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., London	1
19	"Handbook of Marxism, A"	Edited by E.Burns	Victor Gollance Ltd., London	3
20	"History of Anarchism in Russia"	E.Yaroslavsky	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., London	9
21	"Housing Question"	Fred, Angeles	---do---	7
22	"Hunger and work"	J.Kuesynski	---do---	3
23	"Imperialism the Highest Stages of Capitalism"	V.I.Lenin	Martin Lawrence Ltd., London	3
24	"Left wing communism"	V.I.Lenin	---do---	3
25	"Lenin":Vol. XIII		---do---	1
26	"Leninon Britain"		Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., London	2

Sl. No.	Title	Author	Published	No. of. copies
27	"Leninon Religion"		---do---	3
28	"Letters from A far"	V.I.Lenin	---do---	3
29	"Letters to Kugelmann"	Karl Marx	---do---	2
30	"Ludwig Feurbach"	Fred, Angeles	---do---	2
31	"Marx and theTrade Unions"	A.Lozovsky	---do---	2
32	"Marx-Engels Marxism"	V.I.Lenin	---do---	7
33	"Marxism and the National and colonial question"	J.Stalin	---do---	6
34	"Nature of capitalist crisis, The"	J.Strachey	Victor Gollancz, Ltd., London	1
35	"New Fashions in wage Theory"	J.Kuesynski	Lawrence & wishart, Ltd., London	3
36	"New writing" (Old Series) No.2-5	Edited by J.Lehman, etc.	---do---	4
37	"Novel and The People, The"	Ralph Fox	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., London	3
38	"October Revolution"	J.Stalin	---do---	2
39	"On capital, Essays & Reviews"	F.Engels	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., London	1
40	"On the Eveof October"	V.I.Lenin	Martin Lawrence, Ltd., London	3
41	"Paris Commune, The"	V.I.Lenin	Lawrence &Wishart, Ltd., London	3
42	"Peoples' Front in the United States, The"	Earl Browder	---do---	4
43	"Political Economy"	A.Leontiev	---do---	1
44	"Poverty of Philosophy"	Karl Marx.	---do---	1
45	"Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kantasky"	V.I.Lenin	Martin Lawrence, Ltd., London	3

Sl. No.	Title	Author	Published	No. of. copies
46	"Red Star Over China"	E.Snow	Victor Gollancz Ltd., London	1
47	"Report of Court Proceedings of Anti socialist Block of Rights & Trotskyites"		Lawrence & wishart, Ltd., London	4
48	"Revolution of 1905, The"	V.I.Lenin	---do---	3
49	"Russian Revolution"	Lenin & Stalin	---do---	5
50	"Selected works of Lenin"			Vol.I. 1
				Vol.II.5
				Vol.III.1
				Vol.IV.5
				Vol.V.3
			---do---	Vol.VI.1
				Vol.VII. 5
				Vol.VIII.1
				Vol.IX.1
				Vol.X.7
51	"short history of the Russian Revolution"	R.Page Arnot	---do---	Vol.I. 6 Vol.II.6
52	"Socialism and war"	V.I.Lenin	Lawrence &Wishart, Ltd., London.	3
53	"Son of the people"	Maurice Thorez	---do---	2
54	"Soviet policy and its critics"	J.R.Campbell	Victor Gollancz, Ltd., Londen.	3
55	"State and Revolution"	V.I.Lenin	Martin Lawrence, Ltd., London.	3
56	"Strategy of Tactics". (Readings in Leninism No.4)		Lawrence &Wishart, Ltd., London.	3
57	"Taskoftheproletariat in our Revolution, The"	V.I.Lenin	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., London.	3

Sl. No.	Title	Author	Published	No. of. copies
58	"Teachings of Karl Marx"	V.I.Lenin	Martin Lawrence, Ltd., London.	3
59	"Text book of Marxist philosophy, A"	Edited by John Lewis	Lawrence & Wishart, Ltd., London	3
60	"Theory and Practice of Socialism, The"	J.Strachey	---do---	2
61	"Theory of Proletarian Revolution" (Readings in Leninism No.2)		---do---	2
62	"Threatening catastrophe and how to Avoid it, The"	V.I.Lenin	Martin Lawrence, Ltd., London	3
63	"Two Tactics of Social Democratic evolution"	V.I.Lenin	---do---	3
64	"United Front, The"	G.Dimitroff	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., London.	
65	"War and the second International"	V.I.Lenin	Martin Lawrence, ltd., London.	3
66	"What are we to do?"	J.Strachey	Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., London	1
67	"What is Leninism?" (Readings in Leninism)			2
68	"What is to be Done?"	V.I.Lenin	Lawrence &Wishart, Ltd., London	3
69	"Will Bolsheviks Maintain Power?"	V.I.Lenin	---do---	3
70	"World Politics 1918-1936"	R.P.Dutt.	Victor Gollancz, Ltd., London	1

Russian Revolution,1905

A Telugu book entitled Russia Viplavamu 1905 (Russian Revolution, 1905), published by Viswa Shahidya Mala and printed at Srinivasa Press, Rajamundry, was a translation of a book in English, the entry of which into British India was already proscribed by the Governor General in Council. The Government of Madras considered that the Telugu book contained passages tending to incite armed rebellion and the commission of offences involving violence and that was expressly published

in this publication. Hence, the Governor of Madras proscribed the books under Section 19 of the Indian Press (Emergency powers) Act, 1931(XXIII of 1931), as it contained matter of the nature described in Section 4(1) of the said Act as amended by Section 16 of Criminal Law Amendment Act,1932 (Act XXIII of 1932).[24]

The articles contained in the two books were written during and after the period of revolution. The Government of Madras thought that such books would not fail to have things worthy of being learnt by the Indians who were engaged in the struggle for complete independence. Urging, in his characteristic passionate style, for the provision of a well–organised militia of the people's revolutionary party in any country, generally as a pre-requisite for the attainment of independence, V.I.Lenin wrote:- "The main support for Independence lies in the armed forces. The working class should wear arms forth with. It is when the workers are prepared to carry on strikes and revolution and show their readiness to fight, the (Government) military would be in a dilemma and the (Government) soldiers would realise the self-deception they had been practicing. The soldiers would at once turn against the very same devilish Government, the very same cruel demons, on whose behalf they had been tormenting unarmed workers, women and children and would join the side of the people. Whatever may be the result of the present Peters burg rebellion, one thing is certain; This would lead to a better disciplined and dynamic revolution…The immediate duty of all revolutionaries belonging to the various parties in the country is to arm the workers and the masses, rally together all the forces of training and organise them as regiments. We should all join together in the task and unanimously deal a blow to our common enemy; the Czar's Government.[25]At such a time as this, the workers' class should not forget it's ideal. Keeping in view its ultimate goal, which consists in wiping out from the world the present system of exploitation, the workers' class should work in Union with the Social Democratic Party, maintaining its own individuality during the struggle, in resisting the armies of the Czar who is the common enemy of all the masses and in pulverising the forts and jails of the oppressing foe, all of us should work together. The attention of workers' all over the world is riveted on the 'Russian Workers' class. Our workers have started with great courage the task of destroying the Emperor Czar. This is a mile stone of change in the world's history. This revolution (of 1905) will render the task of other nations in other countries easy... Long live Revolution! Long live the Revolutionary Workers' Class."[26]

Further, the book commenting on the Czar's Manifesto, it republished an article published in the French journal Temps on 30 October 1905, where Lenin commented

24. *Extract from a Telugu Book "Russian Revolution1905", Rajamundry, pp.1-2.*
25. *Ibid, pp.3-6.*
26. *Public, G.O.No.668, Confdl.,11th April 1938.*

the manifesto of Czar as following: "O! Bourgeois gentlemen! That is not it. The workers can never forget the power for fear of which the Czar yielded. It was by the application of force alone, by their power of organization, by their power of union, by their own boldness and courage that they were able to obtain a small bit of paper from the Czar, a shadow of independence called the "Manifesto". It is by that power alone that they will wrench real independence. The workers will not forget this point also…We must form the workers' Militia forthe defence of the rights of revolution. We should carry on agitation for the release of all prisoners. Our modes of work should thus be widened in scope…When the strike was widespread all over the country, the revolutionary workers hatched plots to keep the Army neutral and paralysed the same. What is required to bed one now is that the soldiers should be turned to the side of our people. All the ryiots should be roused up… They should be made to fight for their ryiots and also strengthen the fight for independence. The Ryiot Movement should be directed in such a gigantic manner that it will continue to fight in union with and on the side of the urban workers and remain revolutionary until real and complete independence is attained and the autocratic Government destroyed. This alone is the task before the Social Democratic Party at present".[27]

The Telugu book further referred the writings of Lenin on the relative importance of strikes and armed revolt. It quotes Lenin: "But we say that a peaceful strike by itself is not enough to secure success in the fight and that an armed fight must be carried on by the people fearlessly and mercilessly. We must tell this to the people. The time has come when it should be admitted openly and clearly that a mere political strike is not enough. A tremendous propaganda has to be carried on among the masses about the need for an armed fight. We must do our propaganda without giving room for any doubt, without resorting to any concealment and without mystifying the issue by deceitful words to the effect that there are certain stages to be gone through… The methods for the manufacture of bombs on a large scale should be taught to workers' regiments. Those who have military skills as well as the workers' battalions in our party must be helped with the supply of ammunitions, explosives, automatic revolvers and the like… The people should understand the fact that they have to carry on an armed and relentless fight with courage. They should have no fear of death. In that case, we are bound to score success. We must resist the enemy very strongly. Not self-protection but facing the enemy should be our sole inventive. Our only duty is to destroy our enemy ruthlessly". By making such appeals to the countrymen, Lenin consistently planned to have a major revolution against the Czar of Russia.[28]

Knowing the purpose of the publication of this Telugu book, the Government of Madras declared the publication forfeited under Section 4(1) of the Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act of 1931 as amended by Section 16 of Criminal Law

27. The Russian Revolution, 1905, 11th April 1938. 28. Ibid., pp.28-31.
28. Public, G.O.No.668, Confd l.,11th April 1938.

Amendment Act of 1931 (Act XX111 of 1931) on 11 April 1933.[29]

The Government of Madras issued a communiqué on 10 August 1938 on the circulation of the Communist pamphlets, published by the Communist Party of India, Madras entitled Rule of Anarchy in India: Communist's Aim and it reads: "As these show the extravagances to which the party is committed and disorders and chaos which it hopes to introduce into the country, the Government feels it is their duty to give publicity to these intentions, so that members of the public may be on their guard against becoming unwittingly involved in a movement, of which the methods and philosophy are wholly opposed to the culture and traditions of India".[30]

The Communiqué added; "One pamphlet which discusses the fundamental problems of the national bourgeoisie and the National Congress, which is described as being only a constitutional movement against certain dictatorial powers of the 'Imperial Bourgeoisie' and directed forward, keeping the masses politicaly ignorant, goes on to explain that the Constituent Assembly proposed by the 'national bourgeoisie' will not mean independence from the imperialism but the highest form of compromise and alliance between the imperial and national bourgeoisie for the joint exploitation of the Indian People". The Communist pamphlet termed the Congress Party as 'national bourgeoisie' and criticized the ruling Congress Party that it had lost its main agenda of getting independence and equalled their rule with the British Imperialism.[31]

The pamphlet further criticised the Congress for not involving in the national struggle and merely governing the people without serving for attaining the independence. It stated: "...has taken a dual course - the one of reformism and constitutionalism, the other of consistent revolutionary nationalism and mass action. The revolutionary vanguard of the toiling masses - the Communist Party of India - will develop the class struggle and declare the 'national revolutionary strike'."

The pamphlet declared the 'national revolutionary strike' would be the only remedy for the Indians and the pamphlet described the strike as follows:

Revolutionary strike: "The workers shall down tools; the intellectuals shall leave the desk; the students shall come out to the streets; the peasants shall refuse paying taxes and rents; the railways shall come to a stand still; the factories and mills and power stations shall close down; the military and armed forces shall waver and sway; the bulk of the soldiers and armed forces shall be won over by the revolutionary soldiers' committees to the side of the national struggle. Bonds of these shall fraternize with their striking brethren, disarm their own imperialist

29. *A Press Communique issued by Govt. of Madras on 10th October1938.*
30. *A Communist Pamphlet Rule of Anarchy in India: Communists Aim, Madras,1938.*
31. *Ibid., pp.2-3.*

bureaucratic commanders and together with the defence corps of the revolutionary people, form detachments of revolutionary militia".[32]

It also stated: "The national strike shall grow into a national revolution. The revolutionary peoples' militia, so far peaceful and defensive now, must take up the proud challenge of the imperialist militarist obliged to arm the people as best as possible. The revolutionary detachments must seize the local armouries and police stations; must mobilize an ever larger and ever stronger militia and finally must throw up local District, provincial and national military committees, operating under the corresponding committees of the revolutionary national front and lead on to a revolutionary war by the toilers' vanguard".[33]

The pamphlet stated further that the establishment of a Soviet Republic, having the closest of ties with the union of Soviet Republics, as the prime aim of the Communist Party of India. It read: "It is ofcourse clear that in such a development the practice of non-violence would find no place". In an another pamphlet entitled, Why do we oppose the creed of non-violence?', the CPI desired to discard 'non-violence' in this country and promoted the social democracy by having revolutionary ideology as the prime factor of C.P.I. The leaflet vehemently criticized the Congress Government in Madras under C.Rajagopalachari, Premier of Madras, who declared an order treating the Communist Party as the unlawful association.[34]

Das Capital of Karl Marx

The Communist publication such as Karl Marx's *Das Capital* or other similar classic works on Marxism e.g., *Marx and Engles* and *Communist Manifesto*, which are of universal and academic interest but certain editions published by Communist firms or edited by leading Communists whose intention was to encourage the growth of organised Communism were witnessed as objectionable, according to the General Communist Notification of 1932. Based on this notification, the Customs authorities of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta prohibited such publications in its entry into British India under the general ban.[35]

By realising the academic significance of the book *Das Capital* by Karl Marx, imported from Moscow, U.S.S.R., the India House, London, lifted the ban against *Das Capital* of Marx directly from Moscow. In the mean time, a London - based Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., had been importing Marx's *Das Capital* England edition to British India since 1936. On 7 September 1938, the Customs Authorities of Bombay portconfiscated a number of copies of Marx's *Das Capital* ordered by

32. *Home (Pol) Dept. File No.6/1938.*
33. *A Communist leaflet "Why do we oppose the creed of non-violence?, issued by the CPI, Madras,1938.*
34. *Home (Pol) File No.41/55/38.*
35. *S.B.Watson's letter to the Director of Nelson & Sons Ltd., London on 7th September1938.*

M/s.Tarapore walla of Bombay and the Customs authorities allowed them to be reshipped so that no loss had been incurred by M/s. Taraporewala of Bombay. Then Taraporewala Company had informed the Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., London that the Indian Customs Authorities had recently confiscated five copies of *Das Capital* of Karl Marx, an a bridged version with an introduction by John Strachey, an English Communist leader. In as much as other editions of this bookwere for sale in India, and in fact many copies of the same edition were sold in the last few years to Indian customers.[36]

S.B.Watson, in his letter dated 7 September 1938, the Director of the Nelson & Sons Ltd., London wrote to the Secretary of Publishing and Judicial Department, India Office, London, asking about the action taken against their publication. In addition, he requested the authorities to inform them whether this particular edition of *Das Capital* was banned and if so, for what reason. The book, they (the Indians) need hardly pointed out, was intended as a student's book and was circulated without any impediment in this country.[37]

S.B.Watson further writes: "…we shall be greatly obliged also if we might be informed about the censorship of books imported into British India; for example, the name of the censoring authority, the principles on which censorship is applied, and the procedure where by publishers are informed thereof ".

The Secretary of the Publishers' Association of Great Britain and Ireland sent an office letter dated 20 September 1938 to the Under Secretary of State for India, India Office, London requesting him to state the reason for the banning of *Das Capital* of Karl Marx, published by M/s. Nelson and Sons Ltd., London, one of the members of the said association and writes: "…under an arrangement referred to in the above mentioned letter, this association has hitherto been informed when the entry of certain books into India has been prohibited, but we have not as yet heard anything about Marx's *Das Capital*". [38]

J.G.Simms, Under Secretary of the Government of India, wrote a confidential letter dated 23 November 1938 to the Under Secretary of State for India, India Office, London, as he mentioned about the status of the Government regarding the ban on Karl Marx's *Das Capital*. In this letter, he said that there is no ban against Karl Marx's *Das Capital* as such no exception was taken to editions such as those that appeared in *'Every Man's Library'* published by J.M.Dent with an introduction by G.D.H.Cole. Further, he elaborated on the issue that editions published by Communist firms or edited by prominent Communists containing introductions or editorial comments,

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36. Home (Pol) File No.41/55/38.

37. J.G.Simms, Under Secretary to GOI, Confdl., letter on 23rd November 1938 to Under Secretary to Secretary of State for India, India Office, London.

38. Finance Department (Central Revenue) General NotificationNo.61,10th September 1932.

which were calculated to encourage the growth of organised Communism in India were considered as objectionable and were prohibited entering into India under the Finance Dept. (CentralRevenue) General Notification No.61 of 10 September, 1932.[39] At last, the five copies of Nelson's edition of Marx's *Das Capital*, ordered by M/s. Tarapore walla of Bombay was confiscated by the Bombay Customs, which were reshipped to the publishers at London, England.[40]

Confiscation of Lenin's Biography

Customs informed the Intelligence Bureau and the Home Department that the Madras Customs had confiscated, under Section 19 of Sea Customs Act, 28 copies each of Vol-I and II of Lenin's Selected Works published by Lawrence and Wishart Ltd., London consigned to M/s. Higginbothams, Mount Road, Madras on 28 April, 1945 at the Madras Port.[41]

It is interesting that these said titles were not proscribed by the Government of India untill 1945 under any specific notification and presumably the Madras Customs Authorities were acting under the General Notification with the consultation of Government authorities of Madras. The first volume of the work was in Russian language but published by the Lawrence and Wishart Ltd., in London. *'The Selected Works of Lenin'*, imported by the Higginbothams, Madras, which contained 58 volumes (1944 edition) and ten volumes of the *'Memoirs of Lenin'* written by N.Krupskaya, wife of V.I.Lenin issued by the same publisher from London. The first named book was prohibited under Section 19 of Sea Customs Act, and volumes were confiscated under Section 167 (8) of the said Act. As regards the second book, a reference was made by the Superintendent of Police, Special Branch C.I.D., Madras, and as per his advice communicated in his letter No.3379/Cdtd. 26 May,1945, these books were also confiscated.[42]

Against the orders of confiscation, the importers through their clearing agents M/s. Spencer and Co. Ltd., Madras had applied for permission to return the work of Lenin to the place of origin. The Madras Police was directed to take action against the importer and the clearing agent in Madras.[43]

The case regarding the second book entitled, *The Memoires of Lenin* was a different one. The content of the book was based on Lenin's involvements in the Communist movements in Russia. The author of the book V.Krupskaya was the wife of V.I.Lenin, the former head of the Russian Soviet Government and was a member

39. *Home (Pol) FileNo.41/55/1938.*
40. *Home (Pol) FileNo.41/03/1945.*
41. *The S.P of Police branch C.I.D letter No.3379/c, 26th May1945.*
42. *Home (Pol) FileNo.41/03/1945.*
43. *The Deputy Secretary to G.O.I D.O letter No.515/Cus/1/1945 to Collector of Customs Authority, Madras,1945.*

of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and of the Supreme Executive Council of U.S.S.R. All documents issued by or emanating from any person holding office in the Communist International or organisations affiliated to were banned in Finance Dept. (Central Revenue) Notification No.61 - Customs dtd. 10.09.1932 as the General Communist Notification, issued by the Government of India. This book was therefore prohibited entry into British India under the said notification. The General Communist Notification was superseded by Government of India, Finance Dept (Central Revenues) Notification No.3 dtd. 21 January 1943, and the Director of I.B had directed that the publications already circularised as objectionable under the General Communist Notification should continue to be with held under the new notification. Hence, the Director of I.B instructed the Customs authorities to with hold the publication under the General Communist Notification and it appeared to come with in the orbit of the Notification No.3 of Finance Dept. (C.B) the 21 January 1943.[44]

At last, the Deputy Secretary of Government of India in his letter D.A.No.515/ cus/I/45 directed the Collector of Customs, Madras to release the consignment of books to the consignees based at London.

Replacement of General Communist Notification

F.G. Crackwell, the Deputy Secretary of the Government of India, in his secret express letter dtd. 29 August, 1945 mentioned about the replacement of General Communist Notification of 1932 for the purpose of with holding objectionable Communist literature, being imported into British India. The Government had decided to abandon the system of with holding Communist publications under the later Notification No.3 dtd. 21 January, 1943 and if in future any book was to be with held from entering India it would be done by a specific Notification under Sea Customs Act.[45] Further, the only exception would be with respect to books, which offend against the Finance dept. (C.R) Notification No.5, camp dtd. 12 February, 1944, which bans the import of such literature, that officially deals with the infantry orguerrilla tactics, sabotage, or use of explosives and military weapons.

The Government of India further clarified that they should continue to withhold the Communist literature of this description under the general powers given by this notification, but each book, which contained the same content would be with held by this new notification. By this way, all local Government authorities were informed to take action against the Communist literature accordingly.

44. *Public G.O.No.693 (Gen), 5th March 1943.*
45. *Public G.O.No.2105, Confdl., 11th September1945.*



10

Education, Unemployment and Freedom Struggle in Colonial Madras

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Introduction

British colonialism accelerated propensities towards change in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century by introducing new measures in agrarian policy, administration and education in the Madras Presidency.[1] After the enactment of Macaulay Minute in 1835 and the establishment of the University of Madras in 1857, the educational system began to produce high school and university graduates at a rapidly increasing rate. It led to the development of professions like medicine, engineering, law, accounting, teaching and other services.

1. *A. Sarada Raju, Economic Conditions in the Madras Presidency, 1800-1850, Madras, 1941. pp. 12-27.The present state of Tamil Nadu was part of the Madras Presidency during British rule. The seat of the Government was at the Presidency town, Madras City, now known as Chennai.*

The changing educational structure ensured that caste did not remain a criterion of appointment, instead, it was replaced by the candidates' performance in educational qualification, examination and competition. Altogether, the prescribed educational standard and successful performance in competition became the first step to enter into Government services. Whereas, the size and scope of Government activity augmented rapidly and there was an even more marked spread out of the educated class. No longer was it so easy for an educated man to get an employment and make a fortune as a Government employee.2 By the 1930s, unemployment was evident among the educated class and a Madras Unemployment Committee was set up to investigate the issue. These growing economic and educational issues affected the political behaviours of native intelligentsia and played an important role in the freedom struggle in Madras. However, the historiography is silent in this regard.

The historiography has not turned its attention to the various challenges of educated class, like struggle for jobs, unemployment, and focus on passing competitive examination. Subsequently, how these issues shaped and affected the origins and development of nationalism in the state has not been given importance in historical writings.[3] Against this backdrop of neglect in studies of the educated community, Dharma Kumar, a noted Indian economic historian, correctly called services, a 'forgotten sector'.[4] Viewed in the context, the present article attempts to study the emergence of educated class, their challenges, problem of unemployment, and their role in the freedom struggle of the Madras Presidency.

The Growth of Education

The condition of education was not pessimistic in pre-British Madras. Long before the commencement of British rule, indigenous education was universal in the region, as in other parts of India. There were Hindu Monasteries, elementary and secondary schools and tols or colleges, which taught law, logic, astronomy, Vedas and Tamil classics. An enquiry conducted in 1822, during the Governorship of Thomas Munro, reported that there were 12,498 indigenous schools in the

2. *Robert Eric Frykenberg, 'Elite Formation in 19th Century South India: An Interpretative Analysis', paper presented at First International Tamil Conference – Seminar Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 18th - 23rd April 1966.*
3. *N. Rajendran, The Nationalist Movement in Tamil Nadu, 1905-1914: Agitational Politics and State Coercion, Madras, 1994;D.A. Washbrook, The Emergence of Provincial Politics: The Madras Presidency, 1870-1920, Cambridge, 2008; Saroja Sundararajan, March to Freedom in Madras Presidency, 1916-1947, Madras,1989; C.J. Fullera and Haripriya Narasimhan, Tamil Brahmans: The Making of a Middle-Class Caste, London, 2014; Christopher John Baker, The Politics of South India, 1920-1937, Cambridge, 2008.*
4. *Dharma Kumar, Colonialism, State and Property, Delhi, 1998.*

Presidency.[5] Amidst these circumstances, education in India under the East India Company rule was firstly ignored. Till the first decade of nineteenth century, there was no interest on the part of the Government to ascertain the situation of education in India. It was only after the Charter Act of 1813 that a state system of education was officially introduced when one lakh rupees was set apart for the improvement of literature and knowledge of sciences among inhabitants of the British territories.[6] Subsequently, after concurrence of the Government to Lord Macaulay's vigorous plea for spreading Western learning through the medium of English in 1835, the authorities in Madras interpreted it as prohibiting the use of vernacular languages as the medium of instruction in institutions maintained by the Government.

The first ever demand for higher education in colonial Madras was voiced forth in a public address on 11 November 1839, signed by 70,000 native inhabitants, to Lord John Elphinstone, the Governor of Madras. The address underlined the need for an English college in the city of Madras. It read in part as follows:

My Lord, we are the people of this County– inheriting this land for thousands of generations…We descend from the oldest native subjects of British Power in India,but…Where, amongst us, are the Collegiate Institutions which, founded for these generous subjects, adorn the two Sister Presidencies [i.e. Bengal and Bombay]…We have had no benefactors to commemorate.[7]

The address was described as the beginning of the understanding of the rights of the people. The request of the people was favourably received by the Governor and he evolved a plan in his educational Minute of 12th December 1839, for the establishment of a Central Collegiate Institution.[8] As a result of his plan, a High School was opened on 14th April 1841 in D'Monte House at Madras and a College in April 1853, which was named Presidency College in1855. When Charles Wood's Despatch of 1854 proposed the establishment of the University at Madras, the Presidency College premises was used as the first home of the University for a while.

The University of Madras was incorporated by an Act of the Legislative Council of India on 5 September 1857. This institution, like the sister University of institutions at Calcutta and Bombay, was framed on the model of the University of London, which was mainly an examining body. The colleges affiliated to the University

5. *H. Sharp, ed., Selections from Educational Records: Part I, 1781–1839, Calcutta, 1920, p. 3.*
6. *C.E. Trevelyan, On the Education of the People of India, London, 1838, p. 2.*
7. *The House of Commons, 'Minutes of Evidence', in Report from the Select Committee on East India Produce: Together with the Minutes of Evidence, an Appendix, and Index, July 21, 1840, par. 4137, 294.*
8. *Fundamental Rules', in Opening of the Madras University on the 14th April 1841, Madras, 1841, pp. 2-4.*

were scattered all over the Presidency. About the same time, the systematic effort of imparting scientific, technical and medical education began with the establishment of the College of Civil Engineering, Madras Medical College, and law classes at the Presidency College.[9] With these developments, Madras became the best-educated city in India, with one literate person in every four and produced the largest number of candidates for the university entrance examination (Table I). Between the year 1857 and 1884, the Madras University conferred more than 800 degrees in various courses.[10] Report of the Public Instruction, 1872-1873, mentioned that Tamils were perhaps more acute and eager after knowledge.[11] The landed class took a lot of interest in sending their wards to schools and colleges (Table II). Educated youths of lower castes like Kammalans (artisans), Vellalas (cultivators), and others had also started going to school.[12] In the higher and professional studies, Brahmins dominated but the presence of non-Brahmin caste was also growing (Table III and Table IV). These developments led to the emergence of an educated class in the Presidency.

The Career, Competition and Unemployment

The hopes and fears of the educated community was concerned with the chance of gaining employment in public services. A newspaper lamented, "What also can he [educated men] do but qualify himself, or, if he is [a] father, train his son for the public service or one of the learned professions?"[13] Kerala Patrika, a regional newspaper in Malayalam language, observed that the educated men were mad after Government employment and disliked taking up occupations such as trade, agriculture and others.[14] In order to become a public servant, the successful performance in educational qualification and competition was the laid criteria. After the Charter Act of 1853, open competition for appointment in civil services started instead of traditional method of recruitment through patronage. Emphasising the importance of competition, Trevelyan argued in his Competition Wallah that "we must not close our eyes to the undoubted advantages of competition…Why not

9. *University of Madras, History of Higher Education in South India: University of Madras, 1857-1957, Vol. II, Madras, 1957.*
10. *Report on Public Instruction in the Madras Presidency, for 1877-1878, Madras, 1878, p. 6.*
11. *Report on Public Instruction in the Madras Presidency, for 1872-1873, Madras, 1874, p. 29.*
12. *Somerset Playne, Southern India: Its History, People, Commerce, and Industrial Resources, London, 1914-1915, pp. 628-29. See, E. Thursotn and K. Ranghachari, Castes and Tribes of Southern India, Vol. VII, Madras, 1909, p. 373.*
13. *Indian Mirror, 13 February 1878; Suresh Chandra Ghosh, 'The Genesis of Curzon's University Reform: 1899-1905', Minerva, Vol. 26, No. 4, December 1988, pp. 463-492.*
14. *Kerala Patrika, 20th January 1894, in Report on Native Papers Examined by the Translators to the Government of Madras for the Fortnight Ending the 31st January 1894, Madras, 1894, pp. 18-19. The paper reported the fact that even vakils earning five or six hundred Rupees per month were willing to take up appointments as Munsif on Rs. 200 per month was itself a clear proof that the educated class were looking for Government appointment.*



appoint men by open competition".[15] A scheme of examination for all Government appointments in the Presidency above the grade of peon was promulgated in March 1858.[16] By the end of nineteenth century, from the post of village officials (headmen, karnam) to constables to clerks, competitive examinations were prescribed.[17] In these changing circumstances, caste no longer remained a criteria of appointment in Government Services. However, the idea of competition was also opposed by some social groups.

Muslim minorities and lower castes felt that the dominant social groups would only succeed in competitive examination. An English weekly, Mahomedan Observer, noted, "to insist upon open competition as the only mode of selection for State employments means the absolute exclusion of the Mahomedans from the public service"[18] The Vritanta Patrika in its issue of 11 January 1894, reported that a meeting

15. *G.O. Trevelyan, The Competition Wallah, London, 1864, pp. 13-15.*
16. *C.D. Maclean, Standing Information Regarding the Official Administration of the Madras Presidency in Each Department: In Illustration of the Yearly Administration Reports, Madras, 1877, p. 391.*
17. *Washbrook, The Emergence of Provincial,pp.154-155; Dharma Kumar, 'Agrarian Relations: South India', in Dharma Kumar, ed., The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. II: c. 1757-2003, New Delhi, 2010, p.232. David Arnold, 'Bureaucratic Recruitment and Subordination in Colonial India: The Madras Constabulary, 1885-1947', in RanajitGuha, ed., Subaltern Studies IV: Writings on South Asian History and Society, New Delhi, 2013, p.14*
18. *'The Mahomedans and the Indian National Congress', Voice of India, Vol. V, No. I, January*

of Pariahs (oppressed caste people) was held in Madras, which resolved that the holding of Indian Civil Service examination in India was undesirable, as it would be prejudicial to the interests of the majority of people.[19] Subsequently, *Paraiyan*, a Tamil weekly published from the city of Madras, in its issue published on 22 September 1894 refereed, "[if] the Civil Service Examination be held in India, Brahmins alone would prove to be successful candidates and fill high offices".[20] Amidst these debates and oppositions, the prescribed educational standard and successful performance in competition remained the first step to enter into public services. Whereas, the size and scope of Government activity augmented rapidly, there was an even more marked spread out of private and professional enterprise. No longer it remained easy for an educated man to get an employment and make fortune as a Government Servant. Amidst the growing cases of problem in getting employment, a Madras Unemployment Committee was set up under the Chairmanship of the Commissioner of Labour, G.F. Paddision, in 1926. The Committee reported the existence of serious unemployment among the educated middle class.

When the Superintending Engineer of Mettur Irrigation Project inserted a test advertisement in the newspapers for a clerk's post carrying a salary of Rs. 35/- per month, 666 applications were received; of these, 30 were from graduates, 61 from intermediates, 194 came from S.S.L.Cs (Secondary School Leaving Certificate), and 381 from those not declared eligible for a university course.[21] On an average not more than 3% of educated candidates were employed.[22] In fact, B.A. passed students were employed as stokers on an engine and as waiters in a refreshment room.[23] These were an indication that the darkening clouds were forming on the career of educated class,which was further affected by the retrenchment during the great Depression in 1930s.[24]

The menace of unemployment also affected professional graduates. Arthur Davies, the Principal of the Madras Law College highlighted that inspite of the fact that a young man after taking the B.A. degree was required to study hard for at least two years in order to become a lawyer, 40% of the graduates of the Madras University joined the Law College every year. Twenty per cent of the candidates joined the Law College because they had nothing else to do, 30% preferred Government Service,

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1887, p. 20.

19. *VrittantaPatrika, 11th January 1894.*
20. *D. Sadasivan, The Growth of Public Opinion in Madras Presidency, 1858-1909, Madras, 1974, p. 79.*
21. *A Report on the Question of Unemployment among the Educated Middle Classes, Madras, 1927, p. 4.*
22. *Report of the Unemployment Committee, 1926-27, Evidence, Vol. II, Madras, 1927, p. 123.*
23. *Department of Industries and Labour, Labour, File No. L-1373, Collection No. 14, Sl. No. 66, 1927, National Archives of India, New Delhi (hereafter NAI).*
24. *K.A. Manikumar, A Colonial Economy in the Great Depression: Madras, 1929-1937, Chennai, 2003.*

and 40% joined for practising at the Bar.[25] A student of law course told the Principal:

> I am not very much interested in law... I am very much interested in pedagogism. But as I could not get any teacher's post so that... I joined the Law College so that waste of another year... can be avoided.[26]

Subsequently, the bar was overcrowded and as many as 500 vakils from the mufassal and the Madras City applied for the post of bench clerk in the High Court.[27] The average number of vacancies in Government Service for men with medical degrees was only fifteen.[28] Arthur Paul, a Senior Lecturer at A.E.L.M. College reported that several candidates with Bachelor of Medicine and Master in Surgery (M.B.C.M.) degree, having no employment, were working at the Madras General Hospital as unpaid probationers[29]. Unlike the law and medicine profession, engineering graduates were solely dependent on the Government for their employment. During 1921 and 1926, the number of engineers turned out by the institute was 547, but only 115 appointments were made by the Public Works Department.[30]

For the very first time, an attempt was made in 1931 Census to collect statistics of the educated unemployed. As per the Census calculation the number of educated unemployed in the Presidency was 2463, excluding native States.[31] However, the collected data was not complete because many forms were issued to the people to fill in and very few were filled and returned to the enumerators.[32] However, the data manifested some important indication. The equal predominance of Brahmins and Non-Brahmin Hindus was quite noteworthy. Out of the 2,463 unemployed, 1,171 were Brahmins, 1,095 other Hindus (Non-Brahmins), 76 Muslims, 13 Anglo-Indians, 9 depressed classes, and 99 from other classes.[33] As far as the regional distribution was concerned, unemployed were thoroughly spread out, but their main concentration

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25. *Department of Industries and Labour, Labour, File No. L-1373, Collection No. 14, Sl. No. 66, 1927, NAI.*
26. *Report of the Unemployment Committee, 1926-1927, Evidence, Vol. III, Madras, 1927, pp. 483-484.*
27. *A Report on the Question of Unemployment among the Educated Middle Classes, Madras, 1927, pp. 8-9.*
28. *Ibid.,p. 9. See also Gautam Chandra, 'Medical Profession and Unemployment in Colonial Madras (1835–1930)', Indian Journal of History of Science. Vol. 57, 2022, pp. 91–101. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43539-022-00037-1*
29. *Report of the Unemployment Committee, 1926-27, Vol. III, p. 423.*
30. *Department of Industries and Labour, Labour, File No. L-1373, Collection No. 14, Sl. No. 66, 1927, NAI.*
31. *Census of India, 1931: Madras, Vol. XIV, Part I, Madras, 1932, p. 261.*
32. *Home Department, Public, File No. 45/27/38, 1938, NAI.*
33. *Census of India, 1931: Madras, Vol. XIV, Part I, pp. 261-62.*

was in Madras (109 Brahmins and 141 other Hindus) and Tanjore (214 Brahmins and 110 other Hindus).[34] The absence of industry, dependence on agriculture, racial discrimination, retrenchment measures and economic depression were considered as the main reasons behind unemployment.

Table I

Number of Candidates appeared in University Entrance Examinations (1864-1885)

Presidency	Entrance		Total Number of Students
	Passed	Failed	
Bengal	16,639	21,151	37,790
Bombay	7,196	15,209	22,405
Madras	18,390	36,356	54,746

Source: *Anil Seal, The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century,* Cambridge, 1968, p.18.

Table II

Family Background of Students

Year	Percentage of College Students Whose Fathers/Guardians are:					
	Officials	Petty officials	Traders	Landlords	Artisans	Labourers
1895-1896	33.8	5.1	5.6	46.9	0.4	0.1
1916-1917	35.2	7.6	7.7	42.0	0.3	0.1
1926-1927	31.4	11.5	9.2	39.6	0.7	0.9

Source: *Baker, The Politics of South India,* p. 48.

Table III

Education and Community

		1910-1911	1920-1921	1930-1931
Arts colleges	Total Students	3,741	7,580	12,419
	% Brahman %	8.5	64.2	50.5
	Non-Brahman	20.1	21.9	33.3
	% Muslim %	1.6	1.8	3.4
	Christian	9.9	10.8	11.2

34. Ibid.

Professional Colleges	Total Students	890	1,784	1,966
	% Brahman %	67.2	69.6	47.8
	Non-Brahman	18.5	19.5	33.7
	% Muslim %	1.0	1.9	3.8
	Christian	8.1	7.6	12.5
Secondary Schools	Total Students	152,413	161,796	198,074
	% Brahman %	34.3	37.8	29.5
	Non-Brahman	42.4	45.1	48.0
	% Muslim %	5.5	5.1	6.0
	Christian	13.8	10.8	12.3
Primary Schools	Total Students	922,911	1,492,666	2,638,108
	% Brahman %	9.0	7.6	5.8
	Non-Brahman	72.9	64.5	63.5
	% Muslim %	9.7	10.0	10.6
	Christian	7.6	7.6	7.2

Source: Ibid., p. 46.

Table IV

Different Communities that Passed in the Examinations of the University of Madras up to 1925

Class of graduates	Brahmans	Non-Brahman Hindus	Christians	Muhammadans
Bachelor of Arts	14,478	4,852	2,146	293
Master of Arts	669	122	85	8
Licentiate in Teaching	1,960	291	387	19
Bachelor of Laws	4,803	1,115	253	47
Medical	422	291	164	13
Engineering	216	31	29	1

Source: Report of the Unemployment Committee, 1926-1927, Evidence, Vol. III, Madras, 1927, p. 739.

Struggle for Job and the Origins of Nationalism

The problem of unemployment and other related issues of educated class precipitated a serious economic crisis in the region and affected the political behaviours of the Government and the native intelligentsia. One of the earliest modern political organisations of the Presidency, the Madras Native Association, founded in July 1852 by Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty, P.Somasundaram Chettiar and others, took up the question of native people's proper share in the administration of country

and presented the various grievances before the British Parliament. Subsequently, another association, the Madras Mahajan Sabha, formed in 1884 by G.Subramania Iyer, a graduate of Madras University, headmaster of a native school at Triplicane and the founder of The Hindu newspaper, P.Ananda Charlu, avakil of the High Court and others, became the vehicle of opinion of native intelligentsia. Through these associations, aspirations of the rising educated class found expression. Madras Mahajan Sabha directed its attack against the exclusion of natives from the Indian Civil Service and submitted an exhaustive memorial on 4 November 1884 for increasing the age of Civil Services, which was 19 at that time, and for examination being conducted simultaneously in England and India.[35] At the same time, the third session of the Indian National Congress held at Madras, attended by Madras leaders like T.Madhav Rao, S.Subramania Ayar and P. Sundaram Chetty, passed a series of resolutions stressing the necessity of reviving indigenous industries, introduction of technical education and throwing open of higher-grade posts to Indians.[36] Various student associations were also formed to discuss their problems. The Student's Literary Association was formed at Coimbatore in 1886 to encourage the study and discussion of public questions by students.[37] A Medical Students' Association was started on 4 December 1885. 52 students enrolled themselves immediately and published a journal, Students' Journal.[38] In the years following the birth of these associations and the raising pertinent questions regarding the career of educated class, it began to be thought in the imperial circle that the decision to promote English education became a "story of grave political miscalculation".[39]

The demand for Indianisation of services and employment for Indians continued and reached a new height during the Swadeshi Movement, which had begun after the partition of Bengal in 1905. The agitation against the partition evoked response in the Presidency from students' community. Apart from Students' Literary Association of Coimbatore, newly formed association of educated class like Young Men's Hindu Association of Salem, formed in 1903 in Salem and Nellore Progressive Union, established in 1907, encouraged the Swadeshi Movement and raised the issue of unemployment and difficulty in getting a job. A group of three thousand students attended the meeting at Madras Beach, presided by G.Subramania Iyer. Students attended daily meetings at the Moore Market in the Madras city in large numbers and hooted at European passers-by with shouts of Bande Mataram. They accompanied

35. *G.O. No. 2357 (Mis.),Public Department, 4th November 1884, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai (hereafter TNA).*
36. *B.S. Baliga, Studies in Madras Administration, Vol. I, Madras, 1960, p. 4.*
37. *V. Sankaran Nair, Role of Students in Freedom Movement: With a Special Reference to Madras Presidency, New Delhi, 1990, p. 29.*
38. *Home Department, Medical, Proceedings, No. 81, Part B, November 1893, NAI.*
39. *Sir Alfred C. Lyall, 'Introduction' in Valentine Chirols, Indian Unrest, London, 1910, p. XIII.*

Bipin Chandra Pal in his visit from Vizagapatam to Madras.[40] Students received thanks from the Indian National Congress at Lahore session, 1909, for their participation as volunteers.[41]

The general attitude of the Government was hostile against the nationalist activity of the educated class. The Madras University, at a special meeting of the Senate held on 2 August 1907, decided to punish the students for misconduct in any Government college or hostel by their exclusion from university examination and deprivation of scholarship.[42] In fact, Hari Sarvothama Rao, M.A., who delivered public address before Bipin Chandra Pal at the time of his visit in Rajhamundry on 19 April 1907, was debarred from employment as a teacher in any Government or aided school or college. Another student Ramchandra Rao was debarred from appearing for B.A. degree examinations and was warned that he would not be readmitted into any Government or aided college.[43]

During the Home Rule League movement led by Annie Besant, it was declared that so long as the swaraj (self-rule) was not attained, all crying problems like the poverty of masses, unemployment, the decay of industries and so forth would remain unsolved.[44] She condemned the existing educational system as being backward, reactionary, and wrote in New India that the ill treatment of students amid other various reasons forced her into the political work.[45] In 1914, Besant founded the Young Men's Indian Association to appeal to the 3,000 students community of Madras city.[46] This association acted as a centre for the dissemination of Home Rule ideas in the city. Unsuccessful students took part in Home Rule League and were attracted by the anti-administration stance of League. Annie Besant vehemently denounced the Government and the University at a crowded meeting convened to protest against the failure of 2,800 youth at the SSLC and Intermediate examinations.[47]

Government in an order prohibited students from attending all public meetings.[48] At the Madras Christian College and the Presidency College, students were permitted to read only newspapers and contents 'expunged' by the Principal.[49] After the non-co-operation Movement and the formation of Justice Ministry in Madras, educated

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40. Nair, Role of Students in Freedom Movement, pp. 26-31, 35.
41. A. M. Zaidi, INC: The Glorious Tradition, 1885–1920, Vol. I, New Delhi, 1987, p. 306.
42. Nair, Role of Students in Freedom Movement, p. 35.
43. Ibid., p. 42; G.O. No. 385, Education Department, 18 June 1907, TNA.
44. Baliga, Studies in Madras Administration, Vol. I, p. 6.
45. New India, 4th April 1917.
46. Washbrook, The Emergence of Provincial Politics, 290.
47. New India, 10th July 1915.
48. G.O. No. 559, Education Department, 1st May 1917,
49. Nair, Role of Students in Freedom Movement, pp. 9-10.

class, their issues and there participation in the freedom struggle reached a new height.

Educated Class, Unemployment and the Freedom Struggle

The arrival of Mahatma Gandhi on the all-India stage in 1920s and the explosion of Non-Co-operation agitation equipped the provincial Congress at Madras with new aims, policies and leaders. C.Rajagopalachari along with Doctor P.Varadarajulu Naidu, the banker T. Adinarayana Chetty, the businessman and ex-chairman of Erode Municipality V.Ramaswami Naicker and the publicist T.V.Kalyanasundara Mudaliar took control of the newly established Tamil Nadu Provincial Congress. They came together to organise the campaigns of non-co-operation.[50] At the time of non-co-operation Movement, Congress at its special Calcutta session in September 1920 and Nagpur session in December 1920, appealed for the gradual withdrawal of Indians from Government Service, British educational institutes, boycott of court and the refusal on the part of military, clerical, and labouring class to offer themselves as recruits for services.[51] During the course of non-co-operation Movement, educated class formed their organisations and took part in various political activities.

A League for Youth was formed by S.Ramanathan, V.Raghavachari, K.Santhanam, P.Govinda Menon and others in 1919, after a discussion with Gandhi in Madras. The League supported the Gandhian programme of boycott of foreign goods and British institutions. The students of Pachaiyappa College, Madras Christian College, and other institutes held a meeting with C.Rajagopalachari and extended their support to Non-Co-operation movement.[52] It was reported that the number of students in colleges was reduced from 52,482 in 1919-1920 to 45,933 in 1921-1922; and in secondary schools, from 12,81,810 to 12,39,524. Meanwhile, 92 national institutions were established with a total enrolment of 5,072 candidates.[53] Quami Report of 26 January 1921 wrote that it was unseemly for the children of Islam to be desirous of taking B.A. or M.A. degrees to become vakils or barristers.[54] Khazi Abdul Rahman, a clerk in the Port Trust and a Khilafat worker was found distributing pamphlets and invoking Muslim sepoys and police officers to give up Government Services. Educated classed supported the non-co-operation movement.

Indian National Congress created a band of volunteers, consisting of students, unemployed men, and others to carry out boycott programmes and flags procession on Rs. 30/- per month.[55] M.Parthasaradhy, a resident of Godugupet, Masulipatam in his evidence to the Madras Unemployment Committee wrote:

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50. Baker, The Politics of South India, pp. 247-250
51. A. M. Zaidi, INC: The Glorious Tradition, Vol. I, pp. 450-457.
52. New India, 25th November 1920.
53. Nair, Role of Students in Freedom Movement, p. 84.
54. Ibid., p. 75.
55. Ibid., pp. 82-83



The huge and unparalleled success although for a time of the non-co-operation movement, which from the very beginning to the last closing chapter of its ephemeral life, had been in the hands of the misguided student, the unemployed educated gentry, the briefless vakil and the noisy agitator, the perpetual and constant agitation of the gazetted and non-gazetted officers for increase of their salaries and pay- all these, present to our glance at a moment the existence of the unemployment problem.[56]

Very much parallel to the period between the Home Rule and Non-Co-operation Movement, Justice Party emerged in 1916 under the leadership of weaving magnate P.T.Chetty, Doctor T.M.Nair, and estate-holders like the rajas of Pithapuram, Ramnad, Bobbili, and Kalahasti to oppose Brahmin domination in both the public services and political associations in the Madras Presidency.[57] The Party was awarded the first Ministership in 1921 under the new 'dyarchy' constitution and it retained control over the ministry for the whole of the dyarchy period except for a few months. During one of the debates in the Madras Legislative Council, held on 25 August 1925, it was highlighted and accepted by the Justice Party that the question of unemployment had affected all social groups - Brahmins, Non-Brahmins, other Hindus and Muslims.[58]

56. *Report of the Unemployment Committee, Vol. III, p. 371.*
57. *The Hindu, 20th December 1916.*
58. *G.O. No. 330 (Mis.), Law (General), 4th February 1926, TNA.*

By the mid of the third decade of the twentieth century, unemployment, one of the important issues of educated community, became a part of discussion on political forum. Native members brought the question of unemployment in Madras Legislative Council and Imperial Assembly. R.Veerian in the Council on 25 August 1925 said:

> There is so much unrest in this country because this unemployment question stands at the top…don't we see that there is danger in not providing employment to those who are not employed…in olden days, kings were able to provide work for unemployed men … now it's the duty of the State to come forward to solve this problem.[59]

Another Member of Council, C. Gopala Menon, said, "hundreds of youth of that stamp are scattered all over the country in a state of desperation and preparedness to drift into revolutionary politics".[60] Further, the legislatures opposed the Constitution of the Madras Retrenchment Committee, 1922-1923.[61] Pointing at the Government's double stand, Yuvabharatam, a native newspaper, reported that at one side the Government was carrying retrenchment and on the another side it has appointed a Royal Commission on the Services to attend the cry of English officers for more pay.[62] Amidst the retrenchment measures, S.V.Ramamurti, the Collector of Ramnad, delivered a lecture on 'Unemployment' at the Young Men's Christian Association, Madurai on 30 July 1926.[63] During the Depression days in the 1930s, the solution to the problem of educated unemployment was linked with getting swaraj/independence. As A.Rangaswami Iyengar told in the Imperial Assembly that unemployment:

> is a perpetual and vital problem... so long as we do not get Swaraj, so long… this country is going to be under the domination... there will be no real or lasting solution to this problem.[64]

At the Madras session of Indian National Congress, 1927, a conference of educated unemployed was held and several resolutions were passed.[65] The students and unemployed educated were drawn to the nationalist politics. Government of India wrote a letter to the Chief Secretary of Madras on 24 June 1929 that nationalist leaders supported youth movements and volunteer organisations were getting successful in

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59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*
61. *Proceedings of the Madras Legislative Council, Vol. XXIV, Madras, 1925, p. 715.*
62. *Yuvabharatam, Chittur, 14th October 1923, in Report on English Papers Examined by the Criminal Investigation Department, Madras, and on Vernacular Papers Examined by the Translators to the Government of Madras for the Week Ending 18th October 1923, No. 43, 1923, p. 1329.*
63. *Report of the Unemployment Committee, Vol. III, Madras, 1927, p. 596.*
64. *Legislative Department, Assembly, File No. 19-XXVIII/26 A.C., Sl. No. 1-2, 1926, NAI.*
65. *Report of the Unemployment Enquiry Committee, Travancore, 1928, p. 21.*

taking the support of educated middle class, especially the literate unemployed.[66] Meanwhile, the political activities also got momentum with the beginning of Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930.

The Civil Disobedience Movement started in the Presidency with C.Rajagopalachari led salt satyagraha at Vedaranyam in the south of Kaveri delta. The provincial Congress showed that it was more capable, than ever before, of harnessing the idealism of students and other young workers to give organisation and weight to its show of strength.[67] During the period 1929-1930, 23 students from the Presidency College and Pachaiyappas College left the college to take part in the Civil Disobedience Movement.[68] Students of Madras Law College, Anantpur College and from various parts of Presidency- Mangalore, Trichinopoly, Madurai, Trichy and Triplicane took part in flag processions, demonstrations, strikes and various related activities. Several Youth Leagues were formed at Madurai, Malabar, Kistna and at other places. The participation of students and volunteers marked this movement.

Government understood the role of unemployed paid volunteers in the political movements. As the Census Commissioner, 1931, noted that the Congress at the time of Census employed and paid as many volunteers, who otherwise had been unemployed.[69] Nevertheless, the students made it clear that they were not job hunters, but freedom fighters.[70] H.D. Raja, a Member of the All-India Congress Committee, opined that organising the masses under the intellectual leadership of youth was essential for the achievement of independence. In a famous handbill entitled Inquilab Zindabad, he asked the educated class:

> what shall it profit you to get your empty degrees and your mess of pottage if the million starve and your motherland continues in bondage? Who lives if India dies? Who dies if India lives?[71]

Further, Congress at its Karachi session in 1931 passed a Resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Programmes. The resolution laid down that the state should provide protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment.[72] The same issue became the part of the election manifesto of party in 1936. At the 38 session of Tamil Nadu Political Conference, Vellore, on 6 December 1936, Vedaratnam Pillai while giving Presidential address

66. *Nair, Role of Students in Freedom Movement, New Delhi, 1990, p. 95.*
67. *Baker, The Politics of South India, 1920-1937 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 212.*
68. *Nair, Role of Students in Freedom Movement, p. 101.*
69. *Home Department, Public, File No. 45/27/38, 1938, NAI.*
70. *Nair, Role of Students in Freedom Movement, p. 128.*
71. *Ibid.,pp. 98, 100.*
72. *National Planning Committee: Report of Sub-Committee on Labour, Bombay, 1947, p. 23.*

criticised the Government and sighted that India was becoming poorer and unemployment was increasing.[73] The unemployment had become an electoral issue in provincial election of 1937. People of Madras thanked Jawaharlal Nehru for his campaign against poverty and unemployment.[74] Finally, Congress party formed the ministry under the leadership of C.Rajagopalachari. Amidst the Second World War, the Quit India resolution was passed in 1942, and the educated class took active participation in this spontaneous movement. Gandhiji's rousing call to the educated class received wider support.

A Tamil book, Gandhi Malar Manavarukku, by V.Ramaswami and A.L.Natarajan, who represented Gandhi's views on educated class, their issues and problems exerted great influence. The arrest of Gandhi and other national leaders further agitated the educated community. H.C.Papworth, the Principal of the Presidency College discussed about the students strike at the college.[75] Students of Madras Medical College emptied their hostels. Violent methods advocated by the Congress Socialists assumed greater proportion in the Presidency towns. Office of the Deputy Collector of Erode, Municipal School at Hospet, Post boxes at Trichinopoly and Madras were set on fire. On 11 August 1942, several students died at Madurai because of police repression. After the Quit India Movement, the reports of the sub-committees of Jawaharlal Nehru - led National Planning Committee was published and promised to look after the problems of the educated class, especially of unemployment.[76] Learned men like Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar, N.Gopalaswamy Ayyangar, and T.T.Krishnamachari took part in the framing of Indian Constitution. In these ways, educated class actively participated in the freedom struggle.

73. *N.N. Mitra, ed., The Indian Annual Register: An Annual Digest of Public Affairs of India,Vol. II, July-December 1936, p. 306.*
74. *Baliga, Studies in Madras Administration, Vol. I, 1960, p. 18.*
75. *Nair, pp. 143-170*
76. *National Planning Committee: Report of Sub-Committee on Labour, Bombay, 1947.*

Conclusion

British rule in India brought about momentous transformation during which the centuries old socioeconomic relationships and institutions were transformed. With the establishment of University of Madras and other professional educational institutes of law, medicine and engineering, the systematic development of education began by the later part of nineteenth century and 'Madras enjoyed the consolations of Academy'.[77] The emerging educated class appeared in competitive examination for getting employment in the public service. However, they faced the problem of unemployment, which was reflected in the report of the Madras Unemployment Committee, 1927. Subsequently, the issues pertaining to the educated class like increasing focus on competition, struggle for job, retrenchment and unemployment became part of the freedom struggle.

The British Government tried to resist the demand of educated class and their participation in nationalist struggle. The poverty of India was matched by the poverty of its Government. Lord Pentland, the Governor of Madras Presidency, told Edwin Montague, the Secretary of State in 1917, "we ought to play with them [Indians], humour them in politics and discuss with them industrial development, education and social reform; but there is no necessary for doing anything".[78] The perpetual apathy of colonial power forced the educated class to take active part in freedom struggle.

The politics of province, which revolved around the Madras Mahajan Sabha, Annie Besant - led Home Rule movement, Justice Party's demands Indian National Congress - escorted movements and educated class that also took active part from the beginning of nationalism in the late nineteenth century to Quit India movement. Nationalist leaders raised the issues of Indianisation of services and the problem of unemployment among educated class in legislature, in political movements and in election manifesto and they tried to create a public opinion over it. At the same time, educated class also made it clear that they were not job hunters, but freedom fighters.

77. *Seal, The Emergence of Indian Nationalismp. 103.*
78. *Manikumar, A Colonial Economy in the Great Depression, p. 29.*



11

Student Movements and Freedom Struggle - I

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"Freedom of mind is the real freedom. A person whose mind is not free though he may not be in chains, is a slave, not a free man. One whose mind is not free, though he may not be in prison, is a prisoner and not a free man. One whose mind is not free though alive, is no better than dead. Freedom of mind is the proof of one's existence."

- Dr. B.R.Ambedkar

Introduction

India's freedom fighters went through a hard struggle to attain independence for the country from the clutches of the British. It has been 75 years that the historic date 15th August 1947, has become significant to Indians as India became free and independent on that date. The freedom struggle has been a culmination of multifarious activities, movements as well as struggles that have been targeted towards the British by different people for different reasons. This most awaited independence was successfully achieved through the joint efforts of several freedom fighters. The freedom movement happened all over the nation in different dimensions. Many have sacrificed their belongings and lives in order to attain Indian independence. This mass movement involved people of all age groups from every corner of the nation who were patriotic and who had a common enemy, the British. India was able to attain freedom because of the untiring struggle of relentless patriots and leaders who dedicated themselves entirely for the good of the nation.

Indian Nationalism

Indian Nationalism has been stimulated after the tyranny of the British, exploitation of the economy, as well as their interference in various internal aspects of India. Madras Presidency played a significant role in the freedom struggle. The heroes both popular and unsung have been involved in a meticulous fight to attain independence. Madras Presidency has been a pioneer in several aspects all along. The decline of Mughal rule in India disintegrated India into numerous princely States[1]. It has been analysed that the British in a way were a significant reason for the decline of the Mughal Empire. The British had sustained their rule by playing against the native rulers and supporting few others[2]. They established a strong empire that was unshakable and that kept growing strong. Indians faced exploitation and extreme dissatisfaction at different areas. Educated Indians realised that the British always prioritised their benefits and considered India as a sheer market. This motivated Indians towards the fight for independence. The geography of Tamil Nadu was earlier larger comprising territories of Andhra, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, in contrast to the current scenario. During British rule it was called Madras Presidency after independence it was called the Madras State. The State was renamed as Tamil Nadu in 1969[3], while its capital city Madras was renamed as Chennai in 1996[4]. The role of students of Tamil Nadu in the freedom struggle comprises various patriotic activities of the student body, schools and colleges, in Madras Province. Before

1. *Jadhunath Sarkar, Fall of the Mughal empire: 1739- 1754, Volume -1, (Bombay, 1972), p. 24.*
2. *Waltraud Ernst, Biswamoy Pati, India's Princely States: People, Princes and Colonialism, (New York, 2007), p. 131.*
3. *G.O. MS. No. 1313 dated 14.01.1969.*
4. *Alternative of Name Act, 1996.*

getting into the subject matter of the student's participation in the freedom struggle, the condition of education in Madras Presidency has to be analysed, to have a better understanding of the predicament of students.

Condition of Education

Education of women in the Madras Presidency could be compared favourably with the levels prevalent in the nation[5]. The increase in the demand for education and the related growth in education and administration were clearly noticable. There was a mass demand for skill that made it necessary for the larger political system to imbibe enthusiastic men from among farmers and business class into the English educational institutions[6]. The expenditure on education was on the higher end and more admissions to schools were noticed by 1931. It has been observed that 21.1% of men in the Madras province were educated in the native and vernacular languages while there were 2.2% were educated in English[7]. People of the upper class, and aristocrats, were mostly admitted to the schools. Apart from Madras, most of the schools and colleges were at Kumbakonam and Tanjore. They later went further in their studies in law and the administration[8]. In order to meet the expenses of education, new taxes were introduced and the existing ones were increased. With the funds that were generated, new educational institutions and nursing homes, and new schools were constructed.[9]

The Freedom Struggle

The onset of the struggle for freedom began with full vigour in the later part of the nineteenth century. The struggle was a tough one involving all stake holders of the nation, which ultimately led to independence in 1947. Non - resistance to British colonialism was the trigger among Indians who were united in nationalism and patriotism. The mutinies that happened in the country at different places were an expression of hatred and opposition of the Indians against the British. The tremendous impact of the British rule that interfered in the Indian religion, society, culture and implicated its economy multifariously. The mass movements both major and minor were clearly targeted at the British and this drove them to make hasty rules, which worsened the Indian scenario even further. Some affected individuals, some small groups and large groups of commoners, peasants, petty traders, local bankers, petty rulers and the educated people, all these Indians had one common enemy, the British.

5. *Bulletin: Madras Development Seminar Series, Vol. 5, 1975, p. 559.*
6. *Op. cit., C.J. Baker and D.A. Wash brook, p.176.*
7. *Ibid., p. 216.*
8. *Op. cit., Ganesh. A. p. 25*
9. *A. Ganesan, The Press in Tamil Nadu and the Struggle for Freedom, 1917-1937, (Madras, 1988), p. 207*

Common Enemy

Different communal groups, western and well-educated elite groups, wealthy business class, the affected illiterate and ignorant farmers, youngsters, especially students, and the ones who were personally affected by the British all of them wanted to fight against the British, to attain independence for the nation and to be relieved of the clutches of the British. This chapter discusses role of students in the freedom struggle with significant instances and events. The student body has always been a noteworthy and strong force against any negative aspect. They opposed and objected everything that was felt wrong and unjust. The students' role in the various fights, processions, propaganda, demonstrations, and hartals in large numbers displayed their patriotism as well as their unity. The role of students of northern parts of India is discussed in breef with the role of students of Madras province in order to recognize students' efforts over all.

Students' Participation – National and Region Specific

India has a prolonged history of the student participation in the nationalist movement. The role of students and youngsters in the Indian freedom struggle is a noteworthy one, as the enemy was the strongest. The following instances will give a picturesque idea on the significant role played by students. The base of the mass student participation and movement could be easily traced to 200 years earlier. The founding of the Academic Association in the Bengal's Hindu College, which was led by the Eurasian Henry Vivian Derozio, who was both a teacher and reformer, in 1828 was the beginning. Henry's students and followers of his principles joined together in founding the Young India group who happened to be a group of free thinkers. This group played a significant role in the Bengal Renaissance that occurred in the 19th century. There were other students and energetic youth who participated in the freedom struggle throughout the nation. The Madras Medical College in the Madras Presidency was a pioneer medical institution in British India to admit woman students as early as 1875[10]. This initiative of the British benefitted young widows who later actively participated in the freedom struggle, after inspired by Gandhi[11]. Apart from the ones who were patriotic and enthusiastic, in order to attract maximum possible female students' participation they were with provided school supplies like books, slates and even fee concessions, along with the provision of milk, food as well as uniforms [12].

In 1882, it has been noted that the Kumbakonam college had a student strength of 267 students and the Madras Presidency College had 241 students. In 1910, it was

10. *Lt. Dr.Karpagavalli, 1917 –1918 report, p. 69*
11. *Ibid., p. 75.*
12. *Ibid., p. 95*

noted that in Kumbakonam the student strength decreased to 123 and the strength in the Madras Presidency College grew up to 532[13]. This has been acknowledged as the result of a policy of bureaucratic decentralisation in the Madras Presidency that was adopted for a genuine cause[14]. The National schools that were established in Salem were actually created by renaming the already existing schools that were run by a local literary association. Another school called the Ellora National School was established with funds that were generated by a native education trust run by a premier merchant.[15]

In 1905, when Bengal was partitioned by Lord Curzon, students' participation was the maximum. The student participation in the protest was in large numbers and many even flocked and joined the Indian National Congress followed by the split in the Lahore session of the Congress. The role of students in the freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu has been highlighted in order to highlight their sacrifice, dedication, and involvement in the fight for independence. The national leaders played a vital role in motivating young students across the nation. Bipin Chandra Pal has been considered a very inspiring leader and was very popular among the youth. He had planned to visit Madras exclusively to inspire youngsters in volunteering to participate in the fight for freedom. His visit was fixed between the 11 and 29 of April 1907. This event attracted the youth wings of many associations and significant arrangements were made at prominent places like Cuddalore, Tanjore, Kumbakonam, Madurai and Salem.[16] They made necessary arrangements to welcome Bipin Chandra Pal with due respect. There were a few school boys of Viluppuram that managed to generate funds of rupees hundred to take care of the arrangements when Bipin Chandra Pal arrived. The scenario in Madras was quite different where the college students who were led by Subramania Iyer were able to collect a reception fund of Rs. 250 to meet the expenditure incurred towards the reception and lecture by Pal. Though the students volunteered at these activities, they were restricted to participate in the discussions carried out by adults in the welcoming of Bipin Chandra Pal. The students who participated in the propaganda work were ranging from 200 to 300 students. These patriotic students gathered at the Basin Bridge railway station to welcome Bipin Chandra Pal on 27 April, 1907, but it so happened that he arrived later on 30 May only.

The Madras Mail, 13 May 1907 printed a circular and circulated it among the youth of the city requesting the students' participation on 30 May. Therefore, on

13. *The Hindu, dated 22nd January 1915.*
14. *C.J. Baker and D.A. Wash brook, South India, Political Institutions and Political Change 1880 – 1940, (Madras, 1975), p. 213.*
15. *Ibid., p. 118.*
16. *Report of the District Superintendent of Police, 23rd April 1907, Home, Pub/Pol. A, Dec. 1907, Proceedings. No 44-56 (NAI).*

the assigned date, 400 students assembled at the same Basin Bridge railway station and shouted Vande Mataram to express their patriotism. The enthusiastic students volunteered to pull carriages in which Pal was about to travel. This clearly proved the impact of Pal over the students. The patriotic students of Madras honoured and presented him with a brief address. The mass student population gathered into a big procession of 4,000 students. This procession began from Thambu Chetty street near north Madras and became intense as it moved in to the main areas. The police had arrived and asked the mass students' gathering to disperse. The students resisted and that resulted in the extreme severity and barbarism of the British officials and the Government in dealing with the student patriots who displayed patriotism.[17] The youth and the students of schools and colleges were motivated by popular and unsung national leaders, regional leaders, and the elders at home, especially in the Madras Presidency. The students were actively connected through the medium of circulars and they significantly involved themselves in the plausible fight against the British. The students who were from the Presidency College were noticed to be violent.[18] The students complained that the European professors often rudely commented hurting the in self-respect, pride and they were demeaning the race of the students as well as the nation, which resulted in the mass rebellion. The students of the Wesley college High School Madras were even beaten and those of the Raja Tapas college Madras opposed that the language used by the professor were abusive and hence they conducted processions. There was a tremendous transformation in the attitude of Indian students, teachers, parents and the elders because of this.[19]

A young student K.C.Muhammad Ismail, who was the President of the Muslim students Association at Uttamapalayam along with the association's Vice-President who was from the Madurai District Congress were given harsh and severe punishment for raising specific anti-war slogans and for instigating the students of the Government colleges against the British. They were branded as rebels and were imprisoned in the Alipore Jail for many months together. Apart from these incidents the Khilafat impact caused a major student upsurge leading to many students being imprisoned. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre that happened on 13 April 1919 led to the arrest and imprisonment of Indian leaders on 19 April 1919. This also resulted in the proclamation of the martial law on 15 April. Later an European situation at Turkey triggered the Khilafat movement on 14 November 1919. This witnessed maximum students' participation.

Further, the participation of patriotic students' in various activities like strikes and demonstrations took place as early as 1920 in the King Edward Medical College,

17. *Report of Commissioner of Police, Madras City, 6th May 1907.*
18. *Risely Circular, 4th May 1907, Edn.(A). June 1907 Proceedings No. 76, (NAI).*
19. *New India, 25th May 1916.*

located in Lahore and this was against the academic discrimination that was implied amidst Indian and English students. The student body, exclusively the ones who went through ill-treatment by the British were the ones who were mostly enraged and behaved in an outrageous manner. Some students on the contrary even tried to have conversation with the British and invited Sir Arthur Havelock, Member of the Madras Legislative Council. He was invited by the students of the Maharaja College to preside over their annual ceremony. Their choice proved right as the presidential address delivered was quite impressive.[20] The students sensitised issues and acted accordingly. When Gandhi invited young students across the nation to boycott the schools and colleges providing Western education as one of the activities of the nation-wide civil disobedience movement, the patriotic and enthusiastic students immediately responded. The schools and colleges became empty in a matter of no time and large numbers of students were mobilised into participating in the civil disobedience movement. When Lala Lajpat Rai presided over the first all-India students conference at Nagpur in 1920, he massively inspired and ignited the spark of nationalism among youngsters. Most of the students got their guidance from the numerous heroes who emerged as national leaders. Subhas Chandra Bose was a great source of inspiration throughout India and abroad.

The Non-co-operation Movement that began in 1920 has been called the first mass movement of India, and numerous students' participated in this. The All-India Khilafat Committee planned to observe 19th March 1920 as second Khilafat day. There were posters in Tamil and English that were put up at all strategic locations in order to create political awareness among the general public. In connection with this, a mass procession was organised in Triplicane by young students, which displayed the unity of the Hindu Muslim brethren and their combined efforts.

Several bright students from the law colleges and Arts colleges played a significant role in organising the Muslim students' Khilafat conference. This was led by Rajagopalachari, Kasturi Ranga, Mahadev and Hussain who addressed the students at various law colleges in Madras. The patriotic students who were motivated by these leaders protested and appealed to the students of Saint Joseph's College in 1920 to join the new National College located in Tiruchirappalli. They also expressed their patriotism by hoisting the tricolour flag all over the town and there were mass student processions, which carried the same flag and sung influential patriotic songs at different places. The Quami report of December 1920 issued an order, as directed by the Nizam of Hyderabad, which approved students to participate in the non-co-operation Movement.[21]

20. *V. Nagam Aiya, The Travancore State Manual - Volume 1, Travancore (Princely State), 1906, p. 635.*
21. *Op.cit., V. Nagam Aiya, p. 85*

A youngster called Chinna Kannan of the Madras Tennis Academy of Presidency College sports Arena was 13 years old when he was shot dead in May 1930. This incident occurred when he actively participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement.[22] The course of the non-co-operation movement involved people who surrendered titles, resigned from Government offices, boycotted official meetings, and the students left the schools and colleges.[23] Young Gopal, a kid of 10 years and a resident of Kumbakonam was killed at a firing when he eagerly participated in the Quit India Movement by participating non - violently near the Gandhi Park at Kumbakonam.[24] These give clear evidences on how young students who abandoned their schools and participated in the national movements were killed ruthlessly. These are instances of their valour and the cruelty of the British.

Even the swadeshi movement was flocked by students who boycotted schools and colleges, along with British goods. The mass movements like the non-co-operation Movement, the indigenous Civil Disobedience Movement, and the ultimate Quit India Movement had witnessed massive student's participation. Sincere patriots in the northern part of the country like Bhagat Singh, Khudiram Bose and Subramaniya Siva, Subramaniya Bharati and many others in South India motivated and inspired student masses all over the nation. When Jawaharlal Nehru was young, he too inspired several thousands of students. The students' participation in the nationalistic movements were usually triggered by the rallies under the leadership of prominent national leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi and Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Apart from the patriotic students from north and south India who participated, there were several Muslim students who in January 1936 managed to travel across the nation. They came from places like Punjab, the Sindh, Baluchistan, the North-west frontier province, the central provinces of Delhi and Madras, Orissa, the United province and Bangalore to organise a union of Muslim students and create an association to ignite the spirit of nationality and create political awareness amongst youth in northern and southern parts of India. The All-India students Federation that was initiated on 2 August 1936, under the leadership of Motilal Nehru was called the baby of Congress. This political body, split into two large groups in 1938, named as the All-India Youth Congress and the All-India Youth Federation where the students from throughout the nation could join. The All-India Muslim Students Federation was created as it was considered essential and in response to this the Muslim students of Madras province also participated actively.

22. *Public Department Consultation, Jeeva (MS) no. 275 a 1205/1930, TN.SAC.*
23. *Ibid., p. 90*
24. *Public Department Pol.(b) GO. MS. no. 3097/10.10/1947, TN.SAC.*

Several students involved in violent activities like destroying public property, disrupting postal services, attacking police stations, banks as well as other services. This was the time when Annie Besant had inspired the students of the Madras Presidency to actively participate in the nationalistic struggle for independence. This was also the time when Lord Pentland, the then Governor of Madras, issued strict orders that restricted students from participating in the various political activities and hartals. The non-co-operation movement and the boycott of British schools and colleges resulted in prolonged absenteeism in several educational institutions in the Madras Presidency. The reaction to this from the side of the British Government was an order that was issued on a strict warning on those who continued to be absent for too long would be removed from the educational institutions. The mass numbers of students who participated in demonstrations and hartals, were severely subjected to different types of harassment and these have even gone to the extent of many losing their lives. K.Perumal a youngster of 19 years and a resident of Udayarpalayam, Coimbatore, has been noted to have played a significant role in fighting against the British as part of the Quit India Movement. The police shot him on 12 September 1942 due to active lead.[25]

M.Krishnan an 18-year-old student and a resident of Devakottai, located in the Ramanathapuram District actively participated in the Great India Movement in 1942. It was a shocking incident that he was shot by the police on 17 August 1942 at Devakottai during a public propaganda.[26] The lawyers and students at the law colleges boycotted them and students from other schools and colleges also boycotted the Assembly elections. Along with these, they surrendered the honorary titles and British products. These significant activities of the non-co-operative movement gathered tremendous support and activities. When Gandhi was arrested on 9 August 1942, there was mass resentment at the Madras Presidency. Here, the Hindus and Muslims joined together to participate in demonstrations against the British Government. There were direct and open clashes between the patriotic students and the police. The students who actively participated were lathi charged. They decided to involve continuously in the agitations in spite of whatever may come their way.

The Quit India Movement witnessed the participation of Muslim students from the American College. These students also motivated other students to join the movement. This mass movement was disrupted, when one of the active leaders, a young student called Abdul Sattar Saheb, from Dindigul was given nine months prison time as he had made anti-war propaganda. He was not only a young patriot, but also a very active participant of the Congress secularist and socialist student's organisation.

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25. Coimbatore District Jail slip, Office copy no. 846 and clean copy no. 846, TN.SAC.

26. Public/Military/Public Department, Military Consultation, GO. no. MS. no. 301/03/12/1948, Ramanathapuram, District judge, TNSC.

Apart from these students activities, there were significant activities like the founding of the Crescent Hospital that was established in Madras by the Madras Student Federation in 1946. This institution intended to facilitate treatment for the people affected by disasters. The other major activities involving students in and around Madras was the organisation of processions and rallies in large scales. While these were non -violent ways of protest against the British, there were also other students who paralysed the British administrative machinery by their violent act, by cutting railway lines and blocking railway routes, between significant places by cutting trees and placing them on the tracks. They were quite successful.

Many students at the Madras Presidency were inspired by Annie Besant who was their idol. Observing this magnetism of Besant, the Government of Madras issued an order that restricted students in participating in any form of agitation thereby depriving Besant of the student's support.[27] The students' involvement and the inspiring speeches of Tilak and Besant increased the popularity of the Home Rule Movement and invited trouble, and the Government in turn banned students from attending political meetings. This was immediately resented and condemned by Tilak. He stated that the Government desperate being aware of the role played by the students in the freedom struggle, yet they were expressing their patriotism and enthusiasm. The Government also threatened the students to give up their studies if they resisted.[28]

27. *Op. cit., A. Ganesan, p. 53*
28. *I Bipan Chandra, Mridula Mukherjee, Aditya Mukherjee, India's Struggle for Independence, (New Delhi, 2016)*

Conclusion

The various national movements and activities that were instigated by Mahatma Gandhi like the processions, propagandas against Rowlatt act, Satyagraha against the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the civil disobedience movement, boycott of British goods and adopting swadeshi goods were supported in a full - fledged manner by the students. The role and the impact of students' participation was highly acknowledged and appreciated. Even after independence, most of the political parties initiated student-wings and gave them significant responsibilities. This also motivated several individual and independent students and groups to participate in social movements and divulge into facilitating the economically deprived people of the society. Thus, the post-independent Indian nation has been able to thrive with the memories and motivations from the students' movements and participation in the independence movement.[29] The role of students in the freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu displays the patriotism and the nationalism of the young students at a point of time where communication was a big challenge. This significant struggle to attain independence proved that age was just a number and the feeling of nationalism is all that mattered.

29. *Hindustan Times, A brief history of student protests in India, Dated Dec 18, 2019*



12

Student Movements and Freedom Struggle - II

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Jawaharlal Nehru's appeal to the Youth of India led to a serious confrontation that arose among the senior leaders and the Youth Congress leaders of the country on the proposed plan of action of the Congress. The Youth Congress volunteers of Madras Presidency prepared themselves for the new course of action. A new manifestation of the Youth movement in Madras was the result against the Simon Commission. Ideologically, the Madras Youth Conference was separated from the Congress and they organised the Madras Youth League meeting on 20 January 1929 under the leadership of Srinivasa Iyyengar. Whereas the official group decided to chew political issue, the impact of the personal influence of Srinivasa Iyyengar, the rival who disagreed with them, and formed a United Youth Conference with the support of the Simon Commission[1].

1. *FNR, Confdl., First half of February,1929.*

The death of Jatindranath Das of Calcutta, who was involved in the Lahore conspiracy case in 1929, created resentment among the students, which in turn strengthened the cause of the youth movement.1929 witnessed the formation of many youth and student associations all over the nation. Several Youth Conferences were organised in their respective regions, with the view to support the mission of Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose[2].

Simon Boycott Propaganda Committee

At this crucial juncture, the Youth Congress leaders of Madras began the Simon Propaganda campaign in Tamil Nadu. The Simon Boycott propaganda Committee was the product of Congress - Swarajist group. The committee was headed by S.Satyamurthi, the prominent leader of the Madras Swaraj party. The main objective of the Committee was to carry on an active propaganda through the press, demonstrations, processions and publication of thematic political literature.

They focussed on school and college-going students. Students were exhorted to absent themselves from schools and colleges. The Simon Boycott Committee published a leaflet on 22 December 1928 appealing to the students of Madras city colleges to observe a complete hartal on 3 February 1929, the day of the landing of the Commission in Bombay. The leaflet said, "It is the students of every country that have played a serious part in organising and even leading the mass demonstrations to disseminate patriotism among the people for the vindication of the birth right of the people"[3].

The students of Madras studying in schools and colleges decided to undertake this responsibility most cheerfully and abstain from their schools and colleges on the day of the national hartal and participate enthusiastically in the Simon boycott procession and other demonstrations organised on that day in the city of Madras[4]. On 3 February 1929 a riotous mob ransacked the restaurant of Madras Harrison and Company in Broadway. The Madras police immediately suppressed it by arresting five students. Later, they protested before the High Court for the release of the arrested students. Knowing the fury of the volunteers, the Madras Police opened fire and killed one person on the spot[5]. In that procession with commotion, 26 persons were arrested on that day. In an appeal made to the press, the Madras Congress Committee called on the Youth to prepare themselves as volunteers for the various boycott programmes. It was said that street propaganda work would be carried out by the

2. *A.G.Noorani, The Trail of Bhaghat Singh: Politics of Justice, NewDelhi,1996, pp.66-69*
3. *Public G.O.No.600 (Confdl.) 25th May, 1929*
4. *A leaflet entitled, 'Boycott an appeal to the students of Madras Province' dt. 2 February, 1929*
5. *Public G.O.No.166(Confdl.)23rd May, 1929*

students and less prominent adherents. The Members of Simon Boycott Committee invariably wore Khaddar uniform[6], as suggested by Gandhi.

The Hindustan Seva Dal Movement

Apart from the services of the Simon Boycott Propaganda Committee in Madras, the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee appealed to the Tamil Youth to initiate such Congress activities by starting the Hindustan Seva Dal movements in their respective areas. The majority of the Youth of the Madras Presidency rushed to fulfil the call made by Gandhi and other regional leaders to start the Seva Dal in their regions. The Hindustani Seva Dal Movement was fairly widespread in the Madras Presidency as the Youth wing of the Congress. Its branches were opened in Madras, Kumbakonam, Gudiyatham, Guntur, Chittor, Madurai, Trichy and Tanjore. N.S.Hardikar was elected as the President of All India Hindustani Seva Dal.Under the auspices of the Madras Branch of the Dal, foreign clothes were collected to be burnt on Gandhi Jayanthi Day. The main objective was to observe the National Flag Day all over the country, on the last week of every month, a decision taken at the Calcutta Session of the Congress in December 1929[7]. The National Flag Day was exactly performed by the students of Madras. The Madras Police instructed the College management authorities to take action against their students, who participated actively in the National Flag Day meeting. The College authorities suspended three students of Pachaiappa's College for a fortnight and fined seven students after enquiry on their participation[8].

In the period between 1929 and 1930, twenty-three students from Madras Presidency, participated in the early phase of Civil Disobedience Movement, a few from Pachaiappa's College and Presidency College left the Colleges to take part inthe Civil Disobedience Movement[9]. Three students namely M.Vinayagam, S.T.V.Sarma and Markandayan were sentenced to various terms of punishment for defying the ban order prohibiting the holiday for a public meeting of the Members of the Madras National Volunteers Corps. Their parents were called by the College authorities and were instructed not to allow their sons to participate in the movement. The students of these colleges indirectly organised the Seva Dal meetings in their college hostel premises. Knowing these developments, the Principal of Pachaiappa's College ordered the students to vacate their hostel rooms and informed these developments to the Madras police. The police camped in the premises without their police uniform and watched the political participants among the students[10]. Incidents on these lines were

6. *Public G.O.No.600(Confdl.)25th May, 1929*
7. *Public G.O.No.683-C,(Confdl.)2nd July, 1930*
8. *A letter from Madras Police Commissioner's office on 27th November, 1930 to the Under Secretary, Government of Madras, Madras*
9. *A letter from Police Commissioner's office on 10th November, 1930 to the Under Secretary, Government of Madras, Madras*
10. *Public G.O. No.683,(Confdl.) 2nd July, 1930*

also found in some of the urban centres like Madurai, Trichy and Kumbakonam. The District Magistrates of Madurai, Tanjore and Trichy were instructed to watch these developments in the early March, 1930.

The Youth League Services in Madras District

The National Youth volunteers of Madras City organised salt demonstrations in the second week of April 1930 on the Marina beach. College students of the city were mobilised at the Triplicane beach and were motivated by the senior leaders of the youth organisation like B.Subba Rao and P.S.Bhasyam. There was a spontaneous response from the student community to the demonstration. The Congressmen along with the students organised another salt camp at Udayavanam. The local leaders of the Congress were arrested on that day. The students conducted a procession at Udayavanam beach, demanding the release of the satyagrahis. At the same time, the agitators from the Choolai Mills, Madras provided another dangerous element and a tense situation originated in the riots of 27 April, 1930, but the vigorous action of the youth saved the city from disorder[11]. On 7 July, the arrest of six Congress leaders in Gudiyattam was followed by a riot. For suppressing the riot of the youth league, the police had to open fire. This incident put an end to the excitement in the District. Later, the youth league prepared to begin the same, but not in a vigorous form of that occurred earlier in these places[12].

Between May and July 1930, small incidents occurred in the outskirts of the Madras District. A serious riot occurred in the Tindivanam area, which was promoted by the Youth Forum of this region, after the arrest of the local leaders. In the Chingelpet District, the youth movement was more or less localised at Sholinganallur where the students were strongly charged by the police. Their wholehearted disobedience activity was started on 2 June 1930 and led to a riot in which police fired 37 rounds, to bring the riot under control[13].

The Swadeshi League, Madras

The Swadeshi League of Madras sought to 'promote Indian Industry' by urging the Indians to avoid the purchase of all foreign goods and advised them to use the indigenous products. Dr. A.G.Hogg, Principal of Madras Christian College had the full support of J.P.Joshua, a teaching faculty of the college, who sought to divert the youth league activities from political into social and economic channels[14]. Everyone was of the view that "the most effective way of preventing students, and there minds from involving in undesirable political activities would be through suppressing their patriotic feeling by diverting them into the path of self - sacrifice effect for the social

11. U.S.S.File,Confidential,No.705, 29th August, 1930
12. FNR, Strictly confidential, Second half of July, 1930
13. U.S.S.File, Confidential,No.705, 29th August, 1930
14. FNR,Strictly Confidential, Second half of September, 1930

and economic upliftment of their country". He was also of the opinion that students must find some way of patriotic self-expression other than their study. This should be achieved through the social and economic channels but not political channels. When the attitude of Joshua tended minds…the league was questioned by the Government of Madras, especially since he was appointed in a committee of the swadeshi league to prepare a directory of Indian goods. The Principal of the Christian College argued that though the keenness of his nationalism should lead him into occasional... as a redressal, it has the compensation advantage of preventing students, discounting his sympathy with the college attitude, by setting down their spirit of patriotism[15].

The Congress propaganda among the student community was still alive as shown by the successful turnout of the efforts of V.A.Sundaram, a popular agitator of Madras who made picketing of three colleges in Trichy town. When he escaped from the hands of the city police, the arrest of a number of students frustrated the movement initiated by him. Students of Trichy colleges were exhorted to quit colleges and observe hartal on 3 September, 1930[16]. A few cyclostyled sheets drafted and signed by Sundaram, urging the students to join Civil Disobedience Movement, were arrested before his arrest on 4 September, 1930.

V.A.Sundaram, a student turned agitator was charged by the police for leading the students of three colleges of Trichy. The police authorities were ordered to watch his day-to-day activities. Two police constables were posted at his residence, without police uniform. They collected information regarding the anti-British activities of Sundaram. The Criminal Investigation Department stationed at his place reported his movement to the police authorities[17].

The student activities in other areas of Tamil Nadu were noteworthy. Mahalingam Ayyar, a student agitator of Coimbatore, was also found among students, to stimulate them to boycott their colleges. As a result, Paul Ramasamy, a student of Government College, was able to lead the students of local colleges to boycott the shops, where foreign clothes were sold. R.Sundaram of Erode went to Tiruppur and urged the college students to boycott their colleges on 12 September 1930. A demonstration was organised with the help of local Congressmen in the main streets of Tiruppur asking the public to extend their support to the movement. The Swadeshi League of Salem under Parthasarathy, a College student came forward and invited other students to boycott the foreign goods shop in Salem. A group of college students went to the bazaars on 22 September, 1930 and urged the people to wear Khaddar[18]. The police authorities rushed to the spot and used lathis to discharge the crowd. The prominent Swadeshi League members were arrested and imprisoned.

15. *U.S.S.File,Confidential,No.705,29th August, 1930*
16. *FNR, Strictly confidential, Second half of September, 1930*
17. *Ibid.,*
18. *FNR, Strictly confidential, First half of October, 1930*

Independence Day, 26 January 1931

The National Flag and Independence Day celebration was organised in Madras City by the Madras District Congress Committee. Absence of any prohibitory order, the news about the imminent release of Gandhi and other Congress leaders increased the intensity of work for an effective demonstration and observed complete hartal on 26 January, 1931[19]. Picketing of schools and colleges formed an important programme of Congress.

In this scheduled programme, the participation of the students of the colleges of the city was considerable. While students in some of the educational institutions were able to force their authorities to declare that day as a holiday, the disturbance that had erupted in Pachaiyappa's College began to speed up. On 26 January, 1931 some of the senior students of Pachaiyappa's College pressurised the Principal to close the school and college for the day, in honour of the release of the leaders. The attendance was fairly strong, and the college students were found in their respective classes. The Principal made frequent rounds in the college premises to avoid the students from going out. Further, he advised the students, via classroom mic, explaining the necessity of attendance. The advice of the Principal to take some other day for a holiday was ignored, as the students had gathered to demand the declaration of a holiday as given by the Christian College and other local colleges, on the demands of their students[20].

The Principal of Pachaiyappa's College, at last met the demand of students by declaring holiday on 26 January 1931 and watched them leaving in order by manner, students shouting slogans *Vande mataram, Mahatma Gandhiki jai*, but they were not violent. In the meantime, the police entered the campus, after assaulting the watchman at the college gate and they charged against students, without any hesitation. The students of the college ran from one room to another and took asylum in the central hall of the college. The Secretary of Student's Association of the college reported that more than five students had received serious injuries. One Krishnamachari, a third year student, was taken to General Hospital. Raja, an innocent student, was beaten so severely he became unconscious. The Principal disapproved of the presumption that students took an active part "in throwing shoes, bottles, brickbats etc., as asked by the Home Members"[21].

The proceedings against the students of city colleges added fuel to the fire. The Congress Committee staged a demonstration in front of the Commissioner of Police office, demanding justice for the students of Pachaiyappa's College. The police lathi-

19. *The Swandira Sangu, Madras, 29th January, 1931*
20. *FNR, Strictly confidential, First half of February, 1931*
21. *Confidential letter from the C.I.D. to the Under Secretary to Government of Madras, dt. 28 January, 1931*

charges invited a lot of criticism in the Congress circles and the press[22]. The press questioned the police authorities on the lathi-charge made against the students, and they invariably published articles, after getting interviews with the affected students of the college[23]. Protesting against the police lathi-charge, the students of Madras Law College, numbering about more than a hundred went in an orderly procession on 7 February, 1931[24].

However, the Principal of the Madras Law College stated that beyond the fact that the procession started from gates of the Law College, it had no connection with the college whatsoever. The processions included many senior lawyers and students of other colleges, but they were easily taken for as the 'law college students'. The Police Headquarters in Madras City, got alarmed with these political proceedings that the Director General of Police issued an official circular to the College Principals of all Government colleges on the subject of students' participations in the Congress movement. It emphasised the role of the Principals in 'protecting the students from the effects of propaganda assigned to betray them into acts of indiscipline and excess'. Student participation in political agitations was to be dissuaded by the Principal[25].

Students and their guardians were to be made aware if the students took part in political agitation or absented themselves from school or college as a protest against the action or policy of the Government of Madras at that time and disciplinary action to be taken against the students of schools or colleges. The punishments were to be serious and severe in two forms dismissed or suspension from the college. However, for undertaking such actions on them no permission was required from the parents or guardians[26]. This preventive measure immediately became an action to control their anti-British activities in the Madras Presidency.

The British authorities in India thought the youths' 'immature minds' it had to be prevented by passing orders to suppress their young minds. Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose, other young Congress leaders made a platform for inviting the youth into the national movement. Gandhi, who believed much on the concept of young Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose appealed to the student community to come forward to take the responsibilities in their shoulders. The young activists served as the second line of Congress leadership, when the Government took action against the prominent Congress leaders. It was under this leadership that the youth and students of India found favourable guidance to their activities.

22. *The Hindu, Madras, 27th January, 1931*
23. *The Swarajya, Madras, 27th January, 1931*
24. *FNR,Strictly confidential, Second half of February, 1931*
25. *The Swandhira Sangu, Madras, 29th January, 1931*
26. *The Hindu, Madras, 30th January, 1931*



13

Contribution of Christians of Tamil Nadu to the Freedom Struggle

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"History of Christianity in India is not a mere eastward extension of the western ecclesiastical history with an emphasis of 'foreign mission' dimension. It is a part of the enchanting mosaic that is called the History of India."[1] *Christians are part and parcel of this ancient land, India. Even though they embraced Christianity, their Indianness was never questioned. It has been greatly appreciated. A cursory glance at the available archival sources, historical documents, and private records of the Indian Christians unfolds an impressive list of committed Christian nationalists, in Tamil Nadu. They were ready to sacrifice their lives for a cause.*

1. *D.V. Singh, History of Christianity in India, Vol. II, CHAI, Bangalore, 1982.*

A historical enquiry opens a new vista in the historiography of Christians in the Indian National Movement, in the multireligious and cultural context. Transcending the barriers of caste and creed people from different walks of life, along with the Indian National Congress devoted themselves to the National Movement. It cannot be denied that every community in the Indian sub-continent - Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Dalits, Adivasis, and others - came forward to contribute its mite. They sacrificed many lives from the respective communities on the altar of freedom struggle. The Indian Christian participation was very impressive, given the smallness of the Christian Community. According to the official Congress report, in the Madras Meeting held in 1887, there were 607 registered delegates. Of these, 35 were Christians, seven were Eurasians, and 15 were Indian Christians. They constituted 2.5% of the total participation, although Christians accounted for less than 0.79 per cent of the population.[2]

1. Christians in Swadeshi Movement in Tamil Nadu

From the turn of the nineteenth century the Christian leaders, in Madras, supported the Indian National Congress.[3] Congress had several Christian sympathizers and active workers from Madras.[4] The Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company of V.O.Chidambaram decided to sell its shares for over 10 lakh of rupees. The rate of a single share was fixed at Rs. 25/-. The company had 31 directors. Paul Peter, a Christian, acted as the legal advisor to the company.[5] Inspired by the ideals of Swadeshi Movement, the staunch swadeshi Masillamani from Tuticorin, became a close associate of V.O.C. and supported his initiative. When V.O.C. had to face trials from the British for establishing the Company, Masillamani's presence helped him[6] in his bold venture. "Sriman Masillamani is too well known to require introduction. He is a Catholic who has devoted himself heart and soul to the service of the motherland. Many are his patriotic songs…"[7] complemented the daily, The Hindu. Masillamani owned a timber shop in his hometown, and he produced spinning wheels and distributed them to people to cultivate the spirit of swadeshi. He and all his family members wore only kadhar (khadi) garments manufactured by him.[8] He sponsored thirty *charkas* (spinning wheels) to the villagers in Sillanatham near Tuticorin to promote the movement. He also appointed a person, at his own expense,

2. *B. Pattabi Sitaramaya, The History of the Indian National Congress, Vol.I. (1885-1935), Bombay, 1935.*
3. *Indian Church History Review, Vol.11.No.1, June 1969.p.45.*
4. *The Christian Patriot, Vol.VII, No. II, January 1896. p.4*
5. *Bipan Chandra, India's Struggle for Independence, Penguin, New Delhi.p.47.*
6. *Ma.Po.Sivagnanam, Viduthalai Poril Thamizhaham, Poonkodi Publication, Chennai. 1982. p.165.*
7. *The Hindu, Madurai, 14th March, 1922.*
8. *Nam Vazhu, Chennai, 17th August 1997.p.10*

to teach the villagers how to use the spinning wheel regularly. The yarn that was produced from here was sent to Gandhiji, as their offering to him.[9] Masillamani was a very good writer and orator in Tamil as well as in English. With his oratory, he stimulated the people with thoughts of freedom in all the villages in Tuticorin region. During one of the visits of Jawaharlal Nehru to Tamil Nadu, he delivered a speech and Masillamani was invited to translate it into Tamil. He translated Nehru's speech from English to Tamil, so powerfully, even without the mic that Nehru commented, "how I wish I have your voice".[10] He could stimulate and ignite the people with his inspiring thoughts.

J.P.Rodriquez actively took part in the boycott of the British goods, especially Textiles. He collected foreign clothes and burnt them in the central part of the city. National Missionary Society received new strength through the ideas of a radical Indian group in Madras, led by Vengal Chakkarai, an ardent Christian freedom fighter. This group formed Young Liberals League.[11] Vengal Chakkarai graduated in Philosophy from the Madras Christian College and completed a Bachelor of Law degree from the Madras Law College in 1907. He attended the annual session of the Indian National Congress at Surat in 1907 and became a follower of Bala Gangatra Tilak. In the 1910s, influenced by Indian nationalism, the Young Liberals League led by Chakkarai reconstituted itself as the South Indian Christo Samaj. He also established the Swadeshi Prachara Sabha, in Chennai, to propagate the swadeshi doctrine among the agriculture workers.[12] From 1911, Chakkarai edited a Christian journal Christian Patriot,[13] a paper published from Madras. He showed keen interest in political matters and was very influential among the educated South Indians in spreading nationalist ideas. It was during this period that he became a follower of Mahatma Gandhi. His contact with Gandhiji changed his outlook.[14] He spread swadeshi ideals in the northern part of the Chennai region. Chakkarai said that the national awakening affected the Christians much and had transformed the Christians from complacency to participation. He was a Madras City Councillor from 1924 to 1948, almost for a quarter of a century.[15]

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9. *Masillamani Kudumpathar, Neethikaha Nintru Vathipaen, Masillamani Vazhkai Varalaru, 1885-1949, Monograph, 1974, p. 11. Also Cf. Notice from the people of Sillanatham at the time of the inauguration of reading room in honour of Masillamani in 1952.*
10. *Masillamani (1885- 1949), Centenary Magazine, Madras, 1985, p. 4.*
11. *Gerald Studdert Kennedy, British Christian, Indian Nationalist and the Raj, Oxford University Press, Delhi. 1999. pp.118-119.*
12. *Ma.Po. Sivaganam, op.cit., p. 165.*
13. *Bengt Sundkler, Church of South India,: The Movement Towards Union 1900-1947, London. 1953. p. 86.*
14. *P.T. Thomas, Vengal Chakkarai, Vol. I, Christian Literature Society, Bangalore, 1981, p. 3.Also Refer Gerald Studdert-Kennedy, op.cit.,pp. 118-119.*
15. *As an active member of the Indian National Congress, Vengal Chakkarai was involved in the*

A devotee of Our Lady of Snows at Tuticorin Chevalier Roche Victoria in 1922 established the 'Organization of Faith', which worked mainly for the ban of intoxicant liquor in his area.[16] As an ardent follower of Gandhi, he was influenced by his ideals of swadeshi. Since 1937, from June to August every year, he conducted a Swadeshi Handicraft Exhibition to promote swadeshi goods. He helped financially, for the promotion of Swadeshi Movement in Tamil Nadu.[17]

2. Christians in Home Rule Movement

George Joseph (1887-1938)[18] entered the Home Rule Movement, from Madurai and contributed substantially for its cause from Madurai. The involvement of the Indian Christian Community in favour of nationalism was very much attributed to his dynamic leadership. Home Rule Movement appointed a Commission, in 1918, to visit England to explain the condition of India in the British Parliament. George Joseph was selected as one of the members of the Commission, along with P.N.Narashimman and Manchery Raman to be sent to England.[19]

3. Reaction to Rowlatt Act

When the draconian Rowlatt Act was notified in 1919, Mahatma Gandhi gave a call for hartal. On 9 March 1919, many prominent nationalists took the 'Satyagraha pledge' under the leadership of George Joseph. He met Mahatma Gandhi two weeks

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activities of the Madras Presidency Association, a non-Brahmin enclave consciously promoted within the Congress to arrest the influence of the Non-Brahmin South Indian Liberal Federation or the Justice Party. He was elected the Mayor of Madras City in 1941.One of the pioneers of trade union movement in India, he served as the President of the Madras Provincial Trade Union Congress from 1943 to 1958 and the President of All India Trade Union Congress from 1949 to 1957. Cf. M.S.S. Pandian, Nation as Nostalgia: Ambiguous Spiritual Journeys of Vengal Chakkarai, Economic and Political Weekly, Bombay. 27th Dec.2003. pp. 5357-5358.

16. *M.A. Xavier, Inthiya Viduthalai Poratamum Krithuvarkalum, (Tamil),Vaiharai Publications, Second Edition, Dindigul. 2016. p.116.*
17. *Nam Vazhvu, 02nd January 2000. In 1924 J.S.P. Roach Victoria was elected as a representative of Harbour Protection Council in Madras Presidency. He was also elected as a member of legislative assembly in the elections of 1937 & 1948. During the Chief Ministership of Kumarasamy Raja in Madras Presidency, J.S.P. Roach Victoria was holding the office of the Minister of Food & Fish. He also worked as a Senate member of Madras University during 1941-1947. He was honored with 'Magsaysay Award.'*
18. *Born in a Syrian Christian family in 1887 George Joseph after his graduation at Madras Christian College went to Middle Temple for his barrister and took an M.A., Degree in Philosophy from Edinburgh, England. J. Kuruvachira, Indian Christians and the Independence Movement, pp. 5-6.; Also see P. Athiyaman, Ariyapadartha Alumai: George Joseph (Tamil), Kalachuvadu, 2007, p. 23. Also Cf. Maya Joseph, "An Ardent Advocate of Freedom", The Hindu, 7th June 1987.*
19. *M.A. Xavier, op. cit., p. 118.*

later in Madras. Sometime earlier, Kasturi Rangan, Rajaji, and George Joseph had signed a manifesto, rejecting the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. On 23 March, 1919, Gandhiji came to Madras on an extensive tour of Tamil Nadu. He reached Madurai on 26 March, 1919 and stayed at the residence of George, till 30 March, 1919. George Joseph played a leading role in organising the public meeting for Gandhiji in Madurai on 29 March, 1919. Nearly 20,000 people attended the meeting. A resolution was passed at the meeting that the people of Madurai were fully prepared and resolved to observe the hartal on 6 April, 1919. George Joseph led the agitations.[20]

4. Role in Non-Co-operation Movement

From being a political club for the high caste urban professional elite of the metropolitan region, the Congress in Tamil Nadu became a political party of the masses capable of conducting major agitations for the non-co-operation Movement against the British regime.[21] As an active member in the Home Rule Movement, Vengal Chakkarai came under the influence of Gandhiji in 1920 and joined the non-co-operation Movement. As a dynamic Member of the Indian National Congress, he was involved in the activities of the Madras Presidency Association and was instrumental in organising quite a few public meetings, which discussed questions of political nature.[22]

George Joseph was a member of the first batches of barristers who sacrificed their comforts to engage in national work and joined the non-co-operation Movement. They boycotted foreign cloth shops. At the bidding of Motilal Nehru, George Joseph discarded his fashionable dress for the coarse homespun.[23] The letter of V.O.C. reads as follows: "Barrister George Joseph, V.O.Chidambaram Pillai, N.S.Varadachari, and S.Ramanathan gave up their practice as lawyers. They spent their full time and energy in campaigning for the non-co-operation Movement. C.Rajagopalachari sent a report to the All India Congress Committee that thirty six lawyers in Tamil Nadu gave up their practice as an act of non-co-operation in June 1921."[24]

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20. *T. Stalin Gunasekaran, Viduthalai Velviyil Tamizhagam (Tamil), Vol-I, Niveditha, Erode, 2000. pp. 397-399.*
21. *D.J. Arnold, Nationalism and Regional Politics: Tamil Nadu, India, 1920 – 1937, Sussex, 1973, p.1.*
22. *M.S.S. Pandian, Nation as Nostalgia: Ambiguous Spiritual Journey of Vengal Charkkarai, Economic Political Weekly, 27th Dec. 2003. pp. 5357-5358. Also See. Gerald Studdert-Kennedy, op.cit., pp. 118-119. Also Cf. H.G. Thomas, 'Christian Leaders of Madras and the Crisis', The Guardian, Vol. 20, No. 35, 3rd September, 1942, p. 414.*
23. *J.Kuruvachira, op.cit., pp. 5-6.*
24. *Letters of V.O. Chidambaranar, Madras: 1981, p.18. Also Cf. J. Brown, Gandhi's Rise to Power, Cambridge, 1972, p. 312.*

In September 1921, Gandhiji visited Tamil Nadu to propagate non-co-operation. He planned to wreck the administration of the country by withdrawing country's co-operation from the Government. In this project, he hoped to get the support of Muslims who had become anti-British on the Turkey issue. He made a fervent appeal to the Hindus to support the cause of the Muslims. A Committee was appointed. Joseph Cornelius Kumarappa, a Christian from Thanjavur, was a member of the Committee. He encouraged the other committee members to begin with the boycott of schools, colleges, courts, picketing of toddy shops, Government jobs and boycott of foreign goods, and use of swadeshi.

When All India National Congress observed the non-co-operation Movement in 1920, George Joseph stayed at Allahabad to take part in the Movement. According to Section 7 of the Criminal Law Amendment, the British Government issued an arrest warrant against him and he was imprisoned at Nainital prison.[25] During his imprisonment, he met Jawaharlal Nehru and discussed matters relating to Freedom Movement. George Joseph, after his release from the prison came to Madurai and addressed public meetings.[26] In 1922, when he was the editor of Young India at Allahabad and Independent, he was arrested again for sedition and spent a year in the Lucknow District jail, along with Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahadev Desai, Purushottamdas Gandhiji.[27] George Joseph was also a father figure to K.Kamaraj, a great Congress leader and later the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, for whom he defended in a case.[28] On 27 December 1922, George Joseph, as the editor of Young India participated in the 36 Indian National Congress at Gaya. An editorial of The Harvest Field entitled 'Participation of the Christians in the non-co-operation Movement' said, "There are some Christians in their patriotism carried away by this movement (meaning the Non Co-operation Movement)."[29] "Right to self-determination is an integral part of the fundamental rights of any country…" asserted the All India Christian Conference held at Allahabad on 31 December 1927.[30] Further, S.K.Datta, in his presidential address at the All India Conference of Indian Christians held at Lucknow between 27 and 30 December 1922, made a reference to some of the Indian Christians who had suffered imprisonment as a result of their political activities.[31]

25. *T. Stalin Gunasekaran, op.cit., p. 400.*
26. *L.Ramamurthy, Development of National Consciousness in Tamil Nadu 1920–1930, Unpublished Ph.D., Thesis, Madras University, pp. 51-52.*
27. *Maya Joseph, op. cit.,*
28. *George Gheverghese, George Joseph: The Life and Times of Kerala Christian Nationalist, Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2003.*
29. *"Christianity and Non-Co-operation", The Harvest Field, Vol. XLI, No. 8th August 1921, p. 284.*
30. *S.R. Bakshi, Indian National Movement and the Raj, Vol. II, Criterion Publication, New Delhi.1989. p.29*
31. *Indian Review, Vol.24, No. 2, February 1923, pp. 113-115.*

A few more Christian patriots participated in the non-co-operation struggles in different places. Ignatius, son of W.C. Peter from Thanjavur District, took part in the non-co-operation Movement and was arrested and sentenced to seven months in 1922. He was sent to Tiruchirappalli central jail.[32] Santiago Savarirajan of Mayiladi from Kanniyakumari District joined the movement in 1923 and took part in Nagpur Flag Movement in the same year. As an enthusiastic patriot, he had to suffer eleven months of imprisonment in Vellore, Tiruchirappalli and Shoranur jails for his participation in Salt Satyagraha and Vaikom Satyagraha.[33] Philip, a B.A. graduate from Madras, joined the movement in 1926. He courted imprisonment for his anti-British activities during 1927, 1934, and 1936. He was sent to Bombay, Meerut, and Allahabad jails.[34]

5. Christians and Civil Disobedience Movement

The Pearl City produced another important Christian leader for the Freedom Movement in the person of Valerian Fernando. Inspired by the call of the national leaders, he became a local leader. In 1930, Valerian accompanied Jawaharlal Nehru to Sri Lanka to attract the Tamil youth towards the freedom struggle. Moreover, he organised the 'Army of Volunteers', a youth battalion to fight against the British Government in Sri Lanka, for the liberation of India. Valerian gave employment to the youth involved in the freedom struggle in his salt manufacturing units at Pazhayakaayal, Tuticorin and Dharuvaikulam.[35] He took part in picketing toddy shops at Madurai and was imprisoned for five months. During his imprisonment his mother passed away and he was not able to attend her funeral. While organising demonstrations, he faced police attack and was imprisoned for six more months.[36]

When Gandhiji led Dhandi March, J.P.Rodriquez started the march from Dharuvaikulam, seven miles away from Tuticorin and violated the British law by picking up a handful of salt from the Tuticorin beach. By the end of May 1930, all the important leaders along with Rodriquez were arrested. He was given one year of imprisonment and a penalty of Rs. 200/-. He refused to pay the penalty to the foreign Government and was ready to undergo imprisonment for six more months and was sent to Vellore prison.[37] As a dynamic leader and an activist, J.P.Rodriquez established the 'National Christian Volunteers Army' in Southern Tamil Nadu. Along

32. *Who's Who of Freedom Fighters, Vol.I, Tamil Nadu, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1973, p. 448.*
33. *Ibid., p. 231.*
34. *Ibid., p. 308.*
35. *He was honored by the Tirunelveli Congress Committee as he was elected the chairman of Tutukudi taluk Congress Committee. Subsequently he was elected as a member in the All India National Congress Committee.*
36. *M.A. Xavier, op. cit., p. 116. Also Cf. Who's Who Freedom Fighters, Vol. III, p. 70.*
37. *Nam Vazhvu, Chennai, 02 January, 2000.*

with Valerian, he went to Colombo to organise the youth. J.P.Rodriquez started a weekly magazine called Sudhanthira Veeran, through which he ignited the Christian Community. Hearing all these developments, Jerome Saldhana, a famous freedom fighter from Mangalore commented in The Examiner, a Catholic national magazine, "Catholic merchants of Tuticorin were largely interested along with other Indians in the freedom struggle".[38]

The Christian community produced yet another committed nationalist in the person of Joseph Chelladurai Kumarappa,[39] popularly known as J.C.Kumarappa. While commenting on him, The Indian Express observed: "He was a Gandhian economist. He was a man of sound principles. He was a champion of rural economy, an enemy of mechanization and materialism and a tireless propagandist of the constructive programmes of Gandhi. He remained one of the closest friends of Gandhi in his entire economic programme."[40] J.C. Kumarappa brothers emphasised the value and importance of using home-made products in order to strengthen the freedom struggle. The All India Spinners Association and the Village Industries Associations popularised khadar throughout India.

J.C.Kumarappa, completed his doctoral thesis on 'How Indian Poverty was Contributed by the British Exploitative Policies' from Columbia University. Gandhiji in 1929, was very impressed by his work and entrusted him with several responsibilities such as working out his Philosophy of Economics and looking after All India Village Industries, along with editing the magazine, Young India. Gandhiji admired the philosophy on economics so much that he picked up several ideas from Kumarappa's thesis on economics, village industries, policies of self-reliance etc., At the same time, like Nehru, he was one of the few who dared to argue with Gandhiji and never gave in until he was completely convinced.[41]

J.C.Kumarappa participated in the freedom struggle since the non-co-operation Movement. When Gandhiji was on the Dhandi March, Kumarappa published series of articles on 'Public Finance and Our Poverty'. In addition, Gandhiji asked Kumarappa to write regularly for his paper Young India with the help of Mahadev Desai who was in charge. At the request of Gandhiji, Kumarappa published his research findings on

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38. The Examiner, Bombay, 19 November, 1938.

39. J.C. Kumarappa, from Thanjavur, after completing his early education in Christian College School at Madras he went to London in 1912 and got training in the field of auditing and joined the London Bank. In 1919 he returned to India and started "Kornalius – Tawar Auditing Company" at Bombay with the assistance of the British Company. In 1928 he went to U.S A. to study the Management of Commerce and Account at Columbia University. V. Jeevanantham, Marakkappatta Thirkatharishi J.C. Kumarappa, (Tamil), Erode, 2004, p. 6.

40. Indian Express, 10 February, 1952.

41. See. S.P. Appasamy, A Bishop's Story, Madras, CLS, 1969.

the British economy in Young India. The Karachi session of Indian National Congress appointed an Economic Research Commission under the leadership of Kumarappa to bring out the economic condition of India. After investigation, this commission submitted its report to the Indian National Congress. The reports of this commission proved that the British Government spent a huge amount of money for warfare and military expenditure, from the Indian resources. When Kumarappa was questioned for writing against the British he answered, "My responsibility is to publish news regularly. I am not worried about my imprisonment."[42] The British Government took it seriously and an arrest warrant was issued on 3rd February, 1931, under Section 124 (A) of the Indian Penal Code for causing feelings of disaffection and contempt among public through the columns of Young India against the Government established by law.[43] Kumarappa was sentenced to undergo one year and six months of rigorous imprisonment. Moreover, as per the provisions of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, Kumarappa came out of jail on 31st March 1931.[44]

Significant changes had taken place by the time of the Second Round Table Conference on 7th September, 1931. Kumarappa had again this time to assume the editorship of the Young India. The Government tried to stop the publishing of the magazine. However, Kumarappa was fervently determined to continue the magazine regularly. This act of defiance against the British put him behind bars once again.[45] Kumarappa did not waste his time in jail. He wrote two books namely *Economy of Permanence* and *Practice* and *Precepts of Jesus*.

During 1930-1932, Round Table Conference was convened by the British in London. All the important political leaders were invited to take part in that conference. When Gandhiji went to England to attend the Third Round Table Conference, J.C.Kumarappa was the Editor of the magazine Young India. He wrote all the important issues that were discussed in the Conference. For his writings, he was put under house arrest in 1932. Later, he was sent to Nasik jail[46] for two and a half years of imprisonment. After spending two years in jail his health began to deteriorate.[47]

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42. Grama Rajyam, 12th July, 1947. S.P. Sen, (ed), Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. II, Calcutta, 1973, p. 255.

43. Grama Rajyam, 12th July, 1947. Also Cf. S.P. Sen, (ed), Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. II, Calcutta, 1973, p. 255.Gurusamy. M.P, Kolgaiveerar Kumarappa, Madurai, 1979, p. 52

44. M. Vinayak, Gandhian Crusaders, Gandhigram, 1987, p. 62.

45. Nagpur Times, 4th February, 1980. Also Cf. M. Vinaik, op.cit., p. 48.

46. V. Jeevanantham, op. cit. p. 9.

47. Grama Rajyam, September, 1947.

Between 1900 and 1930, K.T.Paul,[48] S.K.Datta and V.S.Azariah formed a trio, and were credited with instilling nationalist spirit in the Christian community. Several Christian Organizations such as Christian Patriot Group of Madras and Indian Christian Association supported the cause. C.Rajaji who had been a friend from his school days and a leader of the non-co-operation Movement in South India, often called him 'Tamil Gandhi'. Paul knew Mahatma Gandhi intimately and had a great veneration for his character and personality. Paul Said, "The magnetic personality of M.K.Gandhi fused the comrades (Hindus and Muslims) into a willing solidarity, a thrilling solidarity, which gave to the whole National Movement an altogether fresh vision of high purpose and noble possibility, higher and nobler than had ever been realized before."[49] K.T.Paul was chosen as the sole representative of the Protestant Indian Christians for the first session of the Round Table Conference in London from 12 November, 1930 to 19 January, 1931.

In response to the call of the Congress for Salt Satyagraha in 1930, Kanniyakumari Congress Committee organised the same at Colachal. Hailing from a village Madathattuvilai near Villukuri in Kanniyakumari District, Rayappan was filled with the nationalist spirit. When his manager warned him not to take part in a Congress meeting at Satymangalam, along with Sundharesan, another patriot, he resigned his job without minding the consequences.[50] He along with Sudhanthiram and Velayutham organised agitations and picketing of toddy shops, and gathered a large crowd in support of the satyagraha. During that protest, all the important leaders and Congressmen along with him were arrested by the police and sent to Thiruvananthapuram central for seven weeks of imprisonment.[51] Rayappan also took part in another important agitation in Suseendram.

Inspired by the nationalist leaders, Santhiyavoo from Mayiladi, in Kanniyakumari District, was interested to join the Indian National Congress by renouncing his job. Most of the days, after Holy Mass, he used to sell the magazine Sudanthira Sangu at village Catholic Churches.[52] He wore only kadhar till the end of his life. In 1931, in the picketing of toddy shop at Sonaimedu, Santhiyavoo as a participant of the agitation was severely wounded in a police attack. Santhiyavoo was also one among

48. *K.T. Paul, a disciple of Gokhale, hailing from Salem, a student of Madras Christian College, after studying law, he joined government service, but soon he left it to become a tutor in history in the Madras Christian College. In 1905 he became one of the national secretaries of the Y.M.C.A. and in 1916 became its General Secretary. He was concerned with the village problems and floated a scheme of co-operative banking in order to help the villagers. Cf. Editorial News: "K.T. Paul" Church Missionary Outlook, Vol. LVIII, June, 1931, pp. 120-121.*
49. *H.A. Popley, K.T. Paul Christian Leader, Christian Literature Society, Madras, 1987.*
50. *Personal Dairy of Thiyagi Rayappan.*
51. *Who's who of Freedom Fighters, op. cit, p. 238.*
52. *Kathiravan, Suriyagandhi, Chennai, 15th August, 1999. p. 28.*

the 42 Congressmen who took part in the Vedaranyam salt march, organised by Rajaji. He organised a salt March in Kanniyakumari District in 1932 and had to face police brutality. Along with Rajaji, Omandurar Ramasamiyar, Sengalvarayan, and M.V.Perumal, Santhiyavoo got nine months of imprisonment and a penalty of Rs.100/-. Because of his poverty, Santhiyavoo was unable to pay the penalty and the imprisonment was extended for six more months.[53]

Ernest Forester-Paton, a missionary from Scotland, a pro-nationalist, was beaten up badly by the police and a case was filed against him in Madras. The issue was raised in the British Parliament and the case was withdrawn. However, his movement was restricted thereafter.[54] G.P.Halstead and Maurice Ballanger, two of the American Methodists who were working in Tamil Nadu, were deported for their involvement in the National Movement.[55]

An impressive list of Christians especially the common folk from rural and semi-urban areas joined the National Movement in the 1930s and 1940s. Moreover, most of them were arrested during the protests in 1930 and 1932.[56] To name a few: G.Lazar (1904) from Nagercoil, Masilamani Fernandez from Ettamadai Azhakia Pandiapuram in Thovalai Taluk, Satyanesan Joseph (1909) from Naickenarkulam Cheri, Nallur, Iravipudur, Innas Fernand from Krishnankovil, Ambrose (1921) Killiyanoor, D.Gabriel (1911) from Nedurilai, Thipramalai Karungal; P.Paul Ratnam (1902) from Marthandam in Kanniyakumari District; Jeremiah Fernandez (1896) and Masilamani Fernandez (1905) from South Arcot District; Viyagulam Fernando, (1905), Vincent Fernandez (1906) and J.Chelliah, (1906) of Tuticorin; Fernandez Masilamani (1903) and Fernando Eramier (1896) from Punnaikkayal of the present Tuticorin District; Robert (1910) from Dindigul, M.Arockiam Fernando from Tirunelveli, Joseph (1911) from Chengalpattu, and Arockiasamy (1916) from Madras were some of the many Christian freedom fighters who took part in one or more struggles for the nation and had to spend their life in prison from six months to three years.

6. Individual Satyagraha and Christians

In 1940, the Indian National Congress was organising the anti-war movement. Masillamani and his wife Jebamani joined the movement. As devoted Catholics, they went to the Church of Our Lady of Snows in Tuticorin and began their protest

53. *Personal Diary of Santhiyaavoo.*
54. *Ibid, pp. 82-84, 101-102. Also Cf. Arthur Jeyakumar, D, Christians and National Movement, Punithi Pusthak, Calcutta.1999. pp. 220-238.*
55. *D. Arthur Jeyakumar, op.cit., pp. 220-238.*
56. *For a List of Indian Christians from Tamilnadu, see Who's who of Freedom Fighters, Vol..I II & III Also Cf. D. Arthur Jeyakumar, op.cit., pp. 220-238.*

March and both of them were arrested. Masillamani was sent to Vellore jail for six months and Jebamani was kept in prison for nine months.[57] The former treasurer of Senthil Kumara Nadar College, Thangaiya had high regard for him, "I am very happy to have been associated with Masillamani from 1922. His sharp intellect, ability to comprehend the issues, amazing memory power, and his gift of the gab, made him a popular leader. Everybody in this area knew about his patriotic fervour with which he participated in the freedom struggle and the suffering which he underwent for the same."[58]

In 1941, responding to the call of Mahatma Gandhi, Valerian Fernando took part in the individual satyagraha and was sent to Alipur jail for six months. He said, "I will fight for my country, till the last drop of blood in my body."[59] It expressed the nationalist spirit of a Christian patriot. Realising the religious spirit and mood of the people of the fishery coast, Masillamani blended the religious fervour with the nationalistic spirit beautifully. He started his individual satyagragha on 20 January 1941, in front of the Church of Our Lady of Snows at Tuticorin and thus could attract and increase the number of Christian patriots in the struggle. The committed nationalist could bring many Catholics to the struggle by saying, "a true and devoted Catholic would be very loyal to his motherland". The British Government issued an arrest warrant against him. The punishment was an imprisonment for six-months and a penalty of Rs. 200/-. He was not ready to pay the penalty because he considered it as a foreign rule. His defiance fetched him two more months of imprisonment.[60] Jebamani Masillamani vigorously took part in picketing toddy shops and in swadeshi agitations along with her husband. Thus, she became a model to other Christian women. She was injured in the police attacks during the agitations. She treated all other wounded patriots at her home. On 20 January 1941, on the advice of Gandhiji, Masillamani along with his wife participated in the agitations against the British, for involving India in World War II. Both of them were awarded with imprisonment for the same. They were the first Catholic couple to go to jail during the freedom struggle.[61] Jebamani Masillamani was the first and only Christian woman candidate to contest

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57. Miranda, MasillamaniPillaiyaiMaranthoam, AnnayinArutsudar, India Viduthalai Naal Malar, Kumbakonam, 1973, p. 36.

58. Letter of R. Thangaiya, Treasurer of Senthil Kumara Nadar College Virudhunagar, written on the occasion of the installation of his portrait in Tuticorin Council on 12th December 1957. Appreciations of this type would acknowledge the valour and spirit of Masillamani and his contribution to freedom struggle.

59. NamVazhvu, Chennai, August, 1997.

60. Kathiravan, Suriyakanthi, 15th August, 1999, p. 6.

61. Jebamani Massillamani Ammal was born on 7 October, 1890 at Kuruvinatham near Kadambur. Her parents were D. Savari Rayan – Sebastiyammal. Her father was a well-educated person, who was the first Tamil professor at St. Joseph's College, Tiruchirappali. On 20th August 1909 she married Masillamani at Tuticorin.

in 1937 Legislative Assembly election and was elected with the margin of 3,680 votes from Congress Party.[62] She again won the Padmanabhapuram Constituency in 1,941 with 75% of votes.[63] Catholic freedom fighters like Masillamani and Jebamani Masillamani received commendable support from their spiritual leaders and heads.

S.Richard Morais (1916) from Tuticorin, Peter Morais (1916) from Sreevaikundam; Samuel Yesudasan (1915) from Tirunelveli District, S.Joseph from Walajabad in Chengalpattu District, and Ambrose (1917) from Ooty are some of the unknown patriots who took part in the individual satyagragha.

7. Christians in Quit India Movement

In the historic declaration of the Indian National Congress on 9 August 1942,[64] resolutions were passed that the British rulers should 'Quit India' at once. Immediately after Quit India resolution was passed, major Christian movements and organisations in India declared their solidarity with the national goal of complete independence to India. The organisations that expressed solidarity with the demand for immediate Indian independence include, All India Conference of Indian Christians, the National Christian Council of India, Christian leaders and student groups related to the institutions and movements such as the United Theological College (Bangalore), Serampore College (Bengal), The Youth Christians Council of Action (Kerala) and the Student Christians Movement of India.[65] At this historical juncture, J.C.Kumarappa wrote an article in Young India entitled "Does a Stone Replace Bread?" For his remarkable writings, British Government issued warrant against him and imprisoned him.

Many Christian students were either imprisoned or were taken to perform tasks. Paul Ramasamy was one such person who later became a school teacher and a catechist after serving a period of six month in jails.[66] The National Christian Review, the official organ of the National Council of India, noted the massive manifestation of solidarity of the Christian Community with the national cause: "Those who have

62. *Jebamani was imprisoned on 6 August 1933 at Madras along with her husband for participating in struggle. In her debate in the Legislative Assembly in 1937, she demanded a separate pastoral land for cattle in villages. She said that, areas should not be divested and the peasants should be aided by the Government in providing pastoral land to improve their cattle wealth and agricultural productions. She said helping peasants and tillers was equal to fertilizing and watering a tree. Cf. Madras Legislative Assembly Debate, Vol. III, No. 1-16, 16 September, 1937, p. 21.*
63. *V. Rajalakshmi, The Political Behaviors of Women in Tamilnadu, New Delhi, 1985, p. 80.*
64. *Jim Masselas, Indian Nationalism A History, Sterling Publishers Pvt.Ltd., New Delhi, 1985.*
65. *George Thomas., op.cit., p.65.*
66. *Arthur Jeyakumar. "Paul Ramasamy and the National Movement" in Dharma Deepika, December, 1997.*

spoken truly identified themselves with the aspirations, sorrows, and struggles of their fellowmen. Christian leaders have sown the deepest concern for the realization of the India's highest interests".[67] The volumes of *Who's Who Freedom Fighters* published by Tamil Nadu Government contain the names of Christian patriots for their participation in the freedom struggles, at various levels.

Inspiring narratives about the sacrifices of the Christian freedom fighters come to light when one listens to the close relatives of these patriots. These narratives unfold the nationalistic spirit of these sons and daughters of this land though they practiced the religion of the oppressors. They lived as Indians first, though they practiced Christianity. One such story is about Vadiyar Savarimuthu (1903-1986) from Dindigul. Following the call of the Congress and Gandhiji for the individual satyagraha along with the whole nation Dindigul vibrated. He had developed a close relationship with K. Kamaraj and Bhakthavatchalam, the Congress leaders in Tamil Nadu. Though he had very close contact with Gandhiji and the Indian National Congress, he left the Congress party not tolerating the selfish nature of Congress leaders in Tamil Nadu after Independence. He joined Sudhanthira Party, working for the welfare of the people of Dindigul.[68]

Edwin, Joseph Simon (1908) of Sandhur, Kethi in The Nilgiris District; Antony Muthu, (1916), Gabriel (1900), P.Joseph (1922) from Ramnagar, Coimbatore, Arockiasamy, (1926) from Puliakulam, of Coimbatore District; Daniel (1899) from Anaimalayanpatti in Uthamapalayam, of erstwhile Madurai District; Simon Paul (1917), Panankattu Cotton Godown Lane, Tiruppur; Anthony Cruz (1919) from Koviloor, Nallapalli in Dharmapuri District; Arokiasamy (1918) from Pommiddi, of Harur Taluk in Dharmapuri District, M.Prakasam (1921) from Tiruvadanai, Yesudas alias Puchi (1918) from Karkalathur in Tiruvadanai, R.Chinnappan (1910) of Panankudi, Nadarajapuram in Ramanathapuram District, Masilamani (1912) from Kombai of Periakulam Taluk in Madurai District, John (1919) of Thirupoonthuruthi, T.Joseph (1924) of Keezha Thirupoonthurthi in Thanjavur District; Issac (1908) from Mookuperi near Tiruchendur, Jebamalai Bernard (1902) from Veeravanallur, Jebamani (1919) from Karanbani in Tiruchendur Taluk of Tirunelveli. Along with them following women Christian nationalists boldly took part in the Quit India Movement; Antony Ammal (1917) from Puliankulam, John Rose.S. (1916) from Nadutherivilai, Maruthangodo, Kanniyakumari District, Maya Joseph (1917) daughter of George Joseph from Madurai and Ignatius Ammal (1908) from Dindigul. All of them were sent to jail in either Tamil Nadu or elsewhere and

67. *George Thomas, op.cit., p. 64..*
68. *Though born at Kayathar near Tirunelveli to Viyagappa - Thayammal, a devoted Catholic family, Vadiyar settled in Dindigul. He had sent one of his daughters to the religious congregation as a nun to serve the people. Cf. A. Fatima Rani, Thoothan, September, 2003.*

some sacrificed their lives for the cause of freedom. Oral tradition regarding the Christian participation in the freedom struggle unfolds several inspiring episodes on the involvement of the Christian freedom fighters particularly from the subaltern communities in the persons of S.S.Irudhayadasan, S.P.Santiago of Dindigul, Lazar, S.A.Thiyagarajan, Postman Sebastian, Packianathan, and others from Pondicherry. These numerous freedom fighters continued to fight against the imperial colonial rule. These are not just names, but the selfless Christian patriots who were ready to shed their sweat and blood for the motherland and sacrificed their precious lives for the noble cause of freedom.

Like other religious communities, the number of Christians participating in the Freedom Movement was on the increase, particularly when Congress led the agitation. The slogan 'Do or Die' Electrified the Christians too, particularly Christian youth as one could notice a large number of Christian youths joining the Movement with vigour. The students of Christian higher Educational Institutions such as St. Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli, Madras Christian College, Chennai, The American College, Madurai, and other colleges voluntarily took part in the struggle. The heads in the educational institutions were unable to contain the spirit of the Christian youth and many a times had to yield as their unrest went out of control. Evidences show that the inspirational writings from the Christian magazines like The Indian Evangelical Review, The New Leader, The Examiner, The Catholic Herald of India, The Harvest Field, and others edited by educated Christians had enkindled them to take to active resistance.

8. Christian Radicals

Though generally most of the Christian patriots were using constitutional means in all their struggles, a few of them radically responded to the call of the leaders of the nation. With strong nationalist spirit they opted for non-peaceful methods. Following are some of the Examples. S.Benjamin (1918) from Amalipuram, near Tiruchendur of Tirunelveli District, belonging to the most backward fishermen Christian community. He was closely associated with the Congress and developed a close contact with the Congress leaders even during his school days.[69] As a gifted speaker and writer, he enkindled the patriotic spirit in people, especially the younger generation. He was proficient in Tamil, Hindi, English and Malayalam. He joined the band of the freedom fighters at a very early age and suffered bodily and in mind at the hands of the British rulers.[70] As an enthusiastic activist, Benjamin founded

69. *H. Anand V Rayan, Neithal Nilathil Thondrita Thesa Viduthalai Porali, Silver Jubilee Magazine, AmaliAnnai Nagar, Thiruchendur.*

70. *Letter from R. Dhanushkodi Athithan, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) to The Prime Minister of India, dated 20th November 1993.*

Bharat Mata National Youth Association with the help of the Congress leaders in Alanthalai, a village in his locality, to attract the youth towards the national cause.

At the invitation of Gandhiji for the individual satyagraha, in 1939, Benjamin went to Wardha Sevagram Ashram and met Mahatma Gandhiji to get permission for individual satyagraha in his own village. On 2 May 1940, Benjamin started Individual Satyagraha in his village Alanthalai and during that attempt he was arrested by the Tiruchendur police and sentenced to one month of rigorous imprisonment.[71] After his release from the prison he took part in *Delhi Chalo Movement* at Tuticorin. On 21 June 1941, anti-war agitation broke out at Jhansi Rani Park, Madurai under the leadership of Vaithiya Nathan. Benjamin, took part in the satyagraha and was imprisoned for nearly six months and was sent to Alipuram prison. 'The Kulasekarapattinam Conspiracy Case' narrates his involvement along with Thookumedai Rajagopal, Kasi Rajan, and others in the freedom struggle. This case was charge-sheeted by the Sub-Inspector of Police, Kulasekarapattinam, under several Sections of the Indian Penal Code, the Defence of India Rules and the Penalties Enhancement Ordinance III of 1942 in respect of rioting, arson and murder committed in that village on 20 September 1942.[72]

On the night of 11 August 1942, about 150 persons, including Benjamin, attacked a salt pan at Kulasekarapatnam. Benjamin was the Union leader in the area. Though their aim was to take possession of guns from four policemen there, the situation went out of control when Loane, the local assistant inspector rushed to the spot. However, before this, they had already taken the guns and tied up the four policemen and the peon to a post. On 6 February 1943, in the final judgement, the Judge ordered Rajagopal and Kasi Rajan to be hanged. Six others including Benjamin, were awarded with life imprisonment[73] and they underwent severe torture by the police. He was not able to attend the funeral of his father as he was in Tiruchendur jail.[74]

9. Christians in Indian National Army

Attracted by the clarion call, "If you want freedom give me your blood" of Subhas Chandra Bose and inspired by high ideals of freedom, Anandam, a Christian youth hailing from Karaikudi and settled in Rangoon in Burma wanted to join the Indian National Army (INA) during his school days. When he expressed his desire to his parents and uncle they resisted and opposed it. One day, without informing them, he ran away from home and joined the Indian National Army on 16 April 1944

71. *H .Ananad V Rayan, op.cit.,*
72. *Judgment of the Special Court, Tinnevelly, 6th February, 1943, p. 4.*
73. *Judgment of the Special Court, Tinnevelly, 6th February, 1943.*
74. *Thiyahi Benjamin's Personal Dairy.*

in Rangoon. He was given training in the Field Regiment Unit 103.[75] However, he was awarded with a nine-month imprisonment from 21 May 1945.[76]

Likewise, Abraham of Ariyalur, S.A.Adaikalam of Aranthangi, Alexander of Chinna Dharmapuram, Amirtham of Tiruchirappalli, Antony of Lalgudi, Antonisamy of Nagapattinam, M.Antonisamy of Devadhanam, S.Antonisamy of Keelanaduvai, M.Arockiam of Poondi, Arulanandam of Manamadurai, Arulanandam of Velivayal, and Antony Dass, and A. Arockiasamy of Chennai struggled for the nation, as cadets of the Indian National Army. One could find some names in special units of the Indian National Army. M.Adaikalam of Pudukottai and Y.Arulanandu of Somalur served in Guerilla Regimental Unit No.I. Albert Sebastin of Madhavaram went to Germany to fight the nation serving in the same capacity. Arulsamy of Madurai committed himself by serving in the third Unit of the Guerrilla regiment and Arulappan of Kalpalayam in the Fifth Unit of INA.[77]

Apart from these persons, few other Christians struggled hard in the Indian Freedom Forward Unit of INA. Some of them were Albert from Kanjanakkanpatty, A.Antony from Madurai and M. Antony, from Viyasarbadi who worked in propaganda unit of INA in Burma. J.Antony from Chennai served as INA soldier in Singapore Segments. E.Arulanandhu from Karaikudi served in the Guerrilla Regiment Unit No.8, of Singapore Segment and R.Arockiam of Tiruppathur served in the Engineering Department of the same segment were some of the Christian patriots.[78]

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75. His photo as steering the military tank with his INA uniform on is attached in the appendix.
76. Personal Interview with Mr. Anandam, Christian freedom fighter, at Pollachi on 09th May 2010.
77. M.A. Xavier, op.cit, p. 93.
78. Who's Who of Freedom Fighters Tamil Nadu, Vol. III, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1973.

Conclusion

Through the committed involvement in the freedom struggle, along with other brothers and sisters of the soil, Indian Christians were able to inspire both the Christian community and others towards independence. Christian freedom fighters attracted other Christians by their commitment. They clarified doubts and sceptical outlook of their brethren about nationalism, particularly regarding religious fundamentalism. Additionally, they emphasised one's duty to the nation as a citizen, irrespective of their religion or social background were able to activate the political consciousness, which was dormant among the Christians.

Earlier, in a meeting held in Thoothukudi in 1930, a speaker Sri Varathachariyar from Srivaiguntam spoke, "We are first Indians. Only then we are Hindus or Muslims," but Masillamani came to the podium after him and explained to the audience that he was not in any way less patriotic than anybody in the land. He continued, "Religion and Politics are two different entities, which are not opposed to each other. Keeping our identity we should work for the liberation of the country. And whatever be our religious identity, be it Hinduism or Islam or Christianity, we should live in perfect harmony in India and work for the nation."[79] Thus, he had a clear perception of his identity and his duty for his motherland, at the same time. "Why should the Indian Catholic be less a Catholic for being more of an Indian? And merging himself in things Indian why should he lose his individuality as a Catholic?,"[80] asked the Christian intellectuals. This was also properly understood by the national leaders. Many Indian leaders publicly acknowledged the national spirit, which was surging among Christians. Rajaji said in December 1944: "Does not the nationalist world in India know that the Indian Christian Community has distinguished itself at every conference by giving the fullest support to the Nationalist Movement..."[81] The Catholic community leaders and people received commendable support from their spiritual heads. We can cite the instance of Rev. Dr Francis Tiburtius Roche SJ, the Bishop of Tuticorin[82] who boldly declared, "as an Indian I support the nation in all its legitimate aspirations."[83] Such patriotic statements by the spirit- filled leaders of the community inspired the Christian nationalists to commit themselves to the cause of the nation.

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79. Muthaiah, Manuscript, op.cit.,p. 9.
80. The Examiner, 6th September, 1930, p. 423.
81. George Thomas, op.cit., p.68.
82. Bishop Roche SJ was the first Indian Catholic of the Latin Rite and was appointed as the Bishop of Tuticorin in 1923.
83. The Examiner, Bombay 3rd October 1936.

As enthusiastic patriots, the Christian nationalists willingly participated in all the struggles and movements. As the National Movement gained momentum the participants from the Christian community also increased. The impressive list of the participants was spread all over the state. One could see their commitment from their readiness to sacrifice their lives and go to jail for the sake of the nation and freedom. Some patriots participated in other related struggles like toddy picketing and temple entry movement like Vaikom temple entry movement as they realised the importance of the fight for equality. Most of the Christian nationalists who eagerly participated in various struggles were educated persons.

The educated Christian elite with their secular education from Christian institutions, together with the early leaders of the Indian National Congress, took part in this process, particularly in working out the conceptual framework of nationalism in the formative stage (of the Congress). The Christian Education Institutions with their secular education and western liberal ideas, served as ideologues, intellectuals, professionals, and editors of journals for the struggle. They also stimulated many committed Indian Christian patriots, leaders and student nationalists across the country, particularly in South India. The seminal role of Christian institutions was evident in, a) providing a philosophical foundation for nationalism, b) initiating ideological debates on democratic principles, particularly, the right to self determination, c) upholding legitimate democratic demands of the Indians, d) instilling nationalist spirit among students, e) galvanizing and strengthening Christian patriotic leaders for passive and active resistance against the British Imperialism, and f) contributing to constitutional development of the democracy.[84]

84. *Cf. M. Arockiasamy Xavier, Christian Educational Institutions and National Awakening, Indian Historical Studies, ISSN. 0973-2713, St. Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli, Vol. XI. No.1st Oct. 2014, pp. 25-44.*



Contribution of Muslims in the Freedom Struggle

14

Contribution of Muslims in the Freedom Struggle

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The Muslims of Tamil Nadu are indigenous people. The vast majority of them are converts from other religions generations back. They are ethnically Dravidians. Tamil is their mother tongue. They are the second largest population in the province.[1] The Muslim society in Tamil Nadu is in the margin of understanding regarding their participation in Indian Freedom Struggle. It is either understudied or distorted and hence there is a need to situate them in the correct place. This paper is a discussion on the role of Muslims in Indian freedom struggle based on primary sources. The Muslim politics in Tamil Nadu has to be examined in its historical perspective. The Muslim population, here is heterogeneous, divided on the basis of language, culture, history and ethnicity. The broad, seeming divisions are the Urdu speaking Deccani Muslims and the Tamil speaking Muslims. Various social factors were at work in their interaction with each other in social and political affairs. However, the cultural differences were never a hindrance for them to join hands in national politics and as such the entire Muslim population in Tamil Nadu constitute a block, as Muslims of 'Tamil Nadu'.

1. *Census of India, 2011*

Prior to 1857

The political melody and economic tragedy in the 19th Century brought popular bitterness and manifested itself in a powerful reaction against the British rule with a mild political will. The local powers, the Poligars, were revolting against the Nawabs of Arcot from the 1750s, who were supported by British East India Company. It finally resulted in the South Indian Rebellion that lasted till 1801, stripping the powers of the Poligars and initiating the British rule from 1801. Some historians call such rebellion as 'First War of Independence'. There are a few references about some names of Muslim soldiers in the Poligar army who had participated in the rebellion. A notable Commander in Dindigul army, Shaik Hussain, was arrested and banished to Prince of Wales Island (Penang).[2] A number of Muslims had participated in the South Indian Rebellion as we hear from folk songs[3].



A series of protests were reported in the native regiments by the soldiers, among them Muslim soldiers were in considerable numbers. In 1775, the 9th battalion of the Madras army revolted. It was found by the authorities that Commander Magdum Sahib had instigated it. He was charged guilty of sedition and mutiny, and hanged at Vellore on 7 May 1784.[4] In 1796, the 35 battalion stationed at Madras was in an attempt of mutiny. The court martial found that Subedar Shaik Ibrahim, Subedar Gulam Mohideen, and Commander Shaik Mohamed were the ring leaders and they were punished.[5]

As general subject under the British rule, the Muslims were the first to rise against the British Government. Vellore, Madras and places around them became centres of anti-British activities. A section of Pan-Islamists and the Wahabis were behind such activities. Vellore swarmed with Fakirs, the Muslim mendicants, propagated secretly subversive doctrines against the British administration. Their

2. *K.Rajayyan, South Indian Rebellion- The First war of Independence 1800-1801, (Mysore,1971). P.274*
3. *J.Raja Mohamad, Muslims of Tamil Nadu in the Indian Freedom Struggle, Jamal Mohamed College, (Tiruchirappalli, 2019), p.19.*
4. *Tamilnadu Archives (TNA), Revenue Consultations, Vol.98, 8 November 1799, pp.2877-2884; Military Despatches to England, Vol. 33, p.668; Col. James Welsh, Military Reminiscences (Londen, 1830), Vol. I, pp. 133-134.*
5. *W.J.Wilson, History of Madras Army, vol. IV, (Madras, 1883), p.304*

network intruded into the military stations. [6]Seditious pamphlets were issued to the public in Vellore area and one Lathif Sahib was apprehended.[7] A Persian Newspaper Sulthana Akbar, was also being circulated.[8] A team under Haji Syed Amin travelled to Madurai and Tanjore to rouse the Muslims.[9] They were supported by the local brethren for raising men and money. [10]A significant early revolt, which had failed to get due treatment from historians, is the rebellion of Yusuf Khan at Madurai in the year 1763. For the first time, in the history of the British East India Company, a revolt was called as "independent" - a war towards independence. The repeated use of the word 'independent' for Khan's rebellion by the English themselves, gave it a claim, if all to be called, "as the first war of independence", a due honour, which had been refused.[11]



In 1806, the native sepoys of the regiment, particularly the Muslims, stationed at Vellore fort revolted.[12] The immediate cause for the spark was the new regulations on dress code. As the authorities failed to address the issues, the Tippu's family accommodated in the Vellore fort and their adherents cleverly exploited the situation.[13] Mohamed Jaffar, a sepoy in the Tippu's army was the first to advocate the idea of revolt among the sepoys. The revolt erupted suddenly on 10 July 1806, but in the long run it failed. The report of enquiry on the revolt said that the mutiny was spearheaded by the Muslim soldiers.[14]

Great Revolt – 1857

The uprising of 1857 in the army had its origin in the general discontent among the native soldiers over their ill treatment, and the general public joined to redress

6. *TNA. North Arcot District Records, Bundle 39 (3), Register 5, pp. 1-20, 11th March, 1839; Bundled 39 (2IVB), pp. 2167-8, 2nd March, 1839; Foreign Department Secret Consultations, No.23, 10th July 1839.*
7. *TNA.North Arcot District Records Bundle39 (21V B), pp.2121-4, 6th June, 1839.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid, Bundle 39(3), p.2126, 31st May 1839.*
10. *TNA. Foreign Department, Secret Consultations, No.20, July 1839.*
11. *S.Muthaiah, The Khan Sahib Rebellion, in, S.Gopalakrishnan (ed),South Indian Rebellion Before and after 1800, (Palaniappa, Chennai, 2007); J. Raja Mohamad, Muslims of Tamil Nadu, op.cit. pp.25-26.*
12. *P.Chinnaiyan, The Vellore Mutiny 1806, (Madras 1992), p.34.*
13. *TNA., Secret Sundries, Vol. 13, p.59.*
14. *TNA., Political Despatches to from. St. George, 29th May 1807.*

their grievances. There prevails a general impression that South India was unaffected by the uprising and is still silent about the Muslims' participation. However, the archival data of the period give a lot of information on the contribution of the Madras Presidency (the geographical area of the present South Indian States) in the important struggle in which the Indian communities, both Hindus and Muslims participated. The Muslims were in large numbers among the participants and the majority were punished.[15]

When the uprising broke out at Barrackpore, (West Bengal) on 31 March 1857, it was also felt in the Madras Presidency and Madras became an important centre of revolt. Secret meetings were held against the British administration in Vellore area and one Syed Kusa Mohamed Augusay Hussein was behind the secret activities and he was apprehended in March 1857. There was commotion among the public. Persons in the garb of fakirs were prevented from entering Madras city and the suspected Muslims were arrested. Sultan Baksh, a member of the Moghul royal family came to Chengalpet in July 1857 and held secret meetings with the leading Hindu and Muslim leaders in the area and their main target was to disrupt communication system by cutting telegraphic wires. Sultan Baksh was arrested on charges of treason and action was taken against the Muslims of the area for organising protest meetings.[16] There was a protest by the peasants in Ranipet called, 'Grain Riot' in February 1857 and in connection with this Mohideen Sahib was arrested and convicted.[17]

Triplicane, the former seat of Nawabs of Arcot became the pivot of the uprising. The sudden exit of Nawabs brought misery in the socioeconomic front of the people in and around Madras, The Muslims at Triplicane declared, "we are ready to fight against the firangis. They have let loose a reign of terror and treating us as slaves. We declare a war for our freedom and people should rise in rebellion". Important activists like Gulam Gouse and Shaik Munna were arrested on charge of treason and were transported for life to the Andamans.[18] The agitators in Pallavaram cut the telegraphic wires and among them were considerable number of Muslims. In Coimbatore one Shaik Abdullah was arrested for instigating violence. Syed Kasim and Shaik Imam were arrested in Cuddalore. There were disturbances in Salem and Hydar, a peon in Government service was apprehended for his seditious remarks on Union Jack.[19] At Chengalpet, Syed Hamid Jaleel Munshi an employee in the court

15. *J.Raja Mohamad, (2019), op.cit. p.31-33.*
16. *TNA., Madras Judicial Department, G.O. No. 1081/A. 30th September 1857; Judicial Consultations, No.71 of 1857, p.408.*
17. *TNA.,Judicial Consultations, dated 30.06.1857.*
18. *TNA.,Judicial Consultations, No. 16-9, February, 1858; N.Srinivasan, Viduthalai Poril Viyappoottum Nickazhchigal", (Alliance, Chennai, 1988), pp. 236-240; Madras Almanac, 1858, p.550.*
19. *TNA.,Judicial Consultations, 20.10.1857, 10.11.1857.*

collected revolutionary matters from various news organs and conveyed them to the soldiers and villagers in the area. He was arrested on charge of sedition and was sentenced to 7 years.[20]

In June 1857, the 8th Cavalry of Madras Brigade with a full strength of Muslim soldiers revolted during the camp at Sriperumpudur. They hoisted the green flag in the temple tower. The revolt was suppressed. Subedar Major Syed Peer, Subedar Syed Mohideen, and Havildar Major Shaik Hussain were court martialled and dismissed. Many of the soldiers were deported to the Andamans. One of the Soldiers, Shaik Ibrahim of Thanjavur was hanged.[21] Thus, the Muslims of Tamil Nadu had contributed their due share in the important uprising of 1857.

Early Phase

During the early phase of the national politics in the Tamil region of the Presidency, the descendant of Arcot Nawab, known as Prince of Arcot, Gulam Mohamed Ali and members of his family like Nawab Mohamed Habibulla and Mohamed Lathif Farooki were active in the local politics. Habibullah started a journal Muslim Herald to represent the views and grievances of the Muslims in the Presidency. Some merchant aristocratic elites like C. Abdul Hakim, who spoke Urdu, joined them. The British Government regarded them as the natural Muslim leaders in the Presidency. The masses far South of Madras were attracted less towards the political activities since a vast majority of them were traders of various kinds.

When the Indian National Congress was started in 1885, it seemed that it could not reach out to the Muslims and they were poorly represented in the first session. However, in the third session that was held in Madras in 1887, a number of Muslim delegates from various parts of the Presidency such as Heumayun Jah Bahadur, a prominent merchant and descendant of Tippu Sultan, Gulam Dasthagir Sahib, Khan Sahib Chinna Marakkayar, and V.M.Mohamed Gani Rawthar participated. Heumayun Jah was the patron of the session. In the succeeding 10 session in 1894, 14 in 1898, 19 in 1903, 24 in 1908 etc..., considerable number of Muslim delegates had participated in the national organization and the name list runs very long.[22]

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20. G.O.1127. Judicial Department, 1st September 1857.

21. TNA., Report of the Commander in Chief of the 8th Light Cavalry to the Governor in Council, August 1857;G.O. No.294 of 1857, Judicial Department, 3rd September, 1857.

22. The Encyclopaedia of Indian National Congress, (ed), Moin Zaidi and Shaheda Zaidi, (S.Chand and Co., New Delhi 1977) Vol. III pp.83-84; R.Sundarlingam, Politics and National National Awakening 1852-1891 (Arizona, 1974) P.273; Congress Centenary Souvenir 1885-1995 (Chairman 1985), p.163; S.Diwan, Viduthalai Poril Thamilaga Muslimgal, (Palayamkottai, 1994).

When the Muslim League was formed in 1906, with the objective to protect and advance the political rights of Muslims, the Muslims of the Presidency also joined the organization. The League branch was started in the Presidency in 1908. Gulam Mohamed Ali, the Prince of Arcot was elected as its President. The presidentship of Nawab of Arcot attracted a sizeable number of Muslims. The separate electorate for Muslims, an achievement of the League become an added attraction. Many of the Muslims were members in both Congress and the League.[23] However, Congress and League had opposite ideologies and drifted apart, but came into a single platform to oppose the British Government, after the signing of the Lucknow Pact in 1913, by which the Congress accepted the separate electorate scheme to the Muslims.[24]

The Muslims participated in the Home Rule Movement of Annie Besant, in 1916, at various districts like North Arcot, Chengalpattu, Thanjavur, etc. Leading Muslim Leaders such as Madurai Maulana and Vellore Obeithullah were active supporters of Annie Besant.[25] In such a national political scenario, the majority of the Muslim population in the southern districts of the Presidency were drawn into the national politics when the Khilafat Movement was started.[26] Thus, the Muslims of the Presidency were drawn into national politics in stages and gathered momentum from 1920s and it continued till the attainment of independence.

Khilafat and Non-Co-operation Movement

In the First World War, Turkey was defeated and the empire was dismembered and divided among the western nations, with Britain at the head. The Khalifat, the ruler of Turkey, who was considered as the spiritual and temporal head of the Sunni Muslims all over the world, by tradition, lost his authority. Agitation in India, in support of Turkey for the restoration of the pre-war status was known as 'Khilafat Movement'. Britain promised to look into the grievance, but actually did not attend to. Maulana Mohamed Ali championed the cause of Khilafat and the agitation was growing strong.[27]

Gandhiji and Congress espoused the Khilafat Movement as their own. Gandhiji felt that it will promote Hindu-Muslim unity. Gandhiji was elected as the President of the Khilafat Conference on 24 November 1919. The non-co-operation and Khilafat Movements found a meeting ground in him and he became the celebrated leader. The sympathisers of both the Congress and Muslim League supported the Khilfat

23. *J.B.P.More, The Political Evolution of Muslims of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1930-1947. (Orient andlongman , Chennai, 1977), p.35.*
24. *Peter Heehs, op.cit. p.75*
25. *TNA., F.N.R., 15th March, 1918*
26. *J.B.P.More, op.cit. p.47*
27. *J.Raja Mohamad. op.cit. pp.52-53.*

cause. The Punjab-Jallianwalla-Bagh and Khilafat wrongs led to the genesis of non-co-operation Movement.

Agitation intensified and protest meetings were held at Madras under the leadership of Yakub Hasan Sait, a member of Madras Legislative Council and Abdul Majid Sharar the editor of news organ Quami Report. Hindus in large numbers participated in such meetings. The Justice Party also supported the Khilafat cause.[28] Rajaji befriended the Muslims and joined hands with Yakub Hasan Sait. Rajaji's influence brought more number of Hindus into the fold of Khilafat agitation.[29] The first Khilafat Day was observed in the Presidency on 17 October 1919 and all the shops in Madras were closed. In the evening, a meeting was held under the presidentship of Abdul Kudus Basha, about 20,000 people Hindus and Muslims - participated. Hartal was observed in many places all over the Presidency.[30] Again a hartal was observed in March 1920.[31]

In April 1920, the Khilafat Conference was held at Madras under the presidentship of Shoukath Ali, who declared in fierce tone, "If conciliation failed to resolve the Khilafat matter, we will start a non-co-operation Movement under the guidance of Gandhiji". Gandhiji had already declared that non-co-operation was the effective remedy. The conference also announced the important features of non-co-operation Movement. 1) to renounce all honorary posts and titles, 2) to boycott the educational institution by students, 3) to give up all remunerative posts under government service, 4) to give up appointments in police and military and 5) to refuse to pay taxes to the Government.[32]

In November 1920, the Jamait-ul-Ulema issued a fatwa (a formal ruling in Islamic law) declaring non-co-operation as the duty and asked the Muslims to follow the path of Gandhiji. This had a good effect and a large number of Muslims were readily willing to join the non-co-operation Movement. Young Muslims became good propagandists in favour of the programme. The participation of the Ulemas in the national awakening and joining hands with Hindus gave a death blow to the Divide and Rule policy of the English. The Hindus and Muslims realised the strength of unity, mutual trust, and co-operation. The third Khilafat day was observed on 1 August 1920.[33]

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28. *FNR, 19th October, 1919. (Fortnightly Report on Internal Political Situation)*
29. *J.Raja Mohamad, op.cit. pp.56-57.*
30. *FNR, October 20, 1919.*
31. *FNR, March 18, 1920.*
32. *32.The Hindu, 21st April 1920; Under Secretary Secret Files - USSF. No.302, 21st April 1920; C.I.D. report, No.831-A, 19th April,1920.*
33. *USSF., No. 307A, 3 December 1920; Desabaktan, 2 August 1920;Swedesamitran, 4th-8th August 1920.*

Gandhiji and Shoukat Ali visited Madras in August 1920. Gandhiji addressed a meeting and expressed his solidarity on Khilafat affairs and requested the Muslims' co-operation for the effective implementation of Non-co-operation Movement. Gandhiji also visited Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Nagore and Salem. Muslims and Hindus accorded him a rousing reception. Muslim women in large numbers gathered for the meetings. A number of prominent Muslims announced to give up their honorary titles, in the presence of Gandhiji.[34]

Tiruchirappalli was an active centre of Khilafat Movement. Under the direction of Rajaji, T.S.Rajan, and T.S. Swaminatha Sastri, with the assistance of Khajamian Rawther, Syed Murtaza, and V.S. Mohamed Ibrahim organised protest meetings. When Gandhiji visited Tiruchirappalli on 18 August, Muslims gathered in large numbers to greet him. Muslims in the District signed the non-co-operation Declaration expressing their willingness to join the movement. A significant volunteer was Rahamath Bivi, who was arrested and imprisoned for six months. There were increased number of resignations from honorary offices by Muslims. Mohamed Ismail (later - Quaid-e-Millath) gave up his college studies to join the movement. Yakub Hasan Sait resigned from Legislative Council. His wife organised Women Khilafat Committee.[35]

Though, generally, the Khilafat agitation was peaceful, the government followed a repressive policy and Khilafat volunteers and leaders were arrested and imprisoned after a mock trial. Yakub Hasan Sait and Abdul Majeed Sharar were arrested for Khilafat propaganda. Madurai Haji Mohamed Maulana Sahib was arrested at Tirukkattupalli in Thanjavur on 23 March 1921, for his speech in the Khilafat Conference.[36] Gandhiji again visited Madras in September 1921. After meetings in Madras, he went to Tiruchirappalli on 19 September 1921. A grand reception was given to him in the railway station under the leadership of Khajamian Rawthar. P.Kalifullah, Municipal Chairman and Syed Murtaza gave an address of welcome. Gandhiji spoke in support of the Khilafat in the meetings. There was a big turnout of Muslims at Kumbakonam and Thirunelveli for his meetings.[37]

Because of the violent incidents in Chauri Chaura in Uttar Pradesh, on 5 February 1922, Gandhiji suspended the Non-co-operation programme. Muslims and Hindus did not like the sudden stoppage. The Khilafat leaders and volunteers continued their agitation in the Presidency and requested the support of the Hindu brethren. The Khilafat movement lost its vitality when Turkey was constituted as

34. *A Ramasamy, Tamilnattil Gandhi, (Chennai 1969), p.278; pp.280-81; 287-88.*
35. *FNR, 4th October, 1920.*
36. *FNR, 1st November, 1921; The Madras Mail, 19th December, 1921; HMF, 1st November, 1921; J.Raja Mohamad, op.cit. p.78.*
37. *A.Ramasamy, op.cit. pp.360-362; The Hindu 20th September, 1921.*

a Republic in 1923 and in early 1924, when the office of Khalifat was abolished by Mustafa Kemal Pasha, the Premier of Turkey.[38] Khilafat and non-co-operation Movement - (1919-1923) are landmarks in the history of freedom struggle, during which Hindus and Muslims sunk all their differences and submerged themselves in the tide of nationalism and sent a strong message to the Government that it could no longer resist the spirit of time.

Nationalistic Struggles (1923-1930)

Nagpur Flag Satyagraha

The Nagpur Flag Satyagraha was a sequel to the objection of the police in Nagpur - Maharashtra to carry the national flag and hence a non-violent struggle was inaugurated, known as Flag Satyagraha, at Nagpur in April 1923.[39] The nationalists in Nagpur were arrested and imprisoned for carrying the national flag. The news spread like a wild fire and galvanised the people and the Nagpur Flag Satyagraha developed into a National Movement. The Congress took up the matter and appealed to organise processions carrying national flag and to send volunteers from all parts of the country to Nagpur to support the struggle.[40]

In support of Nagpur Flag Satyagraha, processions and public meetings were held in various places in the Presidency, observing 18 July 1923[41] as Flag Day. The first batch of 16 volunteers was sent to Nagpur on 23 June from Madurai. Sandal powder merchant Adam Sahib was among them and was arrested and sentenced for nine months. The other Muslims who were sentenced for participating in the Satyagraha were Babu Sahib of Madurai who served for six months, P.Mohidin Khan of Dindigul, who served for a year and Mohidin Sahib for two months. Syed Hussain and his wife Mariam bivi from Tiruchirappalli were sentenced to six months and sent to Cuddalore jail. The list of Muslims of the Presidency who participated in the Nagpur Satyagraha runs still very long.[42]

Boycott of Simon Commission

The British government had appointed a Commission, to study the need for constitutional reforms in India, under the chairmanship of John Simon. All its members were British. Congress and other parties decided to boycott the Commission. The Commission visited Bombay on 3 February 1920. A hartal was organised throughout the country in protest. At Madras, under the chairmanship

38. *FNR., 1st September 1923; 19th November;J.Raja Mohamad, op.cit. pp.7*
39. *FNR., May 27, 1923.*
40. *HFM. file(History of Freedom Movement file)- No. 108. p.3 (TNA)*
41. *Swadesamitran, June 28, 1923; The Hindu, 2nd July 1923.*
42. *Freedom Fighters in Tamil Nadu who is who –Silver Jubilee-1973, in three volumes, Published by the Government of Tamil Nadu- vol.No. I, pp.367-436.*

of S. Satyamurti, Basheer Ahamed Sayeed, Yakub Hasan Sait, and Hamid Khan a hartal was organised. A large number of Muslims responded enthusiastically. Muslim students boycotted educational institutions.[43] Protest meetings were organised in many places like Thanjavur, Kumbakonam and Madurai by Muslims particularly young people and students. The Commission's second visit to Madras in February 1929 was also met with hostility with the slogan 'Simon Go Back'. The campaign was successful with Muslim participation.[44]

Neil Statue Satyagraha

Col. James George Smith Neil, the British General, took part in the suppression of the great uprising of 1857 in Allahabad, Varanasi, and Lucknow. Hundreds of people were hanged and many villages were destroyed along with their inhabitants. Neil was shot dead by the nationalist rebels on 25 September 1857. The British Government decorated him with the highest military honours. His friends in Madras, with the support of the Governor General, installed a colossal statue of Neil in bronze, made in London, at Mount Road (near present Spencer) Madras on 24 August 1861.[45]

The country was throbbing with contemptuous sentiments against Neil and wanted to keep away the statue from public view. The Muslim members of the legislature presented a petition to the Governor for the removal of the statue. The nationalist volunteers launched a Satyagraha campaign in 1927. An idea of demolishing the statue was conceived at Madurai and Mohamed Saliah and Subbarayalu arrived at Madras on 11 August 1927 and broke the sheath of the sword in the statue. They were arrested and sentenced to six months of rigorous imprisionment.[46] The other Muslim volunteers who emboldened to deface the statue were S.M.Aziz a scent merchant in Madras, Kasim Rowthar, a blacksmith from Rameswaram, and Mohamed Hussain of Pantruti; later they were imprisoned.[47] The Muslim members of the Madras Legislative Council, Basheer Ahamed Syeed, Uppi Sahib, and Abdul Hamid Khan tabled a resolution on 21 October 1927 to remove the statue, but the motion was lost as the ruling Justice Party opposed it.[48] After a prolonged struggle the statue was removed and shifted to Madras Government Museum on 19 November 1937 by Rajaji's Government.[49]

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43. *HFM. file, No.108, p.22; Madras Administration Report, 1927, p.XV.*
44. *The Hindu 24th February 1928;Chidambara Bharathi, Madurai Zilla Thiagigal Malar, (Madurai 1948), p.39.*
45. *TNA., Government of Tamil Nadu,Select Document Series, Neil Statue Satyagraha – 1986; Saroja Sundarrajan, March to Freedom in Madras Presidency 1916-1947 (Madras 1989), pp.415-416; Neil Statue Satyagraha file, op.cit. 1986, p.19.*
46. *FNR, Government of Madras, 16th August 1927; HFMF., Bundle 108 pp.7-8.*
47. *G.O.No.248. Public Department 13th March 1928.*
48. *Madras Legislative Council Proceedings, vol. xxxvi.*
49. *G.O. MS. 2602. dated 13th November 1937; and G.O. No. 2391 dated 17.11.1937.*

Civil Disobedience Movement

The Civil Disobedience Movement was launched by the Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji in February 1930. It was characterised by defying Salt Law, boycott of foreign cloth and British goods, and picketing of liquor and toddy shops. Gandhiji began a march to Dandi on 12 March 1930 to defy the Salt Law. Rajaji headed the movement in Madras Presidency. Muslims supported this nationalistic aspiration. On 13 April 1930, Rajaji began the salt satyagraha march to Vedaranyam along with 100 volunteers who were selected from Madurai, Madras, Tirunelveli, Ramnad and Salem Districts.[50] The Government notified that the participation of the Muslims in the Vedaranyam march was negligible.[51] In fact, a large number of Muslims had participated in the salt satyagraha. The plan of Vedaranyam march was finalised by Rajaji at Madurai, in consultation with leaders like A.Vaithyanatha Iyer, Subburaman and Mohamed Maulana Sahib. 24 volunteers were selected from Madurai region alone, among them were six Muslims and they started by train well in advance to Tiruchirappalli before the commencement of the march and they were taken in a procession led by Haji Mohamed Maulana Sahib.[52]

The march started from Tiruchirappalli on 13 April 1930 and arrived at Srirangam and the Muslims received them warmly with the recitation of Holy Quran. The Muslims in the route welcomed the satyagrahis and demonstrated their solidarity and support. When the satyagrahis reached Ayyampettai on 18 April and Papanasam on 19 April, the streets were decorated and wore a festive Look. The Muslims of Rajagri, Pandaravadai, Kumbakonam, Valangaiman, Thopputhurai etc., provided all facilities to the satyagrahis and presented them with purses of money.[53] Haji Mohamed Moulana Sahib accompanied the satyagrahis and participated in the meetings at Kumbakonam and Nidamangalam, and was arrested.[54]

Rajaji defied the salt law and scraped the salt from the salt pan at Agasthiampalli near Vedaranyaman on 30 April and was arrested. The campaign lasted for about one and a half months. Entire band of volunteers were arrested in May, among them were S.BawaMohideen of Madurai, Atchi Batcha Rawthar of Thirumangalam, S.H.A.Rahman, Melur, Syed Ibrahim of Dindigal, Aliyar Sait of Adirampattinam, Abdul Kader of Thirumullaivasal, etc. They were imprisoned for various periods.[55] Thus, the records shed much light on the participation of the Muslims and their

50. *FNR., First Half of April 1930; SarojaSundarrayan, op.cit. p.465.*
51. *Civil Disobedience Movement (Madras) File, 1929-30 (TNA).*
52. *Swadesamitran, April 11, 1930; M.A.Sathar, Thiagi Madurai Maulana, Madurai 2005) pp. 20-23.*
53. *USSF.,No. 687/May 31, 1930, p.39.*
54. *District Calendar of Events of Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930-31, Madras, p.138 (TNA).*
55. *USSF. No.878/ 1930, p.39.*

support. However, it is surprising that not even a single name of Muslim satyagrahi was included in the list of one hundred volunteers in the role of honour accorded by the Congress on Vedaranyam salt satyagraha.[56] On 13 April 1930, T.Prakasam led the volunteers to Madras Triplicane beach to defy the salt law in which K.Obeithullah of Vellore actively participated. He was arrested and sentenced to 18 months of imprisionment.[57] Several Muslim volunteers had participated in the satyagraha in Madras.

The picketing of foreign cloth shops was launched in Madras. Many of the dealers in foreign cloth were Muslims. They were afraid that the very foundation of their economic activity would be shaken by the agitation. However, a large number of Muslim traders accepted to stop the import of foreign cloth.[58] In the southern part of the Presidency, the picketing of foreign cloth shops was vigorous. The Muslims of the Madurai region organized picketing and collected foreign cloth materials and burnt them in public. Such incidents were reported in many other places also, with Muslims in the forefront.[59] Madurai took up a leading part in the campaign against liquor shops. It was organized by Haji Mohamed Maulana Sahib. Muslim women also participated. On 17 July 1930, the police in Madurai opened fire on the Satyagrahis. Satyagrahi Kadar Batcha died in the firing. Muslim volunteers were arrested in large numbers and jailed. Muslims participated in the toddy shop picketing at Kombai, Periyakulam, Dindigul, Namakkal etc. Meetings were organised in mosques in support of Civil Disobedience Movements.[60]

Khadar movement was launched to popularise khadar (khadi) and was supported by Muslims. They encouraged the people to wear khadar. Some Ulemas declared that the marriages of grooms in khadar clothes alone will be solemnized by them. Muslim nationalists like K.R.Mohamed Ismail, Thanga Meeran of Uthamapalayam and Madurai Maulana took up the message of khadar to the masses. Muslim philanthropists like Haji Karutha Rawthar of Uthamapalayam procured khadar and distributed them to the poor. Tiruchirappalli became a centre for propagating the use of Khadar. Peer Mohamed Pavalar, a former police officer in the British service gave up his job in support of the Civil Disobedience Movement and toured the District propagating the use of khadar and the evils of drinking. Awareness meeting about khadi was held at various places like Karur, Musiri, Ariyalur, Thuraiyur, Kulithalai,

56. *Report of Hussain Khan District Magistrate, Chengulpet, 4th June 1930 (TNA); AICC papers file No. G. 116/1930, Tamil Nadu Satyagraha Report, 16th June 1930.*
57. *USS.F. No. 683-C, 2nd July 1930*
58. *Madras Administration Report 1930-31, p.xiii.*
59. *Swadesamitran, 19th September 1930.*
60. *C.J.Baker, The Politics of South India, 1920-1937 (New Delhi 1976), pp.213-214; The Hindu 19th July 1930; District Calander of events On civil Disobedience movement 1930-1931, pp.137-140.*



etc., in which Muslims participated in large numbers. One of the founders of Jamal Mohamed College, Tiruchirappalli, Khajamian Rawthar, had established a factory at a cost of Rs.50,000/- to manufacture khadar cloth and he sold it at a cheaper rate and distributed free of cost to the poor students.[61]

The Civil Disobedience Movement was suspended in May 1933. Gandhiji asked the individuals to take up satyagraha in which a large number of Muslims participated.[62] When Gandhiji visited Madras in February 1934, Muslims gave him a grand reception, and a large crowd of Muslim women also gathered to greet him. Purses with money were presented to him in many places like Periyakulam, Theni, Sinnamanur, Uthamapalayam and there is a record of this event, with the names of many philanthropic Muslims who presented large sums to Gandhiji for the cause of the national struggle, like Jamal Mohamed, one of the founders of the Jamal Mohamed College, Tiruchirappalli, who gave a blank cheque to Gandhiji to fill up the amount that he liked.[63] The names of Muslims who were arrested and imprisoned in connection with Civil Disobedience Movement runs very long,[64] and it reveals their participation in the national struggle.

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61. J.Raja Mohamad, op.cit. p.102 and Particulars collected from the family records in possession of Khajamian Rawthar family.

62. Saroja Sundarrajan, op.cit. p.495.

63. A.Ramasamy, pp.740-763, Particulars collected from the family records of Jamal Mohamed family.

64. Gandhiji (Triweekly Magazine) from25.12.1932 to 07.05.1933; J.Raja Mohamad, op.cit. 198-200, Freedom Fighters who is who, Vol.1,11.

1935 to 1941

In the 1937 elections, though the performance of the Muslim League was appreciable, Congress was voted to power with a majority.[65] An interim ministry of the Congress was formed. It lasted for a few months in which P. Kalifullah, a Leaguer was included. In July 1937, the Congress ministry came up with Rajagopalachari as Prime Minister. Yakub Hasan Sait was included in the ministry. In 1941, Muslim League demanded a separate State for Muslims, Pakistan. However, many of Muslim leaders like Vellore Obeithullah, Madurai Maulana, Jamal Mohamed, Syed Murtaza, S.A.Rahim, and Basheer Ahamed Sayeed were against the Pakistan scheme.

In spite of Pakistan's demand and other issues, the Muslims participated in the agitations of national importance like individual satyagraha, no tax campaign, and anti-war propaganda. A large number of Muslims were arrested and imprisoned.[66] Above all the Muslims showed their mass support to the call of Gandhiji in 1942.The Muslims had cultivated ties with Self Respect Movement of E.V.Ramasamy Naickar from its inception in 1925. The Self Respect Movement supported the demands of the Muslims and the Muslim League. The movement sowed the seeds of Dravidian consciousness among Muslims and they realized that it will be a factor to defend their future in political and cultural activities.[67] E.V. Ramasamy Naickar became the President of the Justice Party in 1938. [68, 69]

Quit India Movement

The Quit India Movement was launched on 8 August 1942, demanding the immediate withdrawal of British from India. To achieve this, Congress launched a non-violent movement under the leadership of Gandhi. Gandhi and other prominent leaders were arrested. The Congress organisation was declared unlawful. On the other hand, the Muslim League concluded Pakistan as the only solution to safeguard the rights of the Indian Muslims and its religious dimension had an impact on the Presidency's Muslims. Though the issue of Pakistan was rousing their tender feelings, but they weighed more on Gandhi, and a sizeable population extended their support to the Quit India Movement.[70]

On the arrest of national leaders including Gandhi, the Hindus and Muslims resented and were keen to participate in the August Revolution. Students, labourers,

65. *Madras Mail 17th April, 1937.*
66. *FNR., January – June 1941; Swadesamitran 10.05.1941.*
67. *FNR., January – June 1938*
68. *FNR., Second Half of December 1938*
69. *Vidithalai, 9th August 1939*
70. *J.Raja Mohamad, op.cit. pp.131-132.*

and the general public intensified the agitation. Railway stations, public offices, police stations, and communication systems were violently targeted by the agitators throughout the Presidency. There were police firing in many places and many were killed.[71]

Muslim participation in Quit India Movement was considerable. In Madurai, hartal and protest meetings were organised and Mohamed Maulana Sahib who was the Municipal Vice-Chairman played an important role. The Tamil weekly 'Indian', edited by Syed Ismail posted the slogan 'Whiteman Quit'. A number of Muslims also participated in the agitation.[72] Gulam Mohideen, a student of American College, mobilised the students and all of them were arrested.[73] Karimudeen a student of Annamalai University was arrested.[74] In Coimbatore, the mill workers struck work under the leadership of Abdul Majeeth and A.K.Abdul Rahim and were arrested under D.I.R. Abdul Sathar of Dindigul mobilised the students and the public for the agitation and was arrested several times.[75]

In Tiruchirappalli district, the Quit India Movement gained wide support from the public and students. The agitators planned to blast the Tiruchirappalli Radio Station and Taluk office at Jayakondacholapuram, but it was foiled by the police. The mastermind behind it, Kadar Khan of Jayakondacholapuram was arrested. In Karur, the satyagraha was organised by Nanna Sahib. His pregnant wife Piyari Bivi also participated in the agitation and was arrested. Nanna Sahib was the brain behind the Pugalur train derailment on 16 August 1942. His brother-in-law Bajan Sahib, participated in the agitation along with his wife.[76] Thus, archival sources throw much light on the role of Muslims in the Quit India Movement in various districts and a large number of them were arrested and imprisoned. The Congress Nationalist Muslim leaders vehemently criticised the creation of Pakistan. Leaders like K. Obeithullah, S.A.Rahim, Madurai Maulana Sahib and Syed Murthaza were instrumental in conducting an 'Anti-Separation' conference at Kumbakonam, in June 1941 and they passed a resolution against the partition of India.[77]

A number of news papers were published by Muslims in Tamil and Urdu in support of the national struggle. A few among them are Siphul Islam (1910), Al-

71. *The Madras Mail, 14th August 1942.*
72. *District Calender of Events 1942, p.108 (TNA); G.O.No.2. Public General, January 1, 1943; F.N.R., 25th September 1942.*
73. *G.O.No. 461, Home Department, December 15, 1942.*
74. *G.O.No. 767, Public Confidential, 07.08.1942.*
75. *G.O. No. 1909, Public Confidential, 01.09.1942.*
76. *G.O.No. 2559, Public Confidential, 15.09.1942; Letter dated 07.09.1942 from the District Superintendent of Police to the District Magistrate – Quit India Movement File (TNA).*
77. *The Madras Mail, 9th June 1941.*

Hilal (1906), Bharatha Kesari (1936), Samarasam (1937) and Mussalman (1923). Archival records testify that the editors of such papers were imprisoned often and hence many of them short lived.[78]

Indian National Army (INA)

The contribution of the Muslims in the Indian National Army (INA) of Nethaji was very significant. Among the soldiers from Presidency's Tamil region, 10% were Muslims. In the 20-member ministry of Nethaji's Azad Hind Government formed in Singapore, Karim Gani belonging to Sothukudi in Tamil Nadu was part of M.J.Khaleelur Rahman, a native of Pallapatti in Karur district was in charge of the propaganda wing of INA in Saigon. Datho Than Shri Ubaithulla of Rajagiri in Thanjavur District championed the cause of the Indian freedom struggle through a radio station in Jakarta.[79] Mohamed Abdul Kadar an INA sepoy was hanged in Madras jail on 10 September 1945. Shahul Hamid, another sepoy was hanged in Delhi Red Fort on 23 August 1945.[80] The Muslims of Tamil Nadu had contributed a lot to the struggle spearheaded by INA and there is a long list of names in the records who served in INA, arrested and imprisoned.[81]

On the Eve of Independence

The British decided, in February 1947, to transfer the power to Indians. Lord Mountbatten was sent to wind up the British rule in India. The All India Congress Committee by a resolution on 14 June 1947 accepted the partition proposal and Gandhi also gave his consent. Two independent dominions Pakistan and India were born in August 1947. Pakistan became independent on 14 with Mohammad Ali Jinnah as President and India on 15 with Jawaharlal Nehru as Prime Minister.[82]

Though the Muslims of the Presidency's Tamil region - Tamil Nadu - were far away geographically, the idea of Pakistan gained a wide currency among them. At the same time, they expressed their Indianness and Dravidian identity by staying back to be a part of new India. Mohamed Ismail (Quaid-e-Millath), the President of the Muslim League appealed to the Muslims to join hands with Congress and other friends to celebrate Independence Day on 15 August 1947, and declared, "we are joining the Independence Day celebrations, not in any compulsion, but as free citizens

78. *A.M.Sami, Tamil Islamia Idhazhgal (Chennai, 1997).*
79. *R.C.Majumdar, Struggle for Freedom (Bharathia Vidya Bhavam Mumbai, 2003) p.682; K.MohamedAbdus Salam Jamali, Karim Gani (Rah) (Thiruvarankurichi 1992) pp. 29-39; Maulana M.J.Khaleelur Rahman, 'Sudamdirapporil Enn Pangu' in,Centenary Souvenir of Bhakiath Arabic College (Vellore 1974).*
80. *K.Dirawiam, 'Delhi Senkottai Visaranai' (Chennai 1964), pp.148-150.*
81. *Who is who freedom fighters,op.cit. Vol. II pp.159-447.*
82. *Saroja Sundarrajan, op.cit. pp. 620-636.*

of free Independent Indian Union."[83] The Muslims celebrated Independence Day with gaiety in all the towns and villages of the Presidency and adapted themselves to the new political climate to live in peace and harmony and to achieve their aspiration and attain progress in the post-1947 India and to ascertain their identity.

The foregoing short accounts of the Muslims of Tamil Nadu will show their participation in the Indian Freedom Struggle. A glance at the long list of Muslims and their leaders, as found in the archival sources, who participated and sacrificed their lives, will demonstrate their role in achieving Indian independence. The services of leaders like Madurai Mohamed Maulana, Vellore Obeithullah, Mohamed Ismail Jamal Mohamed, Khajamian Rawthar, Syed Murtaza, Yakub Hasan Sait, P.Kalifullah, Haji Karutha Rawthar, Justice Basheer Ahamed Sayeed, C.Abdul Hakim, Peer Mohamad Pavalar, S.A.Rahim, Abdul Majeed Sharar, Abdul Lathief Farooki, or a few that deserve special mention.

83. *FNR. first half of August 1947.*


வீரமைவர் பாதமாந்தர்
வெல்க ஐக்கியம்
வெல்க சுதந்தியம்!

15

The Pro-Gandhian Attitude of European Elites in the Civil Disobedience Movement in Tamil Nadu 1930 - 1932

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Gandhian strategy has influenced not only the people of India but also the Europeans. Gandhi studied the psychology of the Indians by making an extensive tour covering the entire nation, from 1915 to 1927 and again between 1933 and 1934. Thereby he came to know their minds that were then systematically admitted to their sub-conscious mind to support his nationalist venture. Irked by this, the British launched invariably a variety of preventive measures to sideline the Gandhian strategy to get freedom for the nation from them[1]. However, Gandhi and his fellow congressmen never minded about the draconian attitude of the British and extended their full support to each and every anti-British activity in a virulent manner.

1. *V.Venkatraman, Prescribed Press and Political Literature under the British Raj, 1910– 1935, Rajapalayam, 2009, pp 16-32.*

The consistent support extended by the Indians towards the earlier movements such as the Champaran, Kheda and Ahemadabad satyagrahas, Rowlatt satyagraha, and the non-co-operation movement continue deven after suspending the non-co-operation movement because the violence exhibited by the sathyagrahis at Chauri-Chaura on 5 February 1922[2]. Gandhi without consulting other senior leaders of Congress, suspended the non-co-operation programme, and took up the responsibility of the crime committed by the Congress volunteers. This incident resulted in the arrest of Gandhi. The massive movement of Gandhi abruptly came to an end all over India[3].

The term 'non-violence' was the magic spell of the period when Gandhi suspended the movement; it was truly accepted by the majority of Indians. A few hundreds of the followers of C.R.Dass, the founder of the Swaraj party in January 1923 opposed the pre-mature closure of the movement. Nevertheless, majority of the people of India supported Gandhi. After the release of Gandhi in 1924, he mainly concentrated on his constructive programmes for which he toured all over India to gain support[4].

Gandhi's participation in Laho resession of Indian National Congress in December 1929 witnessed a major change in his political philosophy. Gandhi accepted a yearlong demand of youth Congress leaders like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Subash Chandra Bose to start another nation-wide non-co-operation movement. Lord Irwin was unturned to the expectation of Gandhi. Thereby, Gandhi announced his new plan of action by launching the Civil Disobedience movement as per the decision taken in the Lahore Congress session in December 1929[5].

On that occasion, Gandhi appealed to the Congressmen to celebrate January 26 1930 as the Independence Day and introduced his Eleven Points Programme. Gandhi's Eleven Points programme raised a storm of indignation not only in the Indian press, but also in the British press.[6] In February 1930, the Congress Working Committee met at Sabarmati Ashram to draft the Civil Disobedience Programme. Gandhi said "Civil Disobedience is sometimes a peremptory demand on love… it is the only non-violent escape from its soul–destroying heart…" Gandhi was contemplating on some methods for attacking this nefarious monopoly of the British in India[7].

2. *G.Venkatesan, History of Freedom Struggle in India, Coimbatore,1985, pp.243-245*
3. *B.M.Tanuk, Non Co-operation Movement in Indian Politics 1919 – 1924, Delhi, 1979, pp. 118-119.*
4. *V.Venkatraman, Freedom Movement in Rajapalayam, 1905-1947, (T) Rajapalayam, 1998, pp. 28-30.*
5. *Indian Administrative Report, 1930, Vol.I, Delhi,1931, p.17*
6. *The Sudandhira Sangu, Madras, 3rd February 1930*
7. *D.G.Tendulkar, Mahatma – Life of Mohan Das Karam Chand Gandhi, Vol-III, New Delhi, 1992, p.20*

At the same meeting of Congress Working Committee, on the basis of his Eleven Points, he launched a programme called 'Salt Satyagraha' as a token programme of Civil Disobedience Movement. Gandhi decided to start the movement against the British policy of levying tax on the purchase of salt. Gandhi selected the venue to breach the Salt Tax at Dandi, formally lighthouse but now a deserted village on the seacoast, two hundred miles from the Sabarmati ashram[8].

Gandhi after a long scrutiny of applications, finally selected 79 satyagrahis who hailed from Punjab, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Kutch, Sind, Kerala, Rajaputana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Bengal, Nepal and Fiji. Among the 79 volunteers, Gandhi included two Muslims, one Christian and the rest were Hindus including two Dalits[9]. By having this troop, Gandhi commenced the satyagraha march, popularly known as Dandi March on 11 March, 1930. The Satyagrahis were welcomed gracefully by the villagers up to Dandi beach. They reached Dandi on 5 April, 1930[10]. On 6 April 1930, Gandhi along with 74 of volunteers proceeded to these ashore and took ceremonial dip in the sea, broke the Salt law exactly at 6.30 p.m. On that day, they broke the salt law by picking a lump of natural salt from a small pit[11].Thus, Gandhi began the Civil Disobedience Movement officially with the Satyagrahis.

Gandhi, after breaking the Salt Law, issued a statement that every Indian who could take the risk of prosecution under the Salt Act, could manufacture salt in their respective regions. The clarion call of Gandhi was uniformly adopted by the people in a vivid manner. In the Madras Presidency, salt marches were organised at the Marina beach in Madras (later/now Chennai) by the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee on 22 April, 1930[12] and the Tami-l Nadu Provincial Congress Committee under Rajagopalchari organised the salt Satygraha march from Trichy to Vedaranyam beach on 13 April, 1930 on the Gandhian model by taking about 180 kilometres to reach Vedaranyam with 100 Satyagrahis selected from Tamil Nadu. They reached Vedaranyam on 28 April 1930[13].

On 27 April 1930, the Andhra Congress leaders T.Prakasam and K.Nageswara Rao were arrested at Marina beach while manufacturing salt on the beach[14]. On 29 April, 1930, Rajagopalachari and other prominent leaders broke the salt law and

8. *Home (Political) File No.15/IV,1930,NAI*
9. *D.G.Tendulkar, Op-cit., p.21*
10. *Home (Political) File No.15/IV,1930,NAI*
11. *V.Venkatraman, Towards Independence…!, Rajapalayam 2007,p.85*
12. *Reporton the Administration o f Madras Presidency, 1929-1930, Madras,1931, pp.xv-xvi*
13. *V.Venkatraman (ed.), Sudandira Sangu and Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930-1933, Rajapalayam, 2003, pp.8-10.*
14. *Fortnightly Report, Confdl., First Half of May1930.*

were arrested there[15]. Between 1 April and 30 December, 1930 the British opened fire on crowds 16 times in the Madras Presidency; 13 of these incidents were in Tamil Nadu. The Satyagrahis of these two salt camps were severely beaten by the British police[16].

Gandhi's Salt March was followed by the boycott programmes of Civil Disobedience Movement. Thousands of people all over India enlisted themselves as Congress volunteers and actively participated in the boycott programmes. From 30 July to 1 August 1930, the Congress Working Committee met at Bombay to confirm the next phase of the movement on the basis of Gandhi's Eleven Points programme[17]. Apart from the active involvement of the natives, there were few European elites who observed the Gandhian ventures through their British Press and from the proceedings of the British Parliament, about the recent political developments in British India. They expressed their wish to extend their support to the Indians by visiting personally through the pro-Indian organisation,[18] i.e., 'India League' to Indian cities to observe the political developments between 1930 and 1932.

Initial Stage of English Support

Gandhi's non-violent satyagraha had impressed the like-minded British elites who voluntarily came forward to visit India and they met him personally at Sabarmati Ashram after the non-co-operation movement. Mirabhen and Reginald Reynolds were the pioneers of pro- Gandhian British elites. When Gandhi was selecting the 79 satyagrahis for Dandi March, Mirabhen and Reginald Reynolds wanted to be in the first batch of 79 satyagrahis[19]. The consistent interest and involvement of these elite British to participate in the satyagraha march, was a short lived one. Though two British people pressurised, Gandhi did not accept their request to admit them in the first list of 79 satyagra his. Gandhi forecast the political climate and said, "No" to them in the first batch. He further said, "For you there is greater and far more sacred task. Born as you were in England, I expect from you a greater penance, and that is to forget the desire to invite suffering, to remain behind and to help in conducting as many activities of the ashram as possible"[20].

Later, Mirabhen and Reginald Reynolds did not compel Gandhi for their inclusion in the list of first batch. The two English people even though were

15. *V.Venkatraman, The Cartoons of Sudandira Sangu,1930-1933(T), Rajapalayam, 2000, pp.10-11.*
16. *The Civil Disobedience Movement,1930-1931, Strictly Confdl., District Magistrate letters to the events of the Movement, Madras, 1931, p.152*
17. *Home (Political) FileNo.14/28–1930,NAI*
18. *U.S.S.FileNo.807, Confdl., dt. 20 December 1932, pp.4-5.*
19. *Indian Administrative Report, 1930, Vol-I, New Delhi, p.28.*
20. *D.G. Tendulkar, Op. cit., p.21*

very close associates of Gandhi and his endeavours in the late 1920's, respected Gandhi's forecast and kept them very cool in the Sabarmathi ashram during the salt satyagraha march of Gandhi. Later, they met frequently and stayed along with the other prominent inmates, supported all boycott and constructive programmes of Gandhi. Moreover, after the release of Gandhi from jail, Gandhi admitted Mirabhen as one of his close associates, who took Gandhi with great care. Mirabhen, thereafter accompanied Gandhi in all programmes and tours till his death on 30 January 1948 at Delhi[21].

European Elites and their Pro-Gandhian Sympathy

The Lahore Congress session gave the mandatory to Gandhi to lead the Civil Disobedience Movement. The British Press covered the news items regarding the resolution of Complete 'Independence' or 'Purna Swaraj' and Gandhi's proposed plan of Civil Disobedience.

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) urged their officials to cover the entire course of the movement of Gandhi in India. The team was assisted by the pro-Indian British Statesmen, who had sympathy over Gandhian ideology of non-violence. They visited Sabarmati ashram frequently and accompanied Gandhi in all the nationalist activities.[22] Later, they transmitted the messages. Whatever collected from the Indian soil to the British press, British Radio, and to the senior members of the British Parliament on and about Gandhi's mission.

Apart from these pro-Gandhian efforts of the British Statesmen a very few prominent intellectuals, Christian Missionaries and British non-Governmental organizations, extended their support to Gandhian endeavours by directly visiting many of the Indian cities, wherever the boycott programmes were carried out by Gandhi and the Gandhian followers in India. These European Elites, hailed not only from England, but also from Scotland and Ireland. The European Elites were basically peace loving people of these countries and they visited Indian cities like Bombay, Calcutta, New Delhi and Madras and the interior cities of the Madras Presidency.

Efforts of Women's Indian Association

The Women's Indian Association[23], chaired by Darabhai with other 20 prominent women of Madras, organised a public political meeting in the Ghokale Hall in Madras on 21 May 1930. About 200 people attended this meeting.

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21. The Hindu, Madras, 3rd February 1948

22. U.S.S.File No.759, Confdl., 25th April 1933.

23. The Women's Indian Association was founded in 1927 by Mrs. Darabhai, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy along with Margarita Cousins in Madras to promote the nationalist awareness among the Indian Women.

Margaret, E.Cousins and Mrs Hidawood were the guest speakers of this meeting. In the beginning of the meeting, a resolution was passed, calling on Lord Irwin, the then Viceroy, and the British Government to make an immediate announcement on framing of a Constitution for India as the self - governing dominion status should be the prime duty of the forthcoming Round Table Conference, as an essential first step towards restoring peace and goodwill in India[24].

Mrs Cousins in her turn, condemned the action of the authorities in banning Congress meetings, the subject of which did not suit the policy of those in power and in clapping many of the Congress leaders including Gandhi, in jail, thereby depriving the Indians of their advice at a critical time. She said that no country ought to be under the domination of any other foreign country. The condition of the world is such that, it will not stand any nation being denied anything that is legitimately hers and India is calling for her power and her right to govern herself[25].

Further, Mrs. Cousins noted that other countries had to go through 'blood-shed' but there was no necessity in India for such horrors owing to the spiritual forces of her leaders that she hoped the British Government would remove the tension and the lack of good will by granting 'Home Rule' to India. Mrs. Cousins came to India in 1915 along with her husband Dr. Cousins and stayed at Adyar, Madras and associated herself with Annie Besant's Home Rule League and Theosophical Society. Dr. Cousins who hailed from Ireland allowed his wife Mrs. Cousins to stay in Madras and went back to Ireland brute turned as he considered India as their home[26].

The speeches made by Margaret Cousins were well received by the people of Madras. On 30 May 1930, the Women's India Association further organised a meeting at Ranade Hall, Mylapore in Madras. Mrs. Cousins was invited as the guest speaker and she spoke on the occasion on the concept of 'Swadeshi'. In her speech, she wanted Home Rule with its full implications be given to India and said that no rapprochement was possible when Congress leaders were all clapped in jail. She further appealed to the British Government on amnesty for all Congress prisoners, and said it should be the first step for showing the true mind of England[27].

Mrs. Cousins advocated 'Swadeshi' as the only means for preventing India's money from getting out of India and as a concrete step for making England release her grip over India. She said that many in England were in full sympathy with India's

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24. U.S.S.FileNo.759, Confdl., 25th April 1933

25. The Special Branch, C.I.D.Letter No.1402, Strictly confdl.,. 26th May 1930 to the Chief Secretary of Madras.

26. The Special Branch, C.I.D. Letter No.1508, Confdl., dt. 3 June1930 to the Chief Secretary to Madras.

27. U.S.S.FileNo.759,Confdl., 25th April 1933

demand and it requires only a proper representation in England. The Indian press published her speeches frequently in their columns. The followers of Home Rule League and Congress men of interior Tamil Province wanted to utilise the visit of Mrs. Cousins during the Civil Disobedience Movement. Mrs. Cousins was invited to deliver Swadeshi lectures by the Congress Committee of Tiruppur. Visalakshi Ammal, accompanied Mrs. Cousins to Tiruppur on behalf of the League of Youth of Madras in the second week of June 1930. Between 13 and 15 June 1930, a series of Swadeshi meetings were organised at different places in Tiruppur. Namiah Shampur received Mrs. Cousins at Tiruppur and the political meeting was held on 14 at 6.45 p.m. at Spencer's building at Tiruppur. The C.I.D. officials conveyed these developments to the District Collector Mrs. Cousins along with Saraswathi Ammal, Hanumantha Rao and Visalakshmi Ammal arrived secretly to the venue[28].

The District Collector of Madras sent a telegram to the local officials to take immediate steps to stop the meeting on that Sunday. The telegram was intended to facilitate the cessation of a Swadeshi movement directed against the British Government. The District Collector in his respect, considered these developments as "objectionable".[29]

Even though the proposed Swadeshi meeting was halted, Mrs. Cousins besides the propaganda work was waking up the branches of the Women's Indian Association by extensive correspondence to do their mite of contribution in that direction. She had clearly stated that the Women's India Association was always in favour of 'Swadeshi' and 'Swaraj'. She further praised Kamala Devi and Durgabai, the prominent leaders of the Association, who were convicted in the salt satyagraha campaign in Madras on 24 April 1930.[30]

Madras Swadeshi League Meeting

The Special Branch officer of the Criminal Investigation Department forwarded a confidential report to the Chief Secretary of the Government of Madras on the speech made by Mrs. Cousins at the Gokhale Hall, Madras, delivered on 5 July 1930 under the auspices of the Madras Swadeshi League and Women's Swadeshi League. In this report, it was said that Mrs. Cousins advocated the Gandhian principles of Khadar and boycott, which were very much needed at the present hour. She stressed that wearing 'Swadeshi Cloth' was the only remedy against the economic policy of the British.[31]

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28. The Special Branch, C.I.D. Letter No.1693, Confdl., dt.18 June1930.
29. U.S.S.FileNo.759,Confdl., 25th April 1933
30. The Stri-Dharma, Madras, April-May 1930
31. FNR, Strictly confdl., Second Half of July1930

She said that the Indian women in this country knew that, for thousands of years there was no need to go outside India for anything either for food or for cloth for the people of the country. She categorically objected to the people who called Swadeshi a political subject. This differentiation between 'political and non-political' and 'religious and secular" was entirely wrong, while it affected the vital necessities, life streams, and blood streams of the people's own vitality, and their power and prosperity and that must be looked after by every simple one; and it would be a joy in their own clothing through 'taklis' and 'charkas'[32].

Further, she said that 63 crore of rupees were going to the people of other land enriching them instead of enriching Indians. What could they do with the 63 crore of rupees? The Indians could have education, better health service without asking the British Government for their needs. Her prime reason for being there was that she could give the greetings and sympathy of millions of the people in the European countries. She praised the Americans who were very sympathetic with the ideals of India to have self-reverence, self-knowledge, and self-control. She gave them all her sympathy in the Gandhi an movement for the freedom of India economically, politically, socially, morally and spiritually. In her concluding remark, she openly called the Indians to participate actively in the Civil Disobedience Movement[33].

Celebration of Gandhi's Birthday

Through the combined efforts of Madras Mahajana Sabha, the League of Youth, the Women's Swadeshi League, and the Madras Swadeshi League, a public meeting was organised to celebrate Gandhi's birthday on 2 October 1930 at Gokhale Hall, Madras. About 250 delegates of the above organisations and from Madras District Congress Committee were present on the occasion[34].

Mrs. Cousins made an extensive speech on Gandhi and his mission. In her speech, she said that Mahatma Gandhi was known around the world as the holy man of the world. He was not just asking for the freedom of India alone, but also for the freedom of the world from the very great burden of a belief in force and in violence as a way of settling every kind of dispute or quarrel. If they (Indians) strictly adhered to Gandhi's principle of non-violence they would soon make India an example for the whole world, of a new system in which there would be no longer any wars[35].

While speaking of free people, she could not stop thinking of the 30,000 men and women in Indian jails at present, imprisoned for the sake of conscience. Surely their love went out to them that evening for their sacrifice to liberate their mother India[36].

32. *The Special Branch, C.I.D. Letter No.1972, Confdl., dt. 9 July1930 to the Chief Secretary to Madras.*
33. *The C.I.D. Special Note No.1693/c, Confdl., 18th June 1930.*
34. *The Special Branch, C.I.D. Letter No.2954, Confdl., dt. 7 October 1930*
35. *U.S.S. File No.759, Confdl., 25th April 1933*
36. *The Stri-Dharma, Madras, November–December 1930*

By knowing the consistent efforts and sincere participation of Mrs. Cousins, the Congress leaders of Madras Presidency would prefer inviting her to their respective regions. Mrs. Cousins received a number of invitations from Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Malabar provinces to deliver Sawadeshi speeches. These political developments of Mrs. Cousins were noticed by the Chief Secretary of the Government of Madras, and summons were sent to take action against her pro-Indian ventures in the Madras Presidency[37].

To prevent her contacts and communications with other Congress and regional leaders the Government of Madras passed an order to intercept the correspondence of Mrs. Cousins, who resided at No.15, Leasbeater's Chambers, Adyar, Madras or the Women's Indian Association, Pantheon Gardens, Egmore, Madras.

he Government Order No.1006 Public Department, dated 14 October 1930 reads that in the interest of public safety the Governor in Council directed under Section 26(1) of the Indian Post Office Act, 1898 that all postal articles addressed to or emanating from the house of Mrs. Cousins or the Women's Indian Association office by the post shall be intercepted in the Court of transmission for a period of one year from the date of the order, and detained and delivered to the Personal Assistant of the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Railways and C.I.D. Madras or to the P.A. of the D.I.G. of Police, Madras immediately[38].

Without knowing this preventive order, passed by the Chief Secretary of the Government of Madras, Mrs. Cousins wrote a series of letters to the regional Congress leaders of this Presidency.

Interception of Mrs. Cousin's letters

A letter addressed to the Secretary of Kerala Provincial Congress Committee, Calicut was intercepted in the Adyar Post Office, Madras in which Mrs. Cousins had asked to be supplied with the number of the satyagraha political prisoners, which the Tamil Nadu had given to the National movement since March 1930 and the total number for the Madras Presidency. She collected these statistics on behalf of the All India Congress Committee.

In another intercepted letter, sent by Mrs. Cousins to the Editor of Bombay Congress Bulletin, a copy of the offensive reply of Committee of the Women's Indian Association to a letter from Mrs. Subbarayan, apro-British in character asking for the opinion on any matter regarding Indian women that should be considered by the Round Table Conference, to be held in London[39].

37. *Political (Confdl.), G.O.No.1006-S, 14th October 1930*
38. *U.S.S. File No.759, Confdl., 25thApril 1933*
39. *The Special Branch, C.I.D. Letter No.3001/c, Confdl., 13th October 1930*

A letter written by Mrs. Cousins to Mrs. Shechy Skeffington of Dublin, Ireland, intercepted under Section 26(1) of the Indian Post Office Act, 1898, stated that the efficient organisation of Gandhi's Civil Disobedience Movement in Bombay had successfully held up the Government's action. Furthermore, she suggested in the same letter that some people from Ireland should be sent to India as representatives of Ireland's sympathy for India's struggle and become identified with the whole movement as she has been identified[40].

Mrs.Cousins added that if the Government of India were to prevent the people from entering into India, it would give her and other Irish people in India a handle to protest in the most advertising way possible and that any woman coming could easily get into the country as visitors to the All Indian or All Asian Conference in January1931, and later disclose their credentials as Irish representatives for the Indian Independence movement. After intercepting all the correspondence of Mrs. Cousins, the Government of Madras ordered the District Magistrate to censor all the letters, written by Mrs. Cousins. Many of her letters and correspondences were censored by the Police and Postal authorities for nearly a year from 14 October 1930 to September 1931[41].

The Madras Mahajana Shaba, the Madras District Congress Committee, the Madras Swadeshi League, and the League of Youth jointly organised a public political meeting at the Gokhale Hall on 18 October 1930. The prominent and front - line leaders of Tamil Nadu Congress Committee attended the meeting. Mrs. Cousins was the guest speaker; who delivered a speech on 'Swadeshi and Deepavali'. She advocated the Indians to wear "Gandhi cloth"[42].

Furthermore, she said that one of the great subject of discussion of Indian life at the present moment was cloth, because through this question of cloth, which could be used as a very successful and very fundamental instrument by which the foreign demon might be exorcized. That is, they might think of themselves as in a new Deepavali tradition. They (Indian) were all Krishnas, they were all seeking to be the saviours of the country, redeemers, and reformers of the country wanted to get rid of that new demon (English), which was troubling India and it was taking away the money of India to England. They were fighting this foreign demon and they could do that, every single one of them, in this Deepavali by changing the old custom of buying clothes without intelligence or without thought. They were having a new Deepavali and some day they would have new fireworks to show the triumph of their Deepavali work over the foreign demon of exploitation; and she trusted that

40. *The C.I.D. Office D.O. Letter No.2979/c, Confdl., 8th October 1930*
41. *U.S.S. File No.759, Confdl., 25th April 1933*
42. *The Special Branch, C.I.D. Letter No.3117/c, Confdl., 24th October1930*



very soon those new fireworks would be going of and they would be having beacon fires all over India, as India had attained its freedom[43].

Mrs. Cousins added that she was glad to see that the Madras Corporation was standing firm for clothing all its employees in Khadar (Khadi) and that the Gujaratis had decided not to celebrate Deepavali with the great amount of expenditure that they usually had done. In her speech, she appealed to the Indians in general and Indian workers in particular to support the Gandhian programmes by wearing Khadar and adopting Swadeshi, the only means of Indian Independence[44].

An Phoblacht–an Irish paper

An Phoblacht, an Irish Republican Newspaper published an article entitled, 'All Unquiet on the Eastern Front', written by Margaret E.Cousins from India. The paper in its issue dated 11 October 1930 published a variety of articles on Indian National Movement and Gandhi's salt march. The newspaper sent from Ireland to Mrs. Cousins in Madras, was intercepted under Section 26(1) of the Indian Post Office Act, 1898 by the C.I.D. of Madras during its transmission to Madras. It contained a violent article of Mrs. Cousins, including pictures of British soldiers ill-treating naked Indians. The C.I.D. found the articles and pictures to be most objectionable and recommended the Government of India for proscription under the Sea Customs Act of 1878[45].

43. *The Extract from are port of C.I.D. No.3528/I.S/30 dtd. 19 October 1930.*
44. *U.S.S. File No.759, Confdl., 25th April 1933*
45. *A Phoblacht, an Irish Republican Organ Newspaper published from Ireland, was a pro-Indian publication, frequently published articles, written by Dr. Cousins and Margarita Cousins.*

The C.I.D. further strongly recommended the Government that action should be taken against Mrs. Cousins, but advised the Government not to go for her deportation, which would be a very strong action indeed. Still, no action was taken against her even under the ordinary law of the Government. They said, she must be given a strong punishment because she was too clever. Deportation would certainly give her too good an advertisement but if she should be leaving India for any reason, it would be easy to prevent her return again to India[46].

Mrs. Cousins was much surveilled by the Government of India and was deported to Ireland in the late 1930. In the beginning of 1932, Dr. Cousins and Mrs. Cousins planned to come back to India. The Director of Intelligence Bureau of Government of India strongly opposed their return to India. The British Intelligence authority asked D.R. Elwin I.C.S., the Under Secretary of Government of Madras not to grant facilities to the couple to return to India as long as the Civil Disobedience Movement continued[47].

Dr. Cousins, who stayed in Adyar, Madras with Mrs. Cousins for over seventeen years since 1915, considered India his home because he served in the private educational institution at Adyar, Madras. Moreover, the police authorities further ascertained that if the Government permits his return to India, it would be very difficult to exclude Margarita Cousins' return to India. At last, the aged couple was allowed on the advice of the Government of Madras to return to India for the rest of the years. Margaret Cousins returned to India in 1933 with her husband Dr. Cousins and lived together in this country. Her attachment with the Congress movement continued in India[48].

Dr. E.F.Paton of Scotland

The Special Branch of Criminal Investigation Department closely watched the Europe - based voluntary organisations, rendering humane service in Tamil province, and extending support to Gandhian programmes. C.F.V.William I.C.S. Under Secretary of Government of Madras instructed all the District Collectors of this province, after the salt satyagraha movement in June 1930, to keep a strict vigilance on them. The C.I.D. Officials of all Districts of the province were ordered to collect the information about the pro- Gandhian attitude of such organisations[49].

The C.I.D. of North Arcot District found one 'Christukula Ashram' in Tirupattur, involving the Civil Disobedience Movement. Dr. E.Foresstor Paton, along with Dr.

46. *The Special Branch, C.I.D.Letter No.3257/c, Confdl., 5th November 1930*
47. *D.I.G. of Police, Rlys &C.I.D. Letter No.1787/c, Strictly confdl., 15th June 1932*
48. *The Under Secretary's D.O.No.138-S, Public Department, Confdl., 12th February 1932.*
49. *The District Collector, North Arcot letter to the Under Secretary, Govt .of Madras, D.O.No.138-S, Public Department, confdl., 12th February 1932.*

S.Jesudasan, a native of the town and the student of himself, financed the ashram. Dr. Paton was a native of Alloga in Scotland, he came to India in 1916 and settled in Tirupattur of North Arcot for running an up-to-date hospital that he opened for the poor Indians. In the first week of June 1930, a group of Indian Christians of the ashram along with Dr. Paton organised a meeting and passed a set of resolutions expressing their sympathy for Gandhi's Civil Disobedience Movement[50]. The members of the ashram wore Khadar clothes daily and were on equal terms. Gandhian style of living was followed in the ashram. Vegetarian diet was provided to all in mates including Dr. Paton, who also adopted Gandhian diet and seated himself on the floor. Their footwears uniformly were only sandals. They were staunch admirers of Gandhi and openly condemned the repressive policy of the British Government in India. Dr. Paton and his teammates did frequent pro-Gandhian propaganda in the nearby villages of Tirupattur Taluk between May and June 1930[51].

The Under Secretary of Government of Madras ordered the District Collector of North Arcot, camped at Vellore, to enquire Dr. Paton's involvement in the Gandhian Movement. The District Collector in his reply mentioned his personal enquiry on this issue, he writes: "….Dr. Paton is a British subject; he has not signed any undertaking to abstain from politics. I knew him fairly well when I was in the town eight years ago. He used to go about in sandals then but I do not think he had adopted Khadar and temperance. My enquiry has shown that there would be no ground for any action against him"[52].

Moreover, he confirmed that Dr. Paton was a crank without any definite and seditious intentions. He was a genuine doctor and had recently acquired a considerable extent of land and was running an industrial school and a farm as well to train the village people of the region. After hearing the above from the District Collector, C.F.V.Williams, the Under Secretary of Government of Madras, was satisfied with the statements on Dr. Paton and dropped the idea of arresting Dr. Paton. Nonetheless, he ordered the C.I.D. to watch the day-to-day activities of Dr. Paton[53].

British Repression on Dr. Paton

Gandhi returned to India empty handed after attending the Second Round Table Conference, held in London in December 1931. On 3 January 1932, he resumed the Civil Disobedience Movement for which he was arrested on 4 January and taken to Poona jail. The movement was followed by the resumption of boycott programmes. Toddy and liquor shops and shops selling foreign clothes had been chief targets of

50. *The Under Secretary's letter to District Collector, North Arcot, D.O. Letter dtd. 22 July 1932.*
51. *The Special Branch, C.I.D. Letter No.2001/c, Confdl., 11th July 1930.*
52. *The District Collector, N.A. Letter No.689-S, confdl., 15th July 1930.*
53. *U.S.S. File No.765, Confdl., 1st July1932*

Congress volunteers[54]. The picketing and boycotting were the routine programmes of Congress between January and August 1932. In 1932, Lord Wellington, the Viceroy of India launched ten Ordinances between January and December 1932 to meet the Congress activities and to arrest the anti-British writings of Indian press and political literature[55].

On 15 January 1932, Dr. Paton took the Bangalore Express from Vellore to Madras and reached Madras at 2.20 p.m. and caught the bus at Egmore over a bridge with the intention of coming to the Madras Christian College House. He had heard the reports of Congress picketers being ill-treated by the Madras police and wanted to see them and get himself involved in it. Dr. Paton and six volunteers marched on the Rattan Bazzar road and lectured the people on boycott of foreign clothes and told them not to be afraid of police threats. When they picketed a foreign cloth shop at 2.45 p.m. the police sergeant H.M.Butler and one Syed, the Sub-Inspector of Police along with four constables, who camped at C.I.Police station, rushed towards Dr. Paton. Dr. Paton led the volunteers to boycott the shop, owned by Kishin Chand Chellaram[56]. A crowd of about 350 people surrounded the shop. Butler told them that he was committing an offence and commanded the whole lot to disperse. However, the volunteers and Dr. Paton refused to do so. The police ordered to disperse them by force. Dr. Paton was clad fully in khadar with a Gandhi cap. The volunteers went to the other side of the road followed by the crowd and started shouting "Mahatma Gandhi ki jai" and "vande mataram". The whole crowd including Dr. Paton were dispersed by putting the hose of fire engine, which was brought already to the spot by the Madras police in connection with the arrest of K.Nageswara Rao, a prominent leader of Andhra Province Congress Committee[57].

In the meantime, V.A.Currie, the Inspector of Police ordered Sergeant Butler, Saunders, Noy, and Brigham to take action against Dr. Paton's team. Dr. Paton after knowing the mood of Madras police went away by Franser's road. On the same day, Dr. Paton was enquired by Sergeant Butler at 3.40 p.m. and he asked him about his Gandhi - inspired attire and cap. Dr. Paton replied that he was working among poor people and that was why he wore the khadar clothes. Without waiting to hear the reply, the police started beating Dr. Paton with lathis and the police signalled for the water cart and started dousing him. Dr Paton started walking towards the Flower

54. *Home (Political) File No.18/1, 1932, NAI.*
55. *V.Venkatraman, Proscribed Press and Political Literature under the British Raj, pp.127-130.*
56. *The Commissioner of Police, Madras Report No.296/ 20th January 1932 to Under Secretary, Madras.*
57. *The Chief Secretary of Madras D.O.No.118-S, confdl., 20th January 1932 to the Commissioner of Police, Madras.*

Bazaar Police station[58]. Saunders, the other Sergeant flouted the lathi charge and told him to return through the other way. Hence, he returned, only to get a second dousing from the water tank. There was a hand cart standing near the wall and he took shelter under it. However, the police removed the hand cart so that he got the full force of water. Moving here and there, Dr. Paton without knowing where to go, started walking South. The police stopped dousing further and sent Sergeant Butler to watch his course of walk. He took the Franser's Bridge Road to go towards the Madras Law College. By this time, there was a crowd comprising of 100 people following Dr. Paton but until then he was alone there. The satyagrahis had already gone. Then he went to Y.M.C.A. (Young Men's Christian Association) and had a change of clothing and went to the College House to meet Dr. Hogg, the Principal of Madras Christian College (MCC)[59].

Sergeant Butler informed everything to V.A.Currie, the Inspector of Police and they rushed to College House to arrest Dr. Paton in the presence of Bashyam Ayyangar, Venkatrama Sastri, and Dr. Hogg. Dr. Paton was produced before the Commissioner of Police, Egmore, Madras on 16 January 1932[60]. He examined on the spot about the happenings, considering this event in the interest of every one he recommended the case should be shifted to court. He released him on his own recognition to appear before the Chief Presidency Magistrate on 18 January 1932. He was charged only under the Molestation Ordinance and ordered Anantachariar, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Northern Range of Madras, to conduct an enquiry on the event and produce some eye witnesses[61].

Anantachariar, who conducted the whole enquiry cross-questioned the police witnesses on three separate occasions and with Dr. Paton. In the meantime, Bennett, the District Collector of North Arcot sent two letters, consisting of then quiry of Ramachandran, Sub Collector, Tirupattur on the personal conduct of Dr. Paton. Dr. Paton, who denied the charges made by the Madras Police, said that he came to Madras only to observe the course of boycott and picketing programmes personally and to give first aid to the volunteers who were beaten up by the police[62].

As the witnesses against him were so absolutely certain of their facts, the Assistant Commissioner considered that in the interests of all concerned the case should be thrashed out in the court. Furthermore, last year he had heard of Dr. Paton being a Gandhi sympathiser while in Tirupattur and that lent further probability to

58. *U.S.S. FileNo.765, Confdl., 1st July 1932.*
59. *The Statement of Dr .Paton to the District Magistrate, Madras dtd.16 January 1932.*
60. *The Statement of V.A. Currie, the Inspector of Police, confdl., dtd. 16 January 1932.*
61. *The Report of the Assistant Commissioner of Police, Northern Range to the Commissioner of Police, Madras on 16th January 1932.*
62. *U.S.S. File No.765, Confdl., 1st July 1932.*

the charge against him[63]. After knowing the facts from the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Law and Order, the Commissioner of Police had launched a prosecution against Dr. Paton, based on the denial of Dr. Paton. The case was produced before Abbas Ali, the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Madras and Dr. Paton was accused under Section 528-A of Cr. P.C. and charged under Section 4 of Ordinance No.V of 1932[64].

Judgment against Dr. Paton

Abbas Ali, the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Madras after hearing the arguments of Jayaram Iyer in favour of Dr. Paton, he came to a conclusion to say that, the Chief Presidency Magistrate had the jurisdiction to try the accused Dr. Paton. Jayaram Iyer in his argument said that Dr. Paton was entitled to be tried as a European British subject under the special provisions of Chapter XXXIII of the Code of Criminal Procedure and that a Presidency Magistrate sitting alone had no jurisdiction to try him once such a claim was put forth and when it was proved to the satisfaction of the Magistrate[65].

On the basis of the Judgement order, the Commissioner of Police, Madras wrote a detailed report to the Chief Secretary of the Government of Madras on Dr. Paton's involvement in the movement and asked to take action against him. Moreover, G.T.H. Bracken, the Chief Secretary ordered the Chief Commissioner of Police to arrest him on 8 February 1932[66]. Dr. Paton was arrested and warned by the police for his involvement in the Civil Disobedience Movement and he was then released on the production of personal guarantee to the Government of Madras. The District Collector of North Arcort was further instructed to watch all the proceedings of Dr. Paton's career in Tirupattur with the help of the officials of the Criminal Investigation Department[67].

India League Delegation

G.T.H. Bracken, the Chief Secretary of the Government of Madras had received an official letter from the Home Department, Government of India, written by the Home Secretary on 9 August 1932 from Shimla, informing about an other major threat, the delegates of India League of London, arriving on 17 August 1932 at Bombay, to visit jails and see political prisoners, i.e., those who were arrested and

63. *The Commissioner of Police, Madras Report No. 506 – 6th February 1932 to Chief Secretary of Madras.*
64. *The Judgement Order of Abbas Ali, Chief Presidency Magistrate Madras, C.C.No.1375/ 1932, confdl., 19th January 1932.*
65. *The Chief Secretary of Madras Order No.261/S – 8th February 1932 to the Commissioner of Police, Madras.*
66. *U.S.S. File No.765,Confdl., 1st July 1932.*
67. *U.S.S. File No.765, Confdl., 1st July 1932.*

imprisoned for participating in the Civil Disobedience Movement. The delegation was led by Ms. Wilkinson and other three were Ms. Monica Whately, Leonard Matters, and V.Krishna Menon. Among them the first three were the members of British Parliament and belonged to the Labour Party of England[68].

The Government of India was informed that the team will deliver no speeches and take no part in political movement and that "they have no desire in any way to embarrass the authorities in India, their task being one of obtaining information for the British public and Parliament and to assist in any other way". Actually, the team's visit was a pre-planned work of Congress and it was funded by Madan Mohan Malaviya, a senior-most leader of the Congress. All the three major provinces were directed by the Secretary of State for India to watch the visit of the India League to Madras, Bombay, Bengal, and other local Governments[69]. The office of the Secretary of State for India had informed the team members not to meet the political prisoners in jails. Moreover, the Secretary of State for India mentioned that he had advised them to keep in touch with the British officials and if they showed an inclination to do that, it would be desirable to give them opportunities for acquiring correct information[70].

The India league delegation after visiting Bombay and Poona, arrived at Madras by the Bombay Express on the 25 August 1932, and were received on the platform by leaders like K.Bhasyam Ayyangar, K.Nageswara Rao, N.S.Varadachari, M.Bakthavatchalam, B.Jaganatha Das, Dr. Subbarayan, T.V.Venkatrama Sastri, Mr. & Mrs. B.Shiva Rao, and K.Narayana Menon. Jayaprakash Narayanan, the Secretary of All India Congress Committee came ahead of the delegation from Poona to assist the delegation[71].

On the following day, two members L.W.Matters and Monica Whately were taken by B.Shiva Rao to various Labour centres and slums and were introduced to the Members of the Executive Committee of the Madras Labour Union, while Ms. Wilkinson, accompanied by V.K.Menon, was interviewed by the editors of ***The Hindu*** and ***Madras Mail***[72]. In the evening, all four members attended a garden party, given by K.Nageswara Rao at his residence and met several Congressmen, who were recently released from jails. A procession was organised by the Madras District Congressmen to welcome the delegation, but all those who took part in the procession were arrested by the police and shifted to the Commissioner of Police's

68. *The Home Secretary, Govt. of India, D.O.No.6391/32 – Poll Simla, 9th August 1932, to the Chief Secretary of Madras.*
69. *U.S.S. File No.807,Confdl., 2nd December 1932.*
70. *The Home Secretary's D.O. No. 6391/32 –Poll, Simla, 9th August 1932.*
71. *Public Dept. D.O.No.668/S, Confdl., Fort st. George, 5th September 1932.*
72. *The Special Branch, C.I.D. letter No. 2741/c, 2nd September1932.*

office, Egmore, Madras[73]. Congress slogans, "Boycott British Goods" were found painted on tarred roads in many places of Madras in the morning itself. On 27 August, they met G.A.Natesan, Dr.Subbarayan, A.Ramaswami Mudaliyar, Yakub Hasan, Jamal Muhammad, the Commissioner of Police, and G.T.H.Bracken, the Chief Secretary of the Government of Madras[74]. Dr.Mutulakshmi Reddy took Ms. Willkinson to the Women's Indian Association and explained about the Madras women's participation in the movement[75]. On 28, they met the Liberal leader T.R.Venkatrama Sastri and C.Rajagopalachari, the President of Congress Committee. Rajagopalachari gave the full details of the Civil Disobedience movement along with some reports, pictures, and appeals of the Congress volunteers who were severely beaten by the British police during the salt march and other boycott programmes[76].

On 29 August, the members of the delegation met Ms. Brockway, the sister of Fenner Brockway, Mrs. Lakshmipathy and Mrs. Thompson, the missionary educationalist and several Indian ladies. Ms.Wilkinson addressed the labourers of the M.S.M.Railway Union of Perambur and the mill workers at Perambur Barracks[77]. On the evening of the same day, C.Rajagopalachari took these two ladies of the delegation by West Coast Mail to Gandhi Ashram at Thiruchengode. The Congress leaders briefed the delegation on all the proceedings of Congress and got their sympathy for Congress activities[78]. On 29 August, sometime in the evening, Jayaprakash Narayanan was arrested by the Madras police for his anti-British activities while moving with the delegation in Madras[79].

In the interview with Ms. Thompson, cited above, it was ascertained that certain questions were raised by Ms. Whately with the objective of obtaining answers in justification of Congress aims and its programmes including the Civil Disobedience Movement. Ms.Whately considered it had not been defeated but driven underground, to the detriment of British interests, by the present policy of the Government, both in England and India. Ms.Thompson was targeted by the British senior official, after her interview with the delegation; it was revealed that they had not come to India with an open mind[80].

Ms.Whately visited Madurai from Salem by train and arrived at 7.30 a.m. on 31 August 1932 along with C.Rajagopalachari and N.Ramachandran, and was received

73. *Fortnightly Report, confdl., First Half of September 1932.*
74. *U.S.S. File No.807, Confdl., 2nd December1932.*
75. *The Stri- Dharma, Madras, September – October 1932.*
76. *The C.I.D. Office D.O. 2741/c, dt. 2 September1932.*
77. *U.S.S .File No.807, Conf dl., 2nd December1932.*
78. *The Hindu, Madras, 30th August 1932.*
79. *Fortnightly Report, Confdl., First Half of 1932.*
80. *U.S.S. File No.807,Confdl., 2nd December 1932.*

by the local Congress leaders with Congress flags and they shouted slogans like "Mahatma Gandhiki jai" and "Vandematram". In course of 31, she interviewed a dozen of local personalities like R.Rama Ayyangar, l.K.Tulasiram, S.R.Varadarajalu Naidu, L.Krishnaswami Bharathi, S.S.Bharathi, M.S.Seshe Ayyangar, Ras Shahib Narasimha Ayyangar, and Dr.Ramiah[81].

L.Krishnaswami Bharathi, an ardent Gandhian, presented Ms.Whately a typed report on the Congers movement in Madurai and Ramnad regions and the alleged police repression on the Congress volunteers. Moreover, he explained about the police assault on the Congress volunteers and submitted some photos on the repression of police to her. Six Congressmen said to have been beaten by the police were produced before her and their statements were recorded by her[82]. What injuries they had received and how they got them was well informed to her in person. One Congress volunteer alleged to have been ill treated by the Thirumangalam police by having kerosene poured on the head, was also produced and his statement was recorded by her[83].

C.Rajagopalachari and Mr.Whately visited the Madura Mills and met D.W.Osborne, the Manager. On 1 September 1932, C.Rajagopalachari took her to visit some prominent foreign cloth shops in Madurai, where the Congress volunteers picketed these shops and shouted "boycott foreign cloth". They were stopped by the police and were lathi charged when Ms. Whately entered the shop[84]. After her arrival, again some Congress volunteers resumed picketing the other shops. They were told by the police to go away, but they refused, sat down and shouted Congress slogans. Finally, the police arrested them and took them to the Central Police station, where they were sentenced to 6 months of rigorous imprisonment on 2 September 1932 and others were sent out of police station[85].

In the afternoon, Ms.Whately interviewed more Congress workers including some Congress women. She the nattended the opening of the Gandhi Ashram Khadi Bhander, a Khadar shop connected with C.Rajagopalachari's ashram, by Dr. Subbarayan in the Salem District. The audience on this occasion numbered about 200 and it was an indication of the interest taken by the city of Madurai generally in Ms.Whately's visit and in Congress activities, generally of the present movement[86]. The Congress men and women sung some Bharathi's songs at the ceremony, loudly. Dr. Subbarayan and T.C.Srinivasa Ayyangar delivered lectures

81. *The Madurai Dt. Magistrate Office letter dtd. 4 September1932 to the Chief Secretary of Madras.*
82. *The Sudandhira Sangu, Madras, 6th September1932.*
83. *U.S.S. File No.807, Confdl., 2nd December1932.*
84. *District Magistrate letter dtd. 4 September1932, Confdl., to the Chief Secretary of Madras.*
85. *The Hindu, Madras, 3rd September 1932.*
86. *The Sudandhira Sangu, Madras, 6th September 1932.*

on Gandhi's sacrifice and significance of khadar before the khadar shop, and it was declared open.[87] C.Rajagoplachari and Dr.Subbray an further visited the All-India Spinner's Association Khadar Depot in Madurai in the evening of 2 September1932. Ms. Whately left for Madras at 10.30 p.m. by train.[88] Ms.Whately was very much impressed and she exhibited her sentiments to the Congress volunteers.

The Report of the Delegation

The Report of the Delegation was submitted by the Indian League members to the Government of Madras on 29 November 1932. Firstly, it remarked that inspite of various differences, there was unity of all communities in opposition to repression and ordinances. They ignored the fact that in this presidency, a majority of the elected members of the Legislative Council consistently supported the Government in the measures taken to combat the Civil disobedience and refused to accept motions by the opposition designed to censure alleged excesses by the Madras police.[89]

Secondly, the delegation said that Congress was the strongest party and it will win hands down in a free election. The Justice Party was organising themselves to fight the next election in opposition to the Congress and they have considerable hopes of obtaining a majority, now that many supporters of Congress were alienated by Gandhi's recent political gestures and especially by his advocacy of temple entry for the depressed classes, which had roused the opposition of the orthodox.[90] Infact, since the outbreak of Civil Disobedience in January 1930, Gandhi has been steadily losing ground and more public came to realise the barrenness and futility of the Civil Disobedience creed and the movement, as they had become weary of its manifestation.[91]

Thirdly, the report contained an unexpected attack on the police. The pictures drawn by the delegation on the life in villages, that was made unendurable by the special police, were graphic and evocative. It was true that after the outbreak of Civil Disobedience, the police force was strengthened by re-enlistment of some 300 retired officers.[92] In addition, the report also touched upon the question of jails and complained that they had great difficulty in obtaining admission to meet the political prisoners. Lastly, the delegation cautioned the administration of Madras for their repressive attitude towards Gandhian followers.[93]

87. *The C.I.D. Office Letter No.2784/c, confdl., 6th September 1932.*
88. *The Sudandhira Sangu, Madras, 6th September 1932.*
89. *The C.I.D. Office Letter No. 2815/c, confdl., 9th September 1932.*
90. *G.T.H. Bracken, Chief Secretary's letter, confdl., 26 November 1932, pp.4-5*
91. *Ibid.,p-5*
92. *The Under Secretary Office Letter, confdl., dtd. 27 November 1932 to the Chief Secretary to Madras.*
93. *U.S.S. FileNo. 807, Confdl., 2nd December 1932*

By the visits and supports made by the European Elites towards Indians during the Civil Disobedience Movement in the Madras Presidency unfolded a new era in the Indian National Movement. In the initial stage of Indian struggle, no European came forward to support either directly or indirectly, to the Swadeshi Movement in India. A very few English people from Ireland, Russia, Scotland, and England extended their moral support to the Home Rule Movement of Mrs. Annie Besant. Mrs. Besant founded the Indian Home Rule League in London in 1912 to get support from the British Statesmen, Members of the Parliament, and few missionary people for attaining 'Home Rule' in India. These elites did not fulfil Mrs. Besant's expectations, and she dropped the idea of getting their support for her movement.

Gandhi's Civil Disobedience Movement against the British authorities in South Africa and his concept of 'non-violence' made many Europeans realise the ethical and moral values of Gandhi's mission through the British Press. These European elites realised later and visited India to meet Gandhi personally in 1920s and stayed with him. When Gandhi launched his Civil Disobedience Movement in March 1930, these elites and missionary workers whole heartedly participated in person in the movement and encouraged other Europeans to join the Gandhian movements. They became true Gandhians by wearing Khadar clothes and took natural diet. The principles and values of Gandhian nationalism had a great influence among them and they continued to work for Indian Independence along with Gandhi.


முதல்வர் முத்துலட்சுமி ரெட்டி
வரலாற்றுப் பூங்கா
திறந்து வைத்தவர்
தமிழக முதலமைச்சர்
டாக்டர் கலைஞர் மு. கருணாநிதி அவர்கள்

16

Symbols of Sacrifice: Monuments Related to Freedom Movements in Tamil Nadu

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Remembering and recollecting the past is a way to define and reconstruct one's own identity, and it is the primary function of history. There are many ways of recollecting the past and one novel way is visiting and understanding the Monuments. Monuments are not just bricks and stones, it is the representation of an event, an institution or a personality. Monuments are part of cultural memories and they have a story to say, remember, commemorate, and cherish. There are many monuments in the State of Tamil Nadu, which are strongly connected with the Freedom Movement. These monuments they serve as an aide memoire of the role, contributions made by our martyrs and the significance of certain edifices in the course of our Freedom Struggle. The Monuments are silent witnesses of the great sacrifices of our leaders and serves as solid historical records for the future generations. This chapter tries to narrate a few important monuments and their significance in the context of Freedom Movement in Tamil Nadu. The monuments were broadly divided based on their functionality such as physical monuments, event - based monuments, and personality - based monuments.

Physical monument: Fort St. George, Vellore Fort, Thilak Bhavan, Vanchi Maniachi Railway Station, Fort of Panchalamkurichi and Gandhi Museum.

Event - based monument: Thilagar Thidal, Salt Satyagraha Monument at Trichy, and Salt Satyagrah memorial at Vedaranyam and Trichy.

Personality - based monuments: Maruthu Pandiyar Brother Memorial, Kalayarkoil, Veera Mangai Velu Nachiyar Memorial, Sivaganga, Thillaiyadi Valliammai Memorial, Subramaniya Bharathi Illam at Triplicane and Memorial at Ettayapuram, Tiruppur Kumaran Memorial Statue and V.O.C. Memorial House at Ottapidaram.

FORT ST. GEORGE, CHENNAI:
THE FIRST BRITISH FORT IN INDIA

The British established the city of Chennai with the foundation of Fort St. George in 1639. The Fort was founded neither for spices nor for gold, but for cotton. It was cotton, that was available in the neighbouring regions, that made the British to find this place. It was at Fort St. George that most of the early British administrators such as Robert Clive, Elihu Yale, Warren Hastings, William Bentinck and Thomas Munro started their career. The Fort served as the experimenting ground for most of the modern day institutions such as the formation of the East Indian Company, army by Major Stringer Lawrence, and Banking, to name a few. The Fort has many buildings such as the Clive House, also known as the 'Admiralty House', which is claimed to be the earliest British building in India, the Wellesley House (The canons belonged to Tipu Sultan are displayed on the battlements of this house), and St. Mary's Church, the country's first Anglican church. The most important place



inside the Fort is the Fort Museum, which was formerly the Madras Bank Office. It is in this museum the first flag to be flown upon independence is still on display on the third floor and the controversial marble statue of Lord Cornwallis with the Tipu's sons as hostages can be seen at the ground floor. A visit to the museum will take the visitor back to the colonial days. Until 1947, Fort St. George was seen as the seat of imperial power and after 1947 it served as the seat of people's power; the executive and legislative offices of the Government of Tamil Nadu are located in it.

VELLORE FORT:
THE BASTILLE OF TAMIL NADU

July is closely connected with revolution; the American War of Independence and the French Revolution. On 10th July 1806, there occurred an event at Vellore Fort, which went into the annals of Indian History as Vellore Mutiny, which can be considered as the precursor of the Great Revolt of 1857. Vellore is a town, which lies half way between Chennai and Bangalore and it houses the famous Christian Medical College. The Fort was built by Chinna Bommi Nayaka a subordinate under Sadasivaraya of the Vijayanagara Kingdom in 1566 A.D. The rectangular fort with a circumference of 3 km is built entirely of massive granite cut stones. The fort was occupied by the British in 1760 and was used as a military garrison. After the defeat of Tipu Sultan in the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War the decedents were taken under custody at Vellore Fort. The new military regulations introduced by the Madras Government created discontent and on 10 July 1806 the native soldiers raised a banner of revolt against the British under the leadership of Fateh Hyder, the Son of Tipu Sultan. The British put down the revolt with a heavy hand. This event is the first attempt by the soldiers against the British. The fort contains both secular and religious structures including Tipu Mahal, Begum Mahal, Kandi Mahal, Jalakanteswara Temple, a mosque and a Church. During the British period, it served as one of the hardest prisons. Many were interned here such as the last king of Kandy Sri Vickrama Rajasimha (the Government of Tamil Nadu has built a monument in memory of the King) and later Ammu Swaminathan was detained here during the Quit India Movement.



VANCHI MANIYACHI RAILWAY STATION:
THE PIETER MARITZ BURG OF TAMIL NADU

The early part of 20 century saw the emergence of Revolutionary Movements in Indian Freedom Struggle. The chief contribution of the revolutionary movements was the great awakening of the masses by true examples of heroism and immense self-sacrifices. One such episode was the assassination of the then British Collector Robert Ashe in 1911 by Vanchinathan. One of the reasons that infuriated Vanchinathan was the leading role played by Ashe in suppressing the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company started by V.O.C. and the later uprisings at Southern Tamil Nadu. V.O.C. and Subramaniya Shiva were held responsible for the situation and were imprisoned. In jail, they were treated inhumanely and this led Vanchinathan to assassinate Collector Ashe. On June 17, 1911, Collector Ashe and his wife left Tirunelveli Railway Junction by the 9.30 a.m. train to board a Mail at Maniyachi Railway Station. As the couple waited in the first class compartment of the train to arrive at Maniyachi Station, Vanchinathan entered the coach and shot Ashe. After shooting Ashe, Vanchinathan shot himself and died. On the body of Vanchi, a letter was found urging people to do their best to drive away the foreign rule and establish 'Swaraj'. In memory of the act, the railway station was renamed as Vanchi Maniyachi Railway Station. The Government of Tamil Nadu had erected a memorial at Shenkottai, the birth place of Vanchinathan.



SUBRAMANIYA SHIVA MEMORIAL, PAPPARAPATTI, DHARMAPURI DISTRICT:
TEMPLE FOR BHARATH MATHA

Tamil Nadu can be a focal point for understanding the various phases of freedom movement. It was here the country was seen as a Mother Goddess and a Temple for Mother India was also planned. It was the dream of Subramaniya Shiva. He became the first political prisoner of the Madras presidency for acts of sedition charges and suffered multiple jail terms. When detained by the British, Subramaniya Siva defended himself in court citing passages from Thirukkural. Siva had a good command of the Sanskrit language, while having an unending love and respect for Tamil. According to him, loving Tamil was not in any way at odds with loving one's own nation from an ideological stand point. He views abandoning one's mother tongue



as both a crime and the equivalent of suicide. Shiva attempted to construct a shrine at Papparapatti in Dharmapuri district for Bharath Matha, the Mother India, and laid the foundation stone in 1923. However, due to his illness he was not able to construct it. The Government of Tamil Nadu had erected a memorial for Subramaniya Shiva and also fulfilled the dream of Shiva by constructing the Bharat Matha temple.

GANDHI MEMORIAL MUSEUM, MADURAI:
A WITNESS TO THE TRANSITION, FROM GANDHI TO MAHATMA

Madurai the capital of the Pandiyas had a significant impact on Gandhiji's life. It was on 22 September, 1921 from Madurai, Gandhiji resolved to abandon his Gujarati attire and chose the peasant attire of India, the loin cloth. The Gandhi Memorial Museum, Madurai was the first Memorial Museum for Gandhiji inaugurated by the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1959. The Museum is housed in the summer palace of Rani Mangammal. The Museum has 14 original belongings of Gandhi, including the blood-stained loincloth worn by him when he was assassinated; a congratulatory message sent by poet Subramania Bharathiyar, and an interesting letter written to Adolf Hitler addressing him as 'Dear Friend'. It also houses "Gandhi Kutil"- a replica of Gandhiji's hut in Sevagram. The Museum is a visual treat to Gandhiji's life, containing photos, paintings, sculptures, manuscripts, quotations, and photo copies of about 2,70,000 letters and 62 reels of Micro-films.



SALT SATYAGRAHA MONUMENT AT TRICHY AND VEDARANYAM:
A PINCH OF DANDI IN TAMILAGAM

The Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha was modelled after the historic Dandi march against the imposition of salt tax. Rajaji who already participated in the Dandi march led the march from Trichy to Vedaranyam. The march commenced on the



Tamil New Year day, 13 April, 1930 from the house of T.S.S. Rajan, a prominent Congress worker in Trichy and ended on April 28. Sardar Vedaratnam, a salt merchant, K.Kamaraj, K.Baktavachalam, P.Kakkan, T.S.S.Rajan, and many other prominent people participated in the March. "A war without sword and blood is impending, the believers of eternal truth shall consort" sung the Namakkal Poet Ramalingam Pillai capturing the mood and essence of the movement. When the satyagrahis entered Thanjavur District, its Collector J.A.Thorne, ICS tried to stop it by warning "anyone offering food or shelter to the marchers was liable to six-month imprisonment and a fine". The supporters found a novel way by tying the food packets and water containers secretly to branches of roadside trees. Rajaji successfully defied the salt taxes and was arrested. Among the many who were arrested was Rukmini Lakshmipathy the first woman to serve a jail term for participating in the Salt Satyagraha movement. The Government of Tamil Nadu had erected two pillars to commemorate the event at an intersection leading to the Trichy Railway Junction. The first pillar was erected in 1973 and the second one was in 1986. Similarly, the Government has also constructed a monument named 'Salt Satyagraha Memorial Hall' in Vedaranyam, Nagapattinam.

THILAGAR THIDAL:
ROARING VOICES FOR SWARAJ

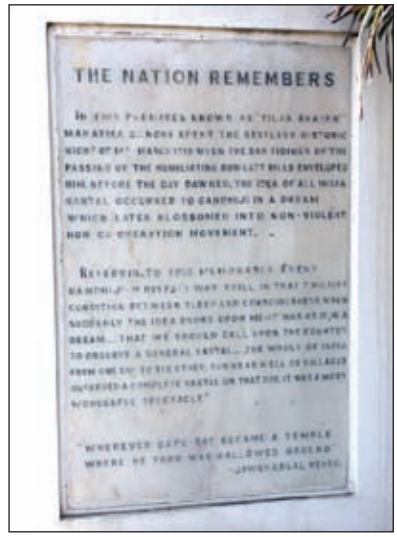


Public sphere plays a pivotal role in politics. During the early part of the 20 century, our leaders toured throughout the country and with their fire brand speeches kept the spirit of nationalism alive. In Madras, most of the leaders addressed the people from the Marina Beach. In 1908, Subramania Siva named the place in the Marina Beach as 'Thilagar Khattam' in honour of Thilak.

"The silvery sand bed of the Marina Beach at Madras on the Bay of Bengal was the venue where great National leaders used to address the people to arouse national consciousness", reads the inscription on the Thilak Ghat plaque in the Marina. Mahatma Gandhi had addressed seven public meetings at this place. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Lala Lajpat Rai, C.R.Das, V.O.Chidambaram, Bipin Chandra Pal, Nehru, Rajaji, G.Subramania Iyer, S.Sathyamurthy,

K.Kamaraj, and various national leaders have used this place for oration. A large number of women had gathered at this place and participated in the salt satyagraha under the leadership of Durgabhai Deshmukh in 1930.

THILAK BHAVAN:
BIRTH PLACE FOR NON-CO-OPERATION MOVEMENT



Chennai occupies a special place in our Freedom Movement. Thilak Bhavan in Chennai was one among them. It was the residence of Kasturiranga Iyengar the Proprietor of *The Hindu* and now the it is the Welcome Hotel. Many Freedom fighters had stayed in this place. It was on 18 and 19 March 1919 Mahatama Gandhi stayed in this place when the notorious Rowlatt Act was passed. This law had deeply wounded Gandhiji and he was not able to sleep and in his dreams the idea of General Hartal occurred and later blossomed into non-violent non-co-operation movement. A squat pillar with a detailed description of the Bhavan and its significance in Tamil and English is depicted in it. Regarding this event, Gandhiji writes that he spent a memorable evening in Thilak Bhavan - "I was still in that twilight condition between sleep and consciousness when suddenly the idea broke upon me... that we should call upon the country to observe a general hartal".

FORT OF PANCHALAMKURICHI:
MIXTURE OF BRAVERY AND TREACHERY

Panchalamkurichi is a small historic village with a heroic legacy of anti-colonial resistance, located 30 kms from Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu. The small hamlet was once the principal village and bustling fort complex of then Panchalamkurichi Palayam. During the Carnatic Wars, the Nawab of Arcot gave the right to collect taxes from the region in lieu of his debt to the British. Veerapandiya Kattabomman the Palayakaran of Panchalamkurichi not only refused to pay his kist (revenue



due) to the Company but also actively conspired against it. He also organised a league of rebellious Poligars of Tirunelveli and Ramnad against the company.

Consequently, as his defiance became more noticeable, the company sent an army under Major John Bannerman to attack the Panchalamkurichi fort and capture Kattabomman. The outer walls of the historical fort of Panchalamkurichi were built with mud, gravel, and granite blocks. Nevertheless, the fierce sun - baked earthen walls of the fort often put the English artilleries to severe test, and was found equal, if not superior, even to masonry-built fort. When the company attacked with much vigour, Kattabomman along with his soldiers left the fort as a wanderer. After a short time, the sepoys of Vijaya Raghunatha Tondaiman, the Raja of Pudukkottai caught him and handed him over to the British.

After a trial, Kattabomman was sentenced to death and hanged at Kayathar on 16 October 1799 CE. The vengeance of the Company was not restricted to Kattabomman and his fellow men rather sought to completely erase material and memory that was associated with the Fort. Firstly, it expunged the name of Panchalamkurichi from all its official documents. The entire mud fort and the palace complex of Panchalamkurichi was flattened. As the final gesture, the fortress, which was known for its kanchiyam and senchi shrubs, was ploughed under and sowed with salt and castor seeds.

The modern Panchalamkurichi Fort was built over the ruins of the antique fort in 1974, as a memorial to this great warrior by the Tamil Nadu government. The new fort is a remarkable structure with a pagoda style roof and leaf-shaped windows. The memorial hall of the fort is adorned by vivid and colourful paintings that depict Kattabomman's saga of bravery. A temple dedicated to Sri Devi Jakkammal, the ancestral deity of Kattabomman, is also located inside the fort. The gates of the temple bear the family emblem: two swords crossed against a shield. Within the periphery of the fort, the ruins of the original fort also could be witnessed. The rebuilt fort preserves and celebrates the memory of Kattabomman's rebellion and acts a source of inspiration and nationalistic pride for the Tamil people.

MARUDHU PANDIYAR BROTHER'S MEMORIAL, KALAIYARKOVIL: THE SPOT OF DUO SACRIFICE

The Maruthu Pandiyar memorial of Kalaiyarkovil is located 64 kms from erstwhile Madurai in Kalaiyarkovil, Sivagangai. The memorial is commemorated to the valorous duo, who were rested near the Kalaiyarkovil temple. The historic town of Kalaiyarkovil houses the famous Shiva temple, which was not only a place for spiritual nourishment, but also of military might as a fortress at times of war.

The Maruthu duo once held sway over Sivagangai Seemai (region) were not from royal lineage or amongst the 'high' born, rather they rose to the stature from the lower rungs of the country's military hierarchy. The sons of a military servant, Mokka Palanisamy Thevar, who served the king Muthuvaduganatha Thevar of Sivagangai kingdom, soon arose to glory and assumed the title of Pandiyar as a consequence of their brave deeds. The local ballads praise their bravery, their extensive use of the ferocious Valari (indigenous boomerang) that kept their enemies at run. Subsequently, as the patriarch of Sivagangai was assassinated by the treacherous Nawab-British alliance, their kingdom was seized. Maruthu duo along with the first queen of Sivagangai, Velu Nachiyar with the able assistance of the Mysorean forces recaptured their lost kingdom.



After the unfortunate demise of Velu Nachiyar, the duo played an important role against the British. They made secret allies with the Palayakars and eventually liberated Oomathurai and Sevathaiah, brothers of Kattabomman from prison. The British wanted them to be handed over to them, but they refused. This gratuitous act pushed them into a costly war with the British. Lastly, Maruthu duo along with their kinsmen were hanged to death in Thirupathur. The only male heir to survive was Doraisamy, who along with 70 other rebels were exiled to Prince of Wales's Island.

The gratuitous rebellion did not merely cost the lives of the brave duo but their entire lineage. The memorial at Kalaiyarkovil where the legendary warriors lay rest is a site that signifies the indigenous thirst for freedom and valiance. The Gopura of Kalaiyarkovil temple symbolises the grandeur of Maruthu duo's sacrifice in the righteous path of independence that extends from the ground to sky.

VEERA MANGAI VELU NACHIYAR MEMORIAL, SIVAGANGA: THE QUEEN AND THE COMPANY

The chronicle of Indian freedom struggle would remain incomplete, if not with the mention of Velu Nachiyar in it. Her intrepid actions and political sagacity were at par to any man of her times. Veera Mangai Velu Nachiyar Memorial located in Sivagangai, 50 km serest while of Madurai, is a lively structure that echoes and commemorates her unparalleled contributions to the freedom struggle against the British colonialism.

Velu Nachiyar was a descendant of the royal military household of Ramnad Sethupathis. Being from the royal family, she was trained in all major combat techniques and also schooled in other forms of knowledge. She later assumed her queen-hood after her marriage to Muthuvaduganatha Thevar of Sivagangai. The sovereign of Sivagangai was no less free spirited as her female counterpart. As the Company was sweeping across the southern Tamil country, squeezing revenue from the poligars, the seat of Sivagangai was one of the earliest to resist. Subsequently, the treacherous henchmen of the East India Company assassinated Muthuvadunganatha Thevar and the kingdom fell under the sway of the Englishmen.

Strategically, Velu Nachiyar along with her loyal commanders - the Maruthu brothers - retreated and sought asylum at the Virupakshi ruler's fortress at Dindugul.



It was here she secured political and military favours from the Mysore Forces. In 1780, with the able assistance of Gopala Nayakar and Haider Ali, the Queen with her army marched towards Sivagangai in pursuit of her vendetta. The rank and file of the marching army was commanded by a range of military leaders from humble origins, starting from the Maruthu brothers to Kuyili. A striking feature of the army was that its socio-religious composition, which encompassed populace from all walks of life, transcending the traditionally imposed caste and gender roles. With the successful conquest of the Sivagangai, Velu Nachiyar did not only become first queen to fight against the British in India, but also the first ever Indian sovereign to recapture its lost throne from the British.

SUBRAMANIYA BHARATHI ILLAM AT TRIPLICANE AND MEMORIAL AT ETTAYAPURAM:

THE POWER OF LETTERS

The banner of Indian National Movement was held aloft by an array of patriotic poets; as Rabindranath Tagore echoed in Bengal, so did Subramaniya Bharati in Tamil Nadu. He was born as Subramaniyan in Ettayapuram of Tirunelveli district (present-day Thoothukudi) in 1882, where a memorial has been erected by the Government of Tamil Nadu to commemorate his legacy. Soon, at the age of 11 he earned his title as Bharathi (Blessed by Saraswathi) from the King of Ettayapuram



for his prolificacy in poetry. Later, he went to Kashi, which had a strong impact on Bharathi. It was in Kashi, he assumes his iconic look starring turban, shaggy beard, and twisted moustache; a look that symbolises rebellion against social constructs. Soon after his return to Madras, he started actively writing and editing in a range of newspapers and magazines. Bharati used the print medium as nationalist propaganda tools to publish his fiery patriotic poems and songs to push the Indian masses towards the freedom struggle.

The main dimensions that could be broadly noticed in his poems were his fondness for Tamil language, his mother land (Bharata Matha), sacrifices of national leaders, spirituality, social reformism, and his dreams for the future independent India. He was the first of Indians to welcome the Russian revolution in his poem titled, 'New Russia'. As he describes in the poem, "Easan (Lord Shiva) may bless the righteous efforts of our Russian friends."

However, Bharathi has to undergo brutal state repression and censorship from of the British colonial state. Most of the newspapers and magazine that used to publish his writing were banned under sedition charges. Soon, Bharathi much like many other revolutionaries had to seek asylum in the French - controlled Pondicherry. It was during his exile in the French controlled territory, he produced many of his iconic pieces of literature. Subsequently, as he attempted to enter British India, he was captured and imprisoned. By this time, the revolutionary poet was poverty - ridden and bodily weakened with illness. The imprisonments had a grave impact on him, and by 1920, when a General Amnesty Order finally lifted limitations on his travels, Bharathi was already struggling for his substance. Eventually, due to the deterioration of his health, he passed away at his house in Triplicane, Chennai. The house he stayed was renovated by the Government of Tamil Nadu in 1993 and named Bharathi Illam (Bharathi's House).

V.O.C. MEMORIAL HOUSE OTTAPIDARAM:
SHIP, STRIKE, AND SWADESHI STORY

V.O.Chidambaram also known as Kappalottiya Tamizhan (Tamil Helmsman) was one of earliest in Madras to articulate Swadeshi as a multi-faceted concept, utilising it in all available avenues to liberate the populace for the nationalist cause. He was born on 5 September 1872, in Ottapidaram, Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu. After the partition of Bengal in 1905, V.O.C. partitioned himself from the worldly life and took up the nationalist cause. The vehement slogan, "Swarajya is my birth right and I shall have it" was the spirit and dictum of V.O.Chidambaram, an adherent follower of Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak.



In 1906, Swadeshi leaders from across Tamil Nadu gathered under the chairmanship of V.O.C. at Palayamkottai for the cause of Swadeshism. As a result, the ideals of swadeshi were materialised with formation of various local organisations to challenge the British monopoly in commerce, such as - Tuticorin Industrial Welfare Association, Dharma Sangha Nesavusalai (for the promotion of native textile), and Deshiya Pandahasalai (outlet that sold swadeshi goods). However, the Swadeshi movement that was kindled in the region came to national attention when V.O.C. along with Pandithurai Thevar and Fakir Mohamed launched a Swadeshi shipping joint-venture called The Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company (SSNC) to challenge the British India Steam Navigation Company's monopoly in navigation. V.O.C. purchased two steamships, namely S.S.Gallia and S.S.Lawoe, to which his comrade Bharathi remarked in his weekly India that our Bharatamata would now be as proud and delighted as a childless woman who gave birth to twin children, Similarly, Bharatamatha now has two ships. As the patronage and popularity of the company increased, the British made all attempts to crush the company.

However, V.O.C's political activism did not rest with the elites and the educated, he took up the cause of the downtrodden too. In 1908, V.O.C. along with Subramaniya Shiva called for a strike demanding wage hike, weekly offs, and other worker benefits for the coral mills workers. While the demands of wage hike and worker's rights were used to mobilise the working class, the strike soon transcended into an arena for nationalist and Swadeshi rhetoric. The slogan of *Vande Mataram* echoed in the chimneys of the factories, in British offices and the streets of Tuticorin alike.

By 1908, V.O.C's political involvement drew the attention of the British. Following the preparations for the celebration of Bipin Chandra Pal's release, defying the local authorities, led V.O.C, Subramaniya Shiva and Padamanaba Iyer

being summoned to the magistrate, where they were all arrested under sedition charges. The arrest was followed by widespread protest from the masses. Eventually, V.O.C. was found guilty and was awarded rigorous life imprisonment. During his imprisonment, V.O.C. was treated as a life - sentenced convict and was forced to do hard labour, such as yoking (in place of bulls) the oil press like an animal, which immortalised his name as 'Chekkilutha Chemmal' (a great man who pulled the oil press). The prison time caused his health to suffer and pushed him along with his family into poverty. After his release, he continued to work for the cause of Indian independence and Tamil revival. Finally, the immortalised partisan passed away in poverty and sickness on 18 November 1936 at the Tuticorin office of the Indian National Congress. The Government of Tamil Nadu has built a memorial house in the memory of this legend at Ottapidaram, 33 kms west to Thoothukudi.

THILLAIYADI VALLIAMMAI MEMORIAL:
VOICE OF FREEDOM ACROSS THE OCEAN

"Neither a child nor a culprit," 16-year-old Thilaiyadi Valliammai was rather a revolutionary freedom fighter, for which she was imprisoned by the draconian colonial administration. Being a partisan of Mahatma Gandhi's passive Satyagraha struggle in South Africa, she is recounted by him with admiration as a selfless Satyagrahi in his book *Satyagraha in South Africa*. Thilaiyadi Valliammai was born to a fairly well-off young Tamil immigrant couple on 22 February 1898 in Johannesburg, South Africa. Her parents originally hailed from a small village named Thillaiyadi of Mayiladuthurai District in India, from which she is given the prefix of Thillaiyadi.



Thilaiyadi Valliammai grew in an environment that was rather growing hostile to Indians. The first impact of the apartheid in South Africa on Valliyamma was when marriages performed in the traditional Indian style were declared illegal by Cape Supreme Court on March 14, 1913, rendering her an illegitimate child. Subsequently, Valliammai and her mother Mangalathammal joined the valiant brigade of women rallying against the discriminatory laws from Johannesburg to Newcastle on October 23, 1913. The colonial police as an act of repression arrested women in batches. Similarly, Valliammai and her mother were arrested and imprisoned at Maritzburg prison, where Gandhi's wife Kasturba Gandhi was also imprisoned.

The arrested women were herded along with ordinary criminals, which sent shock waves throughout South Africa and India alike. Moreover, Gandhi expressed his anxiety over the pathetic condition of Indian women in Maritzburg prison and writes, "The women's bravery was beyond words." The inhuman living condition in the prison had a grave impact on Valliammai's health. As Valliammai was later released from the prison, Gandhi met her bed - ridden. The conversation between the duo during the meeting is later recorded by Gandhi in his book *Satyagraha in South Africa:*

"Valliamma, you do not repent of your having gone to jail?," I asked.

"Repent? I am even now ready to go to jail again if I am arrested," said Valliamma.

"But what if it results in your death?," I pursued.

"I do not mind it. Who would not love to die for one's motherland?"

Within a few days after this conversation, Valliammal passed away on 22 February 1914. However, her legacy of sacrifice, selflessness, and steadfastness has been immortalised in the memory of the Tamil populace. To commemorate her contributions to the Indian freedom struggle, the Government of Tamil Nadu in Thillaiyadi village, Mayiladuthurai District, erected the Thillaiyadi Valliammai Memorial.

TIRUPPUR KUMARAN MEMORIAL STATUE:
A TALE OF THE FLAG MARTYR

As per words of Subhas Chandra Bose, "It is blood alone that can pay the price of freedom" numerous young martyrs had forsaken their lives for the cause of Indian independence. One such courageous young man who laid down his life in the path of Ahimsa was Tiruppur Kumaran. Tiruppur Kumaran alias Kumarasamy Mudaliyar was born in a humble weaver's family in the village of Chennimalai in present Erode District on 4 October, 1904. Because of poverty, he had to drop schooling and later took up the familial trade.



Amidst this, the young lad was no alien to the sweeping nationalist tide. Inspired by the teachings of Gandhi, he soon started participating in anti-colonial demonstrations. He was so much influenced by the anti-colonial rhetoric that he completely dedicated himself for the cause of Indian independence. Later, he founded the Desa Bandhu Youth Association, which primarily mobilised youth across Tamil Nadu and organised rallies against the British administration.

In 1932, when the British authorities imprisoned Gandhiji for leading a demonstration in Bombay, riots and protests broke out all over the country. Similarly, Kumaran took part in the patriotic march led by Thiyagi P.S.Sundaram in Tiruppur to express their views in defiance of the British administration. The demonstration featured in large scale, its partakers carrying the then proscribed tricoloured Indian flag. Eventually, the marching Satyagrahis were violently repressed by British forces with a volley of lathi charge. Though many of the protestors dispersed from the site, unable to withstand the blows, stubborn Kumaran refused to leave the premise and he was entangled in the ensuing chaos. Once Lala Lajpat Rai said, "Every blow that they hurled at us drove one more nail into the coffin of the Empire." However, here the hurled blows put the nail over the coffin of Kumaran; he was later discovered dead on the street, still clutching on to the National Flag. The valiant action earned him the name, 'Kodi Katha Kumaran' (The Kumaran who saved the Flag).

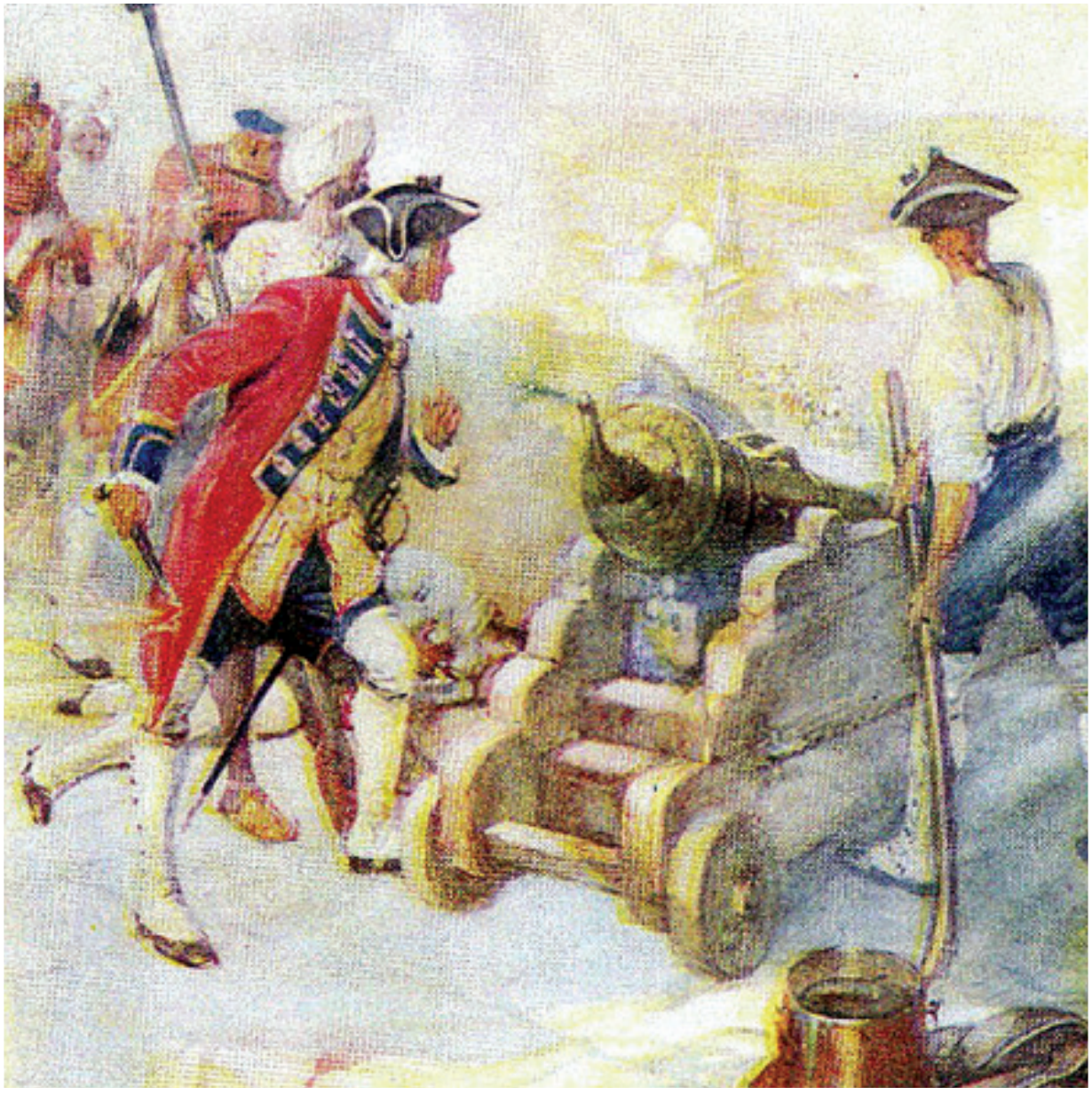
Nevertheless, Kumaran as an individual may have died, but the idea for which he was martyred has incarnated itself in a thousand others. The legacy of Tiruppur Kumaran has been a source of inspiration to the youth since the Indian national movement to the contemporary times. To commemorate the flag martyr's selfless

sacrifice and valour, the Government of Tamil Nadu has erected a memorial statue of Tiruppur Kumaran holding the tricolour, located in Tiruppur District, Tamil Nadu.



Monuments of Sacrifice

1. St. George Fort, Chennai
2. Thilagar Thidal, Chennai
3. Tilak Bhavan, Chennai
4. Subramania Bharati Illam, Chennai
5. Vellore Fort, Vellore
6. Subramania Siva Memorial, Dharmapuri
7. Salt Satyagraha Monument, Vedaranyam
8. Thillaiyadi Valliammai Memorial, Nagapattinam
9. Tiruppur Kumaran Memorial Statue, Tiruppur
10. Salt Satyagraha Monument, Tiruchirapalli
11. Gandhi Museum, Madurai
12. Veera Mangai Velu Nachiyar Memorial, Sivagangai
13. Maruthu Pandiyar Memorial, Sivagangai
14. Subramania Bharati Memorial, Ettayapuram
15. Pachalamkuruchi Fort, Thoothukudi
16. V.O.C Memorial House, Ottapidaram
17. Vachi Maniachi Railway Station



17

Indian Nationalism vis-à-vis Liberation of Puducherry

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Introduction

Nationalism is an ideology that emphasises loyalty, devotion, or allegiance to a nation or nation-state and surpasses all other individual or group interests. At the beginning of the 20 century, nationalism flowered in Asia and Africa, which witnessed the rise and struggle of powerful national movements against colonialism and imperialism. The British decision to partition Bengal in 1905 prompted the birth of Swadeshi movement and subsequently developed into a powerful yet non-violent struggle for the liberation of India from the British and of Puducherry from the French (Weber1996:2828-31). V.O.Chidambaram Pillai, the 'Tamil Helmsman', who founded the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company in 1906 to challenge the English is the first swadeshi of South India.

His emergence in the national scene spurred the growth of wide-spread nationalism in Tamil Nadu and then in Puducherry (More 2022). In Puducherry, nationalism began in the 1840s as an anti-establishment sentiment and developed into anti-French, anti-imperialistic sentiment. The influx of Indian nationalists in early 20th century sowed the seeds of Indian nationalism among the French Indians. Puducherry has a unique distinction among the states of India, in that the nationalism generated in these two political entities has reciprocated the benefits mutually in the freedom struggle of both the states.

Indian Nationalists in Puducherry

Being in the immediate and convenient vicinity outside British India, Puducherry developed an identity as an asylum for revolutionaries hunted out of British India, a springboard for disseminating national sentiments, a launching pad for publication materials with patriotic flair, and an armoury and training ground for revolutionaries.

The first name that connects the Tamil Nadu swadeshis with Puducherry is of Subramaniya Bharathi. Faced with the prospect of arrest, he escaped in September 1908 to Puducherry, which was under French rule. Other revolutionaries V.V.S.Iyer from Paris, Neelakanta Brahmachari, Subramanya Siva, Vanchinathan and Madasamy from Tamil Nadu soon joined him. Aurobindo Ghosh, at the behest of Bharathi, arrived in Puducherry from Bengal in 1910 with his colleagues (Dheenadhayalan 2002:31; Arulraj 2005:56-57).

Immediately after arrival, Bharathi launched Tamil weekly India, assisted by the refugees Paralis. Nellaiyappar and Harihara Sharma. Furthermore, he edited and published Vijaya, a Tamil daily, BalaBharathi, an English monthly, and Suryodayam, a local weekly in Puducherry. The British tried to suppress Bharathi's output by stopping remittances and seizing letters to editors sections. India and Vijaya were banned in India in 1909 (More 2022:56).

Saigon Chinnaiya, a patriotic immigrant from Vietnam came to his rescue and offered him the honorary editorship of a vernacular paper Suryodhayam, which he was publishing since 1906. However, due to continued harassment from the British police, his profession as a journalist ended abruptly by 1910 (More 2022:56-57).

Sri Aurobindo's arrival was a solace for the distressed poet. Bharati, Aurobindo and V.V.S.Iyer spent many hours on the beach discussing literature, philosophy, and mysticism. The serene and picturesque atmosphere inspired Bharati's evolution as Athmagnani and three of his greatest works, Kuyil Pattu, Kannan Pattu, and Panchali Sabatham, which catapulted him to 'Mahakavi' status, were composed during 1912 (Murugesan 2013:328).









During Bharati's self-imposed exile, he began his stay in Puducherry in the house of Chitti Kuppusamy Iyengar. 'Vellachu' Krishnasamy chettiar, Arumugam chettiar, 'Valluru' Nayakar, Mandayam Srinivasachary, Ponnu Murugesam Pillai, Deivasigamani Naicker, Bharathidasan, Saigon Chinnaiya, Jaganatham Gramani, Kodiyalam Srinivasa Iyengar, more specifically Sundaresa Iyer helped him during difficult times. Ammakkannu and Venugopalnayakar were faithful helpers who took care of the family (Kothandaraman 1980:38-39). Once, haunted by poverty, Bharathi decided to leave Puducherry and reached the railway station despite the persuasion of Ammakkannu against it. Having learnt it, Bharathidasan consoled and persuaded him to return. Otherwise, Puducherry would have lost a golden page in its history as an abode of Mahakavi (Mannar Mannan 1980:91). Though the ten years Bharathi spent in Puducherry were the most difficult years, they were the brightest years of his life. The poems sympathising with the slaves of Fiji and African sugarcane fields, and the selection of a Dalit Kanakalingam for adorning with the holy threadin a typically ritualistic 'Upanayanam', and the editorial in Chakravarthini condemning 'Sati' as barbarous and anachronistic, are contemptuous whiplashes rebutting slavery, caste system, and untouchability. Life in Puducherry ignited the flame of patriotism and

kindled the spirit of Indianism not only in the minds of the aliens, but also among the Puducherry youth. In this, he outscores Mahathma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and all the other national leaders.

The other famous leader of the extremist branch who found refuge in Puduchérry was Aurobindo Ghosh. He resided there in exile until his death in 1950. However, despite many attempts by Congress members to lure him back to politics, and to the great disappointment of Nehru, he ceased to engage himself in political activities and devoted himself to spirituality (Guenot 2015:211).

India Office

A secret society called 'India Office' functioned at 58, Rue de Mission Étrangères, Puducherry from where India was printed. The most important members of the society were V.V.S.Iyer, Subramaniya Bharathi, Srinivasachari, Nagasami Iyer, Appadurai Iyer, Gurusami Iyer, and Madasami. The revolutionary leaders kept in touch with the centres of agitation in Europe and America, especially with Tirumalaichary in London, Shyamji Krishna Varma and Madame Cama in Paris (Suresh 2010:222).

An Armoury and Encampment

Nilakanta Brahmachari founded an organisation called Bharatha Matha Sangam in Punalur in Tamil Nadu and plotted the assassinations of influential British men. Escaping from the police surveillance, he came to Puducherry and stayed in Dharmalayam. V.V.S.Iyer, disguised as a Muslim, escaped from Paris and reached Puducherry in 1910. Dressed like a beggar, he also moved into Dharmalayam. Vanchinathan who took a three month break from his job also joined them (Arulraj 2005:60-61).

Ashe's Assassination

Robert William Ashe was the Collector and District magistrate of Thirunelveli district in the year 1911. He did everything in his power to kill the 'Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company' started by V.O.Chidambaram Pillai and was instrumental in imprisoning him. This sparked an impulse for revenge among the revolutionaries. The preparation for Ashe's assassination began in early January 1911. Lots were drawn and Vanchinathan was the choice. He was trained in pistol firing by V.V.S.Iyer and Muthukumarasami Pillai, a local teacher. Five pistols were smuggled out of Paris by one Marie Joseph Xavery, who was returning to Karaikal after graduating as Barrister. Pillai also supplied empty bullets for practice as he was a licence holder. The trials

began in the twilight hours in the canal adjacent to Sithananda Swami temple and in the coconut groves of the neighbouring Ariyankuppam village (Arulraj 2005:60-61).It is the same Pillai who despatched pistols for the training of Bhashyam, who, in later days, hoisted the national flag on the tall flag-mast at Saint George fort in Chennai (Murugesan 2013:330).

Dharmalayam

Dharmalayam was a safe haven for the nationalists from Tamil Nadu. Mandayam Srinivasachari had installed a printing machine there for publishing a bi-monthly called *Dharmam*, hence the name Dharmalayam. Patriotic foreign literature were imported and from there, transported through railway for distribution in Tamil Nadu. Revolutionary youths were also trained in gymnastics and martial arts. Their meetings in secret had all the characteristics of an esoteric secret society with bizarre rites and rituals. They worshipped Goddess Kali, wearing red vermillion [Kunkumam] and holy ash (Vibhuthi). They mixed vermillion in water and applied on the paper. Considering it as the white man's blood, they dipped and wrote 'Vandhe Matharam' and drank it as an avenge of white men (Arulraj 2005:62-64).

On the fateful day, Muthukumarswamy accompanied by Nagasamy guided Vanchinathan to reach Thirupapuliyur bye-passing customs barriers, for boarding the train. Muthukumarswamy cut his finger with his nail and applied the oozing blood as Thilak on the forehead of Vachinathan and bade him goodbye. Ashe was shot dead at Maniyachi junction on 17 June 1911. The name Puducherry was etched in the history on that day (Arulraj 2005:87).

Bharathidasan, the Nationalist

Under the influence of Bharathi, Kanaga Subburathinam, the teacher rechristened himself as Bharathidasan. He began his career as a patriot and composed patriotic collections entitled Siruvar Sirumiyar Thesiya Geetham, Thondar Padai Paattu, Kadhar Raattinap Paattu. At times hecarried rice concealed in his towel for Swadeshis and protected them from the prying British spies.

A Novel Way of Propaganda

Bharathidasan devised a novel way to arouse patriotic spirit among the masses. He wrote hymns on Lord Subramanya of Mayilam temple and Senji Ranganatha, and the lyrics were laced with patriotic fervour. With the help of his friends Saigon

Chinnaiya and Jeganatham Gramani, these lyrics were prominently displayed on large banners welcoming those idols for the annual 'Masi Magam Theerthavari' festivals in Puducherry.

Among the banners, one banner pleaded, *"Destroy the unjust regime, Lord Muruga"* and another prayed,

"On the land above the deep sea, *O' Lord, Elevate Bharath and raise the flag sky-high So that the praise pours in From all the eight directions"* – (Bharathidasan).

The matter was duly reported to the police. Fortunately, the French police got it translated by their officials with incomplete knowledge of Tamil and hence could not comprehend the hidden message and they left. On another occasion, Bharathidasan and the editor of *Sugabivruthini* magazine Venkatasalanayakar printed 300 copies of patriotic songs composed by them and distributed to devotees (MannarMannan 1980:188).

Protectorate against Odds

Immediately after the arrival of Bharathi, the British authorities in Chennai warned their counterparts in Puducherry about the anti-national activities of Bharathi and his colleagues and insisted on prosecuting them. However, the French administration, though it was mandatory toextradite persons working against the interest of either of the nations as per Paris Convention-1814, refused to extradite Aurobindo, Subramaniya Bharathi, and the other nationalists (Weber 1996:327).

After Ashe's assassination, troubles intensified. On persistent demand from the British, a police officer searched the house of Aurobindo. He could not find any incriminating materials, but found Greek and Latin books on philosophy. Amazed at his intellectual acumen, he suggested that he could migrate to a safer French colony like Algeria or Réunion (Kothandaraman 1980:61). Another request demanded the arrest of Aurobindo and Bharathi. The suggestion of the police officer was repeated by Paul Bluysen, the French Philosopher and politician who developed acquaintance with Aurobindo and Bharathi, but in vain. Governor Alfred Martineau dismissed the charges summarily (More 2022:117-119).Compared to the attitude of the French, the Chennai police had no qualms to hound out Subbiah, who was underground, and extradite him to French India in 1939 (Subbiah 1990:197; Guenot 2015:327).

Individuals to the Rescue

Apart from institutional safeguards individuals also protected swadeshis, at times, risking even their lives. Once, Bharathiyar happened to be in the house of Ammakkannu. As he was under the strict surveillance of the British police, scores of spies hovered around the house. Sensing trouble, Ammakkannu dressed Bharathiyar

like a woman and escorted him out safely, as he cleverly covered his face with the sari pretending to suffer from acute tooth ache (Dheenadhayalan 2002:32-33).

Madasamy was the prime suspect in Ashe murder case. Bharathidasan was tested with his protection before he was sent to Singapore to avoid the arrest by British police. One day Bharathidasan was carrying two copies of the book *Erimalai* to be handed over to Madasamy. On the way, he saw him coming towards him and the British police following him. To distract them, Bharathidasan immediately wore a turban, hurried into the neigh bouring temple, hid the books and jumped from a height of 30 feet onto the other side of the road and ran away. Those who followed him were disappointed for missing a chance to apprehend Madasamy. However he had already escaped through another street.(Murugesan 2013:330)



Again, on the previous day of his departure to Singapore, Bharathidasan took Madasami in a catamaran, went into the sea, and spent the whole chilly night in pitch darkness in mid-sea and boarded him safely.

Bharathidasan also performed the dangerous task of carrying the miniatures of Bharata Matha terracotta idols made after Bharathi's design, hidden with pistols to Chennai for distribution among revolutionaries elsewhere (Mannar Mannan 1980:235-236).

Rise of Nationalism in Puducherry

Parallel Activities

Open anti-French political activities were not possible in the early 20 century, but were not required either. However, parallel activities mimicking Indians were started. 'Harijan Sevak Sangam' started in 1933, preached against abolition of untouchability and popularised spinning wheel and Kadhi (Subbaiah 1990:32-33). The Kadhi movement initiated by Gandhi as a response to 'Boycott Foreign Goods Movement', found staunch followers; Khadar Nadesan carried head-loads of khadi clothes and sold them at cheaper rates and donated to the poor. Bharathidasan composed 'Khadar Rattinap Paattu' hailing its virtues; Arangasami Naicker and Ansari Duraisami vowed to wear kadhi for the rest of their lives; students, who fancied to wear 'Kadhi Gandhi cap' to schools were reprimanded. Joseph Xavery Pillai, the lawyer from Karaikal was expelled from the court for wearing kadhi attire, but he waged a legal battle up to Paris and won his right. Kadhi weaving units in the names of Kasthuri Bai and Thiruvalluvar sprang up. The youth of Puducherry formed several associations like Bharat Matha Sangam, Five Member Group, Paraspara Sagodharathuva Sangam, Thiruppani Sena, Ramakrishna Vasaga Salai, Vivasaya Thozhilalar Sangam, Nethaji Seva Sangam, Saraswathi Vilasa Sabha, etc., *Pudhuvai Murasu, Sujniranjani, Sugabiviruththini, Sudhandhiram, Kudiyarasu,* etc., joined the print media band (Arulraj 2005:60-61,80,99).

Ramakrishna Vasaka Salai

Ramakrishna Vasaka Salai (Reading Room) located on Gandhi Road, Puducherry was another organisation which followed Gandhi's ideals. It conducted evening classes for poor children. It had a rich collection of books on nationalism. Its members propagated abolition of untouchability and prohibition through stage-plays, and utilised the winter bhajan seasons to chant patriotic songs of Bharathi to arouse a sense of nationalism among the public (Arulraj 2005:68-69).

Bharathidasan vouches that terracotta miniatures of Bharata Matha designed by Bharathi were made in large numbers in this centre, with pistols hidden inside such toys, and were transported stealthily to Tamil Nadu (Mananar Mannan 1980: 235-236).

Spurred by nationalistic spirit, individuals like Ansari Doraisami, Sethuraman Chettiyar, Subbiah, Arulraj from Puducherry, Arangasamy Naicker, called 'Gandhi of French India', Govindhasami Chettiyar, Joseph Xavery Pillai and Rama Seenuvasan

of Karaikal practised Gandhian principles and participated in the Indian Freedom struggle. S.R.Subramaniyam a migrant from neighbouring Valavanur stayed permanently here, but took active part in India's freedom struggle. He established a radio station in Coimbatore to broadcast patriotic messages and served jail terms in Tamil Nadu (Arulraj 2005:99).

Gandhi and Nehru's Visits

In February 1934, at the insistence of Subbiah, Gandhi visited Pondichérry and then Karikal and invited his audience to fight against politicised religious identities and caste segregation. Nehru addressed a meeting in Puducherry supporting the agitating textile mill workers. However, Gandhi delivered a strong message at Mahé in 1936 that there was no distinction between British India and French India, and the fight was for liberating every inch of land from foreign possessions (Subbiah, 1990:32-33; Guenot 2015:332).

First Political Outfit

In 1937 a new party, the Mahajana Sabha, contested the French hegemony by demanding the removal of the two-list system in favour of a single electoral college. It was the first political party formed in French India and its activities were monitored by the representatives of the Indian National Congress, including V.V.Giri, a close associate of Nehru (Weber 1996: 335).

Inspired by the victory of the Congress Party in the Madras provincial elections in February 1937, Mahajana Sabha contested the municipal elections in May 1937, over the issue of a 'French India' versus an 'Indian India'. It won all the seats, which proved that the visits of Indian nationalist leaders, the influence of political refugees, and the victorious labour agitations had firmly inculcated the spirit of nationalism in French India. Nevertheless, the elections were marked by an usual amount of violence and malpractices by the pro-French elements and the administration nullified the victory and declared the pro-French candidates as winners, making mockery of a democratic process. Not to be outdone, the Sabha faithfully implemented the Gandhian concept of Civil Disobedience Movement, throughout French India, successfully, albeit for a brief period (Subbiah 1990:157-169; Weber 1996:335).

First Mass Participation

When the Second World War broke out and the 'Quit India' campaign was launched in 1942, French India witnessed spontaneous mass participations in several parts. Such cross-border complementary activities implanted the idea of an 'All India Nation' among the French Indians (Guenot 2015:218; Arulraj 2005:92-93).

Support from Foreign Soil

Immigrant Indians in foreign countries still cherished nationalism and contributed to the freedom of India and French India in several ways.



Bhikaiji Rustom Cama called Madam Cama was an affluent Parsi Indian patriot, associated with the 'Indian Home Rule Society' in London. She was the first person to design and hoist an Indian flag in foreign soil in Stuttgart in Germany in 1907. She relocated to Paris in 1909 and co-founded 'Paris Indian Society', which patronised Indian nationalists.

Cama wrote, published and distributed revolutionary literature including Bande Mataram and Madan's Talwar, which were sent to India along with seditious literature banned in British India, like Gaelic American, Indian Sociologist, New York Call, and Evening Post from different cities like London, Paris and New York and were stocked in Dharmalayam in Puduchérry. Later on these were smuggled into British Indian territories for distribution. The revolver used to murder collector Ashe was one of the five she sent from Paris (Arulraj 2005:61-62; Geetha 2008:62-63).

In Indo-China

Puducherry immigrants in Indo-China though were French citizens, they considered themselves as Indians. "We are French on records, but Indians by birth" was their refrain. Harijan Sevak Sangam had a branch in Saigon. It conducted a conference as part of its activities in which dignitaries from Tamil Nadu participated.

Saigon Chinnaiya published Dhesa Sevaken and the bi-lingual *India-Indochina* journals for propagating Indian views. He returned to Puducherry and started Suryodhayam in 1906. When Bharathiyar was distressed by the stoppage of his publications, he invited him to join its editorial team. He continued his patriotic

activities in the company of Bharathidasan, Jeganatham Gramani and other swadeshis and resumed the publication of Dhesa Sevaken in 1922.



Leon Prouchandy was an officer in a bank and he resigned his job to join the Indian National League organised by Nethaji Subhas Chandra Bose. It's secretariat functioned from his house. Saigon accorded a tumultuous welcome to Nethaji when he visited in 1945 and participated in 'India Week' celebrations. Pruchandy had discussions with him about the future plans on 18 August 1945, the day prior to the fatal plane crash.

Since he was the last man to meet Nethaji, he was arrested by the Japanese army and tortured in the jail to disclose Nethaji's plans and possessions. The cruelty maimed him severely and he was brought to Puducherry where he spent the rest of his life as a vegetable and died.

There are several such French Indians who joined Nethaji's Indian National Army (INA) and sacrificed their lives when it marched upto Burma in a bid to liberate India from the British (More 2022:463-470).

India, Tamil Nadu and French India

On the Eve of Independence

After Atlee's declaration in 1946, it became apparent India would be granted independence soon. As for French India too, the general impression was that the French would follow suit. However, when France reiterated its intention of retaining French India on economic, sentimental, and strategic grounds a new surge of Indian nationalism developed in French India, which was fostered by the Government of India covertly and through political parties overtly (Shanthini 2005:247).

The events unfolding from 1946 disclose how Indian nationalism, more specifically the major political parties in Tamil Nadu, Congress, Communist, Dravidar Kazhagam, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam have impacted the freedom struggle, ultimately culminating in the liberation of French India (AkhilaYechury 2015:143-144).

The Emergence of Political Parties

An amalgamation of progressive groups called National Democratic Front (NDF) with Communist Party of Subbiah, India Party of Sellane Naicker, and others was formed on September 15, 1945 with the aim of securing autonomous status for French India. However, with the chances off India's independence becoming brighter, the NDF split diversely by 1947. Subbaiah revived the Communist Party, which he started in 1942. The congressmen split differently. At the instance of Kamaraj, then President of Tamil Nadu Congress Committee (TNCC), the French Indian National Congress (FINC) party, Karaikal National Congress were started in 1946 as branches of the Indian National Congress (INC). S.R.Subramanyam formed Congress Socialist Party. Eduard Goubert was a late entrant to the political arena by launching French Indian Socialist (FISP) party (Krishnamurthy 1991:50-56).

First Demand for Merger

In the general conference organised by the (FINC), chaired by RL.Purushothama Reddiyar on 24 and 25 January 1947 in Puducherry, attended by K.Kamaraj, M.P.Sivagnanam and Ravindra Varma, itwas demanded for the first time that the French India should be liberated and merged with Indian Union unconditionally (Shanthini 2005:247).

The demand received immediate support from TNCC, when its President Kamaraj warned during the 43 State Level Conference at Coimbatore, if France did not depart, TNCC would be constrained to take direct action. A Committee consisting of the Members of the Legislative Council, headed by CP. Adithan was also constituted to guide the freedom movement (Department of Education 2004:93).

However, on 19 June 1948, the Governments of France and India announced through a joint communique that the population of these French Indian settlements would decide their future through a free referendum. The INC considered India's move as "unwise and uncalled for" and the FINC regretted that it was an insult and a challenge to the moral right of the people yearning to join the motherland (Krishnamurthy 1991:65-66).

Municipal Elections: A Comedy of Errors

As a prelude to the referendum, Municipal elections were scheduled for October 1948. The French Indian Socialist Party demanding autonomous status, the French

Indian Congress Party demanding merger with India and the Progressive Democratic Alliance comprising the Communist Party and the Dravidar Kazhagam contested separately in the elections (Krishnamurthy 1991:66)

A Curious Twist

Indhiya Unionil Sera Maruppor Kazhagam, an off shoot of Dravidian movement in Tamil Nadu, headed by Bharthidasan was part of the Progressive Democratic Alliance. It demanded autonomous status for French India within the French Union for the time-being in order to prevent its merger with the Indian Union, so that when Dravida Nadu becomes a reality, French India can merge with it. Communist Party considered the Government of India under Nehru as anti-Communist and pro-Anglo-American and hence French India should attain independence from the French rule first, and then by stages should decide whether to join the Indian Union or not (Kuyil October12,1948;Shanthini 2005:254).

A Taste of Violence

The municipal elections were very crucial as their results would determine the trends of the referendum. More importantly, the newly elected Municipalities would decide the date and the modalities of the referendum (Rajkumar 1951:59).

The anti-merger group wielded its power through manipulation and falsification of the electoral lists and corruption of all sorts, backed by money and muscle. Instances of intimidation, arson and violence threatening people were on rise. Therefore, AICC nominated Dr. N.V.Rajkumar and Dr. P.Subbarayan for Puducherry and A.M.Saminatha Chettiar of Nagapattinam for Karaikal as observers (Krishnamurthy 1991:66).

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Omandur P.Ramasamy Reddiyar(OPR) consulted Sellane Nayakar at Cuddalore. K.Kamaraj, Dr. P. Subbarayan, and SP Adithan joined the campaign trail on 2 October 1948, when they extolled the people on merger during Gandhi Jayanthi function in Karaikal region. They had a taste of violence when the anti-merger goons invaded the meeting and pelted stones. Fortunately, the Congress leaders escaped unhurt (Shanthini 2005:148).

The French India National Congress demanded neutral observers, but it was rejected. The elections were held on 24 October 1948. With the connivance of the administration, all FISP candidates excepting Thirunallar were declared winners despite the voters' choice. It vitiated the whole referendum process (Geetha 2008:166). N.V.Rajkumar castigated, "It is unsafe to be guided by the results of the elections. It was, to say the least, nothing but prostitution of a democratic device to ascertain popular will" (Rajkumar 1951:59).

Goubert, the Ace Manipulator

Armed with the 'dubious' popular mandate and patronage of the administration, Goubert started his grand political manoeuvres. In July 1949, he led a delegation to Paris and sought an assurance from the Government for "a large measure of autonomy for French India within the frame work of French Union" and urged to have this autonomy before the referendum. However, the French officials remained non-committal (The Hindu, 18 October 1949).

Dismayed at the outcome, the Pondicherry delegation visited Delhi, and had exhaustive discussions with Nehru, Rajaji, the Governor General of India, and other Indian leaders and officials in New Delhi. The Government assured that French India would, in the event of joining India, be treated, in broad terms, as a Province or, as Provinces, or, as a State of the Indian Union (Geetha 2008:202-203).

Apparently satisfied, the wily Goubert assured Nehru that his Party was essentially Anti-Communist and hence wanted Tamil Nadu Congress Committee to desist from countering them (Geetha 2008:203). Accordingly, Nehru wrote a confidential letter to Kumaraswamy Raja, the Premier of the Madras Presidency, requesting him to exercise his influence to prevent conflicts in Puducherry between rival groups, at any rate with the French India Socialist Party. Pattabhi Sitharamayya, the President of the AICC also wrote a letter to R.L.Purushothama Reddiyar in a similar vein. However, after reaching Puducherry, Goubert affirmed his commitment to the autonomy by French and started preparations for the referendum. Nehru was naturally upset (Geetha 2008:203-204).

Customs Union and Economic Blockade

In the meantime, the customs union agreement lapsed due to the recklessness of France. Yet, it announced customs-free status for the ports of French India. Consequently, these pockets turned into smugglers paradise. Rashid Ali, the Counsel General of India in Puducherry, countered by initiating an economic blockade. Inevitably a cold war ensued. An angered France called for a referendum on December 11, 1949 (Guenot 2015:231-235).

Indians were not permitted to involve themselves in political exercises in French India; hence the Indian Nationalists of Tamil Nadu who had to operate only in Tamil Nadu areas proximate to French Indian territories, like Cuddalore, Viluppuram, Kottakuppam in Puducherry and Nagapattinam and Tharangambadi in Karaikal regions with Chennai acting as co-ordination centre.

The National Liberation Front (NLF) the first major alignment for merger constituted by Rashid Ali has become moribund. The pro-merger groups were a

divided lot. Therefore, Rajkumar invited the Congress factions to Cuddalore and unified them into 'Puducherry Merger Committee' and 'Karaikal Merger Congress' in 1949 (Krishnamurthy 1991:72).

Referendum Postponed

In order to stifle the dissent, aided by the rulers, a reign of terror was unleashed by the Socialist Party primarily against the Communists and secondarily against the pro-mergerists rallying around the banner of Congress and the Merger Committees (Krishnamurthy 1991:75).

Omandurar Consoles Students

In 1949, the Congress Students of Calve College, who organized a satyagraha, were brutally attacked by the police. They marched all the way from Puducherry to Cuddalore and complained to the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister OP. Ramasami Reddiyar (OPR), who was camping there. OPR consoled them and, while addressing a meeting at 'Padali' theatre, assured them openly that the violence would be brought to an end soon (Arulraj 2005:121).

Attack on Goubert and Its Aftermath

Though the nationalists retaliated, against the socialists, it was Goubert's group that ruled the roost. One day in 1950, a bomb was thrown on Goubert by an indignant victim at a meeting in Murungapakkam, but he escaped unhurt.

As a result, the enraged French Indian Socialists resorted to unprecedented vandalism, first in the town and then in the villages. Houses were burnt shops were looted innocents intimidated or even murdered. On January 13, Subbiah's house was set onfire, Sudhandhiram office was ransacked. Unable to bear the brunt of attacks, thousands of people fled to neighbouring border villages and sought refuge. The philanthropic Tamil Nadu patriots extended moral and material support to them for the next three years (Murugesan 2004:145).

Citing the disturbed atmosphere, AICC Secretary, Jugal Kishore demanded the postponement of plebiscite or the monitoring by neutral observers. However, France rejected the request again and the violence continued (Rajkumar1951:29-30)

Movement Slackens

Pro-mergerists were maimed and the communists were silenced. People's exodus to safety swelled the border villages. Inevitably, there was a slump in the merger operations. However, smuggling went on unhindered. Therefore, India tightened the situation by introducing a series of economic and strategic pressures (Krishnamurthy 1991:75).

Tamil Nadu Concerned

In a bid to revitalise the freedom struggle, an 'Action Committee' was constituted by Rajkumar on 21 March 1950, under the leadership of Sellane Naickar. At the meeting, Kamaraj appealed to the mergerists to set aside their personal preferences and differences and work together towards the merger with the Union of India in these trying times (Neogy 1997:164). Now the anti-mergerists extended their attacks beyond the borders to refugee camps. Such incessant onslaughts prompted Sellane Naickar to seek Kamaraj's support for the refugees in the Tamil Nadu territories on 16 August 1950.

India Rises in Support

The Government of India, Indian Consul General at Pondicherry, the regional Congress Committees, the Indian press and other organisations were firm in continuing to give formidable support to the pro-merger activists and giving shelter to political refugees. In Tamil Nadu, TNCC continued its support by deputing Ministers Bhaktavachalam and Sitaram Reddiyar from Chennai to Puducherry on October 12, 1951.

An Inevitable Stalemate

The policy of terrorism and the resultant fear psychosis had virtually stopped pro-merger political activities by the middle of 1951. However, Indian Consul General R.K.Tandon continued his efforts to organise a network of anti-French operations along the borders. There was a dire need for a strong leader with mass base to revitalise the movement. The choice zeroed on Subbiah (Geetha 2008:224).

Subbiah Returns

At the behest of Nehru, V.V.Giri, the Indian High Commissioner of Ceylon, visited Puducherry in July 1951 and studied the situation. He met V.Subbiah who was at that time hibernating in Madras and convinced Subbiah to plunge into the movement. On his advice, an arrest warrant against him was cancelled; a new era in the history of merger movement began (Subbiah 1990:295).

Viluppuram and Kottakuppam became active centres with the involvement of comrades like Ramamurthi, Kalyanasundharam, Kandhasamy, and the literateur Thirukkural Munisamy. V.P.Chinthan who had been the intermediary between Subbiah and Puducherry during his absence became busier. The printing machines of Sudhandhiram were shifted overnight to Viluppuram and it revived its publication (Arulraj 2005:122,158-161).

Karaikal Revisited

In February 1952, a general body meeting of the Congress Committee was held at Tharangambadi under the chairmanship of Kamaraj. It authorised a sub-committee consisting of Bhaktavachalam and Nagai T.N.Ramachandran to co-ordinate the merger activities in the Karaikal region. Consequently, a new movement named 'French India Liberation Front' started functioning from Thirumalairajanpattinam (Shanthini 2005:146).

First Unification

In 1952, under the initiative of the new Consul General R.K.Tandon, a 'United Front' was formed to unite the nationalists within the French Indian territories. On its behalf, a Refugees conference attended by thousands of people was organised at Cuddalore, in August 1952. S.S.Ramasamy Padayachi who had been caring the refugees in that area and C.P.Adithan participated along with the Puducherry nationalists to stir up their spirits. It was resolved that "The French Government must immediately withdraw from French India; the Government of India, Indian political parties and the people of India should support the struggle for the rights of the people of French India" (Murugesan 2004:152-53).

Issue in Parliament

Often the French Socialist Party thugs barged into Indian territories and attacked the refugees. A gang from Nettapakkam attacked the refugee camp in Pallinelianur village in Tamil Nadu. R.Venkatraman raised the cross-border attacks in Parliament to draw the attention of the central Government. Nehru warned that if cross-border activities continued, the Indian Government would be constrained to take severe action (Neogy 1997:232-234; Arulraj 2005:130).

Rajaji's Indifference

In 1952, when there was a change of Government in Tamil Nadu and Rajaji became the Chief Minister. He had advised Nehru in 1949, not to encourage Goubert's delegation and insisted on a tough line. Due to the economic blockade and barbarous attacks, the people were suffering. He remained a disturbed man. This was evident when Sellane Naickar's group met him on 13 May and requested him to stop the cross-border attacks. He advised them to approach Delhi, as French India was a foreign territory (AjitNeogi 1997:203).

Attempt on Sellane's Life

Provoked by the determination of Sellane Naickar in uniting the Congress factions, pro-French goondas barged into Sellane Naickar's house on August 31, 1952 and fired at him, injuring him seriously.

Nehru Relents

The assassination attempt, which followed a series of violence, shook Nehru, the seasoned democrat. He chose Chennai's public meeting held on October 9, to declare that "the idea of plebiscite has been crushed by the other side through fraud and deceit and attempts have been made to create conditions of terrorism in order to prevent people from voting for merger with India. There is then the end of plebiscite business". He also directed the TNCC leaders to extend all possible help to the French Indian refugees (Neogy 1997:203).

The merger leaders geared up to set up camps for anti-French activities on the border villages of Puducherry, Karaikal, and Mahe. The Government of India was left with no option but to lend moral, material, and logistic support to the movement. It encouraged the publishers of the local press to channelise the nationalistic sentiments towards merger. A new publication *Pudhuvai Murasu* funded by the Government of India was started and 3,000 copies of each issue were distributed freely to the public (Krishnamurthy 1991:77).

Clampdown on Press

The French Indian administration responded by imposing restrictions on public gatherings and processions. Newspapers like Bharatha Matha, Dhinasari, Dhinamani, Swadesamithran, Kalki etc., from Tamil Nadu, which were unrelenting in their support, were banned from entering French India. Undaunted, dailies such as *Swadesamithran, Dinamani, Dhinathanti, The Hindu, The Mail,* and *Indian Express* continued their support (Krishnamurthy 1991:78).

Central Action Committee

Throughout 1953, the mass movement for the cause of merger continued to rock the French Indian settlements. The French Indian authorities retaliated by adopting repressive measures and encouraging the anti-merger elements to terrorise the pro-mergerists and their supporters.

On 5 April 1953, an all-party meeting was convened on behalf of the Central Action Committee at Cuddalore under the chairmanship of Sellane Nayakar. The meeting attended by Suthanandha Bharati, renewed the appeal to Kamaraj and TNCC for continuous help. By the end of 1953, French India Communist Party also organised an All Party Conference under the stewardship of Subbiah who called for united action by all the pro-merger elements to accelerate the pace of the merger movement (Krishnamurthy 1991:78).

Light at the End of the Tunnel

Kewal Singh who assumed charge as the new Indian Consul General at Pondicherry in October 1953, tactically maintained a balance between the various warring groups and leaders, and acted as the link with the Indian Government. Encouraged by him, the French India Central Merger Congress met in Cuddalore in January 1954 and elected Sellane Naickar as President and Dadala Ramanayya, who resigned as Inspector of Police at the behest of Kewal Singh, as Secretary. It decided to launch the *Satyagraha* in Puducherry. Dadala stayed at Cuddalore and trained the youths in the Bahur area. This was the first major step for mass movement as it brought the fragmented elements under one umbrella (Neogy 1997:224).

To prove their determination of unity, Puducherry leaders organised a Merger Conference in Chennai in January 1954. As per the report of C.P.Ramasamy Iyer, a committee consisting of Kamaraj, Bhaktavatsalam, Venkataraman, Ethirajulu, and I.S.Karaiyalar was formed to launch 'Quit Quickly French India' movement. R.Venkataraman also visited Puducherry to galvanize the leaders (Krishnamurthy 1991:78; Arulraj 2005:130-35).

Rectitude Turns Renegade

Simultaneously, Kewal Singh was busy in tacitly exploiting the rift between French India administration and Goubert's group over the alleged embezzlement of funds and the misdeeds of the Socialist leaders. Seizing the opportunity, he held secret parleys in Chennai with Goubert and convinced him that only siding with India would save them from penal action by the French. Accordingly, FISP rescinded from its pro-French stand. Goubert and Mayor Muthu Pillai left Puducherry on 25 March and stayed at Tindivanam circuit house. During the next two days plans for mass action for delivering the pockets from French were finalised (Neogy 1997:227-233).

Ever Benevolent NSK

Facing severe financial crunch, Youth Congressmen approached Kalaivanar N.S.Krishnan and T.A.Maduram team. He immediately agreed to stage a play for collection of funds. They explained insecure conditions prevailing at Puducherry and requested him to have it at Viluppuram. The play 'Panam' was agrand success and he magnanimously donated the entire collection to the movement and refused to accept even their travel expenses (Arulraj 2005:149).

A Decisive Moment

On 14 March, 1954, Jawaharlal Nehru visited Chidambaram. At that time, a seven-member group comprising Goubert, Muthukomarappa Reddiyar, and

Ilayaperumal met Nehru on behalf of the Socialist Party at the initiative of Kewal Singh. Puducherry Youth Congress leaders also consulted him. Ilayaperumal vouched for Nehru's suggestion for a plan of action and his promise to provide financial assistance for the same. At a public meeting on that day, Nehru declared stubbornly, "It is not fair for the French to stay in India even for a minute" (Murugesan 2004:178).

Liberation of Communes

Goubert's group reached Nettapakkam on 27 March by passing the French Indian territories. There, May or Venkatasubba Reddiyar and Muthukomarappa Reddiyar, supporters of Goubert, were ready. Kamaraj and OPR were backing them providing men, money, and materials. A batch of 200 retired army personnel from Tamil Nadu and 100 police personnel in plain clothes were assembled in Siruvanthadu village adjacent Nettapakkam for the final thrust. With the security provided by the Tamil Nadu Government, the people gathered captured the Nettapakkam Municipality and hoisted the national flag at the police station. Later they captured Bahur, Kaduvanur and many villages subsequently without any resistance. On 31 March, these territories were declared liberated from the French yoke (Krishnamurthy 1991:79).

A similar attempt was made in Karaikal by a small batch of Youth Congress. Volunteers carrying Indian national flags, blessed by the newly formed 'United Merger Front', entered the town from Nagapattinam on 27 March, but was smothered (Krishnamurthy 1991:90).

An Act of Defiance

On 6 April, the over-enthusiastic communist cadre captured Mannadipet commune and declared autonomy. However, on the next day a group of volunteers, guarded by two lorry loads of armed personnel, marched from Nettapakkam, drove the communists away, recaptured, and hoisted the national flag (Arulraj 2005:135).

A Spoke in the Wheel

In April 1954, Subbiah visited Delhi and had detailed discussions with Nehru on the situation in Puducherry. Goubert also consulted Kamaraj in Chennai. At Kamaraj's initiative, an all-party meeting reviewed the situation at Cuddalore on the 8 April 1954. Sellane Nayakar, Subbiah, Lambert Saravan, Durai Munusamy, Dadala Ramanayya, Mariyappan, and Arulraj who had been operating individually till now, were there together. It was decided to launch the 'Operation Puducherry' to intensify the Satyagraha in the town. They affirmed to forget the basic political differences and put up a united fight. Subbiahwas a revolutionary, while Sellane was a moderate. Both of them, who were very influential among the people, issued

a joint statement asking the people to take the plunge unitedly. However, later on, for reasons unknown, Sellane Naickar expressed his reluctance to continue (Neogy197:237; Arulraj 2005:138).

The Town Rocked

As per the plan, the agitators marched from four corners of Puducherry and converged on the secretariat. The police and the army drawn from Saigon massacred them. To condemn the police repression, demonstrations were conducted on 14 and they encountered the same fate. An all-party conference, convened by the FINC on 26 April, condemned the French India administration for its all-round failure and the brutal use of force onthe peaceful pro-mergerists. A 'Joint Front' composed of French India Communist Party, the Central Merger Congress, the French India National Congress, the Youth Congress, Dravidar Kazhagam, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and various pro-merger organisations was formed on 29 April. The leaders dedicated themselves with redoubled vigour to intensify the struggle, adhering strictly to the Gandhian principle of non-violence (Arulraj 2005:149).

Dravidian Outfits' Turn Around

There was another major turning point around March 22, 1954. The Dravidar Kazhagam and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (D.M.K.), revised their stance and came forward to support the liberation movement. A conference attended by Periyar at Thoothukudi, passed a resolution calling for the French to leave (Murugesan 2004:193).

Anna Assures Support

A delegation of Youth Congress, D.M.K. and Communist leaders of Puducherry met Annadurai, the General Secretary of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam at Chennai and sought his support. He reiterated his support for the movement and wrote a series of articles and editorials in the official organ *'Nam Nadu'* on titles like 'Volunteers Launch Struggle - White People Tremble', 'D.M.K. Kilarchi-Puduvai Ezhuchi', etc.. From then on, Puducherry D.M.K. volunteers whole heartedly partook in full swing in the final stages of the movement (Arulraj 2005:159).

The Struggle Intensifies

On 2 May, 1954 an All Party Conference was convened by Subbiah at the rice mill of Municipal Chairman Shanmuga Udaiyar in Viluppuram. It decided to intensify the training of volunteers on the docile stretch between Viluppuram and Kottakuppam. V.P.Chinthan arranged a printing machine and installed it in a cellar in Viluppuram for printing propaganda materials. Those developments certainly rattled the French Administration (Arulraj 2005:149-161).

Liberation Government

May 16 was ared-letter day. Nettapakkam witnessed a grand Victory celebration. A jubilant Kamaraj, who became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on April 13, participated with a sense of pride of having achieved the mission. On 17, a Liberation Government, supported by an advisory committee of 12 members was formed to manage the administration. Two of its members were from Tamil Nadu viz. Venkatakrishna Reddiyar of Kiliyanur and Lakshminarayana Reddiyar of Siruvanthadu. Tamil Nadu Collector (Retd) H.S.S.Paul was the appointed administrator of the Government, Puducherry Siva was the Chief Justice, and Raja Mohammed, former Deputy Superintendent of Police, Madras, was the Chief of Police. It was fully operational for eight months and the Government of India released about four lakh rupees towards the cost (Arulraj 2005:152).



Blow after Blow

By 30 April 1954, one-fourth of the French Indian possessions had been liberated by the pro-merger elements. Yanam in June and Mahe in July were liberated through mass struggles (Neogy. 1997:248).



The Grand Finale

After hectic negotiations and decisions at Paris and Delhi, Municipal councillors and members of the Représentative Assembly of French India, numbering 178, mostly Tamilians, assembled at Keezhur on 18 October. Here again, Kewal Singh strategically deployed a security force 200 metres away to avoid any last minute misadventure by the French administration (Neogy 1887:270).

This was followed by the signing of the 'de facto' transfer Treaty at New Delhi on 21 October 1954. The agreement for transfer of power was signed by Kewal Singh, representing India and Pierre Landy representing France on 1 November 1954 ending nearly 280 years off French rule over the four settlements in South India (Krishnamurthy 1991:88-89).



Prime Minister Nehru, accompanied by Kamaraj, arrived in Puducherry on 16 January 1955 to share his happiness with the people in a victory celebration. The people thronged the streets to give a rousing reception and greeted him with gratitude.

In retrospect, it may be that Puducherry particularly Tamil Nadu, aided India like the squirrel helped Rama. Tamil Nadu reciprocated emulating Kangaroo, which exerted an emphatic maternal care by fostering the baby Kangaroo in its abdominal pouch. In short, it is an ecstatic revelation of inter-state co-operation and co-ordination necessitated by historical, cultural, linguistic, and territorial connections.



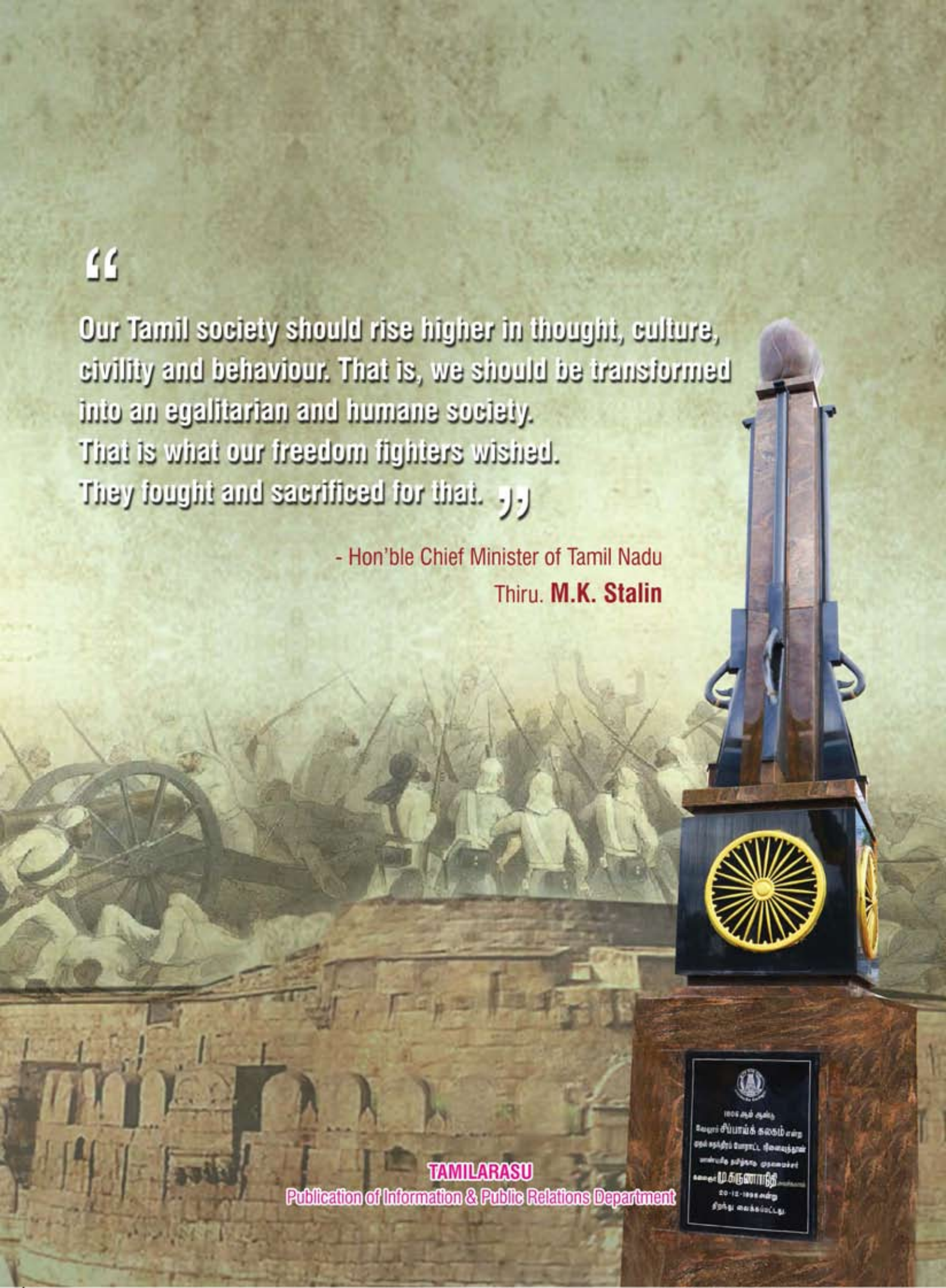
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“Our Tamil society should rise higher in thought, culture, civility and behaviour. That is, we should be transformed into an egalitarian and humane society.
That is what our freedom fighters wished.
They fought and sacrificed for that.”

- Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
Thiru. **M.K. Stalin**

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