

FORTS IN INDIA – A SEAT OF ROYALTY

Project submitted to

St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi

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Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

By

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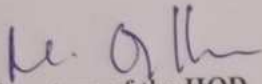
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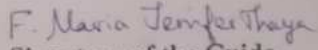
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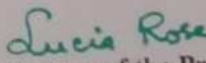
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project entitled "**FORTS IN INDIA – A SEAT OF ROYALTY**" submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History and is a work done during the year 2020-2021 by R. Agnes Roshini a bonafide student of the Department of History, St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi.


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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project entitled “**FORTS IN INDIA – A SEAT OF ROYALTY**,” submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History is my original work and it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The architecture of India is rooted in its history, culture and religion. Among a number of architectural styles and traditions, the contrasting Hindu temple architecture and Indo-Islamic architecture are the best known historical styles. Both of these, but especially the former, have a number of regional styles within them. An early example of town planning was the Harappan architecture of the Indus Valley Civilization. People lived in cities with baked brick houses, streets in a grid layout, elaborate drainage systems, granaries, citadels, and clusters of large non-residential buildings. Much other early Indian architecture was in wood, which has not survived.

Hindu temple architecture is mainly divided into Dravidian and Nagara styles. Dravidian architecture flourished during the rule of the Rashtrakuta, Hoysala, Chola, Chera and Pandyan empires, as well as the Vijaynagara Empire.

The first major Islamic Kingdom in India was the Delhi sultanate, which led to the development of Indo-Islamic architecture, combining Indian and Islamic features. The rule of the Mughal Empire, when Mughal architecture evolved, is regarded as the Zenith of Indo-Islamic architecture, with the Taj Mahal being the high point of their contribution. Indo-Islamic architecture influenced the Rajput and Sikh styles as well.

During the colonial period, European styles including neo classical, gothic revival, and baroque become prevalent across India. The amalgamation of Indo-Islamic and European styles led to a new style, known as the Indo-Saracenic style. After independence, modernist ideas spread among Indian architects as a way of progressing from the colonial culture. Le Corbusier, who designed the city of Chandigarh influenced a generation of architects towards modernism in the 20th century. The economic reforms of 1991 further bolstered the urban architecture of India as the country become more integrated with the

world's economy. Traditional vastu shastra remains influential in India's architecture during the contemporary era.

In recent years there have been growing acknowledgement by scholars and of the significance of history as recorded in the oral tradition and in ancient texts. Written, rewritten and interpreted over centuries, ancient Indian knowledge frequently remained in the realm of folklore, its authenticity always doubted. Today there is an effort to accept that these 'Tales' are the foundation of India, Bharat, Hindustan.

In India forts dominate the countryside, evoking long-forgotten battles – a rallying point for new alliances, towards a new world order. Often there is little didactic information about ancient forts, but local legend and belief hold many to belong to the period of the Ramayana or Mahabharata. For over 4000 years, India has withstood social, political and religious turmoil each era contributing to the spectacle of empire, testimonial of wealth and power, each building a fortification against the enemy. None of these were built in a single generation but what characterizes them is the architectural vocabulary which defines them.

Aims and Purpose of the Study

The aim of the project is to highlight the “**FORTS IN INDIA**”. This project could make some impressions on the present generation to know about the importance of architectural structure of forts and their history.

Objectives of the Study

- The main objectives of the study are as follows; to trace the history of the forts and its structure.
- To appreciate the intellectual capacity of our ancestors.
- To know the role of forts in history

Sources of Study

The project is based on both primary and secondary sources. It has been classified into primary sources and secondary sources. The primary sources are newspapers. Secondary sources consist of books and web sources.

Methodology

The methodology adopted in this study is analytical and descriptive method. The source materials have been critically analysed and investigated. The descriptive method is used in the presentation of the study in order to make the project understandable to the readers.

Chapterization

- The first chapter deals with the ancient forts which reveal the engineering skill of our ancestors in India.
- The second chapter speaks about the forts which belonged to the Sultanate Period.
- The third chapter explains the forts played a vital role in Southern Kingdoms.
- The fourth chapter deals with the Maratha forts which determine the success of Marathas.
- The fifth chapter explore the different styles of forts built during the Mughal's Reign.

Besides this, the project begins with an Introduction and ends with a conclusion.

CHAPTER I

ANCIENT FORTS

Introduction

The first chapter deals with Ancient forts in India. In ancient times so many forts were built by the rulers. Most of the forts stand today as a testimony for the ancient architecture. Some were ruined. This chapter dealt with some forts which belonged to ancient period.

Kalinjar

Location

The most evocative fort of the Vedic era is certainly Kalinjar, which is mentioned in several texts of his period. Located as it is almost at the border between Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, in a remote corner, it remains virtually unvisited. Built on the last spur of the Vindhya Mountains over a 1200-foot chasm, it appears towering 800 feet over the plains. Sheer walls of impregnable stone emerge out of the mountain. It was once an inhabited area, the hill covered with numerous structures, temples and shrines.¹

History of the Forts

Many legends are attributed to this historic fort. According to one, Kalinjar, son of Bharata, was its founder while other claims it to be the abode of Lord Shiva. Apparently, the name was coined to represent Shiva who, after consuming poison churned out of the seas by devas and daityas, rested here and destroyed jaran, the time barrier. It thus represents the timelessness of Lord Shiva who it is believed, still resides here.

There is a mention in the Mahabharata of the Lake of Gods, which has been identified as Budhia Ki Talab, an old tank excavated in the rock with steps and several buildings around it. Legend has it that one of the Chandela Kings, Kritivarman, was cured of his leprosy after

¹ Edwin Felix T. Atkinson. By E.T. Atkinson (and others) ed., *Statistical, descriptive and historical account of the North-Western Provinces of India*, p.449.

bathing in the waters of the spring. In gratitude, he built the steps surrounding the tank and the Neelkantha Mahadeva Temple, which still stands today.

The epic poem Chand Raisa by Chand Bardai, court poet to King Prithviraj Chauhan, records how Chauhan defeated the Chandelas, and speaks of their history. The great Chandela warrior Chandra Varman of the Chandravanshi clan, (mortal descendants of the moon), is recorded on a stone tablet in the fort. Ferishta, the medieval historian names Raja Kedarnath as the builder of the fort in the 7th century AD. Local legend has it that many of the buildings were standing on this hill before the fort was built. Although records of Kalinjar are only available after the 10th century, it has significant oral history, and is considered to be one of the first forts built by the Chandelas around the 1st millennium.²

Structure of the Fort

The embodiment of Hindu Faith, the fort is built on a huge hill, towering strategically over the countryside, its extensive stone fortifications once the cynosure of all eyes. There are two entrances to the fort: the main one is on the north, towards the town while the second is at the southeast. The first entrance used to be guarded by seven gates approached by a flight of steps. The first of these, Alamgir Darwaza, named after Emperor Aurangzeb, is square, lofty, and plain in construction, though rebuilt at a later date. This is followed by a steep ascent up a flight of stairs to the second Ganesha Darwaza, and higher up on a bend is Chandi Darwaza. There is then a double gate of Four Towers, with inscriptions alluding to many periods. The most important of these gates is Budhbhadra which possesses only one inscription. The Hanuman Dharwaza is so named because of the carving of Hanuman on the hill, while nearby is the reservoir of Hanuman Kund. It is thought that these gates represent the seven known planets, or perhaps, symbols of the ascent to heaven.³

² Edwin Felix T. Atkinson, *op.cit.*, p.451.

³ Iqtitar Alam Khan, Ganda Chandella, *Historical Dictionary of Medieval India*, Scarecrow Press, 2007,p.66.

Many rock carvings representing Kali, Chadika, and Shiva-Parvati distract from a fairly grueling climb up to the fort. The sixth gate, Lal Darwaza is almost at the top and has a colossal figure of Bhairav carved into the rock. Opposite, there is a statue of Shiva as destroyer with his eighteen arms holding a skull and sword, and decorated with snake armbands. Further on, there is a carving of two water carriers with their vessels attached to a pole. These sculptures are almost completely meshed with the natural grandeur as water courses over them, the sculptures glistening in the sunlight. At the Centre of the fort is the great Neelkantha Mahadeva Temple, which is still profoundly worshipped, pilgrimage today taking much the same form as it did 2000 years ago. The whole area is dotted with sculptures of the Chandela period; though many are damaged and eroded, occasionally, one can see a perfectly preserved example of the pristine perfection of their art.

Central to the sacred geography of Kalinjar is the Patal Ganga, or underground Ganga, which surfaces in a cave carved with sacred images. Nearby small tals or catchments are defined with ghats and are reputed to have curative powers. Beyond the Patal Ganga is the Pandu Kund which is approached through a dark passage.⁴

According to a legend in the Mahabharata, the Pandavas came here to hide when they were being pursued by Duryodhana. Just outside the cave is a two-foot –high stone statue of a dwarapala who has stood guard over the fort for centuries.

No one can be absolutely sure when this fort was built, but legend and folklore breathe life into this desolate monument standing atop a hill, hiding forever within its walls the secrets and mysteries of its construction.

Bandhavgarh

Bandhavgarh has been occupied well before recorded history and today, archaeologists are verifying 2nd and 3rd century inscriptions which were the legends of Bandhavgarh. It was

⁴Rajkumar, *History of The Chamar Dynasty FROM 6TH Century A.D. To 12th Century A.D.*, Kalpaz Publications, 2008, p.127.

part of the Magadha Empire and later ruled by the Vatakas between the 3rd and 5th centuries. The Sengars ruled from the 5th century and the Kalchuris in the 10th century, when it was known as Haihey Kshetra. The Baghelas, Rajputs from Gujarat, captured Bandhavgarh as late as the 13th century, as they fled the Khilji onslaught in Gujarat and ruled continuously since.⁵

History of the Fort

As with many ancient forts of India, there are strong mythological connections which are still valued. The hill itself is believed to be a gift from Lord Rama to his brother Lakshmana. 'Bandhav' means brother, and hence its name. Built on a virtually unscalable mountain top, the fort is over 2000 years old and has found mention in the Narad Panch Ratra and the Shiva Purana. The histories of the Baghelas and Bandhavgarh are closely connected, and the former royal family traces its own lineage back to the first Baghela king, Maharaja Vyghradev Singh Ju Deo, whose life was saved by the goddess Durga. Her vahan the tiger still roams not just the forest but also the fort. Apocryphal or otherwise, these legends live on in Bandhavgarh.

Maharaja Vyghradev came to this area in 1178, and first settled in an old fort called Marfa near Kalinjar and made Gahora his capital. When his son Karan Deo got married, Bandhavgarh came as part of an extravagant dowry, and in time went on to become the capital of the southern Gahora Kingdom.⁶

In time, Bandhavgarh began to be raided by the Slave kings but despite several attempts, the hospitable terrain surrounding the fort as well as the sheer height of the hill fort made it almost impossible to conquer. Raja Bhedchandra Deo, in 1494 and again in 1499, invited the wrath of Sikandar Lodi by allying against Mubaraq Khan, the Governor of Jaunpur, appointed by the Lodi Sultans. These attempts to capture Bandhavgarh failed as supplies inside the fort outlasted those of the Lodis' invading forces. In the 16th century,

⁵ Chaudhari.L.K & Safi Akhtar Khan *Bandhavgarh – Fort of the Tiger*, Wild Atlas Books, Bhopal, 2003,p.55.

⁶ Shanbaz Ahmad *Charger the Long Living Tiger*, Print World, Allahabad, 2001,p.57.

Emperor Akbar conquered Gahora and as a result many of its people fled to Bandhavgarh and sought protection in its remote heights. But the next raja, Vikramaditya Deo shifted his capital to Rewar, leaving the fort to its hardier residents, the last of whom left in 1935.

The ascent to Bandhavgarh is not for the faint- hearted. A steep path cut into the mountains climbs up a virtual precipice interspersed with acutely angled turns and high gateways. Karan Pol, a 11th century gate at the top, with studded wooden doors still in place, is so small that not even the smallest elephant could pass through it. Bandhavgarh was and remains a perfect vana durg. Many buildings still stand- a parade ground, a jail, and barracks that are reminders of the infrastructure required in a self- sufficient fort.

Structure of the Fort

The layout of the fort, which is extensive, is significant for the large number of water tanks, obviously once quarries which were later dignified with ghats and platforms. The palace area, the Moti Mahal, with richly carved, pillared verandahs and wonderful views across the Bandhavgarh National Park, lies close to the temple.

Ramnavami and Janmashtami are occasions which attract pilgrims from miles around, drawn to its legend, and sacred heritage of almost two thousand years. The oldest temple in the fort is built in kalchuri style. It's garbhagriha, or sanctum sanctorum has a shikhara which appears stunted but would have been the dominant feature at the top of the hill and for miles around. At the edge of water tank lies an 18th century temple, square in form, with pillars and a dome.⁷

The most outstanding legacy of Bandhavgarh are the sculpted dashavatar or ten incarnations of Vishnu – monolithic stone sculptures set on the crest of the hill, and on promontories, both exposed to the sky as well as encased in the temple structures. There are wonderful carvings of fish, tortoise etc, each of which represents a different aspect of the

⁷ Gulzar singh markam, *Gondwana ke garh darshan*, Bhopal, 2005.

powers of Lord Vishnu, the seventh Avatar being Lord Rama, to whom this fort is believed to be dedicated. Halfway down, on a small plateau, is the statue of a reclining Vishnu. The Charanganga, a tributary of the River Son, emerges here, cascading gently over the stone, and is still revered and worshipped.

Bandhavgarh National Park spreads across 448 sq km, surrounding Bandhavgarh Fort. The Maharajas of yore ensured no forest land was cultivated and that this was their personal hunting ground. Each maharaja had to have his 'bag of kill' and a bag of less than a hundred would not befit a king. Gulab Singh of Rewa (1918-1946) was credited with having killed 616 tigers. That said they also pioneered the protection and preservation of this tiger reserve – today the fort and its forest sustain each other.

Sisupalgarh

It is on the outskirts of the historic Ekamra Kshetra, the sacred core of present day Bhubaneswar. There is no empirical information about this fort, but ongoing archaeology now provides major clues to its history. The most striking feature is the impressive scale of the mud fortifications that surrounded and protected the old town. Outside the fort wall was a moat filled with water, which provided protection against intruders, but may also have been a node of water harvesting for the citizens within. Sisupalgarh was occupied from the beginning of the 3rd century BC up to the middle of the 4th century and therefore, would have played an important role in the fortunes of the Kalinga Empire.

High mud ramparts, with massive base, were built around the town. Eight gateways protrude, providing impressive entrances; walls had guardrooms, passages, and watchtowers. The excavated western gateway of *Sisupalgarh* is interesting as it is a remarkably elaborate edifice in a simple setting. It has an enormous entrance, over 8-metres wide with access through inner and outer gates whose gatehouses are reached through steep stairways.⁸

⁸ Lal.B.B, Sisupalgarh, *An Early Historical Fort in Eastern India. Ancient India* 5, 1949, p. 62-95.

The township inside appears well planned, more or less in a square with streets in a systematic grid. There are remains of the local houses that had two or three rooms, and a large verandah. It was clearly a well-established city and there is even evidence of cart tracks. In the centre of the fort are the remains of a large, pillared hall, with huge monolithic carved pillars.⁹

Ranthambore

At the eastern end of the Mewar, Ranas expanded Empire lies in Ranthambore. It is still located today much as it has been four thousandths of years in dense jungle where the row of the tiger breaks the silence the quint essential Vana durg. Ranthambore fort this located within a national park. The fourth itself is about three miles in circumference and spans one of the highest hills in the meeting point of the Rocky Aravalli outcrop and the Vindhya mountains. It is believed to be among the older fourths of India that construction of the fourth is set to have started during the reign of the Chauhan Rajput king Sapaldaksha in AD 944.

The fort was a vital citadel as it stood along one of the major routes of invaders into India and controlled the trade route between Central Asia and the Great Indian Plains. Given its location it was one of the most contested forts in the region and one of the most invincible. Apart from its towering fortifications there was always a thick jungle around which provided an additional buffer. After that defeat of Pritiviraj Chauhan by Muhammad Ghori in AD 1192 the fortunes of Ranthambore Rose and fell as successive invaders fought for control of this strategically placed fort in northern Rajputan from Iltutmish to Ala-ud-din Khilji and the Sultan of Gujarat Ranthambore was the focus of the expansionist ambitions of the slave kings. All these were brief interludes in its history as the Rajput Rajas including Rana Kumba fought to retain its control. Finally Emperor Akbar laid siege to the fort and managed to

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 96-105.

capture it by ribbing the bundi defender Surjana Raja. With each defeat the Rajput Custom of Jauhar was performed and the women of the Palace were consigned to an honorable death.¹⁰

The fort passed to the Kacchawahas, Maharajas of Jaipur in the 17th century, and the area surrounding the fort become here hunting ground for them. Later it was used as a prison fort where that prisoners were executed having been numbed with Opium and then thrown over the fort walls. In an account of this Franco's Berneir a traveler of the 17th century wrote "Prisoners were kept on an average for two months before the governor would have them brought out. They would then be placed on the top of the wall and after having them drink some milk (the decoction of the milky juice of the poppy), they would be cast down headlong on the rocks below. The opium was given to the prisoners to make them in sensible".

The interior of the fort is enormous and there is evidence of palace, pavilions, mosques, cenotaphs, and temples and at its peak would have been a luxurious royal court. The Raj Bagh ruins lie between the Raj Bagh tank and the Padma Talav or lotus tank. The Gupt Ganga is a series of steps cut into rock until they arrive at a pernnial stream-an essential feature of a vana durg. Although it is in ruins, it is still possible to see how magnificent it must have been, even as the buildings are gradually being enveloped by nature.¹¹

The Fort is approached by an extremely steep flight of stairs, hewn into the rock face and within the crenellated bastions. There are four gates at different levels, which act as guardians; each one placed at a sharp angle to the path in a system that ensured that no advancing army could proceed unimpeded. The last gate is heavily spiked and can still be closed. Ranthambore echoes the past, it's silence broken, not only to by the endless stream of tourist to the national park below but also to the Ganesha temple inside. It is believed with that this most auspicious Ganesha gives blessings to married couples and today the postman carries to the temple wedding invitations from across the country to seek his blessings.

¹⁰ Dasharatha Sharma . *Early Chauhan Dynasties*. S.Chand / Motilal Banarsidas1959. p.102.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.103.

Bhatinda

Bhatinda located in Southern Punjab is perhaps one of the most impressive fort of the region. The fort is curiously shaped like a schooner, a shape determined by the land formation on which it is situated. As it was built at the edge of the Thar Desert, it was designed to withstand the harsh environment. There are a large number of historical events that are linked with this fort, given its strategic location on the trade route from Central Asia to India. The Scythians otherwise known as the Sakas, who swept across the plains of India are said to be the earliest to pass through. Over the centuries it has been a heavily contested fort that has played an important role in the defense of India.¹²

The history of Bhatinda Fort dates back some 1900 years, to the 2nd century AD. With the establishment of the Kushan Empire over the Northwest of India the king's set about consolidating and building their empire. The fort is believed to have been built by Raja Dab along with Emperor Kanishka. Some sources trace it even further back, to the Harappan era, but that seems more the realm of legend.

Rao Bhatti founded that town of Bhatinda in the Lakhi jungle area in the 3rd century. The Bhattis were an ancient Rajput tribe who dominated their region at that time. In AD 965, Bala Rao Bhatti occupied the fort and gave its name. It has also been known as Bhattian da Adda, meaning the fort of the Bhattis or the Abode of Bhattis. In AD 1004, Mahmud of Ghazni besieged the fort and this was followed by the invasion of Muhammad Ghori, who also annexed it and appointed his trusted general, Qutub-ud-din Aibak as governor of Bhatinda Fort. It was Prithviraj Chauhan the strongest King at the time who managed to recover the fort after 13 months of fierce battle. Clearly Bhatinda in the fort defended against access in to the Gangetic plain

¹² *Alphabetical List of Monuments – Punjab Archaeological Survey of India – Chandigarh Circle*. 25 June 2018.

Razia Sultan succeeded his father Iltutmish as Sultan of Delhi and was the first woman to be appointed Sultan. It was however a short-lived position her brother Feroz Shah usurped her throne and Razia was imprisoned in Bhatinda. One of the legends of Bhatinda Fort is that she attempted to jump the bastions in an unsuccessful attempt to reclaim her throne in Delhi.

Later Brar, a Jat king and a known marauder and warrior, captured Bhatinda. Bhatinda's position was strengthened after that as it was visited by several Sikh gurus- Guru Nanak Dev in AD 1515 and then Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh.

In AD 1754, Maharaja Ala Singh of Patiala captured Bhatinda and it became the part of the state of Patiala. Maharaja Karam Singh of Patiala later renamed it Gobindgarh to commemorate the visit of Guru Gobind Singh. The fort has two gurdwaras, one in memory of Guru Gobind Singh and another one for the Sikh survivors of World War I. The Nishaan Sahib, a tall pole with a sword on the top, dominated the skyline.

The fort is constructed of large bricks that were particular to this region at the time. An immense structure, it has four large bastions, one at each corner, and 32 smaller ones, in absolute symmetry – the largest with a circumference of 290 feet at the top. The walls of the citadel, which slope from the base upwards, are of extraordinary scale and strength – they are as wide as 53 feet at the base and taper to around 35 feet at the top. The fort walls tower or burji is 120 feet above ground level, and is the remarkable feature of the fort. It is one of the most impressive forts of Punjab.¹³

¹³Amita Baig. *Forts and Palaces in India*, Om Books International, 2017, pp.14-21.

CHAPTER II

SULTANATE FORTS

Introduction

The second chapter speaks about the Forts belonged to Sultanate period. The Delhi Sultans ruled from 1206 to 1526. They built numerous forts, gateways, minarates, tombs, cities and palaces.

Tughlaqabad

Tughlaqs were amongst the first great builders of forts and cities on an unprecedented scale. Even though their rule was brief, lasting a mere hundred years, their construction was prolific, as cities, step wells, serais, bridges, and other civic structures burgeoned around Delhi. They brought with them engineering skills, and introduced India to complex architectural domes, vaults, and arches.¹⁴

Of the eleven Tughlaq rulers, the first three were prolific builders and each built a capital city, the first of which, Tughlaqabad was built by Ghazi Malik, or Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq. It is believed that once the sultan started building Tughlaqabad, his religious teacher Nizam-ud-din Auliya wanted a stepwell to be built for the public as a symbol of his piety. The sultan, who was determined to complete his fort first, refused the saint, who went against the wishes of Ghiyas-ud-din and built a well. Infuriated, the sultan ordered Nizam-ud-din Auliya to leave the fort, but legend holds that before he left he cursed the new city of Tughlaqabad proclaiming that it would soon be inhabited only by jackals, as indeed it was, owing to a lack of water.¹⁵

Ghiyas-ud-din ruled for five years and his fort was built in less than three. His successor, the despotic Muhammed is best known for shifting his capital from Delhi to

¹⁴ Sharma.S.P., *History of Medieval India*, Mohit Publication, New Delhi, 1999, pp.57-160.

¹⁵ Mehta.J.L., *Advanced study in the History of Medieval India*, Sterling Publications, New Delhi, 1954, pp.92-98.

Daulatabad, and thereafter Feroz Shah Tughlaq built his own capital Kotla Feroz Shah, and so life in this fort was short-lived.¹⁶

Structure of the Fort

Tughlaqabad was conceived on a massive scale. Its perimeter wall was no less than 7.75 miles. Some 3 miles wide and roughly square in shape, the massive irregular red stonewalls, punctured for defense and supported with 61 huge bastions, taper upwards and are accessed by 13 entry gates. The sloping ramparts are built upon vaulted rooms that would have housed the garrison. It had clear demarcation for the palace citadel, which occupied a small portion of a fortified city.

The citadel itself could be reached through three gates and had a large audience hall known as Hazaar Ustan or Hall of a Thousand Pillars. The lofty gateway and triple-storeyed tower within the remaining rampart walls are still impressive. A description of the sultan's court by the chronicler Ibn Batuta provides an insight into court life at that time "On all the thirteen gates were ushers of different status. At the gate which led to the main audience hall stood the chief usher who introduced the visitor to the chief minister who took care of the visitor. It was only after crossing the third gate that one could enter the vast grandeur of the hall of a thousand pillars and have an audience with the Sultan".¹⁷

Tughlaqabad is full of underground chambers, or tehkhanas and it is believed to be connected to Old Delhi by an underground passageway. There is also a water tank measuring around 80 feet in depth that was possibly the quarry that provided stone to build the palace citadel. On the vast, forfeited plain there is Jami Masjid and there would have been many small settlements within its walls, with the services tucked around the walls but outside. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq built his own citadel, Adilabad outside the fort to the southeast, and connected it with a causeway. Outside and connected by another causeway is Ghiyas-ud-

¹⁶ Upinder Singh, *Delhi Ancient History*, Social Science Press, New Delhi, 2006, pp. 53-61.

¹⁷ Satish Chandra, *History of Medieval India (800-1700)*, Orient Blackswan Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, pp. 76-137.

din's mausoleum, which would have stood in the middle of a water tank. It is elegantly embellished with sloping walls and provides the best evidence of the architecture of that period.¹⁸

In the 19th century, General Cunningham noted: "The fort stands on a rocky height, and is built of massive blocks of stones so large and heavy that they must have been quarried on the spot. The largest stone that I observed measured fourteen feet in length by two feet two inches and one foot ten inches in breadth and thickness, and must have weighed rather more than six tons... the walls are built of large plain dressed stones, and there is no ornament of any kind: but the vast size, the great strength and the visible solidity on the whole, give to Tughlakabad an air of stern and massive grandeur that is both striking and impressive".¹⁹

Kotla Feroz Shah

Delhi was well known during the Tughlaq period as prosperous and vibrant city. Even so, the fortunes of the Tughlaq dynasty were short-lived. After Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's costly misadventure of shifting his capital to Daulatabad, his kingdom was significantly weakened. His nephew Feroz Shah Tughlaq succeeded him to the throne at Delhi. A reluctant king, he assumed power in AD 1351 and started the construction of his new city Ferozabad almost immediately. A dedicated patron of the arts, Feroz Shah committed most of his career to building civic and secular structures, with the general philosophy of making his people more content and prosperous. He was responsible for a number of urban settlements, canals, tanks, and wells; gardens and orchards and inevitably hunting lodges, pavilions, and palaces. His first palace was built in Khirki, a village in South Delhi, where there are still the remains of a mosque. However the scarcity of water, which spelt the end of Tughlaqabad, was a constant concern and he was forced to consider building his fort near the River Yamuna,

¹⁸ Chaurasia.R.S, *History of Medieval India From 1000 A.D to 1707 A.D*, Atlantic Publishers, New Delhi, pp. 3-107.

¹⁹ Chitnis.K.S, *Socio Economic History of Medieval India*, Atlantic Publishers&Distributors (P) Ltd, New Delhi, pp. 39-98.

where his court could be sustained. He thus began the construction of Ferozabad and Kotla Feroz Shah.²⁰

Structure of Ferozabad

Development was divided into distinct areas, with the fortified seat of power, palaces, zenanas, and homes of noblemen housed within the citadel, Kotla Feroz Shah. A second level of fortification encompassed the homes of workmen, artisans, and farmers in the villages around. The city of Ferozabad comprised 18 villages.

To enter Kusk-i-Feroz or Kotla Feroz Shah, there was a large entry gateway with a barbican and bastions on either side. The citadel had high fortifications, with a double row of slits for arrows and circular bastions. Beyond were the public buildings, the hall of public audience, baths, stepwells, tanks, and garrison quarters. The stepwell, built in 1354, is an elegant union of function with artistic rendering. This was a recreational area with open chattri-style pavilions and two storeys of underground rooms with piers opening onto the well. There was also a large network of tunnels connecting Feroz Shah Kotla's settlements, the evidence of which can still see at Bara Hindu Rao.²¹

The three palaces had the best location at the top with views across the river and steps leading down. There were many pillared halls and a pigeon tower. Jami Masjid, a congregational mosque which could house over a thousand people, was built in 1354 and is said to be the largest of seven mosques built in Delhi in that period. The mosque is an impressive domed building raised on a block of cells. The main entrance to the mosque is from the north, accessed by a flight of stairs leading to the next level to a domed chamber going into the sehan, or courtyard. The mosque is rubble masonry covered in plaster which would have been a reflective white colour. Contemporary historians have stated that the

²⁰ Anil Chandra Banerjee, *New History of Medieval India*, S.Chand&company Ltd,Ram Nagar, New Delhi, 1983, pp. 1-185.

²¹ Keene H.G., *The Great Anarchy or Darkness before dawn*, London, 1901, pp.310-314.

doorways of the mosque were covered with carved stone, and that an account of Feroz Shah's reign was inscribed in the centre of the courtyard beyond.²²

Feroz Shah Kotla has at its centre the remains of a three-storeyed pyramid-like structure with an Ashokan pillar at the top. Inspired by the Qutb Mosque's iron pillar, Feroz Shah, in 1367, transported this at enormous effort, on a specially fabricated, 42-wheeled carriage and crossed the River Yamuna on a pontoon of boats joined together. The pillar was then installed on a pyramid, with three levels of small, vaulted chambers with corresponding terraces, tapering upwards. A staircase winds through the structure to the summit, where the pillar stands. Muslim clergy called these two pillars the work of djinns and Hindu pundits, calling them the walking sticks of Bhima, a hero in the epic Mahabharata.²³

The total expanse of the city was vast - as described by two travellers of that time, Afif and Barani. Because the Tughlaq dynasty's fortunes lasted a mere three generations, there was no renewal and layering of buildings seen in later forts. But the settlements, which he had developed with civic amenities including the Satpula Bridge at Jahanpanah, have served the city of Delhi well over the centuries.

Mandu

Mandu, or Mandavgarh, a lost city at the edge of the Malwa Plateau above the Nimar Plains, is one of India's architectural gems. It is an enormous complex of pleasure palaces and pavilions enclosed by huge fortifications, rebuilt in the 11th century, Mandu Fort stands at an elevation of 2,000 feet, extending over 13 miles along a crest of the Vindhya ranges, overlooking the River Narmada on one side and the Malwa Plateau on the other. Mandu, with its natural defenses, was originally the fort-capital of the Rajput Parmara rulers of Malwa,

²² Keene, H.G. *The Mughal Empire from the Death of Aurangzeb to overthrow of the Mahratta Power*, London, 1866, pp.316-318.

²³ Irwine Willam, *Later Mughals*, 2 Vols., Calcutta, 1922, pp.350-355.

around the 6th century Towards the end of the 11th century, it came under the sway of the Taranga kingdom. The city reached its zenith in the early 15th century.²⁴

Mandu was then renamed Shadiabad, or City of Happiness and Peace, a city where he ushered in an era of prosperity. But he was an ambitious king and constantly at war with his neighbours in Gujarat and Mewar. His war with Rana Kumbha of Mewar was a victory of some irony as Rana Kumbha built his Vijay Stambh at Chittorgarh to mark his success while Khilji built a seven-storey tower at Mandu to mark his victory.

Baz Bahadur the last Sultan of Malwa, was famed for his love of Rani Roopmati and in whose praise balladeers of Malwa still sing. Rani Roopmati's Pavilion gazes down at Baz Bahadur's Palace. The Rewa Kund palaces exemplified a life of pleasure and indulgence which eventually cost him the loyalty of his people and attracted the attention of Akbar. His army, led by Adam Khan, sacked Mandu and Baz Bahadur fled, leaving Rani Roopmati to consume poison rather than surrender to the Mughals. Thereafter Mandu became a halfway house for the Mughals, especially Akbar and Jehangir, on their forays into the Deccan and they attempted to restore some of Mandu's splendour. Thomas Roe, Ambassador of the King of England to Jehangir's court, visited Mandu to participate in the emperor's birthday celebrations. Here he witnessed Jehangir laden with gems of every description, weighed in silver, precious stones, and brocades on gold scales, distributing silver nuggets to his courtiers. In the face of these unsustainable excesses, Mandu was bound to flounder; it fell to the growing power of the Marathas as Malhar Rao Holkar defeated the Mughal Governor of Malwa. Later, the British took over and Mandu, the quintessential pleasure palace became history.²⁵

Mandu has a magical quality, its landscape gently undulating, its lake reflecting its glory. Most of the buildings here, from the palace to his own tomb, were built by Hoshang

²⁴ Krishnan, V.S., *Madhya Pradesh District Gazetteers Ratlam*. Government Central Press, 1994, pp.33.

²⁵ Majumdar, R.C. *The Mughal Empire*, Mumbai, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1997, pp.112-113.

Shah. His tomb is the first white marble construction in India with a large, well-proportioned dome, charming lattice work in marble, and corner towers which define its square form. It is believed that Shah Jahan sent his architects to study this tomb for inspiration when designing the Taj Mahal.²⁶

Hoshang Shah also built Jami Masjid, one of the finest buildings still standing in Mandu. Inspired by the great mosque of Damascus, as the Shahs traced their lineage to Damascus, this mosque was constructed on an enormous scale. Although simple in style, it is at a great height with a huge, domed porch over the entrance pavilion, and is balanced by five colonnaded aisles with 17 domed bays. Although many of Mandu's mosques are built with material looted from temples, this was an original construction, in a Classical style, with a large congregational courtyard and arcades flanking it.

On the other side of the great mosque is Ashrafi Mahal, built by Mahmud Shah Khilji. This palace of gold coins or ashrafis was designed as a madrasa, or school of Islamic studies. Here, the Persian art of glazing, brought from Multan was used to embellish the façade of the mahal, a wonderful palette of turquoise blue and bright yellow. This 15th-century structure is the jewel of Mandu. Nearby is his famous seven-storeyed victory tower of which only one storey survives.²⁷

Quite the most famous building in Mandu and certainly its most romantic is Jahaz Mahal or Ship Palace, located between two artificial lakes - Munj Talav (of much older provenance) and the Kapur Talav. Stretching 400 feet along the edge of the talav, this was essentially a pleasure palace for Ghiyas-ud-din's queens. It is a series of open-plan halls with large terraces, little chattris and open pavilions, with fountains, bathing courtyards, kiosks, and cupolas. Jahaz Mahal and the adjoining Taveli Mahal reflected in the water, have an ethereal quality when silhouetted against an evening sky.

²⁶ Mandu, *Travel Guide*. Good Earth Publications, 2009, p. 7

²⁷ Ajai Pal Singh Shiv Pal Singh. *Monuments of Mandu*. Agam Kala Prakashan, 1994, p.8

Daulatabad

Daulatabad, or the Abode of Wealth is the culmination of the compounded avarice of many, an ugly history of merciless killings and destruction. Ironically, in its first manifestation, it is believed to have been a Buddhist monastery. Its known history is from the time of the Yadavas of Devagiri who founded their capital here in the 12th century. Perched upon a rock, it fuses with the rough basalt landscape, virtually inaccessible to all.

Muhammed-bin-Tughlaq named Devagiri as Daulatabad, and although his attempt to shift his capital failed, it remained with his Governor until 1347, when the establishment rose against the Tughlaks and resettled as the Bahmani Kingdom in Gulbarga. It remained with them until the Mughal strategists began to decimate the powerful confederation of Bahmani Sultans. It was strategically most important and coveted, given its location and the rise of Maratha powers in the 17th century. Its conquest was crucial for Shah Jahan who was aspiring to merit his succession to the throne. Prince Khurram's military strategies were honed here as he was appointed Viceroy to the Deccan. The Deccan Sultans were nefarious friends and foes and shifting allegiances resulted in many re-groupings. Even though Shah Jahan made Daulatabad his focus, it took him almost 15 years to finally conquer this fort, and after he became emperor in June 1633, Daulatabad passed into the hands of the Mughals.²⁸

Structure of the Fort

The fort's construction reflects its turbulent history. It has huge ramparts built in three distinct layers, and was one of 39 forts running north to south along the western edge of the Deccan Plateau. Towering 650 feet over the plains, its sheer walls were excavated to ensure it could not be scaled. Ambarkot is the outermost fortification at the base, and completely enclosed the hill where the community, which sustained the fort, would have lived.²⁹

²⁸ Stanley Lane Poole, *Rulers of India Babur*, S.Chand&co, New Delhi, pp.137-155.

²⁹ Gopal Madan, Gaudam.K.S. *India through the ages*. Publication division, Ministry of information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1990, p.174.

The main citadel, Mahakot, is truly formidable, surrounded by a moat with a stone bridge. It was controlled by dams which could render the bridges impassable during a siege. There is then a defence tower and access to the fort is through a series of underground chambers and passages hewn out of the rock; and a stone barrier drawn by iron rings reinforced the security. The monumental doorway to the tunnel resembles the entrance doorway to the Kailasa Temple at Ellora not far away, reflecting the cross-cultural influences of the time. At the other end is a ribbed iron door 20 feet across and an inch thick; it could be heated red-hot from a small chamber alongside. A sophisticated air-ducting system could smoke out the tunnel and formed a lethal defence apparatus.³⁰

Beyond lies a shrine and a Yadava pavilion with a balcony overlooking a 100-foot chasm, believed to have been the residence of the Yadava rani but later occupied by Shah Jahan. On a nearby bastion is the Kila Shikan or fort-breaker, one of Daulatabad's mightiest guns. Inside the Mahakot there are the ruins of a Shah Jahani palace, the Daulat Khana, a Jami Masjid and the baths. The Jami Masjid was built in the time of Khilji's invasions in 1318 and comprises a large, enclosed square with a pillared prayer hall on the west side, whose 106 pillars form 25 aisles, with a flat roof. Four external columns, recycled from old temples, support a corbelled dome over the mihrab. Nearby is the four-storeyed Chand Minar or Moon Tower built in 1435, which dominates the entire complex.³¹

Kalakot is the inner most enclosure built on the northeastern side; one of its bastions houses the massive cannon, known as Creator of Storms, inscribed in Gujarati and installed by the Mughals. There is evidence of the royal palaces including Chini Mahal which may have been the reception hall, named after the blue and white tiles which used to adorn the interior. In 1687, Aurangzeb imprisoned the last of the kings of Golconda here for 13 years. An arched gateway leads through a long double-height hall with transverse arches leading to

³⁰ Bajwa, Jagir Singh Kaur, Ravinder, *Tourism Management*, APH Publishing, p. 249.

³¹ Kishori Saran Lal, *History of the Khaljis. (1290-1320)*. Allahabad, The Indian Press, pp.55-57.

further chambers at a higher level, which would have been the private chambers. These open onto a courtyard and across, there are remains of more apartments which would have been in heavily carved wood, the building type used in this region but which did not survive the ravages of time.

Daulatabad's hoary past is reflected in the massive entrance fortifications. While they may have destroyed all that lay before them, they were equally determined to fortify themselves against retaliations. It is therefore a powerful structure, visible across the countryside - a symbol of power and destruction.³²

Bijapur

The Adil Shahi dynasty was founded in 1490 by Yusuf Adil Khan, and their architectural achievements were matched by their political prowess in the region. The Adil Shahis were Shia Muslims and tolerant rulers who did not persecute other faiths, and in time they became influential in the Deccan because of their inclusive policies.

Bijapur flourished as scholars, ambassadors, and learned men flocked to his court. He lived mainly in Raichur in the great concentric fort of the Yadavas, and his kingdom stretched down to Goa, which he frequented until it was lost to the Portuguese. The Vijayanagara kings, however, were a continuous threat and eventually, in 1565, Ali Adil Shah allied with Ahmadnagar, Bidar, and Golconda to destroy the hold of Vijayanagara, at the time ruled by the powerful king Rama Raya.³³

Bijapur lies within two concentric circles of fortifications. Construction of the outer city walls, extending more than 6 miles with extensive moats, was started by Yusuf. Reinforced with 100 bastions, the fort was built to accommodate heavy artillery. Burj- e- Sherza, or the Lion Bastion has two sculpted lion heads and houses the Mallik- Maidan. or

³² Sen, Sailendra, *A Textbook of Medieval Indian History*, Primus Books, 2013, p.170.

³³ Lewin.B. Bowring, *Rulers of India, Haider Ali & Tipu Sultan*, S.Chand&Co, Ramnagar New Delhi, pp.40-41.

Lord of the Plains, a massive cannon believed to be one of the largest cannons ever cast. Behind the bury and in the town is Haider Burj, with a spiral staircase leading to the top. It was obviously a vantage point for miles around with a cannon called Lamchari or Distant Filer mounted atop. Inside the fortifications is the citadel, which houses the royal palaces its entrance gateways are accessed over heavily arched bridges, of which only two survive. The gates themselves were made of iron with spikes and barbicans fixed at sharp angles.³⁴

To commemorate the successful decimation of the Vijayanagara Empire, Ali began his most ambitious construction, the Jami Masjid, funded by his Vijayanagara booty. One of the finest mosques in India, it is remarkable for its harmonious proportions and dignified simplicity. The mosque's courtyard was an enormous 9,000 square feet and was later extended to 11,000 square feet to accommodate 5,000 people. The central bay is believed to have originally been covered with rich velvet carpets, but after Aurangzeb looted Bijapur, this design was incorporated in stone. The single hemispherical dome is immense. The old Jami Masjid, built soon after Yusuf's death in 1513, was also imposing in scale. In fact, all of Bijapur's mosques are quite remarkable for their refinement despite the large scale on which they are built. Without doubt, Gol Gumbad is the culmination of this obsession with size. Famed as the second largest dome in the world it is the tomb of Muhammad Adil Shah Its square base supports a dome some 150-feet high with a diameter of more than 100 feet, covering a great hall of immense proportions.³⁵

The royal complex is no less noteworthy. Gagan Mahal or Sky Palace, was the hall of public audience built by Ali Adil Shah in 1561. The façade has a large central arch nearly 60-feet wide and 50 feet high, with smaller arches on either side. Fine plasterwork motifs, notably with fish, distinguish it. Fish was the emblem of the Adil Shahis, and a motif widely used during Muharram processions in this region. There used to be an upper floor for the

³⁴ Jadunath Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb, Vol I & II*, pp. 228-264

³⁵ Sharma.S.R. *Mughal Empire in India*, Lakshmi Narain Agarwal Educational Publishers, Agra,1934.

zenana, but like many of the palaces that were built in exquisitely carved wood, they have since crumbled. Nearby, Anand Mahal, built much later, was the Palace of Pleasure.

An extremely large courtyard lies at the centre of the palace citadel. Towards the northwest is Sat Manzil or Seven-storeyed Palace, of which only five floors remain. In contrast to its unadorned façade, the interior is profusely painted with murals. To its north is Jal Mandir a small pavilion with brackets and eaves over hanging the pool within which a temple stands. It is part of an elaborate system of water channels so necessary in the hot desert plateau. Chini Mahal nearby was so named because of the Chinese ceramics found in its vicinity. Built later across the moat is Dad Mahal, the Hall of Justice, later converted into a shrine, and Athar Mahal, which is said to hold the relics of Prophet Mohammed with a grand entrance that has teak wood pillars double the height of the gate, this palace, with its elaborate archways and painted ceilings, remains intact and provides a glimpse of what the palaces looked like in their day.³⁶

Another work of consummate design in the complex is the mausoleum of Ibrahim Rauza and family members. The hanging ceiling and exquisite, filigreed screens must have created a vision of paradise against the backdrop of the surrounding garden, as is evident from an inscription found here: "Heaven stood astonished at the elevation of this building, and it might be said, when its head rose from earth that another heaven was erected."

Once the Mughal incursions into the Deccan gained strength, the days of the Adil Shahis were numbered. Though Bijapur held firm, contracting suitable alliances (such as giving their beloved Padshah Bibi in marriage to the imperial family), they were finally worn down. The besieged fort collapsed, and the last Sultan of Bijapur was exiled to Daulatabad.

³⁶ Amita Baig., *Forts and palaces in India*, Om Books International, 2017, pp.106-109.

Gulbarga

Gulbarga's history dates back to the 6th century, when the Rashtrakutas controlled the area. In the 9th century, it fell to the powerful Chalukyas, who reigned for almost 200 years. The Kalachuris succeeded them and remained in control until the 12th century. Then followed the rule of the Yadavas of Devagiri and of the Hoysalas of Halebid. The Kakatiyas of Warangal soon took over most of the area and then finally succumbed to the Sultanate in Delhi. The Bahmani dynasty ruled over the Deccan for nearly 200 years with Gulbarga as their capital.³⁷

Gulbarga Fort is a desolate structure evocative of its barbaric History and its short-lived glory. It sprawls across the countryside, its ramparts and bastions scaring mightily into the sky. Constructed on the remains of a Warangal Fort built by Raja Gulchand, it was a nara durg with no natural defences, dependent on the might of its men. Completely over hauled and reconstructed by Ala-ud-din Bahmani, it was an engineering feat of its time, with a 50 foot thick double wall the inner one higher than the outer. It had an almost impregnable defence system with a 90-foot wide moat with draw bridges completely surrounding its three miles of fortifications. The massive stone bastions that have outward projections provided enough space to house revolving cannons. The fortifications also had provision for dropping solids or liquids upon the approaching enemy, as well as merlons, and embrasures for musketry, 15 towers and 26 cannons ensured it was one of the mightiest of forts. The western entrance is colossal with four gates and four courtyards each one so fortified that it would be impossible to pass through unscathed. The doors themselves were in metal ceated, with iron spikes to protect against an enemy mounted on elephants; iron chains to hold the doors and bars to close them present a formidable welcome to Gulbarga Fort. It is an excellent example of military architecture, and was probably inspired by the Syrians.

³⁷ Sen, Sailendra, *A Textbook of Medieval Indian History*, Primus Books, 1983, pp. 106-108.

Inside are remains of large buildings, temples, and several beautiful courtyards. The large and foreboding Bala Hissar was used as the royal residence and certainly as a last refuge. The Jami Masjid built in 1367 is awe-inspiring as it covers 38,000 square feet and being covered is a unique congregational courtyard of a type not usually seen in India. The grandeur of the mosque is further enhanced with a repetition of ogee and cusped arches, with a trefoil at the centre for the mihrab, a style more visible in West Asia. The early tombs of the Bahmanis were simple stone and rubble masonry structures.³⁸

The eighth Bahmani king, Feroz Shah was as depraved as his ancestors, even as he built much of Gulbarga's splendours, including public buildings and palaces. Gulbarga was razed completely by the Vijayanagara king Krishna Deva Raya in 1520. The Deccan Sultanate broke into individual entities and in due course, Aurangzeb overran all.

Centuries after its creation, Gulbarga is still famous for the dargah of Hazrat Gesu Daraz, the renowned Chisti saint, who migrated here in his old age and settled in a monastery close to Jami Masjid. But as he refused to bless the dissolute son of Sultan Feroz, he was banished to the outskirts of the fort city.

Deccan forts, Golconda Fort is a massive assemblage of granite and masonry, it towers from a hillock over vast plains that held some of the densest concentration of diamond and gemstones in the world. The fort is chiselled with such skill that the baradari pavilions and palaces seem to almost spring from the surrounding granite rocks.

Golconda

A diamond among the Deccan forts, Golconda had been at the centre of a bustling trade in gemstones, and caravan serais for merchants, nobility, and fortune hunters, who streamed in from as far as Turkey and Persia, dot the landscape. The region was originally called Warangal, meaning solitary rock and was ruled by the Hindu Kakatiya kings, who built

³⁸ Michell, George & Mark Zebrowski, *Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates*, *The New Cambridge History of India Vol I:7*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999, pp. 77-80.

a mud fort at the site around AD 1143, when an idol of the deity Mangalavaram was found by a shepherd boy here Golconda later became part of the Bahmani Sultanate and the Bahmanis added considerable fortifications. In AD 1518, the fort's Turkish Governor proclaimed independence and, assuming the title of Sultan Quli Qutb Shah, ruled long and well until the age of 90.

One of the most visionary and liberal kings of medieval India, Quli Qutb Shah built most of the fort as it stands today, channelling the revenue gained from flourishing trade and prosperity into an impressive fort and palace. He replaced the old Warangal mud fort with a huge edifice of stone that is arranged in several layers. Later sultans added their own contributions to this unique fort.³⁹

The city of Golconda was enclosed by outer fortifications that lay well below the hillock. This city, however, was plagued by disease and lack of water and the later sultan, Ibrahim Qutb Shah built a bridge across the River Musi to allow expansion into healthier areas with a better supply of water. It was during Ibrahim Qutb Shah's reign that the famed diamonds of Golconda were discovered at Kollur near the River Krishna.

With the discovery of the diamond mines, Golconda quickly became an extraordinarily wealthy kingdom. The liberal attitude of the Qutb Shahi kings led to a vibrant cosmopolitan culture that was secure within the towering fortifications. Three granite walls of stupendous scale encircled the fort. The outermost wall was extended to encompass a smaller fort on a hillock and some settlements nearby, while the second wall girdled the hill at its foot. The third fortification guarded the hilltop and appears to be almost hewn out of the granite hillside with huge boulders straddling its walls. This wall has at least 87 semi-circular bastions, is 60-feet high and is fashioned out of massive granite blocks. Some of these still have beautifully engraved cannons in place.

³⁹ Michell, George & Mark Zebrowski. *op.cit.*, pp.47-53.

The main entry to the fort is through the Fateh Darwaza, or Gate of Victory, reached through a long, narrow road lined with towering ramparts. Fateh Darwaza is heavily spiked to defend against battering by elephants and attacking armies had to Intoxicate their elephants to make them push against the gates. The gate is acoustically designed in such a way that any sound here could be heard at Bala Hissar pavilion at the top, almost a kilometre away, a curiosity that continues to amaze and attract visitors. The gate bears the figure of a Hindu deity and may have been built by the Kakatiya kings. The other gates Banjara, Bahmani, Patancheru, Mecca, and Jamall are all decorated with animal relief in fine plaster work. Bala Hissar Gate has a monumental domed portico and marks the beginning of the palace precincts.⁴⁰

Stories of the fort are legion, with each bastion having its own tale. In the northwest corner lies Petla Burj, or the 'Big-bellied Bastion', jutting out from an angle in the wall and housing the famous Fateh Rahbar cannon. The 'Nine-lobed Bastion' lies to the northeast and is so called because it has a corrugated face with nine protrusions, a design that affords a great length of parapet for defence and an expanse from which to fire at all sides. Musa Burj to the south is named after Musa Khan Abdullah Qutb Shahs general, and was built by the architect Dharmachar to protect the fort against the first Mughal invasion in 1656.⁴¹

Inside the fort are remains of mosques, palaces, and zenanas built by successive generations of Qutb Shahi kings. The road towards the citadel's west is lined with military barracks, while the road to the south runs past a large complex of palace buildings. The shila, or armoury, dominates the fort's outer section. Further inside lies Taramati Masjid, the royal mosque adorned with fine plasterwork. Cobbled pathways lead through Dad Mahal, a long arcade with massive vaulted ceilings, into the royal complex where pleasure palaces and fountains and chambers abound. The Rani Mahal overlooks the courtyard and opens onto a

⁴⁰ Sen Sailendra. *op.cit.*, pp. 59-63.

⁴¹ Amita Baig. *op.cit.*, pp. 114-116.

triple-vaulted hall that still contains remnants of refined plasterwork embellishments. Most of these buildings suffered severe damage during the Mughal sieges and few stand in their entirety. Steep flights of stairs and stone-flagged passages lead to the large Bala Hissar hall, which was probably used either as a durbar pavilion or as a safe house, since the road up the hill is lined with granaries, stores, and even the treasury. An elaborate water system was devised to raise water to the top with water channels and tanks all the way uphill. Immediately below lies Ibrahim's Mosque and the original Mahakali Temple.⁴²

In 1724, Golconda eventually became the property of Nizam-ul Mulk, the Nizam of Hyderabad. The Nizam's wealth was built on his control over the diamond mines in the region, and he collected so many diamonds that were hoarded in fort, which led to Golconda Fort being called the world's most remarkable diamond vault. The largest of the Nizam's diamonds, the Jacob diamond was used as a paperweight in the last Nizam's office, as perhaps inverted snobbery of the wealthiest man in the world.⁴³

⁴² Sardar, Marika. *Golconda Through Time: A Mirror of the Evolving Deccan*. New York University.

⁴³ Sardar Marika. *op.cit.*, p. 59-63.

CHAPETR III

SOUTHERN KINGDOMS

Hampi

Hampi is situated on an ancient site known traditionally as Pampakshetra and Kishkindyakshetra. The site is mentioned in the Ramayana as Kishkinda and has a sacred geography, Pampakshetra is believed to be where the marriage of Lord Shiva with Parvati was consecrated, and the city of Hampi grew around the ancient temple of Virupaksha, a manifestation of Shiva. The earliest record of settlement is a 7th century copper plate that refers to the site as Pampa tirtha, after the river goddess Pampa who presided over the tirtha on the southern bank of the River Tungabhadra. Over the next six and a half centuries, Pampa tirtha grew into a ceremonial centre of significance. In recent years, archaeologists have found evidence of Neolithic settlements.

Located at the edge of the River Tungabhadra, Hampi is spread over 9 square miles in the lee of a rocky outcrop, which together with the river provides a natural protection. The city expanded rapidly under the Vijayanagara Empire. Abdur Razzak, an ambassador from Persia wrote of it in AD 1442: “The city of Bijadnagar is such that the pupil of the eye has never seen a place like it and the ear of intelligence has never been informed that there existed such a place like it”.⁴⁴

Structure

Hampi is one of the richest archaeological treasures in India. An outer fortification encloses the temples and the royal palaces. The fortifications are almost circular with gateways leading to the city within. Pavilions and watch towers still stand in the remains of palaces and royal reception areas. The most imposing structure is the Mahanavmi Dibba, a multi-level platform 40-feet high and tapering towards the top. It is elaborately carved with

⁴⁴ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/241>.

depictions of the court, wars, and hunting expeditions. The highest platform served as the throne of the Rayas from where they presided over religious ceremonies like Navaratri and Diwali.⁴⁵

On the southern side are two spectacular bathing tanks with steps leading down in complicated geometric patterns. The Queen's Bath is built in the Deccan Sultanate style with a vaulted and domed roof and balconies overlooking the tank. A sophisticated water system connected the tanks with the bathing pavilions.

Lotus Mahal

Lotus Mahal is a two-storey pavilion with projections on all sides, and an upper floor with cusped arch openings. The beautifully plastered superstructure is supported by 24 square pillars. The ceiling is elaborately ornamented with stucco arches, friezes, and ledges, mostly with animal motifs but noteworthy for the Yalis, the guardian deities. The superstructure consists of nine towers that form a pyramid shape. These used to be fully decorated and covered with polished lime plaster. The Lotus Mahal is also known locally as Chitrangini Mahal, but the Svaramelakalanidhi, a contemporary text, refers to it as Ratnakuta, the centre of arts.

The elephant stables are a handsome ensemble consisting of 11 chambers. They are crowned with a sequence of plain or fluted domes, alternating with 12-sided vaults capped with ribbed finials arranged symmetrically on either side of a central two-storey upper chamber. The linear arrangement of the domed chambers is similar to that in Bahmani architecture and so is the decorated stucco, which is also seen on the octagonal pavilion that faces a huge courtyard where parades were held for the kings⁴⁶

⁴⁵ John. M. Fritz, George Michelli, Clare Arni, *New Light on Hampi: Recent Research at Vijayanagara*. Marg Publications, 2001, pp. 1-7.

⁴⁶ Burton Stein, *The New Cambridge History of India: Vijayanagara*. Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 31-32.

The Virupaksha Mahal

The Virupaksha Temple dominates the skyline and continues to attract thousands of devotees. It is situated on the banks of the River Tungabhadra and is part of a larger complex of tanks, mathas, and related shrines. It was originally built in the 7th century and is among India's oldest temples where worship has continued unbroken to the present day. The temple has three gopurams. The eastern one is 160-feet high and was built by Krishna Deva Raya in the 16th century. The northern gopuram has five storeys and lies in front of the third gopuram, which has three storeys. All the three gopurams have wonderful stucco work depicting religious images. Krishna Deva Raya also constructed the central pillared hall known as the Ranga Mandapa, two mythical lion-like creatures form the balustrade at the entrance to an open pavilion. This hall has five aisles and 38 rows of pillars sculpted with mythical creatures like Yalis that are shown standing on crocodiles. The Krishna Temple complex nearby is in ruins. The Hazara-Rama' Temple, its name inspired by the thousand images of Rama carved on the walls, lies close to the royal enclosure and is richly carved in bas-relief depicting scenes from the Ramayana.⁴⁷

The centre piece of Hampi is the Vitthala Temple complex. A vast number of structures, large and small, make up this damaged temple complex. A stone chariot intricately carved with mythical battle scenes, is one of the jewels of Hampi and seems to be inspired by Harihara II's victories in Orissa, where the Konark Sun Temple is built in the form of the Sun God's chariot. Nearby is a many-pillared hall called the Maha Mandapa. The balustrade is dramatically carved with giant Yalis fighting elephants. The hall stands on an ornate platform carved with floral motifs. The reliefs on the lower level of the platform depict chains of horses, trainers, and traders. The Maha Mandapa is also known as the hall of musical pillars,

⁴⁷ Verghese, Anila, *"Deities, cults and kings at Vijayanagara"*, World Archeaology, 2004, pp. 416-431.

as its elaborately carved giant monolithic pillars resonate with musical tones when skilfully tapped.⁴⁸

Vellore

One of India's finest military forts, Vellore is an almost perfect jala durg, a fort defended by water. Its formidable façade of huge granite fortifications is surrounded by a very broad moat. Located on the banks of the River Pallar it conforms to the ancient principles of defence stipulated in the Shastras. The water of the moat was infested with crocodiles and its causeways could easily be flooded. The very name Vellore means a City of Spears, evoking its martial history of battles and bloodshed. Its chequered history is clearly reflected in the various layers of construction that each successive ruler added to the fort.⁴⁹

History of the Fort

Built in the 14th century by Chinna Bommi Nayak, a chieftain of Vijayanagara, the fort was called 'Raya Vellore' to differentiate it from the 'Uppu Vellore' situated in the Godavari Basin. Constructed during the reign of Krishna Deva Raya, the fort grew in prosperity when Dutch, French, and Portuguese traders established bases along the Coromandel Coast in the 17th century. However, this period of peace was short-lived as the Sultan of Bijapur seized the fort in 1656 as part of the Deccan Sultanates' collaborative campaign to annihilate Vijayanagara.

Finally, the British East India Company took over the fort after a series of what are known as Carnatic Wars and used it as an important garrison right up to the time of Independence. Haider Ali of Mysore attacked the fort in 1780 but the British defied the siege for two years. Haider Ali's son Tipu Sultan, was kept prisoner along with his family at Vellore Fort after the British victory at Srirangapatnam in 1799.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Amita Baig, *Forts and Palaces in India*, published in Om Books International, 2017, pp.128-129.

⁴⁹ Rajayyan.k. *Tamilnadu a Real History*, Ratna Publication, Trivandram, 2005, pp. 262-263.

⁵⁰ *The Hindu*, 20th July 2019.

Structure of the Fort

Vellore Fort was also the site of the first Indian sepoy mutiny against the British, half a century before the first Indian war of Independence in 1857. Early in the morning on July 10, 1806, some 1,500 Indian soldiers of the Madras Regiment attacked the European barracks and killed 100 soldiers and 15 officers. The immediate provocation for the revolt was an order forbidding the wearing of caste marks and beards. The rebels urged Tipu Sultan's sons to lead the attack. Reinforcements were rushed to the fort and the rebellion was quashed by noon, after almost 800 Indian sepoys had been killed. Tipu's family was moved to Kolkata, though they were later buried in Vellore just outside the fort.⁵¹

Vellore Fort hugs the contours of the land, its gray-blue granite wrapping itself along the River Pallar. The massive ramparts are interspersed with bastions and square towers at regular intervals. There are two distinct fort walls, the outer one slightly lower than the inner so that both walls could be used in tandem for the firing of guns and cannons as well as spears and arrows. The crenellated parapets are made of brick, in which embrasures are cut. The embrasures are possibly a later European addition. To the south is a raised bastion with a flagstaff. It was entered through massive gates and was protected by a drawbridge, a system that was altered in the 18th century to adapt it for artillery defence. The broad moat surrounding the fort receives water from the Suryagunta tank, a large reservoir nearby. The moat is said to have contained more than 10,000 crocodiles at one time. It extends to 8,000 feet outside the fort and in some places is as deep as 190 feet.⁵²

The most significant structure within the fort is the Jalakantheshwara Temple dedicated to Lord Shiva. It was left untouched even during the Sultanate and Arcot occupations. In its entrance courtyard is a magnificent Nandi bull statue in blue granite and an impressive gateway with a seven-storeyed gopuram, also of granite. The gateway is

⁵¹ *The Hindu*, 20th July 2019.

⁵² Amita Baig, *op.cit.*, p.129.

flanked on either side by magnificent statues of a dancing Parvati while the temple itself is heavily carved in the Vijayanagara style with gopurams, mandapas, and cloisters of sculpted stone.

Within the fort, the parade ground is flanked by the old royal palaces, which are two-storey buildings with large internal courtyards. The Tipu and Haider Ali Mahals were built by the British to imprison the survivors of the family. The charm of Vellore Fort is that despite its turbulent history, a temple, a mosque, a church and a variety of British military buildings blend into harmony with the forbidding granite ramparts. Today, the Pallar flows gently by; there are no crocodiles, and the fort is easily accessed by a bridge that hundreds of devotees cross every day to worship at the Jalakantheshwara Temple.⁵³

Gingee

The great fort at Gingee straddles the three hills of Krishnagiri Chandragiri, and Rajagiri. It is the quintessential giri durg, or hill fort. The building is a stupendous array of fortified walls and bastions scattered in ruins over a large area in the Eastern Ghats. Situated in an idyllic rural landscape, its remains are now one with nature. The fortifications rise and descend with the contours of the hills, forming a tough triangle, Rajagiri is the highest hill and houses the main fort and palace of Raigarh.⁵⁴

History of the Fort

Gingee was a Chola fort, the Cholas were the most powerful rulers of Southern India from the 9th to the 13th centuries. They built strong defences against their traditional enemies, the Pandyas of Madura, but by the mid-15th century Vijay Ranga Nayaka, the Pandya Governor of Thanjavur, had taken control of the fort and extended the fortifications to the Chandragiri and Krishnagiri hills, retaining the citadel at Rajagiri.

⁵³ *Vellore Fort History by Indian Postal Department, Retrieved 10 October 2013, p.118.*

⁵⁴ Hildebeitel, Alt. *The Cult of Draupati Mythologies from Gingee to Kurukserta, Volume.I*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1991, pp. 317-320.

The Pandya Nayakas reigned supreme during the 16th and 17th centuries and built remarkable temples and palaces in the fort. After the collapse of Vijayanagara, Gingee fell to the Sultan of Bijapur. When Maratha king Shivaji entered into an alliance with his arch rival Golconda; the Marathas stormed Gingee making it their stronghold till 1698, when the Nayakas briefly regained power under Raja Sarup Singh. This was a short-lived rule, as the fort was besieged by the Mughal general Zulfikar Ali Khan during the reign of Emperor Aurangzeb, a siege that lasted seven years. Throughout this period, the Marathas laid siege to the Mughal forces looting their supply lines and completely demoralising them. However, infighting among the Marathas gave the Mughal armies the edge who finally conquered this invincible fort and made Gingee their southern capital until 1730 when the capital was shifted to Arcot. Gingee played a crucial role in the battle between the French and British as they struggled for supremacy in a beleaguered India. The French commander Bussy finally took Gingee in 1750 and a mere 10 years later it became the last French fort to fall to the British culminating their seven year war with the French in South India.⁵⁵

Structure of the Fort

The great fort at Gingee now deserted, was one of the most impressive forts in India. The three hills on which the fort is built are high and difficult to ascend with their rocky escarpments contributing to the fort's impregnability. A main outer wall stretches to the fortifications protecting Chandragiri and Krishnagiri. From the centre of the fort's triangular formation, three main lines of walls lead in succession to the citadel of Rajagiri at the summit. Supplementary walls running between the hillocks enclose the ravines and provide additional fortifications.

Entrance to the complex was gained through the gate at the centre of the wall forming the base of the triangle, about halfway between Chandragiri and Krishnagiri. The citadel's

⁵⁵ Manchanda, Bindu, *Forts & Palaces of India: Sentinels of History*, Roli Books Private limited, 1997, pp.218-225.

outer bailey partially moated contained the granaries and the later multi-storey prasada-like Kalyana Mahal built by the Nayakas: This bailey was entered through a great triple gate, with a barbican and heavily guarded courts, with a complex passage that had 90-degree turns at six places. The next two gates serving as entry and exit of a second bailey, stand diagonally across each other and at different heights. Over the lintel of the second gate is a small circular carving of Kirtimukha - 'Mouth of Glory' - with a demonic head. A deep and rocky chasm lies on the way to the summit. A drawbridge used to exist over this leading to a narrow and forbidding passage to the inner sanctum.

The route to the citadel is defended by seven gateways. Three of the gates in the second and fourth walls have large courtyards between them. The royal compound of the Nayakas consisted of a number of buildings, the best preserved being the Kalyana Mahal or the zenana. This complex has apartments on four sides of a square water tank in a classical Hindu plan. These chambers were reserved for the Nayakas' entourage. At the centre of the courtyard is a large lower pavilion of seven storeys each having pillared arcades with a single entry from the southern side. Above the first storey the tower is laced on its four sides with arched openings from which the women of the court could look out without being observed. This multi-storey tower would have provided ample space on the upper floors for the privacy and security of the Nayaka. A highly sophisticated water system with three tanks fed by two springs could lift water as high as six storeys, ensuring that this mahal was always well served.

To the north of the Kalyana Mahal stands a six-storeyed tower with arcades on its four sides, and a small chamber with a steeply pyramidal roof at the top. To its west lies a double row of small chambers with shallow vaults, each with an arcaded verandah, which are likely to have been stables for horses. These form the northern boundary of the Kalyana Mahal complex creating a spacious parade ground. To the west of this ground, foundations of

what would have been the royal residence are visible, with a square, central room, evidence of a colonnaded verandah, and subsidiary chambers. Immediately below, and reached by a spiral staircase, is a large square stone slab with a bolster that formed part of a ceremonial seat. The slab is hewn from gray green granite and raised on a stone structure. It is speculated that the Nayaka rulers used this as a seat for presiding over the vast parade ground. A vaulted granary, a watch tower and an oil press also form part of this complex.⁵⁶

To the south of the Kalyana Mahal is a large bathing tank carved out of rock and surrounded by a covered colonnade. Access was limited and achieved through several steps around the tank. It was used possibly for ritual purposes. The tank would have provided vital water storage during the seven-year siege of the fort.

Granaries with pointed arched vaults are prominent in the royal complex at Gingee. Each one is varied: one has four interconnecting chambers but an unadorned façade, while another is single-chambered but with decorative features, including a frieze of foliage motifs and Yali heads at the arched ends. The open pavilions nearby, with fanciful arches and fluted domes, would have been pleasure pavilions.

A huge gun crowns the Rajagiri citadel. The Prisoner's Well is a gigantic boulder pierced by a large opening and balanced on a rock with a low, circular brick wall. It is believed that prisoners were thrown in and left to die of starvation.

Srirangapatnam

For a brief period in its otherwise peaceful history, the Srirangapatnam Fort was the bloodiest and most war-ravaged citadel in India. In the mid-18th century, Haider Ali, having risen from the fighting ranks of the Mysore army to become de facto king, jolted the small kingdom of Mysore out of its bucolic existence and pitchforked it into the heat of the battles for power raging across India. Feared for his cruelty against enemies, Haider Ali worsted the

⁵⁶ Text & Pictures Macherla Diwakar, *Temples of South India*, Techno Book House, 2010, pp. 40-42.

Marathas, conquered Calicut, and attacked the British East India Company. He modernised the army, employed European officers and artillery, and, in 1781, plundered Tanjore so mercilessly that folklore in the region still remembers the attack as Haiderakalabam, or the apocalypse wrought by Haider. His son Tipu Sultan was as ferocious and was known as the Tiger of Mysore: A friend of Italian nationalist rebels and an admirer of European technology, Tipu fought to the bitter end, defending Srirangapatnam from the Company.⁵⁷

History of the Fort

Poised on an island in the sacred River Kaveri, Srirangapatnam is a perfect jala durg. Its name is derived from the ancient temple of Sri Ranganatha Swami on the island. In 1610, the Wodeyar king of Mysore shifted his capital from Mysore to Srirangapatnam, extending his territories and consolidating his holdings across peninsular India. Following the defeat of the Vijayanagara Empire in the 16th century, the Sultans of Bijapur and Golconda held sway across most of South India. The Mughals decimated the Sultanates and established overnors but soon the Mura Empire was in decline renewing the thiggle for power in the Deccan this time between the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Marathas.

Haider Ali wept across the region, destroying all that his path. The Marathas and the Nikam were so alarmed that they joined forces but they still could not muster the strength to face the marauder and so allied with the British, who themselves looking to increase the power in the region. Even the com armies of the British, the Marathas and the Nizam were routed by Haider Ali, who also seized Mangalore and had reached the gates of Madras when the Company negotiated a peace tresty n 1769 in 177 the Marathas attacked Srirangapatnam but were betrayed by the British who, instead of facilitating them used the opportunity to capture Mahe, a French protectorate of Mysore Halder Ali bought off the Marathas but

⁵⁷ Thomson, Rev. E.W., *The Last Siege of Seringapatnam*. Mysore City, Wesleyan Mission, 1990, p.44

remained on the offense against the Company, capturing Arcot. On his death in 1782 Tipu Sultan became the ruler of Mysore⁵⁸

Tipu's soldiers defeated British armies in the east repelled a joint Maratha Hyderabad invasion from the north, and captured territories in the south. At one point Tipu even captured Hyderabad but returned it after the Nizam promised peace. The British however opposed this agreement with Mysore and provoked Tipu into attacking Travancore and setting off a three-year war between the British and Mysore. In 1791, Lord Cornwallis captured Bangalore and attacked Srirangapatnam, but had to retreat after his plan failed. In 1792, he returned with a larger force and captured Srirangapatnam. Tipu had to surrender half his lands to the Marathas and the Nizam. The final struggle took place in 1799 when Lord Wellesley sent in his army, finally destroying the power of Tipu Sultan and restored the Hindu Wodeyars to the throne. The assault against the island fortress, a joint military operation by 40,000 troops culminated in the capture of the city on May 4, 1792 and the death of Tipu Sultan, as a result, the British were able to secure control of all of Southern India. Establishing the transition from trade to military power.

Srirangapatnam Fort is accessed through its main southern gate, the Mysore Gate. During the assault by Cornwallis some 10,000 prisoners kept in the fort escaped through this gate. Thereby is the flagstaff erected by Lord Wellesley, the first Duke of Wellington who prior to defeating Napoleon had earned fame for the defeat of Tipu Sultan.

The Elephant Gate, built in 1793 is large enough to accommodate caparisoned elephants and was once secured by a drawbridge. The Delhi Gate was accessed by the Delhi Bridge, which Tipu dismantled for defence purposes, but the stone bases still remain. The northern rampart leads to the Sultan Battery below which are the dungeons where prisoners were confined in appalling conditions, often for years. Standing up to their necks in water,

⁵⁸ Sampath, Vikram, *Splendours of Royal Mysore*, Rupa Publications, 2008, p.54.

they were chained with their arms crossed, and compelled to eat like animals, with the food being placed on stone ledges above. Further east along the ramparts is the 'Gateway of the Fallen Fortress, or the Bidda Kote Bagalu, with underground vaults also used as dungeons.⁵⁹

The Temple of Sri Ranganatha Swami stands at one end of the parade ground. Nearby is the 18th-century Narasimha Swami Temple built by the Wodeyars. The Lal Mahal, the palace of Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan, once described as India's finest building, no longer exists. The Jami Masjid built by Tipu is a graceful structure with onion domes and a mound nearby marks the grave of Mir Muhammad Sadak, executor of Tipu's heinous tortures, and also his most trusted lieutenant.

The gumbaz built by Tipu is an extravagant mausoleum complex with great gardens and a naubat khana straddling the gateway to the main hall containing the graves of Haider and Tipu. These are elegant square buildings, each with an onion dome and four small minarets. They are raised on an arcaded verandah with elegant polished stone pillars and an ebony door inlaid with ivory. This door was restored by the British when they occupied the fort. Just outside the fort is Daria Daulat Bagh, Tipu's summer palace. Built on the remains of the Mahanavmi Mandapa of the Mysore Rajas it was briefly used by Haidar Ali as barracks. Tipu transformed it into an elaborately painted and gilded hall, with the murals depicting his successful wars against the British. The garden itself is a classical char bagh and exotic plants brought from Kabul, Lahore, and beyond were grown here.

Rebuilt many times, the Srirangapatnam Fort stands as a reminder not only of the tragic fall of Tipu Sultan, but also the rise of the British Empire in India.

⁵⁹.Amita Baig, *op.cit.*, pp.134-136.

CHAPTER IV

MARATHA FORTS

Raigadh

The first fort Shivaji captured was Torna. This provided him the resources to start the reconstruction of Raigadh Fort, which in time became his capital. The main palace at Raigadh was constructed using wood, and so only the bases of the pillars remain. The ruins of three watch towers can be seen directly in front of the palace grounds, overlooking an artificial lake created next to the fort. It also provides a view of the cliff from which the sentenced prisoners were thrown off, called Takmak Tok. The King's Hall of Public Audience has a replica of the original throne. The main entrance to the fort is the majestic Maha Darwaza though the king and his entourage used the Palki Darwaza, or Palanquin Gate.⁶⁰

Shivaji built more than a hundred forts in the Deccan and by the time he died, his kingdom was defended by 240 forts. Some he conquered and some were built from scratch, and these were the bulwarks of his military campaigns. He was a wily strategist and many of his sieges were successful not because of his endurance but his deviousness. His forts reflect the tenets of Adnyapatre, a contemporary text on kingship, which states: "Fort... the essence of an entire kingdom. A country without its forts is a country which turns to ruin its people un-sheltered with just one invasion of an enemy. If the country is destroyed what is left to be called as a kingdom. A fort is the root of a kingdom, a fort is the treasure, a fort is the strength behind an army, a fort is Raj Lakshmi, a fort is the perfect place to live and a fort is a place where you can sleep without fear. Indeed the fort is the protector.

⁶⁰ Kinlaid.C.A & Rao Bahadur, Parasnis.D.B., *Comprehensive History of Maratha Empire*, Anmol publications 1986, Delhi, pp.1-150.

Lohagadh

Within a formidable network of forts which exemplify Maratha supremacy in the 17th century Lohagadh, the Iron Fort was one of Shivaji's most coveted. It towers 3400 feet above the landscape around and is located at the summit of a long, serpentine mountain, with the rivers Pavana and Indrani protecting its base on either side. It predates Shivaji by many centuries and is believed to have been occupied by the Satvahanas, the Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas, Yadavs, Bahmanis, Nizamshahis and the Mughals before, it was captured by Shivaji in 1648. He lost it to the Mughals, but recaptured it some twenty years later and it remained with the Marathas until the British took control of the region in the 19th century. Its importance to Shivaji was its virtual invincibility and it served as his treasury. It was here that Shivaji stored his plunder or spoils of war, which financed his wars against the Mughals and the British. Local legend has it that some of this treasure still lies secreted away in the fort yet to be discovered.

Lohagadh's height gave it a significant advantage over the enemy. On an adjacent hill, Shivaji built Visapur Fort at a higher elevation. This later proved to be a strategic error as, once it was captured by the British in 1818, it gave them a base from which to bombard Lohagadh, forcing the Marathas out. The steep and treacherous staircase up to Lohagadh winds along the contours, which in the rainy season, becomes a waterfall, making it even more difficult to negotiate. It is punctuated by four monumental gateways; Ganesha Darwaza, Narayan Darwaza, Hanuman Darwaza, the oldest and Maha Darwaza, which has some decorative sculptures. Between the second and third gate, there are stone cellars that were possibly used as granaries, and beyond Maha Darwaza, there are some tombs in a building within there are several water tanks one of them being spring fed thus ensuring pure drinking water.⁶¹ At the summit, there is a Mahadev temple with steps leading down to a water tank

⁶¹ Kinlaid.C.A & Rao Bahadur, Parasnis.D.B. *op.cit.*, pp. 151-250.

and there is also the grave of a Pir. Near the edge of the fortification there is a spacious rock-cut cave called the Lomesh Rishi cave. During the Peshwa period under Nana Phadnavis, extensive building was undertaken inside the fort, especially augmenting the water system and building a stepwell. There are remains of a large number of buildings which would have served his military.⁶²

Lohagadh is forbidding in its location. Its fortifications encompass the entire hilltop; its narrow, long, fortified western end is called Vichhu Kanta, the Marathi word for scorpion's tail derived from its curious shape. There is a watch tower from where it was possible to guard the entire fort and perhaps many miles around and was also used to monitor octroi collections in the region as this was a major trade route in the western Sahyadris. It still stands virtually unassailable, shrouded in mystery.

SEA FORTS

Vijaydurg

Vijaydurg and Sindhudurg bear testimony to Maharashtra's martial and maritime supremacy during Shivaji's reign. Vijaydurg is an ancient site, originally called Gheria. It was once part of the Bijapur Sultanate before it was acquired in the 17th century by Shivaji who gave it the name Vijaydurg or Victory Fort. Vijaydurg was extensively reconstructed by Shivaji who built huge fortifications, giving it its architectural grandeur. It is one of the strongest marine forts on the west coast of India, with a superb location.

Built on a hill at the mouth of River Vaghotan, the fort stands on a promontory into the sea, protected on three sides by the sea with a moat to the east long since abandoned. The three-layered fortifications provide a massive stone façade and, as in other Maratha forts, make it virtually impregnable. The multiple layers of fortifications have 27 bastions, some of them double storeyed. Its main entrance faced east away from the vagaries of nature but also

⁶² Chitnis.K.N., *Socio Economic History of Medieval India.*, Atlantic Publishers&Distributors, New Delhi, p.224.

with clear strategic intent. Within its massive walls, there is a second almost concealed gateway. Within the citadel, there were many buildings, largely military and functional, though few remain. However water supply the most essential element was in abundance with several wells and large tanks. In recent years, a submerged wall 100 metres east of the fort has been discovered. Almost 9-feet high 20-feet wide and nearly a quarter of a mile long this too seems part of the grand architectural plan for security. Vijaydurg finally fell when the Peshwas allied with the British in 1756, but remained with the Peshwas until they too surrendered to the British.⁶³

Sindhudurg

Sindhudurg stands on a rocky outcrop of 48 acres known as Kurte, just off the Konkan coast it was built by Shivaji in 1664, after successive futile attempts to capture Murud Janjira and symbolised the Marathas supremacy of the west coast. Shivaji employed an architect to design this mammoth fort and sourced his building skills, including 100 Portuguese, from Goa, where construction was prolific. There are records stating that it took 3,000 workers three years to build with Shivaji's pillaging of Surat paying for the extravagance. It is approachable only by boat through a narrow, barely navigable channel, which limited access to the fort, and was its defence. It also highlights the enormous challenges which would have been faced during the construction of the immense fortifications. It is surrounded by rocky outcrops and simply navigating the waters to Sindhudurg was not always possible.

The fort is well preserved and has walls 27-feet high, ramparts as wide as 9 feet and some 4 miles in length punctuated with 47 bastions. The unique feature is that the

⁶³Amita Baig, *Forts and Palaces in India*, Published in Om Books International, 2017, p.174.

foundations of the fortifications were laid in molten lead, and a further 2,000 khandis or 72,000 kg of iron reinforced the fort walls. It was an engineering feat of its time.⁶⁴

The main gate of Sindhudurg faces east towards the city Flanked by two huge bastions, a nearby parapet with two small domes has what are believed to be Shivaji's footprints embedded in the lime concrete. Within the fort, there is a Shivaji Temple, built by his son Rajaram, unique in itself, with an image of the Maratha warrior. After Shivaji, Sindhudurg was ruled by the Angres, Peshwas, and then Kolhapur. It was briefly captured by the British in 1765 who called it 'Fort Augustus'! Later in 1818, the British dismantled the fort's defence structures, destroying its legacy.

Maheshwar

After Aurangzeb's death in 1707, the Maratha Empire founded by Shivaji expanded to fill the vacuum created by the Mughal retreat from South and Central India. The Marathas had become a hydra headed force, with different commanders having created their own dominions and armies. Of these, five Maratha clans rose to prominence: the Peshwas of Pune, the Gaekwads of Baroda, the Scindias of Gwalior, the Bhonsles of Nagpur and the Holkars of Indore. Maheshwar Fort was the main citadel of the Holkars, from where they ruled Central India's Malwa plateau. The Holkars are among a handful of dynasties who accepted a woman on the throne. Queen Ahilya Bai ruled for 30 years as one of the most visionary and accomplished sovereigns of the time.

Situated on an isolated hillock on the banks of the sacred River Narmada, the Maheshwar Fort is believed to stand on the site of Maheshwari mentioned in the Mahabharata as the capital of King Kartavirya Arjuna. Maheshwar is also considered to be Mahisatti or Mahishamati, capital of the 7th-century BC mahajanapada of Avanti During the reign of Mughal emperor Akbar in the 16th century, Maheshwar and Burhanpur became important

⁶⁴Amita Baig, *op.cit.*, pp. 175-176.

military bases. The Marathas raided Malwa in 1730 and Malhar Rao Holkar, the Maratha commander who led the attack, declared his independence and made Indore his capital.⁶⁵

It is said that during one of his military campaigns in Central India, Malhar Rao stopped at a village called Chondi and saw the eight-year-old Ahilya Bai serving at a temple. He brought the girl with him as a bride for his son Khande Rao, Khande Rao was killed in battle in 1754 and when Malhar Rao died 12 years later, Ahilya Bai succeeded to the throne. She shifted the capital to Maheshwar and ruled from there until her death in 1795. The Holkars became feudatories of the British Raj after the third Anglo-Maratha War in 1818, and were granted the title of Prince of Indore.

Ahilya Bai was an extraordinary woman she led the army with four bows and quivers fitted to the corners of the howdah of her elephant. She was a prodigious builder erecting temples and pilgrimage centres across the length and breadth of India, and extensively renovating the Maheshwar Fort. She had the fort extended and the fortifications strengthened with new merlons to install modern weaponry. The height of the outer wall was raised 6 feet and in many places, the wall's lower part was reinforced with stones found near the river and from local black igneous rock. This created a vast façade of dark stone that is broken only by the bastions. Kamani Darwaza on the northern wall is possibly a Mughal gate and overlooks the town. Another gate nearby is the exclusive royal entrance and leads to the palace⁶⁶

The rajwada on the southwestern corner is the fort's highest point. Constructed in 1766 by Ahilya Bai, it is a simple and elegant structure built around rectangular interlinked courtyards. The wada or palace is a classical example of the Maratha architecture of the period, with its heavily carved wooden pillars, beams, and brackets set against masonry walls. The royal apartment is located on top of a huge burj with spectacular views of the

⁶⁵ Chaurasia.R.S, *op.cit.*, pp.285-327.

⁶⁶ Sharma.S.P. *op.cit.*, pp. 124-143.

Narmada. Within the palace complex is the royal throne with a life size statue of Ahilya Bai. On the western side of the rajwada are gardens and orchards.

Ahilya Bai was a great patron of the arts. The famous Marathi poets Moropant and Anantaphandi, and the Sanskrit scholar Khushali Ram stayed at Maheshwar on her invitation. Craftsmen sculptors, and artists received generous patronage and the famed Maheshwari textiles, especially the silk sarees were first woven on a large scale in her reign. Ahilya Bai's greatest architectural legacy, however, are the exquisite temples built along the Narmada joined to the river by series of steps that almost seem to cascade. The perfectly dressed stone of the temples serves as a foil to the rough-hewn fort walls. The temple of Ahilya Bai dominates the landscape and is heavily carved and decorated. It is dedicated to Lord Shiva and has been open to people of all faiths since its inception.

Gwalior

Like many of the classic forts in Central India, the Gwalior Fort stands majestically atop an isolated hill. The region is believed to be the Gopakshetra mentioned in ancient Hindu texts, and Sanskrit inscriptions record that Mihirakula, the Hun, built a sun temple here in the 6th century AD. The region later became part of Kanauj under the Pratihara king Mihira Bhoja before falling to the Kachhawaha who reigned for over 200 years. The Kachhawaha chiefs believed that Suraj Sen founded the fort in the 4th century while out hunting on this hill, then known as Gopagiri. Here, a hermit, Gwalipa gave Suraj Sen water to drink, which miraculously cured his leprosy. The hermit told Suraj Sen that if he adopted the name Pal his family would rule at Gwalior. When the 84th Pal descendent, Tej Karan, broke this tradition, the Pratiharas captured Gwalior but soon lost it to Qutub-ud-din Albak in 1196. In 1398, as Timur sacked Delhi, the Tomar chief Bir Singh Deo declared Gwalior independent and bought his peace by paying tribute to the Delhi Sultans. In the 16th century, Ibrahim Lodi invaded Gwalior with "30,000 horses and 300 elephants" but a year later, the

fort fell to Babur, who described it as the pearl in the necklace of the forts of Hind. The Mughals held Gwalior until 1754, when the Maratha advance into Central India led the Mughals to retreat to the safety of Delhi. However, the fort remained heavily contested until the Maratha warrior Mahdaji Rao Scindia established himself here in 1784 to take on the emerging British power. Gwalior also played a significant part in the 1857 rebellion, with some of Jayaji Rao's forces siding with the Rani of Jhansi.⁶⁷

Most of the fort was built by Raja Man Singh in the 15th century, on a hill that is virtually sheer, and where it was not it was scarped. The massive ramparts are reinforced with bastions, often capped with delicately poised chattris. The most striking feature of the fort are the extensive bands of brightly coloured glazed tile, creating a delicacy in the otherwise formidable façade. The fort is reached by a steep road twisting its way through the hillside and is entered through seven gates, five of which are straddled by palaces. Raja Man Singh's Palace is above the Hathiarpur Gate, which was built between 1486 and 1517 and is a showcase of medieval Hindu architecture. Although most of the richly tiled façade of the palace has not survived, the interior still has wonderful tiles bands of mosaic elephants, and peacocks in blues, greens, rose pink and gold, including a whimsical frieze of Brahmani ducks in brilliant turquoise waters.⁶⁸

Man Singh's two-storey palace is laid out around a series of courtyards and is heavily carved with stone. The zenana is on the upper floor, above the king's chambers, and the terraces have exquisite pavilions. There are huge halls with fine stone screens where royal ladies used to learn music. Below the palace are circular dungeons built in the Persian style, these once housed prisoners of the Mughal state. Aurangzeb had his brother Murad Baksh Imprisoned, and later executed, here.

⁶⁷ Jadunath Sarkar, *op.cit.*, pp.14-57.

⁶⁸ Chaurasia, R.S. *History of the Marathas*, Atlantic, New Delhi, p.110.

Mughal emperors Jehangir and Shah Jahan added the Jehangiri Mahal and the Shah Jahan Mahal to Man Singh's Palace. These include a beautiful baradan pavilion, delicately executed in a synthesis of Hindu and Islamic architecture. The fort is also renowned for its extensive network of tanks, stepwells and channels that managed a huge quantity of water. Suraj Kund to the west is the largest tank and it is believed that it was water from this kund that cured Suraj Pal of leprosy.⁶⁹

Close to Suraj Kund is the sacred centre of the fort the 9th century Tell ka Mandir, a rectangular Shaivite shrine with a towering 80- feet high shikhara. The temple is unusual in that it has only a garbagriha and no mandapa. The Chaturbhuj Temple, built during the Pratihara dynasty is a monolithic rock-cut temple of Vishnu, while the two Saas Bahu Temples were built in the 11th century and their extravagantly carved images of a dancing Vishnu have survived. The most outstanding sacred structures, however, are the five gigantic Jain Teerthankara images carved into the rock face below the fort. Just 70 years after they were made Babur ordered "these idols be destroyed" and they were mutilated, though they have since been restored with stucco.

Gwalior was historically a centre of the arts, as literature, music, and poetry over the centuries found patronage from among its many ruling dynasties, founding one of India's most renowned schools of music. Outside the fort are the mausoleum of Tansen, the legendary singer at Akbar's court, and of the Sufi saint Ghous Mohammad. Ghous Mohammad's tomb is one of the earliest Mughal buildings in India and has huge hexagonal towers at the corners giving it the shape of an octagon with a high dome that was once tiled. A school was founded within the fort in 1897 and the buildings today resound with the chatter of children.

⁶⁹ Jackson, William Joseph, *Vijayanagara voices: exploring South Indian history and Hindu literature*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd, 2005.

CHAPTER V

MUGHAL FORTS

Purana Qila

Purana Qila established the sixth of the fabled seven cities of Delhi, its founder was the Mughal emperor Humayun, who called it Dinpanah, or 'Refuge of Faith', but the major part of the fort was built by the Sur emperor Sher Shah, whose dramatic growth in power began in Eastern India, demolishing early Mughal ambitions. Humayun had to find refuge in Persia and it was not until ten years after Sher Shah's death that he managed to recapture Delhi in 1555.

After Humayun recaptured it the fort was renamed but it was a hundred years later, after Shah Jahan built the Lal Qila in his new, walled city of Shahjahanabad, that it came to be known as Purana Qila, or Old Fort.

Purana Qila was the citadel of a much larger fortified city. It was located at the edge of the River Yamuna and water was plentiful. Bada Darwaza is the main gate and was built in 1533-34. It is a three-storey structure with two massive, curving bastions made of rubble masonry. A chattri on one of the bastions indicates that the gate would have once been much grander. The gate itself is dressed in deep red sandstone, inlaid with coloured stones and black marble. On the second floor are three openings, two of which have jharokhas⁷⁰, and all are embellished with green and blue glazed tiles.

The northern gate is known as Talaaqi Darwaza or the Forbidden. This gateway has huge bastions with honors similar to Bada Darwaza. The inside of the roof is exquisite, with finely incised plaster work amid medallions, mirrors and panels of blue tiles. To the south of the fort lies the Humayun Gate with a view to his tomb.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Amita Baig, *Forts and Palaces in India*, Om Books International, 2017, pp.150-151

⁷¹ Chitnis.K.N, *op.cit.*, p.101.

It was during Sher Shah's reign that much of the fort's interior was built. Sher Shah's mosque, Qila-e-Kuhna Masjid, dominates Purana Qila, built in 1542, it is located near a well and stands at the centre in alignment with the Bada Darwaza. The central arch is large and extensively decorated with white marble. The outer arches, which include the *sawal* and *jawab* - architectural elements often used to provide balance and symmetry - are of red sandstone and Delhi's famous gray quartzite. The ceiling of the *liwan* (the vaulted portal) is decorated with glazed tiles in blue, green, yellow, and white combining Persian-inspired encaustic tile work and marble mosaic. The *mihrab* here is particularly ornate, carved and inlaid with sandstone and black and white marble. All five bays of the mosque are decorated with carvings and show traces of paintings on the ceilings.

Sher Shah also built Sher Mandal in 1541 south of Qila-e-Kuhna Masjid. This is a squat octagonal tower of red sandstone that is topped with a diminutive dome. Each side of the octagon has a recessed arch decorated with carving and inlay in white marble while the second storey has a chamber with decorative tile work and stucco. It is reached by a steep flight of stairs. It was probably designed to function as a pleasure retreat but when Humayun regained the fort, he converted this double-storey building into his library. A year later in 1556, Humayun tripped and fell down the stairs of Sher Mandal and died of his injuries. His son, Akbar, lived briefly in the fort before shifting his capital to Agra. Purana Qila fell into disrepair but it left a distinguished legacy as the first Mughal fort.⁷²

Lal Qila

“If there be paradise on earth, it is this, it is this” inscribed on the roof of the Diwan-e-Aam in Delhi Lal Qila on Red Fort these words celebrate the Red Fort as the culmination of the great imperial ambitions of the Mughal Empire. Though Shah Jahan built the even more wondrous Taj Mahal a few years later the Red Fort remains the most

⁷² Chitnis. K.N. *op.cit.*, p.166.

important legacy of India's greatest builder. The fort has always represented the heart of India's power, passing from Mughal to British to finally independent India's hands and the nation's. Prime Minister continues to deliver the Independence Day address from the Red Fort's ramparts. The fort also stands at the heart of Shahjahanabad, the seventh city of Delhi that Shah Jahan built which is now known as 'Old Delhi and is one of the most densely inhabited areas today.⁷³

Shah Jahan shifted his capital to Delhi when Agra could no longer handle the scale of the emperor's movements, his army of elephants and horses severely restricted by its narrow streets Delhi offered virgin lands on which to build a fortified city befitting the Shahenshah of Hindustan. This walled city would be Shahjahanabad city of the ruler of the world, the most magnificent the world had seen. On his astrologer's advice, Shah Jahan selected a site just south of Salimgarh (built by Salim Shah in 1546), started on an auspicious date in 1638, and in nine years, the structure was ready. The fort was first called Qila Mubarak Fort of Good Fortune and Shah Jahan moved into it in 1648, the 20th year of his reign. Through the great gate facing the river he held his first durbar amid lavish celebrations lasting several days. Known by many names, including Qila Shahjahanabad, and during the reign of the last emperor of Delhi, Bahadur Shah I, as Olla l-Mualla or the Exalted Fort it became the Red Fort under British occupation.⁷⁴

The Mughal emperor Akbar added a projecting balcony in 1806, which reinforced the tradition of darshan. It was from this balcony that King George V and Queen Mary appeared before the public in 1911, after the great Delhi Durbar.

The Red Fort was conceived and designed on a massive scale. The chief vision was Shah Jahan's, but the architects were two Persians, Ahmad and Hamid-ul-Sar. The huge crenellated ramparts, in perfectly dressed red sandstone, ran along the River Yamuna on one

⁷³ Satish Chandra. *op.cit.* pp.226-355.

⁷⁴ Sharma.S.P, *op.cit.*, pp. 211-280.

side and faced the city of Shahjahanabad on the other. The fort is a rough rectangle, some 3,000 feet long and 1600 feet across. It rises over 60 feet above the river and is surrounded by a broad and deep moat on the side of the city. It presents a spectacular façade and was originally, according to the 17th century European traveller Bernier, surrounded by large gardens full of flowers and shrubs which contrasted with the stupendous walls to produce a beautiful effect. The vast expanse of land between the fort and the city was used to house the cavalry and the retinue of visiting rajas, who never actually lived inside the fort.

Two enormous gates punctuate the fort walls. Lahore Gate is the majestic main access to the new city's central concourse, Chandni Chowk. Aurangzeb later added a barbican for further security, or as Shah Jahan was to lament: "a permanent veil for the bride. Lahore Gate rises three floors, flanked by two octagonal towers with chattris and a panel of little white marble domes between them. This gate leads to the market that is now known Chhatta Bazaar but in Shah Jahan's time was called Meena Bazaar or the Bazaar-e Musakkaf. In the 17th century, the shops along this covered, vaulted arcade catered to the huge population living inside the fort as well as visitors everything from jewels and brocade to furniture was available. Further south Delhi Gate, guarded by two massive stone sculpted elephants, opens towards the bazaar, and the roads from these two entrances lead to the great square court where the Naggar Khana or Drum House would announce the opening of the Diwan e-Aam.⁷⁵

In Khas Mahal, the water channel flowed beneath a marble latticework screen of remarkable delicacy, surmounted by a marble frieze depicting the scales of justice over a crescent and surrounded by the planets. Khas Mahal faces the Diwan-e-Khas and includes the Tasbih Khana where the emperor prayed. Behind it is the Khwabgah or the sleeping chamber of the king, and to the south is a long hall with painted ceilings and walls that was either the tosh khana, (robe chamber), or baithak, (sitting room). Beyond lay more palaces including the

⁷⁵ Sharma.S.P., *op.cit.*, pp.281-337.

palace of Mumtaz Mahal and the royal hamams. The Mussaman Burj was used primarily for the emperor's darshan but also for his own pleasure, such as viewing elephant fights on the river's edge.

Moti Masjid near the hamam was built by Aurangzeb for his private worship. It is a simple structure on the outside, with three bulbous domes rising above the fort's skyline; but has an elaborately carved white marble interior. To the north is Hayat Baksh Bagh, or the 'Life. Bestowing Garden with marble pavilions at each end. A red sandstone pavilion in its central pool was added by Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal emperor, who was tried for treason in this fort after the 1857 rebellion. After that, the fort became a garrison of the British Indian Army and, until recently also of the Indian Army.⁷⁶

Agra Fort

Agra Fort became the seat of the imperial Mughals when Akbar shifted his capital from Lahore to Agra, a city he described as the “emporium of the traffic of the world”. In popular imagination, the Fort is more closely associated with emperor Shah Jahan, who was imprisoned here by his son Aurangzeb and left to die a melancholy death, his days and nights spent gazing at the Taj Mahal, the memorial to his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal.

It was Akbar who built most of the present-day fort, demolishing the existing structure and building a mass fortification in dressed red sandstone, over 70 feet high and 1.5 miles in circumference. It was built in the shape of an expanded bow, its straight side separated from the river Yamuna by a moat. Inside, only a few remain of the “five hundred buildings in the wonderful design of Bengal and Gujarat” recorded by Abdul Fazl, Akbar's court historian. Of these, Delhi gate, Akbar gate and Bengali Mahal was built during the reign of Akbar.

Jahangir and Shahjahan added their own buildings to the Fort. Often by demolishing the earlier ones, creating error in commission of the static sensibilities of three different

⁷⁶ Irwine William, *The Army of the Indian Mughals*, London, 1903, p.165.

Mughal kings. Shahjahan architectural vision shifted from the red sandstone of Akbar's period to finely carved and inlaid marble. He redid several of the sandstone palace into the dainty, richly embellished marble structures. When Agra Fort to the British many of its buildings were destroyed.

The fort appears invincible from outside. It has massive double ramparts interspersed with bastions. Towards the city, there is an additional moat after the first one. The main gate on this side is Delhi Darwaza, a heavily decorated gateway with a kernel displaying the surrender of seven elephants to a mythical beast, symbolising the indestructible power of the Empire. The Magnificat Hathi Pol lies immediately beyond, providing a second layer of entrance. It had to huge sandstone elephants flanking it, which were destroyed by Aurangzeb in an attempt to erase as much as he could of its Hindu features. Akbar Darwaza, renamed Amar Singh Darwaza by Jahangir, was guarded by two barbicans. It is a massive structure with galleries built in tiers, which appear to amplify the size of the gate. Towards the river front is Khizri Darwaza, which once opened onto a year and bathing gods that have been lost due to the river slowly changing its course.

The Fort is spatially organised as city of grand scale. Military facilities bound the outer walls on the city side, securing the part of the forth that once busted with public buildings, markets, and servant quarters. The royal residence lay on the other side with Jahangiri Mahal being the main Zenana. this Alice has yam most perfect synthesis of Hindu and Timurid architecture, it is long halls, arched recesses and valid courtyards all elaborately carved with Islamic as well as Hindu motifs. Constructed around 1570, it is entered through an impressive gateway and a Courtyard that overlooks the river through a curved screen wall. Heavily carved brackets, piers and cross beams still hold remnants of gilded decorations. Almost every surface is ornamented with bats and fruit and floral motifs. Carved elephants

abound, and elaborately adorned doors, windows and lintels create an exquisite space, delicate and immense. It is the most significant surviving building of Akbar's time.

Near the northern entrance is the Diwani-e-Aam or the hall of public audience. The most ingenious aspect of this hall's design is that the throne is approached from the sides rather than from the front. The alignment of the palace is so precise that visitors arriving through the gates under right and left have an uninterrupted view of the seat of the emperor. The raised platform on which the legendary peacock throne or Takht-e-Taoos stands is beautifully inlaid with precious and semi-precious stones. Behind the throne is a pavilion with a delicately carved screen through which women could view court proceedings.

Opposite Diwani-e-Aam and across Courtyard lies the Diwani-e-Khas, the hall of private audience. This is a heavily decorated pavilion, with fine inlay work in precious stones and an ear screen wall at the back. Outside is a terrace with its showy marble throne platform. Between the Diwani-e-Aam and Diwani-e-Khas is the Macchli Bhavan, or the fish, meant for the amusement of the harem. This paradoxical garden with mountains and pools full of fish was looted by Raja Surajmal and transported to his palace Deeg.⁷⁷

Khas Mahal was built by Shah Jahan in his favourite white marble. It was the emperor's personal chamber with three pavilions on the river side and a mountain Courtyard on the other. The central pavilion with its cost or charges is flanked by two Bangalore style qawalis on that have gilded domes. There is a small room with a little niche where, it is believed, women could pass through, the nature's being so narrow that only a woman's slender and could pass through. Khas Mahal overlooks Angoori Bagh, 'the garden of grapes', so called because of the profusion of carvings of grapes. This is a classic char bagh garden and is said to have been inspired by the gardens of Kashmir. On the other side of the garden is there any min masjid built by Aurangzeb to Alok his impressive and father to worship.

⁷⁷ Amita Baig, *op.cit.*, pp.156-161.

Sheesh Mahal is the 'Palace of Mirrors'. It consists of two large pores completely covered with a mica mosaic, embedded in lime. The curvature of the mica is such that candle light is reflected many times. When the hall was lit with candles, every surface came alive in my red lights, casting a magical quality. Sheesh Mahal also had ponds and channels of water running through it, which were connected with the royal baths.⁷⁸

Musamman Burj is an octagonal pavilion with an open pavilion built by Shah Jahan for his wife Mumtaz Mahal. It is enclosed with beautifully carved marble lattice screens to ensure the queen's privacy while she looked out at the river. The burj is surrounded by a way around the that has a marble fountain at the centre and your Courtyard with squares laid out for a game of 50 c a form of backgammon. It was from here that the impression the Shah Jahan spent his last days gazing at the Taj Mahal.

Moti masjid are the 'pearl mosque' is a perfect jump setting the centre of the fourth beyond the diwan-e-Aam, its dome dominating the Skyline. Nagina masjid are the 'Gem mosque' is a private mosque built by Shah Jahan for the ladies of the court. The level below it used to host the Meena Bazaar, market only women could enter. Both the mosques carry Shajahans stamp of white marble.

Akbar son Jahangir shifted his court to Lahore and often stayed in Kashmir, was built exotic pleasure gardens. But Shah Jahan return to Agra and infused a new life into the Fort, a life was effectively snuffed out when the emperor became a prisoner in his own fort. Aurangzeb built an additional wall around the fortifications, but Mughal power had already grown to disease to be revived by brick or stone. Aurangzeb, having proclaimed himself 'Alamgir', king of the universe, in 1658, left Agra for his Deccan campaign in 1682 where is spend the remaining 27 years of his life, and never set foot in Agra again. Agra Fort is today

⁷⁸ Agra Fort- World Heritage Centre, UNESCO.ORG, Archived from the original on 17 July 2010, Retrieved 26 December 2019.

a UNESCO World Heritage site, a testimony to the grand architectural achievements of the Mughal Empire.⁷⁹

Fatehpur Sikri

The most eloquent testament in stone to the great human is division of Mughal Empire Akbar the ‘lost’ city of a Fatehpur Sikri, the new capital Akbar built for his Empire. A mere fifteen years after it was built the city was abundant for lack of water. Akbar went back to Agra but the fort at Fatehpur Sikri still lives, sustained not so much by tourist as by pilgrims and wash it was visiting the shrine of Sufi saint Sheikh Salim Chisti. Salim Chisti had advised Akbar to move his capital here and he would be blessed with sons. And so, it was no sooner than Fatehpur Sikri was built that Salim, later to be Emperor Jahangir, was born to Jodha Bai believed to be the Rajput princess of Amber.⁸⁰

Following his victories in Gujarat in 1572, Akbar order new imperial capital to be built in year Agra with the name Fatehpur ‘city of victory’. The fort was built on a grand scale but the most remarkable feature where the buildings inside, built in an unprecedented architectural synthesis of diverse cultures Akbar love of red sandstone found unbridled expression. Exquisite palace were built for his Prince and his most prized couturier was called navaratnas or nine jewels, and exotic chambers designed for meditation and spiritual and theological debates. Fatehpur Sikri was the crucible of Akbar’s idea of a new faith, Din-e-Ilahi and enlightened and rational synthesis of the universal values of Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity and Zoroastrianism.

Fatehpur Sikri spectacular architecture owes much to the Gujarat craft man Akbar brought with him from his campaign in Gujarat. These craftsman bad masters of carving and decoration, having inherited the rascal from generations of temple builders. The craftsman

⁷⁹ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/255>.

⁸⁰ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/255>.

worked the rich red sandstone, quarried from the area around Sikri, into some of the most delicate work of the buildings ever built in India.

The Diwan-e-Aam, hall of public audience, in Fatehpur Sikri is a large Courtyard facing a family on with innumerable jharokhas, each a combination of an enormous eave and a delicate balcony. The central and much larger jharoka cost. The emperor's throne Beyond this lies the hall of private audience are Diwan-e- Khas. This is probably the most ingenious building in Fatehpur Sikri. From outside, it appears to be huge, two-storey structure but it's actually just a single all with a double height ceiling. Massive Central pillar, with brackets radiating out words supports, the wide, circular platform from where the emperor presided. From this thrown- platform, four bridges of red sandstone connect to a balcony that runs along the upper level of the chamber and was used by the nobles of the court servants and others stood at the lowest level.

A Courtyard paved with red sandstone flags, the panchesi court connects the Diwan-e-Khas with Anup Talav. The legendary musician Tansen is said to have performed on an island in the middle of Anup Talav. A section of the Courtyard is marked with slabs of marble as in a board of panchesi, and it is said that slave girls were used as pawns. Akbar sat at a height directing the movement of his live pieces.⁸¹

Fatehpur Sikri consists of two distinct sets of buildings, demarcating sacred spaces from secular ones. The sacred section is dominated by the jama masjid and is entered through a colossal gate Buland Darwaza, the largest and highest gateway in all Indian forts. Once flanked by two massive stone elephants, the towering gateway rises 176 feet from the ground, it's researched central arch dominating not just the fourth but the entire area. Inscribed on the arch in Islamic calligraphy are the words: 'the world is but a bridge pass over but world no houses on it'.

⁸¹<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/255>.

To the left of the Jama masjid is the tomb of Sheikh Salim chisti, its white marble glistening like A pearl in the vast sandstone Courtyard. Akbar had the shrine built in red sandstone in 1571, but shajahan rebuilt it in white marble. Four carved pillars support a low dome and the walls are intricately carved screen. Next to it is the Jamat Khana, made of red sandstone and also with curved screens and low dome, containing a grave of Islam Khan, a disciple of Salim Chishti. In contrast of the delicacy of these two shrines, the Janma Masjid is spaingly but elegantly carved. The domed ceiling of the mosque still has ttaces of turquoise, mauve, and sea-green decoration.⁸²

The other part of the 4th houses the imperial buildings. Built largely of red sandstone, they surround Anup Talav at the southern end of the courtyard. Akbar's famous library is nowness dafter corner and beyond it are there royal chambers, laid out over a complex network of water channels designed to cool the interiors. The Miriam palace is clearly the finest, embellished with building and a frescoes that it is depicted scenes Firdausi's Persian epic, shahnama. Jodha Bai palace sister largest palace and is also known as Jehangiri Mahal.

As Jodha Bai was Rajput, palace has several Rajput architectural elements that can be said to have been borrowed from the palace at Mandu. The palace is built around your Courtyard with blood chambers on all sides. It has space for a temple where the queen could worship, and a hawa Mahal or wind pavilion where she could enjoy the breeze while remaining secluded from the outside gaze. The two pavilions at other and have sloping roofs covered in blue tiles that are clearly visible from the rest of the Fort.⁸³

⁸² Safvi, Rana (10 December 2017). *The secrets about Fatehpur Sikri. The Hindu*. Retrieved 13 January 2020.

⁸³ Amita Baig, *op.cit.*, pp.162-165.

Panch Mahal

Panch Mahal is a distinctive palace, its five stories tapering as they go up, It consists of 84 pillars, each differently carved and embellished in Hindu and Jain tradition. It was yeh pavilion for Akbar was harem.

At the foot of the hill on which the buildings stood, grow at township, originally a small Hamlet called sakri that was incorporated into the fort and thus the name Fatehpur Sikri. This was the commoners space, containing markets, residence, mosques and temples. The Hiran minar located here marks the grave of Akbar's favourite elephant. Beyond this lay the caravan serai, the polo grounds, and a lake. A mile of fortifications strengthened by eight double-towered gates, protected the short-lived but remarkable City.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Catherine Ella Blanshard Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India, Part I*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p.22.

CONCLUSION

One of the most enduring achievements of Indian civilization is undoubtedly its architecture. Indian architecture, which has evolved through centuries, is the result of socio-economic and geographical conditions. Different types of Indian architectural styles include a mass of expressions over space and time, transformed by the forces of history considered unique to India. As a result of vast diversities, a vast range of architectural specimens have evolved, retaining a certain amount of continuity across history.

Indian architecture, belonging to different periods of history, bears the stamp of respective periods. Though the cities of Indus Valley provide substantial evidence of extensive town planning, the beginnings of Indian architecture can be traced back to the advent of Buddhism in India. It was in this period that a large number of magnificent buildings came up. Some of the highlights of Buddhist art and architecture are the Great Stupa at Sanchi and the rock-cut caves at Ajanta.

With the establishment of Hindu kingdoms in South India, the south Indian school of architecture began to flourish. The most notable achievements of the Pallava rulers were the rock-cut temples of Mahabalipuram and the temples of Kanchipuram. The Chola, Hoysala and Vijayanagar rulers also did remarkable job in the field of architecture. The temples at Thanjavur, Belur and Halebidu bear testimony to the architectural excellence of the South Indian rulers.

In north India, there developed a new a different style of architecture. This was called as the Nagara style architecture. In central India, the Chandela rulers built a magnificent temple complex at Khajuraho. With the coming of the Muslim rulers, there developed a new architectural style in India- the Indo-Islamic architecture. The Indo-Islamic style was neither strictly Islamic nor strictly Hindu. The architecture of the

medieval period can be divided into two main categories. They are the Delhi or the Imperial Style and the Mughal Architecture.

It was followed by a new style of architecture that developed as a result of colonization of India. This style of architecture came to be called as Indo-Saracenic. The Indo-Saracenic architecture combined the features of Hindu, Islamic and western elements. The colonial architecture exhibited itself through institutional, civic and utilitarian buildings such as post offices, railway stations, rest houses and government buildings.

Preservation of the Forts

The term art conservation denotes the maintenance and preservation of works of art and their protection from future damage and deterioration. Art restoration, by contrast, denotes the repair or renovation of artworks that have already sustained injury or decay and the attempted restoration of such objects to something approaching their original undamaged appearance. The techniques and methods of art conservation and restoration go hand in hand and became the province of trained professionals in the 20th century. They have become an increasingly important aspect of the work not only of museums but also of civic authorities and all those concerned with works of art, whether artists, collectors, or gallery goers. The methods of art restoration used in earlier periods were closely linked to and limited by the art production techniques known at the time. Advances in science and technology and the development of conservation as a profession in the 20th century have led to safer and more effective approaches to studying, preserving, and repairing objects. Modern conservation practice adheres to the principle of reversibility, which dictates that treatments should not cause permanent alteration to the object. Art conservation has become an important tool of research; it is standard practice among professional conservators to document treatments with photographs and written report.

Over the last three decades certainly, but more realistically over the last years, the fate of the great forts and palaces of India has become increasingly vulnerable. Today governments fight to protect the heritage in a system which no longer validates traditional ownership. With the adoption of colonial systems of protection. India's massive resource of monuments went into foster care. The Archeological Survey of India, now 150 years old, old the responsibility for protecting of India's heritage along with state departments of archaeology, overall no more than 6000 sites. But in reality much of India's heritage lies outside their protective fencing, fighting a battle against extinction.

The great forts and palaces of India once restored need to be celebrated as sentinels of India's ancient history, we need to engage with them in today's context; no longer conquered and rebuilt, but restored as the memory banks of valour, tempestuous battles; great beauty and often great cruelty, Knowing that each fort and palace provides a clue to what defines the nation today; that they are the building blocks of Bharat, there must be paradigm shift from providing mere protection to an affirmative commitment. These sites must provide the canvas for scholarship, for a greater understanding of our history, expanding the frontiers of knowledge, and providing crucial records of our time.

New mechanisms for management must be charted. Partnership in management is essential if the forts and palaces are to become vibrant destinations. Expansion of tourism will be both challenging and constructive ensuring these sites are preserved in a new avatar, celebrating the past in the present. Indian culture requires its heritage to be infused with life to make it relevant. Each fort and palace will present a unique set of solutions, all of which must be embraced. Ultimately restoring custodianship to the community and the stakeholders will ensure sustainability; it is a partnership waiting to happen.

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Unsung Heroes of the first war of Indian Independence

Project submitted to

St.Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi

affiliated to

Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

By

ANITHA.G

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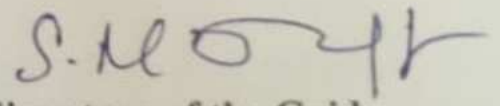
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project entitled "**Unsung Heroes of the First war of Indian independence**", submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History and is a work done during the year 2020-2021 by G. Anitha a bonafide student of the Department of History, St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi.

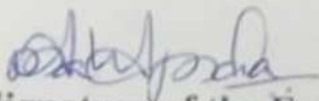


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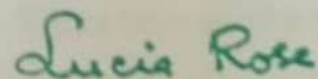
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project entitled "Unsung Heroes of the First War of Indian Independence" submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History, is my original work and it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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INTRODUCTION

“Aj shahidon ne hai tumhein, Ahle vatan Ialkara.

Todo ghulami ki zanjeerein, Barsao angara

- Azimullah Khan

Today the martyrs call out, to you, the people of this land, break the shackles of slavery, rain fiery embers...

The confrontation with the West forced India to make a critical examination of its traditions values and ideas, customs and institutions and to repudiate or remould such among them as appeared unreasonable or unwholesome. This was the destructive aspect of the impact. On the other hand, the challenge called forth a response from the unfathomable depths of the Indian consciousness which amounted to a reassertion of the uniqueness of the basic principles of Indian life principles which for thousands of years had inspired the conduct of the individual and society, which constituted the ethos of Indian culture, its individuality and continuity through the ages.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, when the dawn of modernism was just breaking on the horizon, old India was profoundly disturbed by the prospect, for it looked upon the onset of the Western imperialism as a menace to its age long culture its economy, polity and religion. In order to avoid this fatality, the old order reacted violently but ineffectually. The earlier uprisings were isolated and uncoordinated, and they culminated in the tragic Revolt of 1857.

Aims and Purpose of the Study

The Unsung Heroes of 1857 Revolt reveal self sacrificing sons who carried on the mission of freedom of the country and made the sustenance and continuance of the British

Empire impossible and forced them to go lock stock they live and die so that after them others must live fuller and better lives than they would have otherwise done.

Objectives of the Study

- To reveal the Unsung heroes of Great Revolt of 1857.
- To highlight the people participation in the revolt.
- To inspire the future generation about the martyrs.

Sources of Study

Different sources have been used in this study. Source materials have been classified into primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are mainly based on newspapers, journals and reports . The secondary sources are mainly books related to 1857 revolt.

Methodology

The methodology adopted in this study is analytical and descriptive method. The source materials have been critically analysed and investigated. The descriptive method is used in the presentation of the study in order to make the project understandable to the readers.

Chapterization

The first chapter “Background of 1857 Revolt” enumerates the condition of Indians on the eve of 1857 Revolt.

The second chapter “Proclamations” elucidated the Proclamations of great leaders and the response of the people.

The third chapter “Unsung Heroes of 1857 Revolt” highlights the unknown heroes and their role in revolt.

The fourth chapter “Loyalty VS Disloyalty analyses the loyalty of the people and disloyalty of the Rajput princes.

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND OF 1857 REVOLT

The treatment of the native races of India by European officials, according to Ball, was “such as no people of spirit would submit to it for an hour”. He quotes the testimony of an Indian writer, who observed : “The great majority of English officers both civil and military, are guilty of using bad language to their subordinates, dependents, servants, to the sepoys, and to the people of the country in general”. He found that a gulf yawned between the rulers and the ruled which became daily yet more wide and impracticable. This result was, moreover, sustained by the hauteur, and insolence of tone and manner, assumed by the civil and military servants of the Company in their dealings with even educated and wealthy natives, which naturally prevented any approach to cordiality or confidence on either side.

Ill-treatment of the Indians

Another cause was the change of British attitude towards the Indians. This change was the result of England’s success in the Napoleonic wars, growth of prosperity proceeding from the Industrial Revolution, spread of religious movements like Methodism and Evangelicalism, and improvement in social manners and moral standards. All these combined to stimulate Englishman’s sense of superiority over others and aggravated national pride.

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the hauteur, and insolence of tone and manner, assumed by the civil and military servants of the Company in their dealings with even educated and wealthy natives, which naturally prevented any approach to cordiality or confidence on either side.

Lord Stanley, the Secretary of State for India, speaking to the young cadets at Addiscombe College on the 10th December, 1858, referred to “the overweening and offensive assumption of superiority” by the Europeans in India.

As early as 1818, Munro had written to the Governor-General Lord Hastings: “Foreign conquerors have treated the natives with violence, and oftener with great cruelty, but none has treated them with so much scorn as we; none has stigmatized the whole people as unworthy of trust, as incapable of honesty, and as fit to be employed only where we cannot do without them. It seems to be not only ungenerous, but impolitic to debase the character of a people fallen under our dominion”.

“The main evil of the system is the degraded state in which we hold the natives hold superstitions and prone to falsehood and corrupt. In well-meaning zeal for their welfare, we shudder at the idea of committing to men so depraved any share in the administration of their country. We confine them to the lowest offices with scarcely a bare subsistence, and even these are left in their hands from bare necessity, because Europeans are utterly incapable of filling them. We treat them as an inferior race of beings... We reduce them to this abject state and then look upon them with disdain as men unworthy of high station”.¹

The Marquis of Chanricarde, while discussing in the House of Lords in February 1857, the system under which the Government of India was administered, stated: “The truth was, that the whole system by which India was governed tended to degrade the natives, and to render them cunning, sordid and deceitful.

¹ 1857 *Essays from Economic and Political Weekly*, Orient Longman Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2008, p.66.

British Contempt of Hindu Religion and Customs

British contempt for the Indian people extended to their religion and culture also. The Christian missionaries were most vociferous in decrying Hinduism in all its aspects – philosophical and popular – and many officers, both civil and military, considered it their duty to spread the gospel of Jesus in order to save the pagans of India from perdition; because of their woeful ignorance of Indian religious systems. In fact, William Bentinck, while expressing his own opinion on Abbe Dubois' work, remarked: "The result of my own observation during my residence in India is that the Europeans generally know little or nothing of the customs and manners of the Hindus. We are all acquainted with some prominent marks and facts, which all who run may read; but their manner of thinking, their domestic habits and ceremonies, in which circumstances a knowledge of the people consists, is, I fear, in great part wanting to us. We understand very imperfectly their language.... We cannot see in their houses and with their families."

Michael Edwardes points out: "In the eighteenth century, intercourse between Indians and English was between equals, between country powers. But as the century closed, the tensions that were to lead to the Mutiny of 1857 appeared on the surface. As the English became conscious of their powers they became more aloof and inaccessible, and that necessary concomitant of an imperial government, contempt for an inferior and conquered people, shows more and more as a characteristic of the ruling class. The British lived in almost complete isolation from the people over whom they ruled. They paid no heed to Napier's advice, namely, "give them share in all things until we blend with them and become one nation."

The political and economic grievances of the various sections of the people were the main cause of the upheaval. The threat to religion was an additional and powerful source of

perturbation, for the Hindus regarded religion as the mainspring of their life, the foundation of their being. Thrown out of his religion the Hindu or the Muslim was anchorless, rudderless, and without support. Nothing could be more frightening to him than a plunge from known and familiar surroundings into an unknown and unfamiliar world.

Propaganda of Christian Missions

Syed Ahmad Khan pointed out that the social measures of the Government, the activities of the missionaries, and the statements of government officials, combined to create the impression that the rulers intended the conversion of the people of India to Christianity.

The propaganda of the Christian missions was on the increase since the permission to settle in India in 1813 was granted to them. Their preachers were seen in the market places and at the fairs often with police escort. So wrote Sir Syed: "The missionaries too had introduced a new mode of preaching the gospel. Religious tracts containing questions and answers now began to be printed and distributed among the people... Of their own accord they used to frequent Mohammedan mosques and Hindu temples, as well as fairs, for the purpose of preaching, to which no one dared object for fear of the authorities. In certain districts, moreover, they were even allowed a chaprasi or policeman from the thanah (police office) to attend them. These person did not content themselves with merely preaching the Gospel, but used to allude to pious men and sacred places of other religions in a highly disrespectful manner, which gave much offence and pain to their hearers, and served to sow in the hearts of the people the seeds of disaffection to the Government.

Among the measures regarded offensive were the abolition of Sati, remarriage of Hindu widows, recognition of the title of a convert to Christianity to ancestral property, enforcement of a common mess for prisoners belonging to different castes, non-observance of caste distinctions

on railways, recruitment of sepoys on the condition that they would serve across the seas, assumption of the management of temples like the shrine of Jagannath at Puri. All these measures may be justified on the ground of morality and administrative efficiency; some of them actually received the approval of enlightened Indians. But they deeply wounded the feelings of the orthodox. As Indians had no say in these decisions they regarded them as impositions from above and enforced by the might of the foreign power.

The new system of education affected the monopoly of the Pandit and the Maulavi in the sphere of education, and introduced ideas into the minds of the young which brought the beliefs and practices of the Indian religions into contempt. As the Christian missionaries wielded much influence in the organization of education, the new institutions became suspect as centres of conversion.

Grievances of the Sepoys

The sense of wrong which rankled in the minds of the upper classes was shared by the Indian sepoys of the Bengal army, a majority of whom were Brahmans and Rajputs. But they had special grievances of their own too. Among them were unsatisfactory conditions of service, encroachments upon religious customs, and offences against their dignity and self-respect.

So far as conditions of service were concerned, the questions of promotion and pay were most serious, because they touched the very basis of their service and loyalty. In the earlier days, when the Company was fighting in the South for its very existence against the French rivals and the Deccan princes, Indian soldiers could rise to the position of officers in Independent command of European and Indian troops. After the conquest of Bengal, the influx of British officers and the enforcement of the policy of anglicization by Cornwallis, the door of such promotions was completely shut. The Indians were reduced to the dead level of rank and file with no prospect of

rise to the status of commissioned officers. For soldiers of the upper classes who had provided commanders of the highest rank to the Mughal government and to the armies of the Indian chiefs, this was a humiliating reminder of Indians' subordinate status under the British.

Pay and Emoluments

The question of pay was more complicated. In the first place, the absolute rates of pay were low, and, secondly, they compared very unfavourably with the emoluments of the European soldiers. The Indian soldier belonged to highly respected groups in society. He felt great pride in his profession and entertained high ethical and commanded little respect in his own society and his morals were far from exemplary. The disparity between the two was striking and the difference of the salary galling. But although there might have been some justification for the different scales of pay and allowances on the ground of their respective standards of living, there was absolutely no excuse for the uncertainties and vagaries which affected their pay and allowance after every war. Already Sir Henry Lawrence had pointed this out, when he wrote: "Of all the wants of the Army, perhaps the greatest want is a simple pay code, unmistakably showing the pay of every rank, in each branch, under all circumstance.

Allowances

The withdrawal of allowances after the conquest and annexation of a province and then posting the same troops in those very territories on reduced salaries, was naturally a very irritating measure. For the poor sepoy received Rs. 7 a month as salary, out of which he spent Rs. 3.8 on food and another Rs. 2 to 2.8 on other necessities of life, and with difficulty saved a rupee or a rupee-and-a-half. To the poorly paid sepoys the main attraction of service at a distance from his home was the prospect of a little additional income which he could remit to his family; but this was denied to him.

Discontent

To this ever-present source of simmering discontent during peace time has to be added the shock administered to the religious scruples of the Brahman and Rajput soldiers by the ill-conceived and inconsiderate decision to send them outside India to fight in Afghanistan and Burma in violation of their contract. To live among Muslims and to take food and water from them was totally repugnant to their ancient customs, and to cross the seas tantamount to abjuration of their Dharme. Either step involved loss of caste, the sheet-anchor of their social existence.

His financial anxieties and religious provocations thus inclined the sepoy to believe the stories circulated regarding British intentions to convert Indians to Christianity. Sir Henry Lawrence reported to Lord Canning that a Jarnadar of the Oudh artillery who was a man of good character, was convinced that “for ten years past Government has been engaged in measures for the forcible or rather fraudulent conversion of all the natives.”

The Greased Cartridge

The part played by the greased cartridges in bringing about the revolt is unduly exaggerated. Major Bontein, commanding the depot of musketry at Dum Dum, testified that even though the Indian soldiers were greatly agitated about the greased cartridges, when he paraded them, “at least two-thirds of the detachment immediately stepped to the front, including all the native commissioned officers. In a manner perfectly respectful they very distinctly stated their objections to the present method of preparing cartridges for the new rifled musket.” General Low, Member of the Supreme Council, writing about the Irregular Infantry of Oudh, stated: “It appears to me, that probably the main body of this regiment in refusing to bite these cartridges, did so refuse, not from any feeling of disloyalty or disaffection towards the Government or their

officers, but from an unfeigned and sincere dread... that the act of biting them would involve a serious injury to their caste and to their future respectability of character.

British Contempt of Hindu Religion and Customs

In 1857, Barrackpore near Calcutta was a big military cantonment having four regiments of native infantry assembled in a brigade. Since early that year great resentment was prevailing amongst the Indian troops for being forced to use cartridges for the newly introduced Enfield rifle, which were greased with a substance known to contain the fat of cows and pigs.

The cartridges and the grease supplied to the troops at Barrackpore and in other stations in the Bengal Presidency were prepared in the Arsenal at Fort William, Calcutta.² When Colonel A. Abbot, Inspector General of Ordnance and Magazines, came to know the objections, he wrote on 29th January, "I enquired the Arsenal as to the nature of the composition that had been used and found it was precisely that which the instructions received from the Court of Directors (England) directed to be used – viz., mixture of tallow and bees wax...." He suggested the use of wax and oil as a substitute to the tallow till the grease of unobjectionable quality was substituted. Consequently powers were conferred on the Commanding Depot of Musketry at Dum Dum and Commanding Officers of other units to purchase Ghee, wax, oil and other prescribed ingredients from the hazar instead of obtaining grease from the Ordnance sources. But then it was found that the objection was not merely to the composition used in greasing the cartridges, but to the composition of the paper also with which the cartridges for the new rifles were made up.

The Regulation existing at that time for loading the firelock or rifle musket by the sepoys, stated:

² *Bhatia, H.S., op.cit.*, p.18.

“First bring the cartridge to the mouth, holding it between the fore-finger and thumb with the ball in the hand, and bite off the top; elbow close to the body”.

The apprehension of the Indian troops about the composition of the grease which they were required to apply to the cartridges and the wax paper which every sepoy, while loading his rifle, was to bite it off, originated by the remarks of an OrdnanceKhalasi employed in the Calcutta Arsenal. The Khalasi asked a Brahmin Sepoy for some water from his lota but the latter refused to give the water due to reasons of caste. There upon the Khalasi said, “You will soon loose your caste, as were long you will have to bite cartridges covered with the fat of pigs and cows”. The remarks spread like a wild fire amongst the Indian troops everywhere. Describing the situation and feelings of the native soldiers at Barrackpore, Major General J.B. Hearsey Commanding the Bengal Presidency Division in his report dated 11th February 1857 to the Government of India, said:

Giving his version of the origin of the trouble, Maj. General Hearsey wrote, “A sepoy from one of the regiments (Dum Dum) was walking to his choka to prepare his food with his lota full of water. He was met by a low-caste Khalasi. The sepoy, a Brahmin, refused, saying – “I have scoured my lota; you will defile it by your touch”. The Khalasi rejoined – “You think much of your caste but wait a little, the Suheb-logue will make you bite cartridges soaked in cow and pork fat, and then where will your caste be”. General Hearsey added, “The sepoy made this speech known amongst his comrades at Dum Dum: the report was not long in travelling to this (Barrackpore) and other stations”.

The repurcussions to the belief in the kinds of the native troops that their religion and caste were being interfered with, were serious. Several European officers’ thatched houses and the telegraphy bungalow at Barrackpore were burnt by incendiaries. On the night of 5th February

1857 a secret meeting was held after the eight o'clock roll call at the parade ground where about three hundred native sepoy of different regiments who had their heads tied up with cloths leaving only a small part of the face exposed, assembled. There the question of killing the Europeans and plundering the Cantonment was discussed.³ But the information leaked out through a native officer who was present at the meeting. Emissaries were then sent out from Barrackpore to Berhampore where on 26th February night, Indian sepoy of various regiments stationed there gathered in a deserted tank and took oath to protect their religion and caste even at the cost of their lives. Consequently inspite of strict orders, the native sepoy totally refused to accept cartridges having a composition of cow and pig fat.

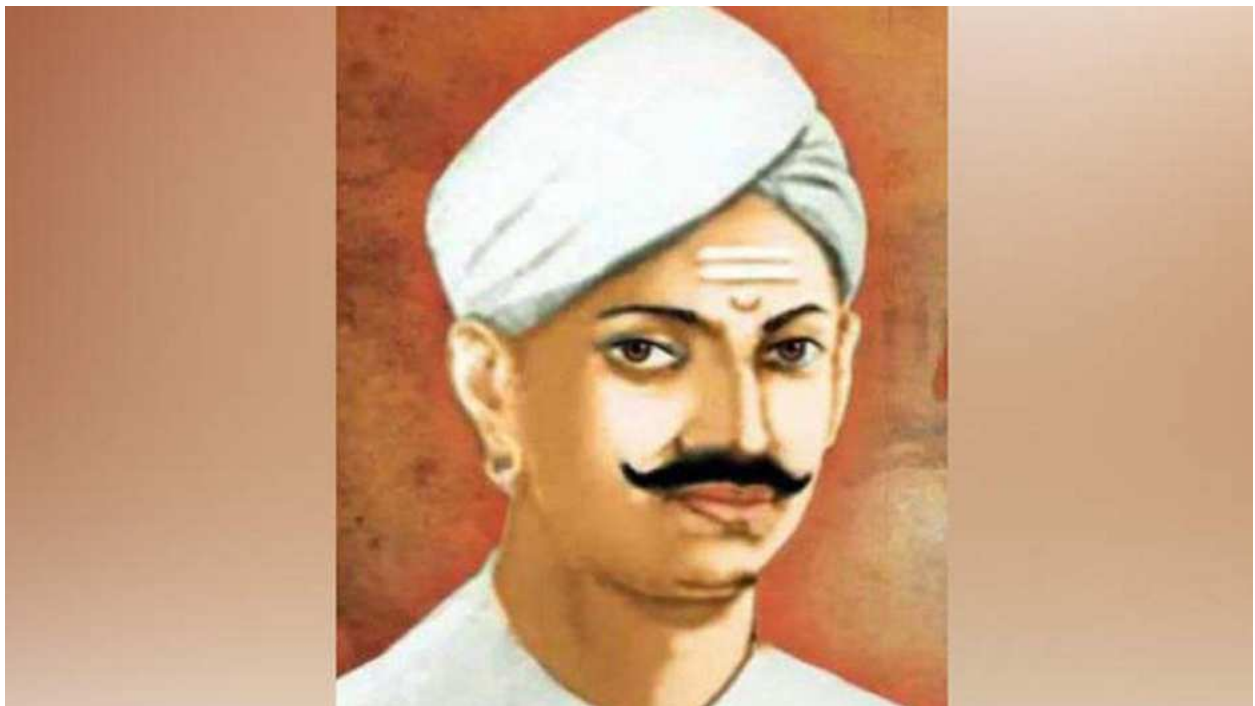
But at Barrackpore on Sunday, the 29th March, 1857 was the first violent manifestation of the deep dissatisfaction towards the ruling Britishers. So far it was confined to presenting applications or meeting in deputations but on that day at three o'clock afternoon a young Brahmin sepoy named Mangal Panday of 34th Native Infantry Regiment suddenly appeared before the Quarter Guard armed with his musket which he took out for cleaning from bells-of-arms and a sword and ordered the bugler to sound the bugle for calling the sepoy to assemble. He declared in a loud and firm voice his intention to die for his religion and said that he would kill any European he would come across. He exhorted his fellow sepoy to join him in this religious war against the foreigners, saying "Nika lao, pultun; nikalaohamarasath". Great excitement prevailed in the camp and some shouts were raised against the use of the obnoxious grease and the cartridges. Soon after the British Sergeant-Major arrived on the scene and wanted to apprehend Mangal Panday but no native sepoy would come forward to help him. Mangal Panday dressed regimentally but with his dhotee took an aim and fired on the Sergeant but missed. There upon the sergeant ran for his safety and took shelter behind the Quarter Guard.

³ *Shodhak A Journal of Historical Research (Vol.XXXVIII), op.cit., p.95.*

Meanwhile Lt. Baugh, adjutant, came riding up to the front. Mangal Panday presented his piece and fired, wounding the horse which fell. At this moment a sepoy Sheikh Paltoo came forward and helped Lt. Baugh to get clear of his horse. The adjutant then pulled out a pistol from his holster and saying – “That man will kill me, he is loading again” rushed towards Mangal Panday. The Sergeant – Major and Sheikh Paltoo followed him. He fired at Mangal Panday but missed him. On that Mangal Panday drew his sword and attacked the adjutant. A sharp hand to hand conflict ensued in which Mangal Panday faced two assailants, the adjutants, the adjutant and the Sergeant-Major. He fought desperately and wounded them both severely. Both the Europeans fell on the ground and another blow from the Tutwar of Mangal Panday might have despatched them if Sheikh Paltoo, himself injured, had not seized him round the waist with his left hand and averted further attacks. Seeing this, Jamadar Iswaree Panday, the Guard Commander and his men abused Sheikh Paltoo and said that if he did not leave Mangal Panday go, they would shoot him. Both the wounded Europeans then slowly stood up and retreated quietly, several men of the Quarter Guard following and beating them with the buttend of their muskets.

Soon after Lt. Col. Wheeler, Commanding the 34th Regiment arrived on the spot and ordered the Guard Commander to capture Mangal Panday alive or dead. But the men would not advance. Then Brigadier Grant, Commanding at Barrackpore arrived followed by Major General Hearsey, commanding the Bengal Presidency Division, and his two sons, both Army Captains at that time. Mangal Panday after freeing himself from the hold of Sheikh Paltoo, reloaded his musket and stood there with musket in one hand and sword in the other, determined to challenge the might of the British power and for protection of his religion. No order or appeal could dissuade him to break his vow to drive out the foreigners from the sacred soil of India. He called upon his fellow sepoys to join him in this holy war against Feringees and for protection of their

religion. Reinforced by the presence of several European officers, General Hearsey ordered the guard men to load their rifles and advance towards Mangal Panday, saying that he himself would shoot with his pistol anybody disobeying the order. All the European Officers and the guard sepoy then moved towards Mangal Panday who instantly changed his mind and instead of firing on the advancing column which included his Indian colleagues also, shot himself through the chest and collapsed with his sword under him. The resultant wound although serious did not kill him.



Mangal Panday

Trial

He was immediately removed to the Quarter Guard of Her Majesty 53rd Regiment where he was subjected to brutal treatment in order to find out his accomplices and organised plot if any to drive out the Britishers from India. On the 4th April, to a question by Major W.A. Cooke, Field officer of the week, Mangal Panday replied, “I acted on my own free will. I expected to die”. He was asked frequently if he would give up the names of any connected with the occurrence, but he refused. Dr. T. B. Reid, Asst. Surgeon, 53rd Regiment under whose charge he was treated him sympathetically. The Doctor admired his courage, patriotism and forbearance and tried to help him on the day of his court martial. When asked to render the fitness certificate on 6th April, Dr. Reid wrote, “Sepoy Mangal Panday has not improved his health since he came under my charge; he has been gradually becoming weaker, and is now much debilitated.”⁴ The wound also presents an unhealthy appearance”. But immediately after that another Doctor James Allen, Asst. Surgeon 34th Regiment, Native Infantry certified that “Mangal Panday sepoy, No. 1446, 5th Company, 34th Regiment, Native Infantry, is in a fit state to undergo his trial this day”.

On the same day he was brought before a standing Native Court Martial presided over by Subedar-Major Jawahar Lal Tiwari and with fourteen native officers as members, for trial on two charges of Mutiny and Violence against his superior officers. Five witnesses including Lt. Col. Wheeler who acted as the Prosecutor also and Sheikh Paltoo the only Indian witness, gave evidence. Mangal Panday, although grown very weak due to his wound, kept up his composure throughout. He declined to cross-examine the prosecution witnesses. When called on for his defence he was reported to have said, “I did not know who I wounded and who I did not,” and added “I have no evidence”. The trial lasted for only one day and on the same day i.e. 6th April

⁴ Bhatia, H.S., *op.cit.*, p.200.

1857, the court found Mangal Panday guilty of both charges and after examining his record of service which showed him good in all respects during his military service of seven years, two months and nine days, sentenced him 'to suffer death by being hanged by the neck until he be dead'. The death sentence was approved and confirmed by Maj. General Hearsey on 7th April and the execution was fixed to take place on the next morning at half past five o'clock on the brigade ground in presence of all the troops off duty at the station.

In the dark cell of the 53rd European Regiment Quarter Guard lay on the ground Mangal Panday, a young sepoy of twenty-six years, weak in bodily strength but strong in spirit, determined to sacrifice his life for the sake of his religion and country. Unmindful of the severe pain, the ghastly wound gave him and the death sentence already pronounced, the first Indian, who took up arms and revolted against the British rulers thought over the helplessness of his country men. He remembered back the year of 1824 when in that year on the same parade ground, where he would be hanged, were slaughtered hundreds of unarmed native sepoys of 47th Regiment for their crime of petitioning the British authorities that they should not be sent by sea for service in Burma. Then his thought turned to his colleague Sepoy Hira Lal Tiwari, who had since absconded, who struck both the adjutant and sergeant-major with the butt of his musket. "What will happen to him and to Jernadar Iswaree Panday and other men of his regiment 1". He whispered to himself. Only a week back on 31st March, 1857 the 19th Regiment stationed at Behrampore was brought to Barrackpore and disbanded and all the men sent to their homes. "Would the same thing happen to his Regiment also for the second time?" "Only a few days ago we the Indian sepoys of the various units in the station were not permitted to celebrate the Holi festival together. Are we slaves in our own land?" protested Mangal Panday lying alone on the ground in the small dark room on the eve of his martyrdom.

At that time suddenly a storm started blowing. It soon grew into a tempest which uprooted trees, thatched roofs and tents and caused much, damage to the buildings. It was accompanied by a violent outbreak of thunder and lightning as if nature was very angry with the intended hanging of a patriot. It also indicated the stormy days which were to follow the execution of Sepoy Mangal Panday. Waves of the Ganga flowing nearby also became most turbulent and the sky turned red as if with wrath. Confirming the outbreak of this sudden and unprecedented tempest on the evening of 7th April, 1857, Maj General Hearsey wrote in a letter, “The 84th Queen’s arrived at Barrackpore from Chinsurah at 6 p.m. on 7th evening during a most violent storm. I kept them on board the steamers and when the storm had passed over at about midnight, the cops was moved upto camp”.

Early morning on 8th April 1857, Mangal Panday offered his prayers to the Almighty for the liberation of his countrymen and his thanks giving for the role allotted to him to be the pioneer in the armed struggle against the British rulers. Meanwhile all the men of the Native brigade and all other European and Native troops stationed at Barrackpore were drawn up on parade. Sepoy Mangal Panday was marched under heavy escort to the gallows. Although very weak, he walked steadily to the place of execution and even at the gallows he did not show any sign of nervousness. Rather a sign of satisfaction of some achievement was lit on his face. After the execution the columns of the Native infantry were advanced close to the gallows to have a close look at a man whom the British rulers condemned to death for being a mutineer but who, for his countrymen, became the first martyr of the 1857 Great Uprising.

CHAPTER II

PROCLAMATIONS

The initiative in the premature uprising after martyrdom of Mangal Pande, did undoubtedly lie with the soldiers but the various outbreaks at Meerut, Delhi, Lucknow, Bareilly, Jhansi, Kanpur, Varanasi, Jagdishpur, areas of Jharkhand, Patna, Arra, Neemuch, Nasirabad, Kota and Ajmer show that this was a people's movement born out of a widespread dissatisfaction and sense of grievance. In the princely states of Rajputana people were against the British. They revolted but the Britishers with the help of the Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur forces controlled the situation. It has been established that women at Meerut instigated the sepoys and aroused the masses. The volunteer force at Delhi did commendable work. At various places the zamindars rose en masse. Hindus and Muslims joined hands in the uprising at all the places. At Lucknow, proclamations in Hindi, Urdu and Persian heralded the outburst of a popular successful uprising which later on resulted in the crowning of an independent boy king who continued to reign in defiance of the might of the British forces for a period of nine months i.e. from June 1857 to March 1858. In Rohilkhand, Nawab Khan Bahadur Khan – a Government pensioner-established an independent principality and ruled for a period of 11 months. Kunwar Singh, Tantia Tope and Rani of Jhansi obtained remarkable successes against the English and carried on prolonged and vigorous campaigns. All the leaders of the movement – big and small, Hindus or Muslims were swayed by one common ideal to drive the foreigner out of India, and the appeal to the masses was characterised by a remarkable and gratifying unanimity of approach.

Many of these appeals and proclamations have been discovered and those were published in full by Government in the first volume in the History of Freedom entitled Source material of the History of Freedom Struggle in Uttar Pradesh in August 1957. These documents have been collected from the U.P. Government Secretariat Record Room and the

contemporary English newspapers. At that time only their English translations were available although vigorous efforts were made to trace the original documents. The translations are at places defective and vague but on the whole they reveal the true spirit behind the struggle. Apart from appealing generally to Hindus and Muslims alike to join together in a common uprising against the foreign government, the proclamations emphasise the political, economic, social and religious grievances of the masses under the company's rule. In Rajasthan N.R. Khadgawat's *Rajasthan's Role in the Struggle of 1857* was published in 1957. This publication was for a purpose so peoples participations could not be highlighted in the way it could have been. Indian Council of Historical Research initiated a project towards of freedom movement in India.¹

In the proclamation quoted above Hindus and Muslims have been exhorted to pick out local leaders and work under them. It is this popular aspect of the rising which was very aptly summed up by Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad in his presidential address read at the 31st session of the Indian Historical Records Commission at Mysore. He says, "What happened was that in the course of 100 years, the Indian people developed a distaste for the Company's rule and gradually realised that power had been captured by a foreign race. As this realization became widespread, the conditions were created for an outburst which was due not to the conspiracy of a few individuals or groups but growing discontent of the entire people.

Proclamation of Bahadur Shah

The most significant of all proclamations is that of Bahadur Shah which was issued on 25th August 1857. Delhi was besieged by the English forces and the defence of the city was becoming weaker day by day. It was essential to booster up the morale of the people in general and the inhabitants of Delhi in particular. The document was published in the Delhi

¹*Shodhak A Journal of Historical Research, (Vol.XXXVIII), op.cit.,p.65.*

Gazette, 1857 and was reproduced by the 'Friends of India', published from Serampur in its issue of October 7, 1858. The proclamation reminded the zamindars of the oppressive revenue policy of the British and the merchants of the various taxes and tolls to which they were subjected; it sought to arouse the public servants against the racial discrimination practised by the British; it appealed to the artisans, the pandits, the faqirs and all other learned persons. It was hailed by the contemporary press under the heading 'The Delhi Millennium' with the following comments: "The Delhi Gazette" published a most valuable contribution to the history of the rebellion. It is the first manifesto (in the European sense) published in India, the first step to stir up the people by promises unconnected with religion. It is in the form of a proclamation issued by the King of Delhi dated 25th August 1857, to the people of Hindustan. The grievances of each class are specified, and a remedy promised if they would but fight boldly for the old regime. It is scarcely conceivable that such a document can be wholly without foundation, that intriguers plotting for a throne should promise reforms they knew were not desired, guarantee the removal of grievances they knew were not there: And yet if these were indeed the changes for which the Indian people yearned, how the Anglo-Indians mistook their temper and their wants. The declaration that the land tax was oppressive and ought to be lowered was only to be expected. Leaders who appeal to the populace, from Jack Code to Mr. Cobden, have always promised cheap bread and lower rents. The promise, too, that every zamindar should be absolute on his domain, was but natural from one who knew what we did not know, that the feudal aristocracy was still strong. That's why Suraj Mal Mishran wrote to The Zamindars letters after letters to rose against the British.

Proclamation of Miroya Ferony Shah Shahyada

A very significant proclamation was issued on 3rd Rujjab 17th February 1858 by Mirza Feroz Shah Shahzada. Giving a list of fourteen main grievances, the prince exhorted the

people in most touching words, “Oh Hindoostani brethren!” You have heard what measures these have resolved to carry out. You must now wash your hands, and becoming their enemies exert yourselves in exterminating them for the sake of your religion and of your lives. Through God’s grace we shall be victorious... Let it be known that the only inducement to enter into these plots, is the call of our ancient religion. Therefore the proclamation is distributed alike among Mahommedans and Hindus and let all those to whom God has granted determination stake their lives and property and joining us, who rise for our faith obtain happinesses in the world and in that to come.² Therefore God orders all who may receive this ishtihar to aid us, the old and infirm by their prayers, the rich by their contributions, and the hale and vigorous by devoting their lives.

Proclamation

- The chiefs subject to the king of Oudh and Nawab of Bareilly must join without first obtaining the permission of sovereign, because they are doing all they can to destroy (bury) the Kafirs, and if they are abandoned, the Nazorines will be strengthened.
- Let zeal for religion alone be the motive which prompts those who determine to join me, not any wordly aspiration, that they may obtain everlasting rewards, besides obtaining to great dignity and rank in a worldly sense when our power is consolidated.
- The reason of the delay there has been in burying the English, is that the commands of God have been disregarded in as much as the soldiers have wickedly put women and children to death, and have, without the orders of their leaders, given themselves upto loot in such a way that they generally convert

² Biswamoy Pati, *The 1857 Rebellion*, Oxford University Press, 2007, p.38.

victory into defeat and the common people have been much oppressed. When you have rectified these faults, you will succeed as I have promised you.

- Great and small will all be on an equality in this army because all brethren are equal when they are fighting for their religion. On such an occasion it is not permitted that worldly means alone should be made use of”.

The proclamation lays down clearly and in detail the plan of the fighters for independence. They knew that they could not beat the superior forces of the British, their siege trains, and their artillery but they were confident that the united efforts of all Indians would undoubtedly crown the struggle with success. The proclamation also condemns the atrocities committed by the sepoys and stresses the need for avoiding such excesses. All the fighters for the great struggle have been declared in it as brethren respective of class or creed. The proclamation shows clearly that all that the leaders were concerned with was the liberation from foreign yoke. It is proof of the fact that the struggle was a national one.³

The activities of Shahzada Feroz, the battle in Gwalior, in the Doab, in the Nepalese Tarai and lastly in Etawah, show how he cooperated with the forces from different quarters of the country. How he finally made good his escape to Madina against heavy odds shows how daring he was.

Proclamation of Begum of Oudh

The proclamation issued by the Begum of Oudh, after her retreat from Lucknow, as a rejoinder to Queen Victoria’s proclamation of 1st November 1858, is significant and interesting. It catalogues the many broken promises of the rulers and appeals to the people not to be led away by falsehood and deceit Charles Ball says, “The beneficial effect produced by the promulgation of the terms of amnesty among the people of Oudh was soon apparent, although on the part of the Begum and her adherents, no means were neglected that might

³ Bhatia, H.S., *op.cit.*, p.88.

counteract the influence which the proclamation of the Queen of India (Victoria) was likely to acquire ever the temper and cool reflections of the people. Among other expedients to this end, the following counter proclamation of the Begum was extensively circulated, not only through the distant provinces of Oudh, but even in the capital itself, although now completely at the mercy of its captors”.



Begum

The fervent appeals of the leaders and the bitter and unceasing resistance to the British forces, reinforced as they were from the U.K and its colonies during 1857 and 1858,

show that the upheaval was not the mere mutiny it has been made out to be but a movement that shook the foundations of the British Empire.

CHAPTER III

UNSUNG HEROES OF 1857 REVOLT

The events of 1857 was really the great upheaval of 1857-58 which assumed the character of the First War of Indian Independence, was, in fact, a gigantic and widespread challenge to the British authority in India so sudden, swift and of an unprecedented character that shook the mighty fabric of the British Empire in India to its very foundations. The movement of 1857 began with the revolt of Mangal pande who belonged to the neighbouring are of Buxar district in Bihar.

Amar Singh: The Ablest Leader of the 1857 War

Early life

Amar Singh, the last carrier of golden banner of Jagdishpur was the youngest son of Sahebzada Singh and Panchratan Kunwar. He was born much later and was in fact a minor at the time of the agreement of 1221.¹ He had a strong physique, fair complexion and a mole on the right side of the nose. He was a skilled warrior and well versed in the use of various weapons. Hunting was his chief hobby and Rohtas fort was the favourite spot of Amar Singh for hunting. Apart from this, he had keen interest in religious aspects and had recited Mahabharata, every night. His knowledge of reading and writing was rudimentary and even he had memorized the entire text of the Udwant Prakash, the family history. He visited so many pilgrimage centres with his wife life Jagannathpuri, Rameshwaram, Chitrakut, Kasha, Prayag, Vindhyachal and Pashpatinath temple of Nepal.

¹ Shodhak, *A Journal of Historical Research* (Vol.XXXVIII), *op.cit.*, p.54.

Loyalty

Amar Singh showed unflinching loyalty to Kunwar Singh and rendered invaluable support during Revolt of 1857 and even waged severe wars against Britishers. According to an official report of 12th January, 1858, Amar Singh was about forty five years old at the time of the outbreak of the movement. It also appears at first he was not happy with the decision of his brother to participate in the movement and kept himself aloof for some-times. It is not quite clear from records when he actually joined the movement.

While Kunwar Singh was busy outside Bihar, Amar Singh continued to fight against the English unceasingly by harassing them in various ways and at different places. He established a strong base in the Kaimur hills and began prolonged guerilla warfare against the enemy between Gaya and Sasaram and cut off the communication between Gaya and Sasaram.

Reward of Apprehension

Amar Singh has actually built a cantonment for his followers not far from the Trunk Road and reports are ripe of his intention to return to Jagdishpur to collect the rents of the estate. The check with the passage of European troops imposes upon him will be merely temporary and if they pass without acting against him, he will naturally be emboldened and ascribe their conduct of fear. If Arrah goes, it will be impossible to keep a large portion of Patna and probably Gaya quite. The government had announced a reward of Rs. 5000 for apprehension of Amar Singh. But by evading capture, Amar Singh appeared on 16 September before Kurrdeah on Grand Trunk Road. He cut the telegraph line, carried off all dak houses and retreated to the hills and they were well protected by the villagers.

Succession

When Kunwar Singh successfully returned to Jagdishpur, Amar Singh rushed to from Kaimur hills to rejoin him at Jagdishpur. On 23 April 1858 there was a massive fight between

the soldiers of Britishers under LeGrand with Amar Singh and his Company, in which LeGrand was killed by the sword of Amar Singh and that was the last victory under the leadership of Kunwar Singh. After heroic fight Kunwar Singh died on 26 April 1858 and his worthy brother Amar Singh, succeeded him, he was acknowledged as the leader of the movement and he conducted his operations with the assistance of an able compatriot, Hare Krishan Singh. On the defeat of LeGrand and re-occupation of Jagdishpur in April 1858 Amar Singh re-established Government with the help of Hare Krishan Singh which appears to have lasted for over four months. Amar Singh became Maharaj.

Heroic fight

On 3rd May Amar Singh came at Jagdishpur and thereafter massive fighters were held at Behea, Hatimpur and Dalimpur. On the 7th May, 1858, Sir, E. Lugard moved from Arrah by the line of rail road to Behea. He decided upon attacking the men of Amar Singh from the west, well supported by another column from the south under Cornfield coming up from Sasaram. Lugard advanced from Behea on 9th May after receiving reports of arrival of Cornfield at Pero. Amar Singh had no intention of getting involved in a pitched battle against such a superior force. He withdrew from Jagdishpur after a short engagement and pulled out his men from northern part of the jungle. He moved to Jitaura. As operation progressed, Amar Singh after harassing the enemy's before, escaped the dragnet closing round him and abandoned the jungle. Amar Singh came out of the jungle and attacked Horse Artillery and cavalry under Lt. Col. Roberston, but were repulsed with some loss on 13th May 1858. On 18 May E. Lugard marched towards Metahi, at a distance about 2 miles from Jagdishpur, faced massive resistance from insurgents and firing from the battery gun under Lt. Col. Campbell and Braford, they again retired into jungle. Amar Singh house was destroyed. Sir Lugard proposed to establish posts at Arrah, Buxar, Dumaron, Bhojpur and Sasaram with a view of keeping the rebels quite at present and eventually compelling them to disappear." And even

clearing of jungle ordered by the commissioner of Patna. On 20th May there was another fight at Metahi between the men of Amar Singh with a body of troops under E. Lugard. On 26th May Brigadier Douglas took the command and men of Amar Singh were eased but could not be overpowered by the British troops. In June 1858, Amar Singh got back to Jagdishpur.

The different batches of those fighting under the common leadership of Amar Singh with 1500 men returned to the jungle near Jagdishpur on 14th June 1858. Brigadier General E. Lugard found the strain too much. His health broke down.² He was forced to take sick leave and return to England. Brigadier Douglas succeeded him in overall command of operations in Shahabad.

Amar Singh's Government was headed by Hare Krishan Singh and having efficient military organization both in civil and military establishment, held different ranks like superintendents of ordnance, factories General etc.

Amar Singh with 1000 of followers moved down on 29 July 1858 to village Karesath (six miles west of Ara) and on 30th July faced Col. Walter at Mahowle with some losses on their side, about 750 of them killed. In early August, Amar Singh again came down upon Arrah. Reports were fed to the Britisher betting at a place 12 miles west of the town Col. Walter, the commander at Ara, immediately set out to deal with them. While he was away from Ara, Amar Singh raided Ara, set the prisoners free and plundered 20 to 25 houses. Another party raided Gaya and broke open the jail. East of Ara, in the district of Patna, Government office in Bikramganj were attacked and created panic in Patna of a possible attack by the revolutionaries.

Death

Amar Singh fled to Palamu (Kharaundha) and from there to the Terai in Nepal at the beginning of October 1858 to assume the leadership of Nanasahab's troops. The Britishers

² *Ibid.*, (Vol.XXXVI), p.166.

wanted to bring Amar Singh to Ara and court martial him there so that it might have deterrent effect on the people. Amar Singh on a attack of dysentery admitted into the Gorkhpur jail hospital on 3rd January 1860 and died there on the 5th February, 1860 before his trial could take place. The reason behind Amar Singh joining the rebellion was purely based on defiance of the enemy, devotion to the cause of libration and dedication to the nation.



Amar Singh

Hare Krishan Singh: The Real Architect of the 1857 War

Early career

Hare Krishan Singh, the first son of Aydal Singh³ of Barubhee, Pargana Bhojpur along with his others brothers⁴ – Lakshmi Singh, Kashi Singh, Anand Singh and Radhey Singh fought with full dexterity in the war of 1857. Hare Krishan Singh, a middle size man of about 30 years at the time of outbreak of 1857, wore whiskers and mustache and brushed them backward like an uncountrry sowar. Hare Krishan Singh, also known as Hare Krishan Singh Bhadoria was one of the most influential amlah (Subordinate staff) of Kunwar Singh

³ *Trial Proceeding of Hare Krishan Singh: form R.J. Richardson, Esqr. officiating Judge to E.H. Lushington, Esqr. Officiating Secretary to the government of Bengal* (No. 122, 17 December, 1859.(NAI)

⁴ Dutta, K.K., *Biography of Kunwar Singh and Amar Singh*, K.P.J.R.L. Publication, Patna, 1958, p.189.

and served him as the Tahsildar (Collector of Revenue) of Pargana Piro. Even it is said that he was the head of Tahsildari department and Revenue collection Department of Paragana Piro.⁵ He had given his service during outbreak in different ways, but two main aspects were directly attached to him. Firstly he was the sole planner of Jagdishpur revolt of 1857 and secondly, he was the brilliant organizer of civilian and non – civilian administration under Kunwar Singh and Amar Singh.

So far as revolt under Kunwar Singh in 1857 is concern it appears that the advisers of Babu Kunwar Singh were divided on the question of his participation in the movement. One section headed by Hare Krishan Singh counseled for joining the movement and other including Babu Amar Singh were for status quo. At last, the party in favour of participation prevailed on Kunwar Singh and all joined the war, later on Kunwar Singh had much confidence in Hare Krishan Singh, so he deputed him along with Randatan Singh (Randnar T Singh) to Danapur to ascertain the state of things there.

Annexation of Ara and Shahabad

After an easy occupation of Ara, he helped Kunwar Singh in organizing a government of their own, which however lasted for a very short period owing to the unexpected arrival of Government forces under Major Eyre coote. Hare Krishan Singh played vital role in all the engagements against Eyre coote till the occupation of Jagdishpur. He then retreated along with Kunwar Singh, to Sasaram hills. From Sasaram hills he went along with Kunwar Singh to various places in Central and Northern India.

It is very clear from sources that Hare Krishan Singh commanded field against Britishers at Dalour Morcha on chestnut coloured horse. It is also reported that Kunwar Singh's right hand was cut off but he was alive. He was wounded by the bursting of a shell at the time of crossing the Ganges at the Sheopur Ghat. Hare Krishan Singh came there from

⁵ *Shodhak India's Journal of Historical Research (Vol.XXXVI), op.cit., p.191.*

Burkagaon and others from Beyresh to join him. It shows that Hare Krishan Singh was always with Kunwar Singh till latter's death.

When Shahabad was under Kunwar Singh's control, he established his own machinery of administration under Hare Krishan Singh, who had taken a leading part in the seizure of Ara at its head and Kunwar Singh, "Proclaimed himself ruler of the country" (Maharaja). Similarly in appreciation of his successful operations, Kunwar Singh is said to have conferred on him the title of Salar Jung.

Hare Krishan Singh Government

After the death of Kunwar Singh, Hare Krishan Singh was the "leading man and had charge of all the treasure, etc". on the defeat of Le Grand and re-occupation of Jagdishpur in April 1858. Hare Krishan Singh helped Amar Singh in re-establishing their Government which appears to have lasted for over four months. Hare Krishan Singh was in fact the head of the Government set up at Jagdishpur under the authority of Amar Singh. During this short period, he tried to stabilize the Government by effecting improvement in the collection of revenue and by recruitment of army. He dealt severely with those who were acting on behalf of sending secret information about them. The result was that almost all the Darogahs of the company left their stations. He held court regularly and took keen interest in the work. He threatened some merchants and Zamindars of dire consequences if they continued to co-operate the Britishers.

Hare Krishan Singh established a Government and soon raised two regiments – one named "Hurjung" and the other "fatteh-Jung" recruited from Shahbad, Saran, Tirhut, Ghazipur and Behar, none belonging to the upper provinces.⁶ Fire arms of different kinds were given to them and a few rifles, they used the cartridge by tearing them with their fingers and not with their teeth. Hare Krishan Singh distributed ammunition (plundered from the

⁶ *Shodhak A Journal of Historical Research (Vol.XXXVIII), op.cit., p.62.*

soldiers 5 killed) and caps (purchased at 2 Rs. per hundred from sepoy of Delhi) to his soldiers and himself distributed salaries to the soldiers, written down by a keith. His military organization was efficient, officers, both in the civil and military establishments held different ranks, e.g., Superintendents of ordinance factories, General, etc.

Reward of Death

Britishers had announced, a reward of rupees three thousand for the apprehension of Hare Krishan Singh, earlier and that amount was increased upto rupees five thousand later on. Even in October 1858, a strong rumour about his death was spread out. The memo of Commissioner Samuells, shows his influence and ability then any man in the rebel camp and is said to have been the chief instigator of Kunwar Singh's rebellion.

On 20th October, 1858, Hare Krishan Singh crossed the Grand Trunk Road about Mohania and proceeded to the Ramghar Thana. On 23rd October 1858, he marched through Dinarah to Lethan, 5 Miles west to Jagdishpur Jungle. On 24th October 1858 Lady Samuel was caught by rebels, but she was treated with kindness and sent to Major Fowler's camp by the order of Hare Krishan Singh. It is from Patna Commissioner's memo on 2nd December 1858, Hare Krishan Singh had still 200 infantry and 150 cavalry. A battle was fought between colonel Seynoor and Hare Krishan Singh and his solders. On 1st December, when colonel Seymoor arrived at Adhora he found that they had broken up into two group and three and gone off in different directions. It appears that there after Hare Krishan Singh went under ground. A vigorous search was made by the servents and agents of the government to trace out these leaders. Hare Krishan Singh was captured on 29th August 1859, at Mouza Dineah in paragana Badhowl of Zila Banaras by the Naib Kotwal of Dussah amdah (Dashashvamedh). He was confined to Ara Jail for some time and was trialed on several charges by R.J.Richardson, Esqrs, officiating Judge of Shahabad and the special commissioner by the Act- XIV of 1857, on the 29th and 30th November, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd

and 16th December, 1959 and hanged at the chowk of Jagdishpur till death. The brilliant character of Hare Krishan Singh can be seen in some of the charges labelled on him to his active role in this movement. The charge follows: “Treason in having on the 27th July 1857 and after that date on various occasions till the dispersion of his force, acted as instigator of rebellion and leader of rebel troops in arms against the British Government.

His works were certainly heroic and full of dedication to his masters. He has been some time called vainglory and cruel in his behavior, but it was not been supported by proper evidence. So far as murders were concerned, those had been taken place the way his cause’s disobedience only, to which Hare Krishan Singh was fighting. Lady Samuel was caught by rebels and sent back to British camp with full respects, was the kindness of Hare Krishan Singh. Towards his people he was kind enough and was calculated to promote the well being of the people in general and so on rough behavior had been found throughout his participation in the movement of 1857.

The glorious chapter of Hare Krishan Singh in Jagdishpur movement of 1857, was conveying the message of D3- Defiance, devotion and dedication defiance of the enemy, devotion to the cause and dedication to the masters and the nation. So undoubtedly, he was the real architect of the 1857

Raja Nahar Singh - Martyr of 1857

Early Career

Nahar Singh born to Raja Ram Singh and Basant Kaur at Ballabgarh on 6th April 1821 received his education at the feet of his preceptors Pandit Kulkarni and Maulvi Rahman Khan. Since he was barely a child of about 9 his father expired in 1830 so his uncle Nawal Singh took over the responsibility of running the state affairs till attainment of his adulthood. Nahar Singh assumed power in 1839. Prior to it, Nahar Singh received tutorship in martial arts also and soon grew to be an adept horse rider and fine shooter. Even as a child, he had a

great passion for hunting and shooting. As a boy he displayed rare skill in this art by shooting down the lion single by hand, which had earlier killed his comrade in the hunting expedition. As he grew up to manhood he found himself irresistibly drawn towards showing feats of shooting so much so that he was considered to be an expert shot and adept aims man by those who had seen him in action. Moreover, his feats of bravery and heroism were amply demonstrated in his participation in fiercely contested battles of Hindon and Badli-Ki-Sarai in defence of Delhi against the onslaught of the British as recorded by contemporary British authors.



Nahar Singh

Patriotism

His sense of patriotism goaded him to raise the banner of revolt against the British and join the Indian forces led by Emperor Bahadur Shah. Once the plunge was undertaken there was no chance of looking back. He not only undertook to drive away the British from the parganas of Fatehpur and Palwal but also displayed rare capacity of administrative skills in maintaining the safety of National highway from Delhi to Hodal.⁷

⁷ Shodhak A Journal of Historical Research (Vol.XXXVIII), op.cit., p.109.

He kept complete surveillance of the movement of the enemy activities and put his fast camel riders to report the matter to the Emperor immediately on any new development in the situation. This they did as is testified from the eye witness record of Munshi Jiwan Lal, who noted in his diary on 25th May, 1857: “at the time of prayer, a camel rider arrived from the Raja of Ballabhgarh to report that he had seen as English force advancing on the city.”⁸ This aspect of his character and activities endeared him to the Emperor who entrusted him to “join the duty to command Delhi regiment” and also undertake “to snap the enemy’s supply line from the south of Delhi”. He made the security arrangements so through that even John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of Punjab was astonished to admit and report to Lord Canning, the Governor General of India that “The East and the South is protected by the strong forces of Raja Nahar Singh of Ballabhgarh, and it is unlikely which can break this wall of soldiers unless they receive reinforcements from China or England.”⁹

Humanism

Raja Nahar Singh was a humanist to the core and saved the lives of all those who sought shelter under his kingdom but he was also a patriot par excellence and did not extend any help to District Collector William Ford when he was running for collecting forces to curb the activities of the freedom fighters in and around his territories. Rather he ignored him. On the other hand, he became a pillar of strength to the freedom fighters. He not only took active interest in their work; but also helped the cause with liberal contribution. For those sepoys of the native infantry or cavalry, who revolted against the British, he opened the gates of services in Ballabhagarh forces with enhanced pay and promotional ranks. As a result of it, according to narrative of Munshi Jiwan Lal by 17th July 1857 the Raja “had taken into his service 200 troopers who had lately been in the employment of the English”. The number continued to swell in the subsequent period. Incidentally, one such soldier who was granted

rank of Naik, appeared as a witness to testify the fact before the Military Commission, which was established to try Raja Nahar Singh. As a matter of fact, to further fortify his armed strength, the Raja not only raised new levies but also collected as much as possible latest weaponry and other war material as was revealed from the recovery of large number of horses, bullocks, carts, English rifles and dresses from his fort after the British assaulted it.

So Raja Nahar Singh also threw open all civil and military jobs open to all his subjects. He recruited the fittest persons to run his administration persons from all walks of life on the basis of talent.¹⁰

Raja Nahar Singh also provided shelter to several persons from Gurgaon and Delhi in their hour of crisis even though they professed Islam and Christianity. In the same way, the forces advancing to join the Delhi regiments to oppose the British also enjoyed comfortable hospitality and assistance from him as illustrated by the Diary entry of 7th July by Munshi Jeevan Lal. It reads: Nahar Singh kept in readiness for the Nimuch force “700 maunds of attah (wheat floor), gram (a pulse for feeding horses) and other articles of food”. For this humanitarian act, the British charged him before the Military Commission of carrying out inimical activities and produced several shopkeepers with their books of accounts as witnesses, who rightly testified to the fact of his having extended fabulous hospitality to his fellow Indians.

He was shining light of the glowing galaxy that gathered around the Emperor to carry the message of freedom to all Hindu-Muslim inhabitants in all parts of the native kingdoms and remained actively associated with him in all his activities aimed at making India free in comity of the nations.¹¹

Trial

¹⁰ Ram Pande, *Bharatpur upto 1826*, Jaipur, 1970, p.74.

¹¹ *Rajpal Singh, op.cit.*, p.69.

After the fall of Delhi, Brigadier General Showers, contrary to his solemn pledge to the Raja granting him security of his life, maneuvered to arrest him through unscrupulous methods, and in his absence assaulted Ballabgarh fort, thoroughly pillaged and ruthlessly vandalized the palaces and the capital town. Contrary to this rash and unworthy conduct and irresponsible behavior of the British Military Officer, Raja Nahar Singh was a person who throughout his life remained steadfast attached to humanist values and ideals of secularism and patriotism. During the course of his trial before the Military Court even the Public Prosecutor had admitted this humanist quality in his enemy in the words: "In the favour of the prisoner," the Deputy Judge Advocate said that "I allude to the Raja's most praise worthy conduct in saving the European's life, and it is but justice to him to declare that though Mr. Munro and others were murdered in his territory, he himself stands quite clear of any complicity in those deeds; this in times like the present or, as I hope I may happily term the past is hardly negative virtue, and will I am sure not be so received by the court."¹²

Death Sentence

After the award of death sentence by the Military Commission, Hodson offered terms for saving his life if the former expressed regret for his doings against the English and begged pardon for his acts of commissions and commissions. But he did not understand the Jats, who live and die for justice, action and truth. Accordingly, from the scaffold at Chandni Chowk on 9th January 1859 the Raja rejected the offer with contempt. He showed no signs of regret or remorse for his having waged war against the British. Rather, the Raja displayed a rare type of poise and courage and uttered these prophetic words on the occasion: "The British are my enemies, I can never ask for forgiveness from them. It makes little difference if I am hanged today for my acts of patriotism because tomorrow one hundred thousand new Nahar Singh will be borne in the country to carry forward the war against the alien rulers of India."

¹² *Ibid.*,

Raja Nahar Singh played a key role in this struggle waged for the independence of the country and he as a symbol of Hindu Muslim unity came forward to bring all nearby rulers under a common flag. Raja Nahar Singh far sighted as he was, tried tirelessly in planning and organizing the revolutionary force to oppose the alien forces and laid down his life for the freedom of the motherland.¹³

Kunwar Singh - Steamer Boat's Accounts

General Lloyed persuaded to take action against the sepoys who had rebelled and fled towards Ara and were reported to be crossing the Sone near Koilwar Ghat. On 27th July 1857, a Steamer with a detachment of troops was sent up to intercept the sepoys. Unfortunately it could not go up the Sone as it was found not navigable. By then the sepoys had already gone across the Sone and liberated Ara. The British steamer with the soldiers on board returned to Danapur by 5 pm on the same day. Now it was decided by British to send a column to Ara in another steamer named Hiranagata. A detachment of 37th regiment was sent in this steamer but it grounded in the river and remained stuck for 36 hours.¹⁴ Commissioner Tayler tried to send another steamer named Bombay, which was on its way from Allahabad to Calcutta, carrying a full load of passengers Bombay was detained at Danapur and then it was planned to send 300 men of the 10th foot along with 70 men of Rattray Sikhs under the command of Colonel Fenwick, but the captain of Bombay declined to take so many soldiers on board as the stranded Hiranagata had to be towed. Then the strength of the 10th Foot was reduced to half and Captain Dunbar replaced Colonel Fenwick as commander of the relieving force well accompanied by two civilian officials McDonnell, the Magistrate of Ara and Ross mangles.

¹³ *Ibid.*,

¹⁴ Dutta, K.K., *op.cit.*, p.134.

In route the soldiers on board Hiranagata, were also picked up. Dunbar landed at Barhara Ghat, 8 miles north of Ara at 7 pm on 29th July. He quickly disembarked his troops from the steamer and commenced the advance to Ara. Around 2 miles beyond Sone sepoys were encountered covering an unfordable nala. The leading elements of the British force managed to cross the nala in boats and the sepoys retreated towards Ara. Running disorderly manner, tried to make for the boats at the unfordable nala which they had crossed the previous evening.

Floating Haystack

MacDonnel, the magistrate, who had accompanied Dunbar was by his side when he got killed. He fought on gallantly during retreat. On reaching the nalla, he found that the insurgents had taken away the arms from the boats. 35 soldiers had taken cover inside a boat loaded with hay known as **floating haystack**. The rudder of the boat was lashed to the bank. MacDonnel managed to cut the lashings of the rudder and thus the boat could proceed. Suddenly they were being fired upon by rebelled sepoys and their two boats were sunk. He had wounded soldiers of 37th Foot along with wounded Mangles, whom he put in a boat during disastrous retreat. This ended when the remnants of Dunbar's column reached the steamer in the Ganga from which they had disembarked the previous day. The steamer and flat was soon gained the diminished party went to the cantonment of Danapur. A report of this disaster dated 30th July 1857, by Gen. Lloyed to the Commander-in-Chief states that the British men were hungry and exhausted.

On 2nd August Gen. Lloyed reported to the Commander-in-Chief that Kunwar Singh had near about 10,000 soldiers and almost all boats were under his control on Sone. 07th August 1857, Tahsildar of Roberstganj ordered to prevent the movements of boats on Sone and save the office.¹⁵ On 14th August H.E.J.Hannay of Indian Navy to proceed with his gun-

¹⁵ *Shodhak A Journal of Historical Research, (Vol.XXXVIII), op.cit., p.93.*

boat and crew to Revilgunge and placed himself under his orders to watch the mouth of Ganges for prevention if possible, of any communication between Fyzabad and Ara. He further concluded that this boat, its gun and European crew would be beneficial to the Chhapra and in default of a steamer do good service in keeping in check the turbulent people of the West bank. On 26th August Veer Kunwar Singh had crossed the river Tons with the help of boats provided by villagers and reached Shankarajpur.

Victory

On the other side the Jubilation in Kunwar Singh's camp over these victories against Dunbar's Column could hardly have been over when news arrived of the advancement of Eyre's Column from Buxar towards Ara. Eyre coote got victory at Bibiganj and proceeded further towards Jagdishpur. A reinforcement of British and sikh soldiers were sent from Danapur by a steamer with instructions to freely torture the village en route. The first phase of the outbreak ended with Eyre coote triumphant and Kunwar Singh marched from Mirzapur to Rewa and on 20th October he and his men marched out from Banda and proceeded to Kalpi to join TantiaTope. On 12th August onwards Kunwar Singh covered 400 miles when he arrived at Kalpi by the end of October 1857 through thick jungles and crossed numerous rivers and nalas. Kunwar Singh proceeded to Lucknow in December 1857. A party of about 1800 men, under the leader ship of a nephew, Kunwar Singh had assembled at BurniGhat on the Ghagra early in December, 1857. About the 12th February he was at Ayodhya with 2000 followers. On the 17th March, he joined a party of his comrades at Atraulia, where Colonel Milman was defeated. At Azamgarh Colonel Danes suffered defeat. Both the defeat created panic among Britishers. A hero of the Crimean war, Mark kerr was given the task of crushing Kunwar Singh, who was either defeated or crippled by Kunwar Singh.

Patna and Jamuna

This situation at Azamgarh and rumours of Kunwar Singh's intention to return to Shahabad caused much anxiety. On 30th March 1858, A.R. Young, secretary to the Government of Bengal forwarded for information to the Governor General that the rebels have collected 90 large boats on the Ghagra to visit Hatuwa and Chapra and so Sikhs should march to Ara. The Jamuna Gun boat which had returned from the Ghagra was ordered upto Buxar, to prevent the rebels from crossing the Ghagra. The 15 Europeans on board the Patna were also put on board the Jamuna in order to render her more efficient. But within 24 hours the boat returned and reported that gunner of "Patna" had threatened him with personal violence. Later on after an enquiry the European crew were sent to Calcutta in the Meghna and new crew joined the vessel to check the rebels. Similarly Patna had been kept on Ghats for the security of the residents at Danapur.

Ghazipur

On getting the news of the defeat of Milman and Dames and success of Kunwar Singh, forced Britishers and E. Lugard was ordered by the Commander-in-Chief to press upon Kunwar Singh. As a strategic move, Kunwar Singh left the place on the 13th April with a part of his troops leaving about 2000 men there under Nishan Singh and advanced towards Ghazipur. He probably wanted to cross the river Ganga there to return to Jagishpur for renewing the contest in that area. Leaving Lucknow on the 29th March 1858, E. Lugard reached the neighbourhood of Azamgarh on the 15th April. While trying to cross the bridge of boats on the river Tons, he was opposed by a Party of Kunwar Singh and even Lugard had to face severe challenge. Brigadiar Douglas also advanced to check Kunwar Singh and his men but Douglas got defeat on Kunwar Singh and his men after crossing river Ghagra by boats reached to Maniar on 20th April 1858. The ShoepurBaboos in Ghazipur entertained Kunwar Singh and provided him with 20 boats. A letter to the secretary to the Government of Bengal from the commissioner of Patna dated 22nd April 1858, observes that the orders were given to

the Magistrates of Ara and Chapra to be most careful in removing all boats from the left bank of the Ganga and the right bank of Ghagra. Same subject's parwannahs were issued to all Zamindars and bodies of police. The Magistrate of Ghazipur also ordered to remove the boats but it was obeyed indifferently. Lynch found a large collection of boats at Manahar on the Ghagra and Kunwar Singh had no difficulty in procuring boats when he arrived on the bank of Ghagara.

Sacrifice

Truly, the born strategist, Kunwar Singh spread the rumours that owing to his having no boats, he intended to make a dash for the river at a certain comparatively shallow spot and cross it on elephants. The British gunboats were patrolling the river. Kunwar Singh with his bold and brilliant moves over come all odds with great secrecy Kunwar Singh advanced to Shivpur Ghat, 10 miles up the ford where it had been given out, he could cross the river. Boats had been secretly collected for Kunwar Singh at this ghat. The villagers on the right bank assisted the rebels, many boats were raised from the places where they had been sunk. Douglas heard the startling news of Kunwar Singh crossing the river at Shivpur Ghat early in the morning of 21 April. He immediately rushed to the spot. The Meghna cruising and Douglas' horse artillery fired upon him. One boat capsized and the other carrying Kunwar Singh was hit by a ball of canon and the left arm of Kunwar Singh badly shattered. Soon courageous Kunwar Singh offered his arm to the holy river Ganga, managed to reach the far bank and rushed to his native village of Jagdishpur. Brother Amar Singh also joined him there and the flag of Kunwar Singh once again fluttered over his palace. On 23rd April the last prestigious fight between Kunwar Singh and LeGrand held, in which LeGrand was killed and Kunwar Singh breathed last on 26th April 1858 as victor in this Jagdishpur war in 1857.

The route of Jagdishpur war of 1857 from Shahabad was Mirzapur – Rewa – Banda - middle and western region- Kanpur - Lucknow - Azamgarh - Jagdishpur. The whole region

had several rivers, Ghats and nalas on which Kunwar Singh with his men and Britishers crossed each other during war. The rivers, Ghats and nalas became the main sights of rivalry and the steamers and boats main tools. Rebelled sepoy and Kunwar Singh used boats whereas Britishers deployed and applied steamers and boats both in large quantities. The Gunboats and cruising were also used by the Britishers. These were utilized with a proper planning and strategy in the route of war. The significant and crucial application of the steamers and the boats had broadened the area and nature of Jagdishpur war of 1857 which lasted upto December 1859. Certainly the steamer-boat's accounts of Jagdishpur war explores a new facet of historical knowledge of the war of 1857 in Bihar.

Alum Baeg

Skull of Havildar "Aalum Bheg", 46th Regt. Bengal N. Infantry who was blown away from a gun, amongst several others of his Regt. He was a principal leader in the mutiny of 1857 and of a most ruffianly disposition. He took possession of the road leading to the fort, to which place all the Europeans were hurrying for safety. His party surprised and killed Dr. Graham shooting him in his buggy by the side of his daughter. His next victim was the Rev. Hunter, a missionary, who was flying with his wife and daughters in the same direction. He murdered Hunter, and his wife and daughters after being brutally treated were butchered by the road side.

Alum Bheg was about 32 years of age; 5 feet 7 inches high and by no means an ill looking native.¹⁶

The skull was brought home by captain Costello, who was on duty when Alum Bheg was executed.

¹⁶ *BBC News*, dated: 05.04.2018.



Kunwar Singh

The whirlpool of mutiny as it gathered in volume caught up and carried away many an unwilling victim, with thousands no more than half willing. The sacrifice of the unsung heroes of 1857 Revolt must be written in the Annals of History of India.

CHAPTER IV

LOYALTY VS DISLOYALTY

The revolt of 1857 posed a great threat to the existence of British Empire. It is generally believed that the Rajasthan was more or less quiet during this turmoil. However, the situation in certain parts of the region was quite alarming. At Nasirabad and Neemuch Cantonments of Indian soldiers revolted on 27th May and 3rd June respectively. At Ahuwa, in the state of Marwar the noble Kushal Singh, took up arms against the ruler. His supporters offered stiff resistance to the troops of the state. In Kota, the murder of Burton the British Agent proved a serious threat to the securities of the English in this part of the country. Mewar was not immune from the impact of the revolt. A good number of records preserved in the confidential section of the former Mewar state,¹ and the record room of its erstwhile Thikanas contain material regarding the revolt. These records reveal the reaction of masses, attitude of the nobles and policy of the Maharana. These records also throw light on the activities of the uprisers and efforts made by the Britishers to crush the revolt.

Swaroop Singh- Mewar

During this period, Swaroop Singh was the Maharana of Mewar. He had provided all military help to the English for crushing the revolt. As in several other parts of India, the people of Mewar had great sympathy for rebels. Alarmed by the dangerous possibility of Marwar rebels getting help from Mewar,² the British officers became active in preventing any sort of aid likely to be given to the rebels by the people. In an order to his various nobles, the Maharana instructed them that neither they should provide any help nor give any protection to the rebels of the Marwar.

¹ Khadgawat, N.R., *Rajasthan's Role in the Struggle of 1857*, General Administration Dept, Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur, 1957, p.69.

² *Banera fort Archive, letter from Gokul Chand to Raja Govind Singh*, Bhadwa Sudi, dated: 1914.

The letter written by Mehta Gokul Chand , the Pradhan of Mewar to Gobind Singh the ruler of Banera contains the order asking them not to provide any help to the Barothia Sardars and their soldiers and also effectively prevent their entry into Mewar. It was also made clear in the letter that more suspicious about the help given to the rebels would be sufficient ground for punishment, without any investigation. In the another letter Gokul Chand Mehta gave the specific names of Neemuch rebels and asked Banera ruler to keep watch over their movements and arrest them as soon as they enter his territory .

This letter not merely contains the names of the eight rebels but their detail description viz-their looks, complexion, identification, identification marks, age, the place from which they hail etc. is also given.³

But it seems that these instructions were not considered effective for this purpose. On account of people's sympathy for the rebels, it was considered necessary to win them over by inducement and temptation and get their help in capturing the rebels. An order was issued to reward the faithfuls, which is clear by notifications.

Thus the Maharana tried his best to crush the rebellious activities in the state, but he did not confine his support to Britishers to it only, he advised other rulers to support the British cause. In his Kharitas to Rewa ruler, he advised him to provide all possible help to the British. He tried to impress upon him about the eventual victory of the British. Maharana was of firm conviction that establishment of peace and order in Rajasthan was entirely due to them. Maharana Mewar advised Jaipur ruler also to cooperate the British in the efforts of crushing rebellion.

³ *Khadgawat, N.R., op.cit., p.70.*



Swaroop Singh

Revolt in Kota

Another letter provided information about the revolt in Kota, the assassination of political agent Barton, along with his two sons and a doctor. This letter throws light on the treatment and behavior of the rebels. Kota army in large number also joined rebels.

The events at Kota were of great significance, The revolt was so instance that the ruler of that state seriously considered the shifting of the Maharani and other ladies to Udaipur. After the murder of political agent General Lawrance issue an order that any person offering protection to the soldiers of Kota would be considered the enemy of the Britishers. No one should either give protection to the soldiers of Kota or allow them to pass through his territories. It was also made clear that if any rebel of Kota was caught by them, he was to be kept in custody till further orders. Specific instructions were issued to kill the rebels if they tried to escape. These instructions were given wide publicity as is clear from the letter.

But it seems that Kota events gave new impetus to the supporters of the rebels in Mewar. With greater enthusiasm they now begin to gain the support of the various nobles for the rebels cause, as it is clear from the letter.

Significant information provided by a letter written by the Rawal of Salumber to Raja of Banera that Rawal was one of the prominent supporters of rebels in Mewar. He has sent his emissary to convey the message of Abdul Kadir. He also informed the ruler of Banera about the movements of rebels forces and wanted to know the details of the clashes that took place at Nasirabad.

Seize of Nimbahera

The other letter contains the information about the success of the English at Nimbahera with the help of Mewar forces. The seizure of Nimbahera, a town near Chittore, by the British proved to be of immense advantage to them. This boosted the morale of the company soldiers. This also revived their prestige which had suffered a great set back in Marwar. At the same time this seizure effectively reduced the opposition of the British in Mewar and Marwar.

However the danger of the attack on Nimbahera continued for some time to come. In the early days of the month of Kartik V.S 1914 there was heavy concentration of rebel forces near Mandsaur hence Arjun Singh official of Mewar insisted Mehta Sher Singh to despatch more army for the security of Nimbahera and its nearby places.

Maharana who wrote a khas Rukka to Raja Bahadur of Karera to reach Neemuch with his forces to check the activities of rebels who have encamped near Neemuch on Magsir Budi. These records also throw valuable light on the movements of various rebels, their leader, strength of rebel forces, their campaigns and conflicts.

Detail description, regarding Tantia's defeat at the hands of General Robert at Sanganer and Kotharia is available in these records. It is clear from these records that at Kotharia, British forces gave a crushing defeat to the rebels. They captured their four canons

beside large quantity of arms and ammunitions thus forcing the rebels to take refuge at Kuraj, Palana, Mohi and other places.⁴

The letter which was written by Bhopal Singh of Shahpura to Raja Govind Singh and other records, reveal keen interest in the information about the happening in other parts of India i.e. Gwalior, Lucknow, Delhi etc. It also throws light on the feeling of revenge gripping the Britishers which got manifested in mass execution of the people.

It is evident from these records, that the Maharana of Mewar Swaroop Singh had put all his moral and material strength at the disposal of the Britishers in crushing the revolt. His example was followed by other rulers. Obviously like many of other rulers of India the rulers of Rajasthan were not able to assess the true significance of the great upheaval of 1857. They were self-centred and were guided by limited narrow interests. If they had given the active support to the rebels, the outcome of the struggle of 1857 would have perhaps been different specially in view of the wide spread dissatisfaction prevailing among the people of Rajputana against the British. The absence of a spirited brave leader who could organize them and who could take full advantage of the troubled situation indirectly helped the British in regaining their position.

People Participations in Rajasthan

Maharana Swaroop Singh of Mewar exerted his great influence as the acknowledge Head of all the Rajput princes on the side of the British by advising all, who applied to him by letter or by accredited minister specially deputed for counsel at the crisis, to stand firm in their allegiance to the British Government. The Maharaja of Karauli sent levies in British support, drove out of his territory the Gwalior rebels and sent a detachment of 800 (followed by a reinforcement of 1500) to Kota with a view to rescue the Maharao who had been reduced by the people to the status of a virtual prisoner. He even 'issued a proclamation to

⁴ *Shodhak A Journal of Historical Research (Vol.XXXVIII),op.cit., p. 20.*

his subjects, pointing out in strong language the delusion' under which the revolting people had been labouring and called upon his people not only not to join the rebels but to help him also in fighting for the British Government.

Maharaja Sardar Singh

All these princes had been to conspicuously loyal and helpful to the British because the blessing of British protection had saved them from the grinding tyranny of the Marathas and the Pindaries. Then, most of them were living in 'continual strife with the chief people of their principalities' and as such stood in dire necessity of an overlordship which could afford them full protection against internal anarchy. Out of eighteen ruling princes and one Nawab in Rajasthan, Maharaja Sardar Singh of Bikaner alone could, despite his strong pro-British affiliations, anyhow manage to give shelter to six-hundred followers of Tantia Tope and procure for them the unconditional pardon from the Government of India. The millions at large were, however, seething with discontent and their anti-British inclinations had been manifested on several occasions.⁵ The principal jagirdars of Rajasthan supported the anti-British rebels because they feared less the continuation of the British rule in India could bring about their political ruins. It was, therefore, left to these jagirdars and their contingents to make a common cause with the mutinous soldiery and raise a standard of revolt against the British.

The literary versions of Banakidas, Giriverdan, Suraj Mal Mishran etc. are of great utility to know about people feelings. Being essentially emotional, these poems to reveal the anti- British feeling prevailing in Rajasthan.

The miserable consequences of a century of Maratha depredations had subjected the princely order of Rajasthan to a very great humiliation and loss. Therefore, that in this atmosphere of confusion and helplessness, the ruling princes of Rajasthan threw themselves

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.70.

into the arms of the British, entered into treaty alliances. These treaties gave the British a chance to spread their economy at the cost of people's economy of these princely states. Wonder that the treaty was concluded in 1818 and the Jaipur market by 1820 was full of British goods and medicines. It was in Rajasthan that the British troops, during their onward march from Bengal to break the power of Marathas, received two great setbacks, the first, the disaster to Monson's columns near the Chambal with the loss of his artillery and baggage; the second, Lake's failure to take Bharatpur by storm. For twenty years the virgin fortress of Bharatpur was the symbol throughout India of British vulnerability until, in 1826 Lord Combermere's took it under different circumstances.

The news of the out – break of rebellion amongst the sepoys at Barckpur as well as Meerut fanned the flames of discontentment in the different parts of the country. From Delhi to Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujrat, Rajasthan and Hariyana all these places were in revolt. The landed aristocracy was taking part to spread the flames of the rebellion, but it was people who were supporting the freedom fighters by raising the funds, fodder, material and participating in the warfare.

Conclusion

That was not to be, yet the rebels showed exemplary courage, dedication and commitment. Thousands of men courted death, fighting for a cause they held dear. Their heroism alone, however, could not stem the onslaught of a much superior British army. The first to fall was Delhi on 20 September 1857 after a prolonged battle. Bahadur Shah, who took refuge in Humayun's tomb, was captured, tried and deported to Burma. With that the back of the Revolt was broken, since Delhi was the only possible rallying point. The British military then dealt with the rebels in one centre after another. The Rani of Jhansi died fighting on 17 June 1858. General Hugh Rose, who defeated her, paid high tribute to his enemy when he said that 'here lay the woman who was the only man among the rebels.' Nana Saheb refused to give in and finally escaped to Nepal in the beginning of 1859, hoping to renew the struggle. Kunwar Singh, despite his old age, was too quick for the British troops and constantly kept them guessing till his death on 9 May 1858. Tantia Tope, who successfully carried on guerrilla warfare against the British until April 1859, was betrayed by a Zamindar, captured and put to death by the British.

The reason for this mass upsurge has to be sought in the nature of British rule which adversely affected the interests of almost all sections of society. Under the burden of excessive taxes the peasantry became progressively indebted and impoverished. The only interest of the company was the realization of maximum revenue with minimum effort. Consequently, settlements were hurriedly undertaken, often without any regard for the resources of the land. For instance, in the district of Bareilly in 1812, the settlement was completed in the record time of ten months with a dramatic increase of Rs. 14,73,188 over the earlier settlement. Delighted by this increase, the Government congratulated the officers for their 'zeal, ability and indefatigable labour.' It did not occur to the authorities that such a sharp and sudden increase would have disastrous consequences on the cultivators. Naturally,

the revenue could not be collected without coercion and torture: in Rohilkhand there were as many as 2,37,388 coercive collections during 1848-56. Whatever the conditions, the Government was keep on collecting revenue. Even in very adverse circumstances, remissions were rarely granted. A collector who repeatedly reported his inability to realize revenue from an estate, as only grass was there, was told that grass was a very good produce and it should be sold for collecting revenue.

The traditional landed aristocracy suffered no less. In Oudh, which was a storm centre of the Revolt, the taluqdars lost all their power and privilege. About 21,000 taluqdars whose estates were confiscated suddenly found themselves without a sources of income, ‘ unable to work, ashamed to beg, condemned to penury.’ These dispossessed taluqars smarting under the humiliation heaped on them, seized the opportunity presented by the sepoy Revolt to oppose the British and region what they had lost.

Although the rebels received the sympathy of the people, the country as a whole was not behind them. The merchants, intelligentsia and Indian rulers not only kept aloof, but actively supported the British. Meetings were organized in Calcutta and Bombay by them to pray for the success of the British. Despite the Doctrine of Lapse, the Indian rulers who expected their future to be safer with the British liberally provided them with men and materials. Indeed, the sepoys might have made a better fight of it if they had received their support.

Almost half the Indian soldiers not only did not Revolt but fought against their own countrymen. The recapture of Delhi was effected by five columns consisting of 1700 British troops and 3200 Indians. The blowing up of Kashmere Gate was conducted by six British officers and NCOs and twenty-four Indians, of whom ten were Punjabis and fourteen were from Agra and Oudh.

Apart from some honourable exceptions like the Rani of Jansi, Kunwar Singh and Maulvi Ahmadullah, the rebels were poorly served by their leaders. Most of them failed to realize the significance of the Revolt and simply did not do enough. Bahadur Shah and Zeenat Mahal had no faith in the sepoys and negotiated with the British to secure their safety. Most of the taluqdars tried only to protect their own interests. Some of them, like Man Singh, changed sides several times depending on which side had the upper hand.

Apart from a commonly shared hatred for alien rule, the rebels had no political perspective or a definite vision of the future. They were all prisoners of their own past, fighting primarily to regain their lost privileges. Unsurprisingly, they proved incapable of ushering in a new political order. John Lawrence rightly remarked that ‘had a single leader of ability arisen among them we must have been lost beyond redemption.’

Thus, come to an end the most formidable challenge the British empire had to face in India. It is a matter of speculation as to what the course of history would have ‘put the clock back’ and resurrected and reinforced a feudal order need not detain us here; although that was not necessarily the only option. Despite the sepoys’ limitations and weaknesses, their effort to emancipate the country from foreign rule was a patriotic act and a progressive step. If the importance of a historical event is not limited to its immediate achievements, the Revolt of 1857 was not a pure historical tragedy. Even in failure it served a grand purpose: a source of inspiration for the national liberation movement which later achieved what the Revolt could not.

**May the Martyrs rest in peace and may the memories thrive and keep an
inspiring the generations of freedom lovers every where forever.**

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RAMESWARAM – THE ISLAND CITY

Project submitted to

St.Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi

affiliated to

Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

By

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Reaccredited with 'A+' Grade by NAAC

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2020-2021

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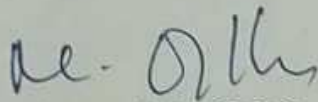
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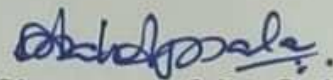
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project entitled
"RAMESWARAM – THE ISLAND CITY", submitted to St. Mary's
College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam
Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, for the award of the
degree of Master of Arts in History and is a work done during the year
2020 - 2021 by P. Babitha a bonafide student of the Department of History,
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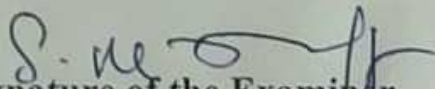


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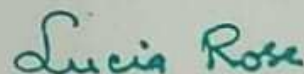
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Place: Thoothukudi

Date: 10.04.2021

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Signature of the Candidate

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INTRODUCTION

This great sacred centre of the Hindus is an Island in the Palk Strait at the extreme South-eastern tip of the Indian peninsula. It is 46 km long and 11 km wide. The Island has been described in the puranas as the Gandhamadana Hill. The history of Rameswaram is wrapped up in legends. The Island figures prominently in the Ramayana, Rama, hero of the epic, was a great devotee of Shiva, who is the presiding deity at Rameswaram. Nearly all versions of the Ramayana state that Rama came to Rameswaram in search of Lanka. But the sea lying between Rameswaram and Lanka had to be crossed. Rama tried to propitiate the sea and fasted for three days. The sea refused to allow passage and prayed that it be allowed to retain its inherent quality and impenetrability. Rama was advised to build a bridge across the sea to enable his army of monkeys to cross over to Lanka. With the help of Nala, son of the architect Vishvakarma, the bridge was built and Rama reached Lanka. Rameswaram is sacred to both Saivites and Vaisnavas. Since the latter is believed to be an incarnation of Vishnu. It is the wish of every devout Hindu from Kashmir to Kanya kumara to visit Rameswaram at least once in their lifetime. Rameswaram is one of the four most sacred dhams in India the other three are Badrinatha in the Himalayas, Puri in Orissa and Dwarka in Gujarat.¹

The Ramanathaswamy Temple is the nerve centre of all the religious activities on this island. The wall enclosing the temple is 20 feet high and has four gopuras built entirely in stone from the adhisthana to the top of the structure. The northern and southern gopuras are not complete. The eastern gopuras are not complete. The eastern gopura is the most splendid structure. The principal entrance to the second enclosure. Work on this gopura is said to have started in 1640 CE. It was left unfinished for some time and ultimately completed only within recent times. It has eleven storeys, rising to a height of one hundred

¹ Surendra Sahai, *Temples of South India*, Prakash Books India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2010, p.252.

and fifty five feet “with good proportions and the contours of its angles straight and strong the scheme of decoration being of the architectural order without much figure work”. The western gopura is a much smaller structure notable for no particular feature- of decoration or architecture. It follows the architectural scheme of the enclosure walls containing gopuras in the middle of each side- the scheme followed at nearly every temple in South India built during the post-vijayanagara period. It was during this period that gopuras both small and huge and pillared mandapas appeared prominently at every important temple.

The Ramanathaswamy Temple has always been acknowledged as a great Shiva temple but its architectural splendor has not inspired similar admiration. In fact, as James Fergusson observed this renowned temple illustrates both the teaches of the South Indian temple style in no other temple has the same amount of patient industry been exhibited as here and in more, untouchability has that labour been so thrown away for want of a design appropriate for its display it is not that this temple has growth by successive monuments for it was finished on a settled plan as unswervingly carried out as that at Tanjore but on a principle so opposed to it that while the temple at Tanjore produces an effect greater than is due to its mass or deal. This one with double its dimensions and ten times its elaboration produces no effect externally and internally can only be seen in² detail, so that the parts hardly in any instance aid one another in producing the effect aimed at”.

The sanctum sanctorum contains a Shivalingam called Ramalinga. It has a triple-storeyed vimana over it. On the northern side of the Ramalinga vimana is the Vishwa lingam in another sanctum. Both these Linga shrines have shrines for the consort of Sri Ramanatha, is on the left of the Ramalinga. The shrine of Visalakshi, the consort of Viswanatha, stands on a separate altar. The existence of two Lingas is explained in the context of the Ramayana. When Rama was on his way back to Ayodhya from Lanka to

² *Ibid.*, p. 253.

worship Shiva to seek his expiation from the sin of killing a Brahmin. Ravana id believed to be the grandson of Brahmin. Rama asked Hanuman to get a lingam from Kashi, while he himself made preparations for the worship. Hanuman got delayed. Lest the auspicious moment for worship should pass, Sita prepared a sand lingam for worship. When Hanuman arrived with another lingam, he was disappointed to find the worship already completed. To please Hanuman, Rama had the lingam brought from Kashi installed in an adjacent shrine and directed that this lingam, called Vishwa-lingam be worshipped first, before worship is offered to the lingam prepared in sand by Sita called Ramalingam.

Vishnu is enshrined separately behind the Ramanatha shrine. Vishnu, called Setumadhava or God of the Sethupatis, who ruled over this stretch of the peninsula. For its statue in marble, it is also called Swetamadhava. A³ccording to a legend, Punyanidhi, a Pandyan king, was a great devotee of Vishnu. To test his devotion, Vishnu sent Lakshmi as an orphan girl called Gunanidhi to the king, who adopted her as his daughter and brought her up. One day, Vishnu disguised as an ascetic entered her bedroom. For this grossly improper conduct, the king had the ascetic arrested and chained at the temple. That night he had dream wherein Vishnu revealed his identity. Punyanidhi, the ruler, fell on his knees and apologized to Vishnu. Vishnu pardoned his mistake and promised to stay on in the temple with Lakshmi and never leave Rameswaram.

It is believed that before the appearance of the stone structures in the 12th century CE, the Ramanathaswamy Temple was merely a thatched hut, which is, in fact, how most of the great temples had their beginnings. It is also said that the sanctum sanctorum of the temple, built in dark and hard limestone, was built by King Vita Raja Sekhara of Kandy to Prakrama Bahu, a King of Lanka is ascribed the first structures in solid stone at the central shrine belong to the 15th and 16th centuries CE.

³ Surendra Sahai, *op.cit.*, p.254.

The Ramanathaswamy Temple has the most glorious corridors measuring nearly 4000 feet in length. The breadth of the corridor varies from 17 feet to 21 feet and their height is approximately 30 feet from the floor to the centre of the roof. Each pillar stands on a 5feet high moulded stylobate. The side corridors are nearly 700 feet long opening into transverse galleries. The total effect of ornamentation and changing light effects is simply breathtaking. But the figure sculpture has been frequently painted in colours, bright and extremely aesthetic in appeal. The central corridor emanating from the inner enclosure carries portrait sculptures of the Setupati rajas of Ramnad in the 17th century and, facing them on the other side, sculptures of their ministers. The bright colours - blue, green, red and yellow create a rather bewildering vulgarity, which to quote James Fergusson, “must be seen to believe”

In its general scheme of planning, the double-shrine is enclosed within three concentric perimeter walls, the outer of these measuring eight hundred and eighty feet by six hundred and seventy two. Some of the small and ruinous ancient structures, perhaps the earliest stone shrines built in the twelfth century CE, can be spotted near the western exterior. But the greater and the central structural section of the Ramanathaswamy Temple shows a remarkable homogeneity in style. which contributes immensely to the contributes immensely to the splendor of the temple architecture. If one single quality of architecture at the Ramanathaswamy Temple has to be pointed out, it is the massive and ponderous look of the magnificent piers in the corridors. “It is the immensely of the labour here displayed” as James Fergusson points out, “that impresses us, much more than its quality, and that combined with a certain picturesqueness and mystery, goes produce an effect which is not surpassed by any other temple in India and by very few elsewhere”.⁴

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 255-256.

This great Shiva temple contains 22 teerthams in which the pilgrims traditionally take a bath before entering the inner section of the temple. Each tank is known for certain specific benefactions. There are some devotees who ceremoniously take a dip in each of the 22 tanks these tanks are: 1. Mahalakshmi (for wealth and prosperity) 2. Savitri 3. Gayatri and 4. Saraswati 5. Sethu Madhava, 6. Gandhamadan, 7. Nala, 8. Neela, 9. Sankha, 10 and 11, Chandra and Surya, 12 and 13, Ganga and Yamuna, 14 and 22, Kavatcha, Gavaya, Shiva, Satyamrita, Sakra, Brahmahatya Vimochana, Gaya, Sarva and Kodi. Traditionally the first bath at Rameswaram is taken at the Agniteertham, which is the calm quiet sea beach right in front of the eastern gopura of the temple. A long market street lies between the Agniteertham and the temple. This beach is where according to the Ramayana, Rama put to test Sita's claims to chastity by making her walk through fire. The small township round the temple is dotted with numerous sacred bathing tanks associated with names of Rama and Lakshman Jatayu is the bird killed by Ravana as it tried to stop the king of Lanka from abducting Sita into his kingdom across the sea.

At the farthest end of the Island projecting into the set toward Sri Lanka, where the Bay of Bengal joins the Indian Ocean, stands Dhanushkodi. It is traditionally held that at this point Rama and his army of monkeys built a stone bridge called Ramasetu or Adam's Bridge has been the subject of a raging controversy typical of faith and religion only to arrive at some truth. But this is not history or archaeology, hence the need of utmost caution in voicing opinions. As Bomila Thapar writes, "Faith finds its own place and function, as do archaeology and history. And the function of each is separate" Dhanushkodi used to be a fishing outpost with a small railway station and some small temples, which were completely washed away by the devastating cyclone in 1964 CE.

Within the town, the Gandhamaradhana Parvatam is a relatively modern double storeyed structure, two and a half kilometer north-west of the Ramanathaswamy Temple. It

contains Rama's footprints in marble. It is believed that from here Hanuman made the first leap to Lanka. This is the highest spot of the Island, ideal for viewing the spectacular sandy beaches and coconut plantations in the picturesque setting. It is however, the ocean which looks most glorious from this point.⁵

Aims and Purpose of the Study

The aims of the project is to highlight the Rameswaram Temple. This project focused on Ramanathaswamy Temple, theerthas and various tourist places. The temple is considered a holy place though my project explain clear detail about the Rameswaram Island city to the new generation.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are as follows; to find out Island city of Rameswaram, to find out special features of Ramanathaswamy Temple, to find out holy theerthas of temple and to find out Rameswaram tourist places of Rameswaram ongoing approaches for Rameswaram.

Sources of Study

Different sources have been used to trace the Rameswaram – The Island City. Source materials have been classified into primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are mainly based on newspapers, acts, reports. The secondary sources are mainly books and article.

⁵ Meena, v., *Temples of South India A Pilgrim's Guide*, Hari Kumari Arts, Kanniyakumari, 2007, p.11.

Methodology

The methodology adopted in this study is analytical and descriptive method. The source materials have been critically analyzed and investigated. The descriptive method is used in the presentation of the study in order to make the project understandable to the readers.

Outline of the Chapters

The project is divided into four chapters excluding Introduction and Conclusion.

- The first chapter enhances the historicity of Rameshwaram in Pamban Island with a transit point to reach Sri Lanka.
- The second chapter focuses on the holy pilgrimage Ramanathaswamy temple for Shaivites, Vaishnavites and Smartha with the longest corridor in the world.
- The third chapter explains the Theerthas of Ramanathaswamy Temple reveals 64 Theerthas, the holy water body associated with the temple.
- The fourth chapter speaks about the Tourist Places of Rameshwaram deals about the popular pilgrimage destinations and as well as tourist attractions.

The conclusion sums up the findings of the project.

CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF RAMESWARAM

Rameswaram is a town and municipality in the Ramanathapuram district of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. It is on Pamban Island separated from mainland India by the Pamban Channel and is about 40 kilometres from Mannar Island, and Sri Lanka. It is in the Gulf of Mannar, at the tip of the Indian peninsula. Pamban Island, also known as Rameswaram Island, is connected to mainland India by the Pamban Bridge. Rameswaram is the terminus of the railway line from Chennai and Madurai, together with Varanasi, it is considered to be one of the holiest places in India to Hindus, and part of the Chardham pilgrimage.¹

It is said the Hindu god Rama built a bridge from here across the sea to Lanka to rescue his wife Sita from her abductor Ravana. The Ramanathaswamy Temple, dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva, is at the centre of the town and is closely associated with Rama. The temple and the town are considered a holy pilgrimage site for saivites and vaishnavites.

Rameswaram is the closest point from which to reach Sri Lanka from India, and geological evidence suggests that the Rama sethu was the former land connection between India and Sri Lanka. The town has been in the news over and capturing local fisherman for alleged cross-border activities by Sri Lankan Forces. Rameswaram is

¹ Bajpai, R. S., *The Splendours and Dimensions of Yoga*, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 2002, p.63.

administered by a municipality established in 1994. The town covers an area of 53km and had a population of 44,856 as of 2011. Tourism and fishery employ the majority of workforce in Rameswaram.

Legend

Rameswaram means “Lord of Rama” in Sanskrit, an epithet of shiva, the presiding deity of the Ramanathaswamy Temple. According to Hindu epic Ramayana, Rama, the seventh avatar of the god Vishnu, prayed to shiva here to absolve any sins that he might have committed during his war against the demon-king Ravana in Sri Lanka. According to the puranas upon the advice of sages, Rama along with his wife sita and his brother Lakshmana, installed and worshipped the lingam here to expiate the sin of Brahmahatya incurred while killing of the Brahmin Ravana. To worship Shiva, Rama wanted to have a lingam and directed his trusted lieutenant Hanuman to bring it from Himalayas. Since it took longer to bring the lingam, Sita built a lingam, made of just sands of the shores, which is also believed to be the one in the sanctum of the temple. This account is well supported by the original Ramayan authored by Valmiki where it is written in Yudha kanda. Sethu karai is place 22km before the island of Rameswaram from where Rama is believed to have built a floating stone bridge, the Ramestu bridge, that further continued to Dhanushkodi in Rameswaram till Talaimannar in Sri Lanka. According to another version, as quoted in Adhyatma Ramayana. Rama installed the lingam before the construction of the bridge to Lanka.

History

The History of Rameswaram is centred around the island being a transit point to reach Sri Lanka and the presence of Ramanathaswamy Temple². Tevaram, the 7th-8th century Tamil compositions of shiva by the three prominent Nayanars namely Appar, Sundarar and Thiruganasambandar. The Chola king Rajendra Chola I had a close connections with the island and claimed the title setukavalan meaning custodians of the Rameswaram. Hinduism was their state religion and they made generous contribution to the temple, Setu was used in their coins as well as in inscriptions as marker of the dynasty.

According to Ferishta, Malik Kafur, the general of Alauddin Khilji, the ruler of Delhi Sultanate, reached Rameswaram during his political campaign in spite of stiff resistance from the Pandyan princes in the early 14th century. He erected a mosque by name Alia – al – Din Khilji in honour of victory of Islam. During the early 15th century, the present day Rameswaram were include in the Pandya dynasty. In 1520 CE, the town came under the rule of Vijayanagara Empire.³ The Sethupathis, the breakaway from Madurai Nayaks, ruled Ramanathapuram and contributed to the Ramanathaswamy temple. The most notable of are the contributions of Muthu Kumara Ragunatha and Muthu Ramalinga Sethupathi, who transformed the temple to

² *Ibid.*, p. 63.

³ Guruge, Ananda, *The Society of the Ramayana*, Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, 1991, p.43.

an architectural ensemble. ⁴The region then full under the rule of different leaders Chanda Sahib, Arcot Nawab and Muhammed Yusuf Khan in the middle of the 18th century. In 1795 CE. Rameswaram came under the direct control of the British East India company and was annexed to the Madras Presidency. After 1947, the town became a part of Independent India.

Geography

Rameswaram has an average elevation of 10million. The Island is spread across and area of 61.8 kilometers and is in the shape of a conch 74% of the area has sandy soil due to the presence of sea and it has many Island surrounding it, the Pak strait in the north west and Gulf of Mannar in the South East. The Ramanathaswamy Temple occupies major area of Rameswaram. The beach of Rameswaram is featured with no waves at all the sea waves rise to a maximum height of 3 cm and the view looks like a very big river. Rameswaram has dry tropical climate with low humidity. With average monthly rainfall of 75.73 millimeters. mostly from North East monsoon from October to January. The highest ever temperature recorded at Pamban station was 37°C and the lowest was 17°C. Ramsethu Bridge is a chain of limestone shoals, between Rameswaram and Mannar Island off the northwestern part of Sri Lanka. Geological evidence suggests that this bridge is a former land connection between India and Sri Lanka. The bridge is 29km long and separates the Gulf of Mannar from

the Palk Strait. It was reportedly passable on foot up to the 15th century until storms deepened the channel. The temple records record that Rama's Bridge was completely above sea level until it broke in a cyclone in 1480 CE. The bridge was first mentioned in the ancient Indian Sanskrit epic Ramayana of Valmiki. The name Rama's Bridge or Rama sethu refers to the bridge built by the Vanara army of Rama in Hindu mythology. The Ramayana attributes the building of this bridge to Rama in verse 2.22-76, naming it as Setubandhanam. The sea separating India and Sri Lanka is called Sethu Samudram meaning "Sea of the Bridge". Maps prepared by a Dutch cartographer in 1747 CE, available at the Tanjore Saraswathi Mahal Library show this area as Ramancoil, a colloquial form of the Tamil Raman Kovil. Many other maps in schwartzberg's historical atlas and other sources such as travel texts by Marco Polo call this area by various names such as Adam's Bridge, Sethubandha and Sethubandha Rameswaram.⁵

Demographics

According to 2011 census, Rameswaram had a population of 44,856 with a sex-ratio of 969 females for every 1,000 males, much above the national average of 929. A total of 5,022 were under the age of six, constituting 2,544 males and 2,478 females. Scheduled castes and 3% of the population respectively. The average literacy of the town was 73.36% compared to the national average of 72.99%. The town had a

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.44.

total of 10579 households. There were a total of 16,645 workers comprising 69 cultivators, 20 main agricultural labourers, 148 in house hold industries, 15,130 other workers, 1,278 marginal workers, 11 marginal cultivators, 26 marginal agricultural labourers 44 marginal workers in household industries and 1.197 other marginal workers. The total number of households below poverty lane in 2003 were 976, which is 10.45% of the total households in the town and these were raised to 3003 in 2007.

As per the religious census of 2011, Rameswaram had 87.4% Hindus 4.36% Muslims 8.13% Christians, 0.03% Sikhs, 0.01% Buddhists and 0.07% following other religions.

Municipal Administration and Politics

According to the Madras Presidency Panchayat Act of 1885. Rameswaram was declared a Panchayat Union during British times. It became a township during 1958 and was declared a municipality in 2004. Rameswaram is a 3rd grade municipality having 21 wards, out of which 6 are general wards of women and one is reserved for scheduled caste women.⁶The major sources of budgeted income for Rameswaram municipality comes from the Devolution fund of Rs.17 million and property tax of Rs.2.4 million. The Major expense heads are for salaries of Rs.6 million, operating expenses of Rs.3.7 million and repair maintenance expenditure of Rs.2.3 million. The functions of the municipality are devolved into six departments:

⁶ Krishnan, M., *Socio-economic dimensions of seaweed farming in India*, CMFRI Special Publication, 2010, p.104.

General, Engineering, Revenue, Public Health, Town Planning and the computer wing. All these departments are under the control of a Municipal commissioner who is the Supreme executive head. The legislative power are vested in a body of 21 members one each from the 21 wards.⁷ The legislative body is headed by an elected chairperson assisted by a Deputy Chairperson.

Rameswaram comes under the Ramanathapuram assembly constituency and it elects a member to the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly once every five years.

Rameswaram is a part of the Ramanathapuram it has been realigned in 2008 to have the following assembly constituencies Paramakudi. Ramanathapuram, Mudukulathur, Aranthangi, Tiruchuli. The constituency was traditionally a stronghold of the Indian National Congress that won 6 times till the 1991 elections, after which it was won twice each by the All India Anna Dravida Munetra Kazhagam and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam.

India's renowned scientist and former president of India, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, was born in Rameswaram.

Economy

Being a Pilgrimage town, the majority of the population is involved in tourism related industry consisting of trade and services. Service sector increased from 70% in 1971 to 98.78% in 2001, which the agricultural sector reduced from 23% in 1971 to

⁷ Nilakanta Sastri, *History of South India*, Published Oxford University press, New Delhi, 2009, p.314.

0.13% in 2001. Rameswaram is an industrially backward town there has been no demarcation for industrial land due to the pilgrim sanctity and ecological fragile geography. Being an island town, the traditional occupation was fishing, but due to poor returns, the people in fishing community have gradually shifted to other professions. Banks such as State Bank of India, Indian Bank and RDCC Bank (Ramanathapuram District Central Cooperative) have their branches in Rameswaram.

Transport and Communication

Pamban Bridge is a cantilever bridge on the Palk Strait that connects Rameswaram to mainland India. The railway bridge is 6,776 ft and was opened to traffic in 1914. The railroad bridge is a double. Leaf bascule bridge section that can be raised to let ships pass under it. The railway bridge historically carried meter-gauge trains on it, but Indian Railways upgraded the bridge to carry broad-gauge trains in a project that finished on 12 August 2007. Historically, the two leaves of the bridge were opened manually using levers by workers. About 10 ships-cargo carriers, coast guard ships, fishing vessels and oil tankers pass through the bridge every month. After completion of bridge, metregauge lines were laid from Mandapam up to Pamban station from where the railway lines bifurcated into two directions, one towards Rameswaram about 6.25 miles terminating at Dhanushkodi. The noted Boat Mail ran on this track between 1915 and 1964 from Chennai Egmore up to Dhanushkodi, from where the passengers were ferried to Talaimannar in Ceylon. The metregauge branch

line from Pamban Junction to Dhanushkodi was abandoned after it was destroyed in a cyclone in 1964.

There are daily express trains connecting major cities in Tamil Nadu like Chennai, Madurai, Tricity and Coimbatore. There are express and passenger trains connecting to major destinations. The Ramanathapuram – Rameswaram National Highway is the main connecting link from Rameswaram to the mainland. Before the 1914 train service linked the mainland with Rameswaram, boats were the only mode of transport to Rameswaram Island⁸.

⁹The Rameswaram municipality covers a total road length of 52 km and 20 km of National Highway covering about 80 percent of the town. ¹⁰The Tamil Nadu state Transport Corporation runs daily services connecting various cities to Rameswaram and operates a computerized reservation centre in the municipal bus stand of Rameswaram.

Rameswaram is the important port among all the ports in the district, having a ferry service to Talaimannar of Sri Lanka, though not operational throughout the year. Limited foreign trade is conducted with Jaffna, Kaituma, Talaimannar and Colombo.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.315.

⁹ Prema Kasturi, *South India Heritage*, East West Books, New Delhi, 2009, p.318.

¹⁰ Burton Stein, *The New History of India*, Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, 1993, p.135.

The Rameswaram TV Tower is the tallest tower in India. The tower is a 323m tall circular concrete tower with a square steel mast of 45m height, diameter of 24m at the bottom tapering to 6.5m at top. The tower has been designed for a wind velocity of 100km /h. There are two lighthouses in Rameswaram, the Pamban Lighthouse and Rameswaram Lighthouse.

Education and Utility services

Ramanathapuram district has one of the lowest literacy rates in the state of Tamil Nadu and Rameswaram, Following the district statistics has a lower literacy rate. There are a couple of government high Schools, One each for boys and girls. There are seven other Schools namely, Swami. Vivekananda Vidyalaya Matriculation School, St. Joseph Higher Secondary School and Kendriya Vidhyalaya School. Alagappa University Evening college is the only college located in the town and all the nearest colleges are located in Ramanathapuram and Paramakudi.

Electricity supply to the town is regulated and distributed by the Ramanathapuram circle of Tamil Nadu Electricity Board. Water supply is provided by the Rameswaram Municipality the head works is located at Nambunayaki Amman Kovil, Meyyambuli, Semmamadam and Natarajapuram distributed through four overhead tanks having a total capacity of 1430,000 litres. About 6 metric tones of solid waste are collected from the town every day in the four zones covering the whole of the town. Rameswaram does not have a Sewerage system for disposal of sullage and

the disposal system consists of septic tanks and public conveniences. Road side drains carry untreated sewage out of the town to let out raw into the sea or accumulates in low-lying area.

Rameswaram comes under the Karaikudi Telecom circle of the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited, India's state owned telecom and internet services provider. A part from telecom, BSNL also provides broadband internet services along with other major internet service provider like Reliance.¹¹

Religion

Being a Hindu Pilgrimage centre, Hindus form the visitor base of the city. There is a minority of Christians belonging to the fishing community. C.S.I Island Mission Church and St. Antony's Church at Oriyur on eastern shore of the Island are prominent Churches in the Island.

Rameswaram Fishery

Being an Island, a significant population is involved in fishery traditionally. Rameswaram fisherman allegedly killed or arrested by Sri Lankan navy along the maritime borders of India and Sri Lanka from the time of Sri Lankan civil war during 1983. In the Face of simmering tension after the 1985 January Colombo bound Yaldevi train attack in which 22 Sri Lankan soldiers and 16 civilians were killed, Rameswaram fishermen dared to venture to seas speling acute hardship for the

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.136.

10,000 fishermen family. An estimated 381 fisherman have been killed in the killings to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, but the casualty continues even after the end of LTTE in the region. The Tamil Nadu state government has increased the compensation of casualty from the original \$ 100,000 to 500,000. There has not been a single prosecution in any of the 381 killings committed so far from the Indian Judiciary. The cases not being filed is attributed to the fact the people killed beyond the maritime boundary of India are not eligible for compensation and not being file complaints against the Sri Lankan navy. Though the Indian Judiciary has provisions to prosecute foreigners, there is little progress due to the diplomatic overheads involved. Indian government has also ventured into the use of technology like use of Global positioning system by the fishermen and enabling cellphone blips to alert their mobile phones whenever they are crossing into Sri Lankan waters. The Sri Lankan navy has confirmed reports on Indian fishermen risking the international boundary due to depleted catch in Indian Waters.¹²

There is a yearly 45-day ban on fishery with motorboats in the region. The fishing ban for year 2012 was effective during the months of April-May. The jetty at Rameswaram is the largest landing centre for fishing boats in the region and it usually comes alive after the ban, with the arrival of fishermen, boat captains, shore workers and others from their native places.

¹² Darani Vasudevan, *Rameshwaram A holy Town*, Createspace Independent Publishing, Delhi, 2018, p.30.

Sea World Aquarium is a natural habitat lying opposite to the Rameswaram Bus stand, having an assortment of underwater creatures it is the only one of its kind in the state, filled with such varied marine life forms including exotic species.

CHAPTER II

RAMANATHASWAMY TEMPLE

Ramanathaswamy Temple is a Hindu temple dedicated to God Shiva located on Rameswaram island in the state of Tamil Nadu, India. Started in the 12th Century the temple has contribution from many rulers who ruled this city at some point of time. It is an honoured pilgrimage destination, which represents the southern most of the 12 Jyotirlingams of India. It is considered as holy as Benaras. This famous Hindu temple situated on the Rameswaram island is located off the sethu coast of Tamil Nadu.

The Temple

Like all ancient temples in South India, there is a high compound wall (madil) on all four sides of the temple premises measuring about 865 feet furlong from east to west and one furlongs of 657 feet from north to south with huge towers (Gopurams) at the east and west and gate towers on the north and south. The temple has striking long corridors in its interior, running between huge columnades on platforms above five feet high.¹ The junction of the third corridor on the west and paved way leading from the western gopuram to sethumadhava shrine forms a unique structure in the form of chess board and it is popularly known as Chokkattan Mandapam where the Utsava deities are adorned and kept during the spring festival and on the 6th day festival in Adi (July – August) and

¹ Revathey Girish, *Tourism Product-II*, Published Wisdom Press, New Delhi, 2012, p.42.

Masi (February – March)conducted by the Sethupati of Ramnad. The outer set of corridors is reputed to be the longest in the world being about 400 feet in each in the east and west and about 640 feet in north and south and inner corridors are about 640 feet in north and south and inner corridors are about 224 feet in east and west and about 352 feet each in north and south. Their width varies from 15.5 feet to 17 feet in the east and west about 172 feet on the north and south with width varying 14.5 feet to 17 feet. The total length of those corridors is 3850 feet. There are about 1200 pillars in the outer corridor. Their height is about 30 feet from the floor to the centre of the roof.

The contribution starts from here of the Kings of the Sethupathy dynasty to the temple was considerable. Especially to be remembered are the immense sums that were spent during the tenure of Pradani Muthirulappa Pillai towards the restoration of the Pagodas which were falling into ruins, the splendid Chockattan Mandapam or the cloistered precincts of the temple.² The temple was repaired and substantial portions were reconstructed by the Nagarathars of Devakottai, especially the Zamindari family.

Shrines in Rameswaram

- ❖ Ramanathaswami Shrine
- ❖ Viswanatha Shrine
- ❖ Visalakshi shirne
- ❖ Parvathavarthini

² *Ibid.*, p.43.

- ❖ Utsava idols
- ❖ Sayanagriha
- ❖ Perumal Shrine
- ❖ Santanaganapathi
- ❖ Sukravara Mandapam
- ❖ Mahaganapathi shrine
- ❖ Subramanya Shrine
- ❖ Sethumadhava Shrine
- ❖ Ramalinga Pratishta
- ❖ Nataraja Shrine
- ❖ Anjaneya Shrine
- ❖ Sethupati Mandapam
- ❖ Anuppu Mandapam
- ❖ Mahalakshmi Shrine
- ❖ Kalyana Mandapam
- ❖ Nandi Mandapam
- ❖ Gandhamadana Parvatham and
- ❖ Arulmigu Kothandaramar Temple.

These are the shrines in Rameshwaram.

The History of The Temple

Few temple in India could claim such antiquity and hoary history along with its spiritual aura such as the Arulmigu Ramanathasamy Temple in island of Rameswaram

jutting out of the India main land on the south east coast.³ Though anthropologists and historian have not been able to establish the exact date that this temple came into existence, there is little doubt that the shrine is as old as the Ramashwaram itself. Hindu mythology records that this shrine dates back to the period, when Sri Rama returned to the island after vanquishing the Rakshaka king of Sri Lanka.

The temple and the island of Rameswaram have acquired this name because, Lord Rama worshipped Lord Shiva, the God of Gods here on return from Sri Lanka. According to legend, after killing Ravana Lord Rama returned with his consort Goddess Seetha to India first stepping on the shores of Rameswaram. To expiate the dosha of killing a Brahmin Lord Rama wanted to offer worship to Lord Shiva. Since there was no shrine in the island Rama had dispatched Sri Hanuman to Kailash to bring an idol of Lord Shiva.

Since there was a delay in Sri Hanuman returning with the Sivalingam, Goddess Sita had moulded a Lingam. When Sri Hanuman returned with the Kailash Lingam, he saw that already a lingam of sand had been installed and which had been worshipped by the Lord Rama and Sita. He tried to remove the sand Lingam but could not do so. In order to appease him, Lord Rama had the Viswa Lingam brought by Sri Hanuman near the sand Lingam and both were worshipped.⁴

³ Subhadra Sen Gupta, *Rameswaram*, Rupa.Co, 2002, p.57.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.58.

This practice had been followed for centuries and is in vogue even today. According to the 'Thala Puranam' of the Sri Ramanathaswamy temple, the Shrine was housed in a thatched hut till the 12th century A.D. looked after by a series of ascetics. The existing records show that in the 12th century, Parakrama Bahu, King of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) constructed the sanctum sanctorum around the 'Moola Lingam' (Sri Ramanathaswamy) Sri. Viswanatha and Ambal shrine. In the 15th century, Udayan Sethupathi of Ramnad and a Vaisya of Nagore near Nagapattinam built the western store tower which was about 78 feet high and the compound wall. A wealthy devotee from Madurai constructed the Ambal Prakaram and also carried renovation works. In the 16th century, Tirumalai Sethupathi built a portion of the Southern second corridor.

His statue and that of his son Ragunatha Sethupathi are found by the side of the southern entrance to the Ambaj temple. They are honoured with flowers every Friday night. Later in the same century Chinna Udayan Sethupathi Katta Thevar who was a feudatory under Viswanatha Naicker of Madurai made some additions including the Nandi Mandapam.

In the seventeenth century Dalavai Sethupathi built a portion of the main eastern Gopuram. Early in the 18th century Ravi Vijaya Regunatha Sethupathi built the palliyarai (sayanagriha) and the Mandapam in front of the Ambal temple, Later in the same century, the world famous Third corridor was constructed by Muthuramalinga Sethupathi.

Architecture of the Ramanathaswamy Temple

A temple must have existed in Rameswaram for millennia but these shrines were made of perishable material like wood and bricks. The tevaram hymns of the poets Appar and Gnanasambandar both writing in the 7th century A.D. describe the shrine at Rameswaram. In the first millennium Tamil Nadu was ruled by some of the greatest Hindu dynasties of the south-the Pallavas, Cholas and Pandyas. The first stone shrines dedicated to Hindu deities were built by the Pallavas in the 6th century.⁵ The Pallavas gave us the temple of Kanchipuram, the Cholas the temples of 'Thanjavur' Srirangam and Chidambaram. The kings of Vijayanagar and the Nayaks gifted to posterity the shrines of the shiva temple dedicated to Ramanathaswamy at Rameswaram. These temples were built keeping strictly the principles laid down in the ancient architectural texts like the Shilpashastra and the Vastupurusha Mandala. The heart of the temple is the sanctum, the garbha griha with the tower of the shikhara rising over it. The garbha griha and the shikhara together create the structure called vimana. Then there are various halls that are attached to the vimana called the mandapas. The first was the vestibule attached to the garbha griha called the antarala, then comes the mahamandapa, the main assembly hall and finally the natya mandapa. There was a smaller temple placed next to the main shrine in the innermost courtyard. A shiva temple the Amman shrine had an image of

⁵ Subhadra Sen Gupta, *op.cit.*, p.59.

parvati while a Vishnu shrine got a temple of lakshmi. The goddess became very important to the temple rituals. The Ramanathaswamy temple is a beautiful example of the final stage of temple building.⁶ The temple was completed during the rule of the Nayakas in the 17th century after the destruction of the great Vijayanagar Empire but the Ramanathaswamy temple displays elements of architecture that flourished in the region for over five centuries.

There are two main shrines within the innermost enclosure, the first prakara. These are the double shrines of shiva as lord Ramanathaswamy and his consort, the goddess Durga, who is called Parvathavardhini Amman. The Ramanathaswamy shrine has two halls the antarala and the ardhmandapa, attached to the sanctum. During puja devotees gather in the larger assembly hall of the mahamandapa that faces the door of the sanctum. The garbha griha has two shivalingams the sandstone lingam called Ramalinga the Vishwalingam that was brought by Hanuman. Eleven important Lingams are said to have been established here by Rama, Hanuman, Sita, Laxman, Sugriva, Nala, Angada, Nila, Jambavan, Vibhishana and Indra. Like many ancient temples, the Ramanathaswamy temple has received many expensive gifts from kings and has a legendary collection of treasures. The temple treasures are displayed in a hall that stands in the second enclosure.

⁶ Meena, V., *Temples of South India A pilgrim's Guide*, Hari Kumari Arts, Kanniyakumari, 2009, p.11.

Festivals

The daily puja at the temple begins when the doors are opened at 4am and the first puja is called palliarai Deeparadhana. The god is awakened with the sound of conches and bells as the priests chant the shlokas that say, ‘‘Awake, Lord of the Universe, to do good for the benefit of the World. Be pleased to accept my worship.’’

There are six main pujas held all through the day. After the lingams have been bathed and offered naivedya at 4 am, the second service, the Udayamarthanda puja begins at 7 am, The third service Udayakala puja begins at 10 am. This elaborate ceremony begins with the sacred water from the koti teertham tank being carried to the temple on the back of an elephant. The fourth service, the Uchchkala puja begins at noon.

The fifth or sayaraksha puja begins at 6 pm when the musicians play at the door of the sanctum. The sixth and final puja of the day, the Ardhayam puja begins at 9 pm after which Lord Ramanatha retires to bed. Pilgrims gather in the mahamandapa to watch the ceremony and many worship Shiva by doing the abhishekha of the lingam with Ganga water brought from the North.⁷

The most important celebration at the Ramanathaswamy temple is Maha shivaratri, when in February/March, the Tamil month of Masi a twelve day festival is held. It is the day when shiva is said to have drunk the poison that had risen to the surface

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.11.

during the churning of the oceans. Another tradition says it is the day when shiva wed parvati.⁸ It begins on the sixth day of the Krishna paksha, the for night of the waning moon and ends with the new moon day. The greatest celebrations of shivaratri in the land are held at the jyotirlinga shrines like Varanasi, Madurai and Rameshwaram.

The vasantotsavam festival is held in the summer, May / June in the Tamil month of vaikasi from the sixth day of the Krishna paksha to the full moon day. The festival of Ramalinga pratistha celebrates the installation of the Ramalingam by Rama. It is held for ten days in June /July in the Tamil month of Ani. The Brahmotsavam Festival, is celebrated in July / August, the Tamil month of Adi in the Thirukalyanam Festival that lasts for seventeen days.⁹

The goddess is again Worshipped during the nine day Navaratri festival held in September / October in the Tamil month of Purattaci. The Adi Amavasai festival takes place in July. Among the other festivals celebrated in the temple are the Skandasasti festival in September / October, the Tamil month of Aipaci that celebrates the killing of a demon called Suran by Lord Subramanya. Makara Sankranti is celebrated in January / February in the Tamil month of Tai. Vaikuntha Ekadasi honours Rama in December / January, in the Tamil month of Margali.¹⁰

⁸ Prema Kasturi, *South India Heritage*, East West Books, New Delhi, 2007, p.318

⁹ Swami Atmashraddhananda, *Kanya kumara and Rameswaram*, Sri Rama Krishna Math, Chennai, 2015, p.53.

¹⁰ Jones, *Encyclopedia of Hinduism*, Infobase Publishing, New York, 2007, p. 45.

CHAPTER III

HOLY THEERTHAS

Badrinath, Ketharnath, Purijeganath and Rameswaram are considered to be the four holiest places in India. Rameswaram is in the south and other three are in the north. Among the twelve Jyotirlinga sthalas, Rameswaram is the only one situated in the south and it is thickly related with Ramayan.

Rameswaram is as holy as Kasi. Though Kasi gives mukthi if one dies there Rameswaram gives mukthi if one see it. People from Himalayas to Kanyakumari visit here. It is embodied as a symbol of national spirituality of the Saivites and Vaishnavites.¹

Rameswaram is trinity divinely famous for it's theerthams, Murthy and devotees. Devotees wish to take holy baths in the holiest theerthams. 30 theerthams are in outside and 22 theerthams are inside the temple.

The THEERTHAMS OF THE TEMPLE INSIDE THE CORRIDOR AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

1.MAHALAKSHMI THEERTHAM

The Punya theertha is called Lakshmi theertha or Mahalakshmi theertha is located south of the Sethupathy Mandapam, the entrance to the shrine and in the area between Sri Amman Sannathi Marriage hall and Sri Mahalakshmi Shrine. This theertha is the first theertha of this inside the temple.

There happened a small quarrel between the savior of the world Thirumal and his wife Srilakshmi in the Vaigunth. Consequently, Lakshmi left Thirumal and

¹ Loganathan, S. P., *Shortage of priests at Rameswaram Temple*, Deccan Chronicle, Bombay, 2012, p.76.

Vaigunth and reached the Gandamadana range of the world near Rameswaram.² As requested by her, Rishis living in this mountain constructed penance hall for her. While Sri Lakshmi was thus living there, Narada, Rishi came there and worshipped her. As advised by Narada, Lakshmi created a pond and a Sivalinga and consecrated the linga. Daily she used to bath in the pond and conducted Poojas for Sivalinga and offered prayers to him. Thrice a day she had poojas offered to Siva.

Aggrieved over the disappearance of his wife. Vaigunthvasa searched for her in a number of places and came last to the Gandamadana Mountain range. He saw his wife there and met her. In order to end the quarrel, Lord Vaigunth told many good things to her. When he was trying best to take her back Vaigunth, Lakshmi expressed to her husband, her wish that the Theertha created by herself should be called Lakshmi theertha. She also requested that those who dip in the theertha and worship Sivalinga should be wholly prosperous. There after the theertha is called Lakshmi theertha or Mahalakshmi theertha Devotees taking a holy dip will enjoy all health and wealth.

2.SAVITHRI THEERTHAM

Savithri theertham is located north of the entrance of the third corridor of the Ramanathaswamy temple and east of the Natarajar shrine. Dipping in the theerthas and worshipping god will rid devotees of sins. It is said that one rishi's son Kasiban bathed in the theerthas and offered poojas and thus got rid of his sins.

3. GAYATHRI THEERTHAM

Gayathri theertham is located on the west of the Hanuman temple. Its significance is king Kasibar got rid of his curse.³

² Murali, J. C., *Tamizhaga Sivatalangal*, Chatura Padipakkam, Chennai, 2000, p.62.

³ Seturaman, k., *Rameswaram Koil*, J. J. Publications, Madurai, 2001, p.57.

4. SARASWATHI THEERTHAM

Saraswathi and Gayathri Theerthas coupled with Savithri Theertha would enable the devotees who perform poojas as per rituals to attain prosperity by ridding of sins. Kasibar benefited thus.

5. SETHUMADHAVA THEERTHAM

There is a holy theertha called Sedhu Madhava theertha in the third cooridor of the Sri Ramanathaswamy temple. This theertha is a pond. Those who bathe here will attain Lakshmi vilas and Siddha Sudh. Sudhama rishi explained the power of this theertha to the rishis of Naimisha forest. Many years ago, there was a king by name Sundarapandiya ruling over Madurai. He had an ambition to vist and stay in the Gandhamadhana mountain and take bath in the holy theerthas and worship Sri. Ramanatha Perumal. Leaving Madurai, he came with his wife Vindhavani to the Sethu region. After handing over the reign to his son, Sundarapandiyan reached Sethu region just for the purpose of living a saivite life.⁴

Accordingly after worshipping Ramanathaswamy he conducted yaga to appease the blue bodied Thirumal. In order to gauge the depth of his affection Thirumal sent his wife Lakshmidevi in the form of an orphan girl. Happy to see the girl, the king (who had no daughter) accepted her as his daughter and he and his wife brought her up. One day the blacky man took the form of an old Brahmin and came to the orchard where the princess was. He had on his shoulders containers with Ganga water, hands with fans and the rudhtratsha on. This Brahim entered the orchard stealthily and laid hand on the princess. Immediately the servant maids accompanying the princess sought out the the king and complained to him about the Brahmin's unjust deed.

⁴ Harshananda, swami, *Hindu Pilgrimage Centres*, Ramakrishna Math Publication, Bangalore, 2012, p.98.

The king got the Brahmin enchained and imprisoned him at a place in the Ramanathaswamy temple. At night the king had a dream when he was in deep slumber. In the dream, Lord Narayana showed himself as the old Brahmin and Lakshmi devi as his daughter the princess. The dream had an effect on him. Waking up in surprise he immediately went to the place of the princess. In that room also he saw, what he saw in the dream. The next morning, the king took the princess to temple. There he witnessed the sight of Thirumal being in chains. He craved the pardon of the god after feeling sorry for chaining. Narayana told him that the chains. He also declared that his (Narayanan`s) name would be always called Sethumadhavan.⁵

⁶The statue of SethuMadhavan alias Thirumal is built of white stone. “There is the SethuMadhava theertham near the shrine. It can offer a lot of puniya effects. The devotees who bathe in this theertham and worship him (God) will have all the Curse, benefits as available after bathing in the Sethu Theertha. If a pooja with the soil from the nearby Dhanushkodi is done for him (God), the devotees will have the Punya as of doing the “Kasi Yathra”. Hence Rameswara is also reputed Vaishnavite Sthala.

6. GANDHAMADANA THEERTHAM

There are a number of theerthas both inside and outside Sri Ramanathaswamy temple of Rameswaram, one of the twelve Jyotirlingas. Of these theerthas, two are located west of the second corridor of the temple and east of third corridor around Sethumadhavar Sannithis One among is Gandhamadana Theertha.⁷ Bathers of the Gandamadana theertha are lucky people. They will have the benefit of their

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.99.

⁶ Venugopalam, R., *Meditation: Any Time Anywhere*, B. Jain Publishers Ltd., New Delhi, 2003, p.51.

⁷ Macherla Diwakar, *Temples of South India*, Techno Book House, Chennai, 2010, p.161.

generations- continuing poverty nullified. They will obtain all Ishwaryas. Even if they have committed Brahamahathi etc., they will be protected against the effects.

7. GAVATCHA THEERTHAM

Bathing in the Gavatcha theertha will relieve devotees of sick and exempt them from hellish troubles.

8. GAVAYA THEERTHAM

Devotees who have bathed in this theertha become eligible for living under the (shade of) Karpaka Virutchu Tree of the land of Indiran.

9. NALA THEERTHAM

It is located in the area of the Sethumadhava Temple. Devotees taking a dip in the Nalan created theertha and worshipping for three days their ancestors will get tonnes of Punya and they will get the luminous body as that of the heaven dwellers and cure all diseases.

10. NEELA THEERTHAM

Neela theertha was created by Neelan. Devotees worshipping Ramanathaswamy after a dip in this theertha will obtain the benefit of doing Swornayah. They will become eligible for living in the land of the sun-god.

11. SANGUTHEERTHAM

Sangu theertham is located in the junction of the temple's second corridor in the east and second corridor in the north and east of the treasury. Its significance is Vasanabhan the sage, got rid of his sin of ingratitude.

12. CHAKRA THEERTHAM

Chakra theertham is located north of the Madapalli of the second corridor to the east of the holy temple is called Chakra Theertha. As it was created by Rishi Akirputhra, this theertha has another name of Rishi theertha. This theertha has power to halt all obstacles created by evil doors and destroy them if required. If devotees take bath in the chakra theertha, all doshas like Bramhahathi and chase away evil ghosts. All sins will be washed off and physical deformities like hunch back, blindness and deafness rectified.⁸

13.BRAHMAHATHI VIMOCHANA THEERTHA ALIAS BRAHMAHATHI THEERTHA

Brahmahathi theertha is located in the second corridor north of the Sri Ramanathasway temple. This theertha was created by Sri Rama himself.

14. SOORIYA THEERTHA

Devotees taking bath in this Sooriya- created theertha will have knowledge of the past, present and the future. They will also qualify for living in the land of Sooriya.

15. CHANDRA THEERTHAM

Devotees taking bath in this Chandra theertha will have knowledge of the past, present and future and reach the worlds they want.

16. GANGA THEERTHAM

Ganga theertha is located north of the second corridor of the Arulmigu Ramanathaswamy temple at Rameswaram. Once there lived a king by the name of Nandhan who had a son called Gnanasruti. He was ruling over his subjects treating

⁸ Tangaraj. M., *Tamil Nadu An Unfinished Task*, SAGE, 2003, p.170.

them as the blood of his blood and the flesh of his flesh. He had made arrangements for establishing lodging facilities for passers by with boarding, offering worship to the gods in Saivite and Vaishnavite temple as per vedic particples, adhering to the tenets of the books and ensuring that the citizens lived prosperously and peacefully⁹. The name and fame of the king spread throughout the length and the breadth of the universe. This made the heaven livers also curious and they too had a desire to watch how the king ruled over his citizens¹⁰. All devas, rishis Siddhi Gandharva etc, of heaven came down and arrived at the place bordering his country. They took the form of swans and descended upon the lotus filled gardens of the country side.¹¹

In the Autumnal period, one night King Gnanesh was having a conversation with his queen in one of his gardens on a Chandraganthi dais. At that time the devas in the form of Swamy were to return to heaven. They appeared to Devendra to bless king Gnanasruti in person as he was a man of honour and sympathy. King Devendra questioned how the king could have claim to greatness. Whatever good done by the king was for obtaining a good life in the rebirth. He also started that the king had nothing good which deserved to be greeted and blessed personally. He further explained to the devas that a punya pursh thousand times greater than Gnanasruti was doing penance in the Gandamadana of the sethu region established by Sri Rama himself. This rishi who had no legs had the name of Rayagurvan. This handicapped had such divine blessing that he could bring the Ganges, Yamuna and Gaya rivers to Gandamadhana mountain range, the place of his residence. This rishi had also seen that the devotees having a dip in these river flowing in the sethu region would be blessed and benefitted.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.170.

¹¹ *Tangaraj, M., op.cit.*, p.170.

This conversation about the prowess of Rayaguva and the three rivers was heard by Gnanasruti. He learned that whatever good deeds he had done till then did not pave the way for motcha. He was determined to seek blessings of the handieapped rishi and therefore commanded his charioteer to go and search for rishi in the Gandamadhana region.

The news told by his charioteer pleased king Gnanasruti and he had immediately made up his mind to seek the blessings of the Rishi Rayagva and this paved the way for obtaining motcha and reaching heaven and avoiding further rebirths. He immediately handed over his rule to his ministers. He started his journey to the Kandamdhana range and took with him a thousand cows and a chariot hestooned with gems and a sack of golden ornaments.

On reaching his destination stood bowing before the Rishi Rayaguva who had bathed in the Ganga, Yamuna and Gaya duly observing penance. He prostrated before the rishi who refused to accept them. Rayaguva explained to Gnanasruti that materials like gold since he was in the divine flood which is all powerful and everflowing. The king replied that the presentations made by him would not equal even one part of a crore and asked him to accept then yet and lead him to motcha. The rishi dedicated all the wealth to Sri Ramanathaswamy. He also told the king that those who were living a family life without sins would obtain the entrance to motcha.

The rishi was pleased that the king chose to be with him despite the desire for wealth. He therefore gave the vara that the king would have a dip in the rivers and there go on to the lord where there is no rebirths. The king accordingly took bath in the rivers and got rid of ignorance. He worshipped the rishi and stayed with him for a long time in the range and obtained Brahmaswaroop.¹²

¹² Tangaraj, M., op.cit., p.170

17. YAMUNA THEERTHAM

It is located in the `inner corridor of the temple. It`s significance is Gnanasruti Rajah has attained wisdom.

18. GAYA THEERTHAM

Gaya theerthas are located north of the second corridor of the Arulmigu Ramanathaswamy temple at Rameswaram.

19. SIVA THEERTHAM

Siva theertha is located in the second corridor of Sri Ramanathaswamy temple east of the Bairava Sannidhi and west of big treasury¹³. A holy dip in the Shiva theertha will rid all afflicted devotees of Brahmahathi and will them achieve external bliss.

20. SATHYAMIRTHA THEERTHAM

Sathyamirtha theertham is located in the north of second corridor of the Sri Ramanathaswamy temple in the Gandamadhana mountain range. Devotees taking a dip in this theertha and workshipping will get all their troubles blown over and they will have all types of joy. They will also have the benefits of doing various yahas and attain enlightenment, the basis of rebirth. It`s significance is emperor Bruravan got rid of his curse.

21. SARVA THEERTHAM

Sarva theertha is located between the second corridor north of the Arulmigu Ramanathaswamy Temple, east of the Bairava Sannithi and west of the big treasury. A dip in this theertha will rid one of sine and cure all sickness. Once, there was one Sudarsanam who was a born blind with capacity to recite the Vedas. He was a Brahmin who hailed from the vediar caste. He had an insatiable desire for taking

¹³ Vanamamalai Pillai, N., *The Setu and Rameswaram*, Sura Pvt., Madras, 1929, p.94.

baths in all holy theerthas. Hence he was praying to Sri Ramanathaswamy all the time. He used to conduct Annadhanam for Siva dasas. He was doing penance for a long time despite rain and the hot sun.¹⁴ The incarnation of Karuna (pity) Sivaparam appeared before this Sudarsanam in his ornamented ears.

The God commanded Sudarsanan to look upto him and immediately he attained wisdom and felt parameswara as incomparable molten fire and offered prayers to him in a number of ways. Umayurubagar became happy and agreed to give him any vara that he demanded of him. The sage replied that he was suffering from sickness, old age and incapacity and prayed to the Almighty to establish all theerthas in one place inorder to expiate all doshas. So siva thought immediately of establishing them and so they appeared. In order to connect all the theerthas and rivers, Siva commanded his Vagana Velvidai. Immediately the ox created a big (taltaka) pond by usin its front legs. When sarva theertha reacted the taltaka (pond), Sudarsanan immediately worshipped and bathed in the theertham. He become young and his body started shining like gold. After bathing he applied holy ash to his body and prayed to Siva.

God declared that since all rivers and theerthas were brought to the pond it would be called Sarva theertham. Who ever came, took bath in and dring it would live a peaceful and lovely life in this world.¹⁵ They will go to motcha in the world. People who have committed lots of sins will get all then sins expiated if they sprinkle that theertha water on themselves. He commanded Sudarsan to bath in the theertha and pray him always. Afterwards he could come to Kailaya and be with him for ever.

¹⁴ Narayanaswamy, V., *Splendour of Tamil Nadu*, Sura's Pvt. Ltd., Madras, 1991, p.46.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.94.

Accordingly, Sudarsanan took a dip in their theertha and got back his youth and his shining golden body resembled that of Madan.¹⁶ As per the decree of Siva, devotees taking a dip in this theertha and drinking and touching it will be rid of old age, pain and they will get relief from their innumerable sins.

22. KODI THEERTHAM

Kodi theertha alias Punya theertha is located in the first corridor of the Ramanathaswamy Temple north of the Srikasi Visalakshi Sannathi and east of Srimathi Visalakshi Amman Sannathi. Thirumal taking the form of the son of the emperor came into being to show the powers of Dharma and justice. Lord Rama created this theertha with his bow called Gothandam. Hence the name is kodi theertha. This theertha enables devotees to get rid of their sins and best on blessings for getting wishes attaining their wishes.

After destroying Ravana, along with sita, Lord Rama installed a theertha in the Gandamadhana mountain range and worshipping shiva. Lord Rama wanted to both the sivalinga with the Ganges water and hence he struck bow on the ground and brought Ganga. When he took back the bow, the river goddess Ganga reached the place and started flowing. Rama worshipped the Sivalinga after bathing in Ganga water and then returned to Ayothi.¹⁷

Conclusion

The temple is one of the most divine Hindu Char Dham sites comprising Badrinath, Puri and Dwarka. However the Origins are not known, the Advaita school of Hinduism documented by Sankaracharya, who created Hindu monastic administrations across India, traits the source of Char Dham to the seer. The four friaries lie across the four corners of India, and their attendant temples are Badrinath

¹⁶ Seturaman.K., *Rameswaram Koil*, J.J.Publications, Madurai, 2001, p.62.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.63.

Temple at Badrinath in the North, Jagannath temple at puri in the East, Dwarakadheesh Temple at Dwarka in the West and Ramanathaswamy Temple at Rameswaram in the South.¹⁸

¹⁸ Meena, V, *Tamil Nadu - The land of Splendour A Travel Guide*, Hari Kumari Arts, Kanniyakumari, 2000, p.36.

CHAPTER IV

TOURIST PLACES OF RAMESWARAM

There is a Plethora of tourist attractions in Rameswaram which beautify the city.

Following are the Major tourist attractions in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu, which are worth a visit on your tour to Rameswaram.

Dhanushkodi

The sacred spot called Dhanushkodi has the Palk Bay to its north and the Mannar Bay to the south. As this is where the waters of the Bay of Bengal merge into the Indian Ocean, it creates a sacred and very rare confluence of two seas. Many historical chronicles mentioned kings arriving at Dhanushkodi to bathe in the sea and among them the most famous is Krishnadeva Raya of Vijayanagar who came here in the 16th century, probably after the conquest of Lanka.¹

Pilgrims bathe in the waters here in a small lagoon called Ratnakara. Much of Dhanushkodi was destroyed in the last cyclone and a new temple dedicated to Hanuman has been built here in 1995. During his wanderings around the country, the sage Swami Vivekananda came to Dhanushkodi in 1897. He was on his way to Kanyakumari where he would meditate on a desolate island just off the shore and gain enlightenment.

¹ Macherla Diwakar, *Temples of south India*, Techno Book House, Chennai, 2010, p.161.

Dhanushkodi is about 20 km south-east of the town of Rameshwaram and pilgrims reach it after a three km walk from the road where the buses will drop them. Here Rama is said to have built the bridge to cross to Lanka. Though other myths place the Ramasetu at the nearby tirtha of Devipattinam. There are a string of reefs and islets that stand out in the water between the two main lands and called Adam's Bridge in the maps, but for the pilgrims it is Hanuman's Sethu.

Later Rama bathed at the sacred confluence at Dhanushkodi before doing penance for killing Ravana and so pilgrims perform the funeral ritual of shraddha here. It is considered especially auspicious to bathe here in the month of May. It is also said that Rama destroyed a small bridge here with his bow at the request of Vibhishana.²

Pamban Bridge

The Pamban Bridge on the Palk Strait connects Rameswaram to mainland India. It refers to both the road bridge and the cantilever railway bridge, though primarily it means the latter. It was India's first sea bridge. It is the second longest sea bridge in India at a length of about 2.3 km. From the elevated two-lane road bridge, adjoining islands and the parallel rail bridge below can be viewed.

² *Ibid.*, p.162.

The railway bridge is 6,776ft (2,065m) and was opened for traffic in 1914. The railrode bridge is a still-functioning double-leaf bascule bridge section that can be raised to let ships pass under the bridge.

The railway bridge historically carried meter-gauge trains on it, but Indian Railways upgraded the bridge to carry broad-gauge trains in a project that finished Aug 12, 2007. Until recently, the two leaves of the bridge were opened manually using levers by workers. About 10 ships cargo carriers, coast guard ships, fishing vessels and oil tankers_ pass through the bridge every month. According to Dr. Narayanan, the bridge is located at the “World’s second highly corrosive environment”, next to Miami, US, making the construction a challenging job. The location is also a cyclone- prone high wind velocity zone.

Agnitheertham

One of the 64 sacred baths in Rameshwaram, the Agnitheertham is one of the most important theertham and receives a large number of tourists each day. Located on the beach side of Sri Ramanathaswamy temple Agnitheertham is the only theertham sited the temple complex.³

In the Sanskrit language, the word agni means fire which the word theertham means holy water. Agnitheertham has been mentioned several times in ancient texts and

³ Sura, *South India Tourist Guide*, Sura Book Ltd, New Delhi, 2006, p.114.

mythological legends as a pilgrimage of significant importance among the Hindus. The devotees visiting the theertham offer their prayers to the deity and atone their sins by taking a dip in the holy water before starting the pilgrimage to Rameshwaram.

The Five – Faced Hanuman Temple

Five – Faced Hanuman temple is the most renowned temple in Rameshwara. It has mythological evidence where Hanuman showed his profile with five faces. He is reckoned to be embellished with senthooram at this particular place.

The statues of all Rama, Laxman, Sita and Hanuman are placed in the temple and all have been sacredly worshiped and revered to the apex. The actual soul of the Gods is supposed to have been put into the idols and this gives a very mystic feel to it. There is a floating stone outside the temple which was used to create the bridge on the sea as prescribed by our Indian mythology.

Ariyaman Beach

Ariyaman Beach is a long stretch of Pristine white sand beach famous for its scenic beauty. The clear waters and the gentle waves create an irresistible environment for the tourists. The beach is also called Khushi Beach and has enough facilities for boating, Swimming and water sports. Those who never wish to leave the beach can opt to stay at one of the cottages by the seashore.

Kalam House

Housing knick knacks from India's most beloved president's childhood, the A.P.J. Abdul Kalam House was known scientist and provide inspiration to all those who visit the place. It is a little-known fact that Dr. Kalam was born and brought up in Rameshwaram, in the very same housed today. Established in 2011, the place holds many interesting photographs from the president's childhood and later life, depicting his formative years, research, awards, and achievements, along with is love for cultures, his mother, and motherland. The second floor has a shop where you can buy artifacts that are made up of sea shells Light is also thrown on his defance research and developments, which is something truly inspiring. Head here with your family to spend time understanding the simple life of an extraordinary man.⁴

Kalam National Memorial

Kalam National Memorial was built in the honour of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam. The splendid memorial was initiated by the Defence Research and Development Organisation in 2015. They display an impressive collection of memorabilia that cherishes the priceless contributions of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam including replicas of missiles, rockets and information about the Pokhran Nuclear Test. The memorial has a beautiful blend of Mughal and Indian architecture with components sourced from different parts of the

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.116.

country making it truly a symbol of national integration which goes very well with Abdul Kalames love and admiration for all aspects of the Indian culture.

Tripadvisor Burial Place of Abdul Kalam

Burial Place of APJ Abdul Kalam is where the mortal remains of the 11th President of India are laid to rest in peace. The burial ground is visited often by admirers to pay homage to the missile man of India.

Jatayu Tirtham

Jatayu thirtham is the holy temple constructed in the memory of Jatayu, who was the most loyal Rama and who helped lord Rama at various instances in getting herbs from the mountains.

It is said that this eagle lost its life in order to save the life of lord Rama and hence its sacrifice is always appreciated and it is worshiped as a deity even today. It was buried in the soil when it died and Jatayu temple has been created at the place of its burial. The whole of its pit was filled with Vibhuti, which is the holy ash that is obtained after the Yagnas.⁵ It is believed that it was buried in the soil when after death and Jatayu temple has been created at the place of its burial. The whole of its pit was filled with Vibhuti, which is the holy ash that is obtained after the Yagnas.

⁵ Rajesh Singh, *Pilgrimage Tourist*, Sonali Publications, New Delhi, 2011, p.149.

Lakshmana Tirtham

Lashmana tirtham had been constructed in the loving memory of lord lakshman, brother of lord Rama. In order to offer sacred prayers to lord lakshmana this temple has been constructed in Rameshwaram itself which indicates that lord Lakshmana had been given a valuable place in the dynasty of lord valuabale plce in the dynasty of lord Rama. Several wonderful sculptures of lord Lakshmana has been carved out from marble and the temple has the statues of lord Rama and goddess sita too which signifies the spirit of unitedness that existed between them.

Villoondi Tirtham

Villondi Tirtham is a beach which is also considered a sacred natural water body and a favourite amongst tourists. It also has a spring inside the sea which makes the attraction a unique one and is often association with the legend of Ramayana. It is believed that lord Rama shot an arrow to create this spring to help his people with drinking water.⁶

Kothandaramaswamy Temple

Kothandaramaswamy temple is situated on the Southern most tip of India and is situated on the island near Bay of Bengal. Indian ocean covers it from all its sides. There had been several instances of cyclone in the area but the temple stayed to be intact even

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.149.

in most critical times. It too has the history and story of Ramayan in its footings. Here, vibhishana, Ravan's brother joined hands with Rama and hence vibhishana too is worshiped at this place. The temple has several wonderful paintings all around the walls of it which flows with the flow of Ramayana and one can enjoy being in the temple with the guide who keeps narrating the story at every instance of time.

Kunthu Kal Beach

Kunthu Kal Beach is located on the pamban Island in the Indian Ocean. The tranquil seashore is a treat to beach lovers. The picturesque location of turquoise waters and glimmering sand lined by coconut trees draws tourists every year. The beach is also said to be a rich source of medicinal herbs in the region.⁷

Nambu Nayagiamman Temple

Nambu Nayagiamman Temple is a 14th century temple dedicated to Lord Rama. The tranquility and the splendid architecture with enormous bells and beautiful lawns draw not just the devotees but tourists as well. The main shrine is an open structure built to allow sunlight in which adds to the uniqueness of the temple.

⁷ Revathy Girish, *Eco Tourism of India*, Dominant publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 2016, p.78.

Gandhanadhana Parvatham

Gandhamadhana Parvatham is the deity of several communities in Southern India and the temple of Gandhamadhana is highly revered, renowned and worshiped in the Southern India. The temple is a massive two storeyed and lord Rama's feet are imprinted on the chakra placed in the temple. Believers and pilgrims alike long to visit this holy place and offer their prayers to the feet of Lord ram. It is one of the most important places in regards of historic significance. Plenty of other pilgrim spots surrounded the Gandhamadhana parvatham and one can visit these when on a pilgrimage.

Tiruppullani

Tiruppullani is a coastal village to the south of the town of Ramanathapuram, on the way to Rameswaram. As the tirtha of Tiruppullani is on the main land, 11 Kilometres from Rameswaram, pilgrims often visit it on their way to the sage pulla'. This sage meditated for many years to gain the darshana of Vishnu and the god appeared before him in the from of Adi Jagannatha. Vishnu promised sage pulla that he would always be present at the temple to listen to the prayers of his devotees. A ten-day festival is celebrated here on this occasion every year in April, the Tamil month of panguni.

The two most sacred shrines at Tiruppullani are the Darbha Sayanam temple dedicated to Rama and the Adi Jagannatha temple dedicated to Vishnu.⁸ After the bridge to Lanka had been built, Rama worshipped the goddess of war, Durga and Lord Vishnu. He prayed for victory and begged the deities that the newly built, bridge should be guarded by goddess Durga of Devipattinam and by Adi Jaganntha of Tiruppullani and the deities granted his request. Later after his coronation as the king of Ayodhya, Rama and sita returned to Tiruppullani to worship at the temples.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.79.

CONCLUSION

Generally it is believed that the Ramanathaswamy Temple had an ancient origin with its in the religious consciousness of the Hindu and held extremely sacred as one of the most in whole country. Among its builders the names of the Setupati rajas of Ramnad figures prominently. A Setupati named Udaiyan is believed to have built the central shrines in the 15th century CE. The western gopura is also ascribed to in the 17th century CE, these Ramnad rajas enjoyed considerable political power in the Setu. Which gives them this family Setupati, a part from the Setupatis, the Pandyas, Nayaks, Nathikotai Chettis and others also contributed to the building of this temple at different stages without affecting any significant change in the construction was obtained from Ambasamudram in Tirunelveli district.

The Ramanathaswamy Temple has preserved its traditions for centuries. The priests here, as at Chidambaram, follow a strict regimen of rituals and worship. These priests called Pancha Desa Brahmins had at some point in distant past migrated from the neighbouring states of Kerala, Kamataka, Andhra Pradesh, Konkan and Maharashtra today they appear to be mostly of a Maharashtrian Origin.

This magnificent temple is one of the last works in the long tradition of Indian temple architecture it is also one of the finest temples in India and the greatest in the Indian peninsula.

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GLOSSARY

1. Adhisthana - South Indian term for base or Socle composed of a Sense of mouldings.
2. Alvar - Vaisnava saints, any hymnists belonging to the bhakti Devotional movement.
3. Amman - Shrine or pavilion for the consort of the main deity.
4. Antarala - Vesibule or passage in front of the sanctuary or sanctum
5. Basement - lower part of temple walls, usually decorated with Mouldings.
6. Bhagvata - associated with worship of Vishnu.
7. Bhakti - An individual's devotion to a personal god.
8. Dravida - South Indian or Southern.
9. Garbha griha - Worship chamber, sanctum of a temple containing the central image for worship
10. Gopura - towered gateway to South Indian temples, monumental Gateway at the entrance.
11. Kailas - mountain abode of shiva and parvati; cosmic summit of the universe in Hindu mythology.
12. Kumbha - bulbous water pot, derivative torus Moulding.

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 13. Latina | - type of northern (Nagara) temple Superstructure. |
| 14. Linga | - the phallic symbol of shiva. |
| 15. Mandapa | - pillared pavilion of which the following are the most Types: ardha (fronting the sanctuary doorway when larger than the antarala) gudha (walled) kalyana (for ceremonial Wedding of the deities in South India) maha (main Component of the south Indian temple in front of the Vimana. Sabha (for assembly equivalent of maha and usually Ranga) |
| 16. Mantra | - magical formula, incantation. |
| 17. Mudra | - sign, hand gesture conveying states of mind |
| 18. Nandi | - Shiva's vehicle. |
| 19. Nataraja | - shiva as the 'Lord of Dance' in his aspect as creator and destroyer of the world, normally represented within a Circle of flame |
| 20. Nayanmar | - saiva saints and hymnists. |
| 21. Pasupata | - a saiva sect |
| 22. Pediment | - triangular formulations of mouldings above a niche |

- | | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| 23. Pitha | - | Plinth or socle composed of a series of Mouldings. |
| 24. Pithika | - | image pedestal. |
| 25. Purna-kalasa | - | bowl of plenty |
| 26. Ratha | - | car, temple chariot used in festival processions |
| 27. Shikhara | - | northern temple superstructure, crowning cupola of South Indian temple vimana. |
| 28. Vihara | - | residential quarters or monastery for the Monks. |
| 29. Vimana | - | temple superstructure. |

TREASURE TROVE OF ARTS AND CRAFTS IN TAMILNADU

Project submitted to

St.Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi

affiliated to

ManonmaniamSundaranar University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

By

Gloria Mercy.B

(Reg.No. 19APHI05)



Department of History

St.Mary's College (Autonomous)

Reaccredited with 'A+' Grade by NAAC

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2020-2021

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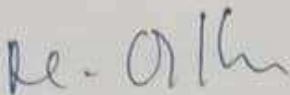
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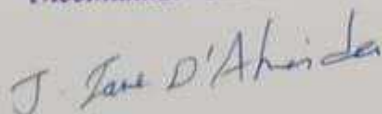
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project entitled "**Treasure Trove of Arts and Crafts In Tamil Nadu**", submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History and is a work done during the year 2020-2021 by B. Gloria Mercy, a bonafide student of the Department of History, St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi.

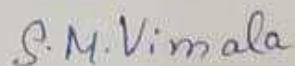


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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project entitled "**Treasure Trove of Arts and Crafts In Tamil Nadu**", submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History, is my original work and it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

Place: Thoothukudi

Date: 10-04-2021

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Signature of the Candidate

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

In the Coromandel Coast, the Eastern Ghats turn away, to meet the Western Ghats in the Nilgiris. There are a few hills in the area, but the plain steadily increases in width southwards. This is the Kaveri basin, the heart of Tamilaham, the home of the Tamils, or Tamil Nadu, the land of unnumbered temples, of indigenous arts and of almost prehistoric industries. Here, artificial irrigation was practiced in the remote past, and some of the most ancient prehistoric settlements of India were located in this area.¹ The famous bronzes of Tamil Nadu reached a stage of perfection and the greatest Natarajas appeared at this time. The other arts, including dance, music, theatre and literature attained their zenith. Most crafts have been adapted to serve religious needs - from the bronze, depicting the Gods to simple basketry, where even the designs and weave may have cosmic connotations. The deep, strong roots of religion have provided a binding force and permanence for Tamil culture, ensuring a continuity of tradition and a major role for the arts. Because classical culture has always been strong and religion deep – rooted, the folk crafts became classicized the village terracottas became the great bronzes, the wood carvings became monuments in stone. Thus, it is very difficult to tell an art form apart from a craft. The basic insularity of the culture protected it from extraneous influences which could have changed its form, as happened elsewhere in India. Instead, the creative genius of the people and their love for the fine arts strengthened the styles from within.²

Although the whole state shares a common language and culture, various parts developed their own distinct styles. If the metalware and woodwork of Chettinad are notable for their design, the work in Thondaimandalam, the area surrounding Kanchipuram, is known for its unique shape and elegant simplicity. Textiles have their own local variations in weave and colour, yet the tradition of contrasting borders is common

¹ Nanditha Krishna, *Arts and Crafts of Tamil Nadu*, Ashok Leyland Ltd., Madras, 1992, p.9.

² *Ibid.*, p.20.

everywhere. Away from the mainstream of Tamil life are the tribes who, have their own distinctive cultures. The most notable of these are the Todas of the Nilgiris, whose origins are shrouded in speculation. The Badagas and Kotas of the Nilgiris, the Kadars of the Aanamalai and the Maravars of the plains are among many who were slowly - absorbed into Hindu society, and yet retained several of their traditions.

The post-independence period in Tamil Nadu has seen a considerable effort to revive several languishing crafts and today, handicrafts have become a big industry. They are major items of export, sent to markets abroad as well as over the country. The sophistication of these crafts has made it possible for them to be adapted easily to contemporary requirements. Yet, this has not necessarily been beneficial, and indiscriminate commercialization has in many cases marred the beauty of the old craft forms. But some traditions die hard in India, particularly in Tamil Nadu, and the ritual kolam, done with great reverence and creativity outside her door by the ordinary housewife, is still a work of beauty. Terracotta horses are still placed as votive offerings in temples; traditional textiles and jewellery are still worn at every festival and wedding; and a bride's trousseau must still include her prayer items. The strong role played by religion, with which most crafts are closely inter-linked has ensured the preservation of tradition and beauty in the traditional Tamil home.³

Heritage crafts constitute one such area which provides a unique space for the pursuit of aesthetic and productive learning in the context of crafts provide a new pedagogic approach to the specialized study of Tamil Nadu's living craft traditions.⁴ Handicrafts are, by definition, 'made by hand' using simple energy efficient tools, with minimum environmental impact and a low carbon footprint, using locally available natural raw

³ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.20.

⁴ *Craft Traditions of India Past, Present and Future*, National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, 2011, p.3.

material. Crafts are produced in a community - friendly manner and are of great artistic and functional value.

Handicrafts are still today a vibrant aspect of Indian culture and society. Crafts have been interwoven with the culture of the people in India from the beginning of human history. Crafts have been an integral part of daily life in villages, towns, courts and religious establishments. The variety of crafts and craft skills available in India and particularly in Tamil Nadu and their continuous development throughout the centuries make India a unique country, unlike any other in the world.

Tamil Nadu has a rich and unique cultural heritage, and has managed to preserve its established traditions throughout history. It has always absorbed customs, traditions and ideas from both invaders and immigrants.⁵ For centuries arts and crafts have been distinguished for their great aesthetic and functional value. Art is one of the oldest and resilient cultures on earth. It had integrated indigenous and outside influences but kept a unique identity of its own.⁶

Aims and Purpose of the Study

The aim of the project is to highlight the “**Treasure Trove of Arts and Crafts in Tamil Nadu**” has been a need to develop a historical perspective of art in context of the world as well as in India and particularly in Tamil Nadu. Art History is a part of studies of arts and is a major area of education from which students learn about their cultural heritage. It is necessary to be aware of the visual tradition in the past and to understand present art production. Understanding of visual tradition enriches visual understanding. Every art object created by man represents his craving for self expression and his art skill, hence comes under the scope of art. Since the State of arts and crafts in a society is deeply co-related and the role of arts and crafts in reconstruction of socio-economic life of the people

⁵ Ashok Narang, *Indian Society and Culture*, Murari Lal & Sons, New Delhi, 2006, p.205.

⁶ Bhandari, N.K., *Cultural Heritage of India*, Aavishkar Publishers, Jaipur, 2007, p.1.

in the contemporary society has been studied. So an attempt has also been made to identify and highlight the nature of their influence and impact on various art forms.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are as follows: to impart an all round and holistic education that equips the Indian youth today to face challenges of a global and rapidly changing world, while preserving their own cultural assets, traditions and values, to understand the critical role of the crafts community and its integral relationship to the Indian society, to enable students to explore the linkages between environment, craft traditions and society, to develop a respect for the diversity of Indian and craft traditions and to uphold the dignity of its practitioners by understanding the difficulties that they face, to introduce Indian culture through the crafts, to understand the design and function of craft traditions in their daily life, to understand various craft skills involved in historic architecture/building/sculpture and painting, to examine about the traditional practices in the craft, the symbolism in them and the different points of views associated with it.

Sources of Study

Different sources have been used to trace the ‘**Treasure Trove of Arts and Crafts in Tamil Nadu**’. Source materials have been classified into primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are mainly based on Government Order, Newspapers and Reports. The secondary sources are mainly books, journals, unpublished thesis and websites related to Arts and Crafts in Tamil Nadu.

Methodology

The methodology adopted in this study is analytical and descriptive method. The source materials have been critically analysed and investigated. The descriptive method is used in the presentation of the study in order to make the project understandable to the readers.

Outline of the Chapters

The project is divided into ten chapters excluding Introduction and Conclusion.

- ❖ The first chapter, '**Revival of Craft Traditions**' elucidates the various styles of craft traditions through the ages.
- ❖ The second chapter, '**Textiles**' explores the ancient industry of Textiles and its world popular trade activities.
- ❖ The third chapter, '**Bronze Sculptures and Metal Ornamentation**' reveals the metallurgical skill of our ancestors.
- ❖ The fourth chapter, '**Stone Carving Sculptures**' enumerates the stone marvels of art and architecture.
- ❖ The fifth chapter, '**Jewellery**' deals about the art of Jewellery making and the transformation of life style.
- ❖ The sixth chapter, '**Terracottas**' explains the both secular and religious art.
- ❖ The seventh chapter, '**Woodcrafts and Musical Instruments**' highlights the different kinds of Musical Instruments and their taste for music.
- ❖ The Eighth chapter, '**Basketry and Fibre Crafts**' enhances the local artistic works of the common people.
- ❖ The Ninth chapter, '**Paintings**' elaborates the incredible paintings of the regions.
- ❖ The Tenth chapter, '**Festival Crafts and Folk Toys**' speaks about the purpose and usage of crafts during festives.

All the chapters are summarized in the Conclusion.

CHAPTER I

REVIVAL OF CRAFT TRADITIONS

Let us begin by understanding the myriad roles, a craftsperson plays in the society as a designer, a problem solver, a creator and as an innovator, and seller of craft objects. The craftsperson therefore is not just the maker of an object, and a craft object is not just a beautiful thing — it has been created to serve a particular function to meet a specific need of a client.¹ A craftsperson therefore has a very important set of skills by which he/ she can design, invent, solve problems, create and sell. Every country in the world needs such people who are skilled in creating practical, efficient solutions to everyday problems. Craftsperson's skilled in fabricating with different materials and communities who can constantly innovate and design new products to meet changing needs are necessary in all societies, ancient or modern.²

The crafts and craftspeople of India and particularly in Tamil Nadu are a deeply integrated part of folk and classical traditions and historical assimilations which together span many millennia. As articles made purely by hand for the daily use of both the common people in an agrarian economy and the urban elite, crafts reflect the cultural ethos of India. While the craftspeople have been cradled by the caste system, their skills were fostered by cultural and religious needs and the impetus provided by local, national and international trade.³

Specialization of Crafts

In India, particularly in Tamil Nadu, handicrafts form an alternative source of earning an income, providing the backbone of the economy for many communities. The rural craftsperson can easily plan his/her production schedule according to the local agricultural calendar and the seasons of the year. Craft production can be organized in those months

¹ *Craft Traditions of India Past, Present and Future* , National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, 2011, p.3.

² *Ibid.*, p.4.

³ *Ibid.*, p.6.

when agricultural activity is low thus, providing additional income to the family. Many women, work at their crafts in their spare time, after completing their housework. In recent years there has also been a tremendous increase in the number of people turning once again to their traditional⁴ craft as their sole means of income. However, others only supplement their earnings with their handicraft products. This economic factor greatly contributes to the continuation and the alteration of the character and the production of the same craft, i.e., to make it market - friendly.

By the time of the Indus Valley Civilization (3000 – 1500 BCE), a developed urban culture had emerged that stretched from Afghanistan to Gujarat. Here archaeologists have found votive figures of clay as well as clay seals, beads made of semi-precious stones, garments of cotton and earthenware of all shapes, sizes and design, all of which indicate a sophisticated artisan culture. Five thousand years ago specialized crafts communities answered social needs and requirements with ingenuity and practical solutions that enhanced the lives of the people.⁵

Treasure Troves of Indian Crafts

It would be interesting and instructive to compare and contrast craft products of different materials as they were produced in the past with those of today. To see wonderful examples of crafts of the past we could visit museums that have specialized crafts collections. There are fabled royal collections of art treasures, archives and memorabilia housed in palaces will throughout India give an idea of a famous tradition of crafts existed in India and Tamil Nadu through the millennia. Crafts formed a major part of our exports throughout history.⁶

⁴ <https://documents.in/document/tradition-of-indian-crafts-mahatma-gandhis-ideas-about-self-.html>

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.7.

⁶ *Ibid.*,p.12.

Mahatma Gandhi Views on Crafts

Mahatma Gandhiji's ideas about handicrafts were part of this vision.⁷ Indians would have to take care to revive and preserve all the village arts and crafts. Among the crafts, which Gandhiji put the greatest emphasis was spinning and weaving.⁸ Spinning, an integral aspect of Indian handicrafts, had to be made an essential part of the lives of the common people. This would make the common people self-sufficient and thus enable them to survive.⁹ Through the revival of spinning and weaving, people would be able to live better since, they would have another source of livelihood. Individuals and villages would become more self - sufficient.¹⁰ A few months before India became independent, Gandhiji wrote: *"The charkha is the centre of our flag. It is the symbol of unity and the non-violent strength of the millions. The yarn spun by the charkha I consider to be the cementing force which can bind those whom the three colours of the flag represent. That is why I have said that the whole fabric of swaraj hangs on a thread of the handspun yarn and have called the charkha our mightiest weapon."*¹¹ The development of handicrafts would add to the total resources of the individual and the village and thus enable both to be self-sufficient and self-regulating.¹² This is the challenge of Gandhiji's vision that India is yet to meet.

Mahatma Gandhi, in the twentieth century, was the single individual who successfully prevented the total eclipse of Indian crafts by relating them to the village economy and the concept of political freedom. He turned the humble spinning wheel into a symbol of defiance by asking people to spin their own cotton at home to weave cloth that was not of

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.32

⁸ <https://www.nationalskillsnetwork.in/mahatma-gandhi-on-craft-centric>.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.33.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.34.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.36

¹² *Ibid.*, p.37.

British manufacture. It thus became a non-violent and creative weapon of self-reliance and independence.¹³

During the nineteenth and twentieth century's, some political and social reformers recognized the importance of handicraft industries as a channel of economic regeneration and cultural confidence in the face of the colonial onslaught. Their vision inspired poet Rabindranath Tagore's craft experiments at his University in Santiniketan, and the emphasis on village industry with which Mahatma Gandhi provided a foundation for India's struggle towards independence.¹⁴

Revival of Handloom Handicrafts

However, after Gandhiji's death, several of his followers initiated and nurtured Government schemes and programme to protect the welfare of the crafts community in India.¹⁵ The Central and State Governments recognized that handicrafts, with its labour-intensive character and wide dispersal through the length and breadth of the country, constitute a crucial economic activity. It would, if supported, bring wealth to the country through trade and exports. The objective of Government schemes was to provide economic and social benefits to the craftsmen of the country and to promote their work in domestic and foreign markets.¹⁶

Prizes, Awards and Schemes for Crafts

In the past, craftsmen would receive recognition from royal patrons and patronage would often be inherited by their families. Since 1965, in order to honour craftsmen, the All India Handicrafts Board presents an annual National Awards to Master Craftsmen of Exceptional Skill. Under this scheme, each recipient of the National Award is presented with a plaque, an angavastram (ceremonial shawl) and a cash award by the President of

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.38.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.61.

¹⁵ Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, *The Glory of Indian Handicrafts*, Asia Book Corp of Amer, 1985

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.43.

India. ¹⁷This is a rare and much awaited moment in the life of a craftsman and it is a moving experience indeed, to watch their response to this distinction.

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of India's Independence (1972), the Handicrafts Board also presented Special Awards to selected crafts persons throughout the country for their outstanding craftsmanship and imagination. A scheme to provide pensions to crafts persons in indigent circumstances was also initiated. This is the first step towards providing some form of social security to the crafts community.¹⁸ "The craftsman is not an individual expressing individual whims, but a part of the universe, giving expression to ideals of central beauty and unchanging laws, even as do the trees and flowers whose natural and less ordered beauty is no less God-given." Thus wrote Ananda Coomaraswamy of India's craftsmen.¹⁹

Crafts in the Age of Tourism

Tourism, if it is managed sensitively, can be a miraculous catalyst for economic and cultural revitalization; it not only enhances income but also establishes an identity of the country. The nature of tourism itself has changed — with tourists travelling for leisure and pleasure, rather than culture and architecture. This new type of traveller is often looking to buy ethnic crafts or souvenirs as a memento of their travel experience. Tamil Nadu has over twenty million craftspeople, who create a very wide range of varied crafts.²⁰ The market for crafts in the tourism sector is based on certain factors which it is important to understand and analyse in order to develop the market potential for crafts.²¹ In order to enter the field of handicraft marketing one has to know where and how the products are made, appreciate the craftsmen's lifestyle and method of working.²²

¹⁷ G.O. Ms.No. 223, *Handlooms, Handicrafts, Textiles and Khadi (G2) Department*, dated: 08.10.2013., pp.1-2

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.52

¹⁹ Coomaraswamy .K. Ananda, *The Indian Craftman*, Life span Publishers and Distributors, 2020.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.103.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.104.

²² *Ibid.*, p.107.

New Avenues for Crafts Development

Crafts, in tourism, do not just mean selling things to tourists. It could also mean crafting the spaces that tourists use such as the hotels, guest houses, restaurants and scenic spots. Crafts of all kinds — architectural, functional, decorative, can be used to enhance and accent these places. This way local craft skills can be promoted and sustained in the long term.²³

Museums are a wonderful venue for selling quality crafts to a discerning audience. Natural and cultural heritage sites can become a catalyst and an inspiration for change. It is possible that such places can become craft production centres where wonderful new crafts by craftspeople and designers are developed, inspired by the historical site. There has been some work done in this direction in Mahabalipuram in Tamil Nadu and Konark in Orissa where skilled young craftspeople train, and produce wonderful new pieces inspired by the monuments.²⁴

Crafts of India

India's deep-rooted tradition in crafts can be traced back to the ancient times when the country, famous for its cotton, was an important trading centre for mainly textiles, dyes and ivory. Sailors from the west and the Far East poured silver and gold into India in return for its hand printed cotton textiles and other handicrafts. But it was only under the early Mughals that Indian crafts touched new heights: the art of textile - making and jewellery was highly developed and new techniques/skills such as velvet manufacturing were introduced and perfected. Local patronage diminished with the weakening of the Mughal power. The colonial era discouraged trade in crafts. Indian crafts were now challenged by the cheap, imported, machine-made goods. Gandhi's swadeshi movement was aimed at

²³ *Ibid.*, p.108.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.109.

reinforcing the status of the Indian crafts.²⁵ After Independence, the Government's efforts have been to launch developmental programmes for the crafts industry, revive many traditional crafts, identify new craft centres and make people more aware of their country's rich, cultural heritage.²⁶

Indian crafts can be broadly classified as (1) folk crafts, i.e. produced by village craftsman for a limited population or created by people for their own use; (2) commercial crafts, i.e. produced by craftsmen of a particular group / caste working in a centre associated with a specific skill; and (3) crafts associated with religious centers.²⁷

²⁵ Coomaraswamy K. Ananda, *The Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon*, Alpha Edition, 2019.

²⁶ Prema Kasturi & Sundaram, G., *South India Heritage An Introduction*, East West Books Pvt. Ltd., Chennai, 2011.

²⁷ Kalpana Rajaram, *Facets of Indian Culture*, Spectrum Books, New Delhi, 2010, p.308.

CHAPTER II

TEXTILES

India, the home of cotton, was a major textile centre from very early times. ¹The discovery of several spindles and a piece of cotton stuck to a silver vase revealed that the art of spinning and weaving of cotton was perhaps known to the Harappans. References to silk artifacts can be found in ancient Buddhist literature. In addition, there are abundant visual references that unveil the evolution of textile designs during different periods of time.² In the Old Testament job's patience and wisdom are compared to the fastness of Indian dyes. As far back as 2000 BC, the Roman word for cotton, *carbasina* was derived from the Sanskrit *karpasa*. A Roman emperor decried the vanity of women who craved for Indian muslin, saying that it emptied the emperor's coffers of gold. In Nero's time "*Indian muslins were known as nebula venti or woven winds*". The dry hot climate of Tamil Nadu has been the home of luminous silks and brightly - hued cottons. The colours are woven together - one for the border and *pallu* and another for the body, creating a rich effect by their colour contrasts and tonal blending. This tradition of combining the most unlikely colours has produced startlingly attractive results.

The earliest records speak of the fine muslins and silks from Tamil Nadu. In the Periplus of the Erythrean Sea it is said that Greek traders came to Uraiyur, a great centre of cotton trade, to buy fine cloth and silks, particularly hand-painted or printed calicoes. From the seventh to third centuries BC, Bengal and Orissa, Varanasi (Benares) and Madurai were famous for silk and cotton weaving. Kautilya notes that Madurai produced the finest cotton fabrics, and the Mahabharata also mentions the textiles of the Tamil kingdom. Thanjavur produced muslin called *agartic*. Among the gifts presented at the coronation of Yudhishtira were pure muslins from this region.

¹ Nanditha Krishna, *op. cit.*, p.23.

² Ashok Narang, *op. cit.*, p.211.

Sangam Age

During the Sangam age, silk and cotton weaving reached a high degree of perfection. The sangam writers tell us that spinning was the part – time - occupation of woman, a tradition that continues till today. The Porunarrupadai refers to silk cloth with its threads knotted at the ends. The Silappadikaaram abounds in references to textiles. It mentions the weavers, known as Karukas of Kaveripattinam, who spun silk, cotton and wool to be later stitched by tailors for woman to wear. There were streets in Puhar reserved only for fine fabrics. Madhavi, the dancer in the story, is described wearing a blue cloth embroidered with flowers, from which we gather that embroidery was also practiced. The girls were fond of multi-coloured clothes, say the epic, and had different clothes for the day and for the night.

Sangam literature says that whereas poor people wore only one garment, the rich wore two, including an upper garment, hung over the shoulder. Cotton could be either coarse or fine, the finer-variety compared to the vapour of milk. Floral designs were most popular on the silks, which could be washed and laundered. This tradition of producing strong silks which can be laundered continues till today. Spinning, says Sangam literature, was a major occupation of widows.³

In the second millennium there was a flourishing trade between Tamil Nadu and China, and silks were exchanged between the two. Thus the word *Sinam* (meaning that which came from China) was occasionally used for silk. This has led several historians to wonder whether silks could have been of Chinese origin. The later Tamil word for silk, *pattu*, actually means a fold, from the cotton cloth folded and hung over the shoulder. Among the goods exported were satin and cotton cloth, *Karpasa* to the Hebrews; vegetable - dyed cloth to Assyria; and lace and dyed cottons to Persia.

³ Nanditha Krishna, *op. cit.*, p.23.

Trade

The importance of the textile trade can be gauged from the fact that the Chola capital Uraiyur, the Chera capital Karur and the Pandya capital Madurai were situated in the vicinity of cotton-growing areas. Cotton was brought to these capitals to be woven and the flourishing trade that ensued enabled them to attain the privilege of becoming the state's capitals. These towns continue to be prosperous centres of cotton textiles even today.

Later visitors have made several references to the textiles of Tamil Nadu. Chau-ju-kua, a Chinese traveler of the 13th century, says that the Cholas, especially the princes, wore only cotton clothing, as that was the prevailing custom. The 16th century Portuguese traveller Fernao Nuniz⁴ mentions the quilted cotton tunics of the Chola soldiers, while another traveler observes that the people in Pandya country wore a short cotton skirt (probably the folded *dhoti* or *veshti*, the lower garment), and a cloth of gold and silk over their heads. The king wore a quilted cotton robe and a garment of gold piastres over it.⁵

According to Marco polo, who visited the Pandyan kingdom in the 15th century, ships used silk and gold cloth as ballast while sailing from the Pandyan kingdom to the kingdom of Eli (Mount d'Ely). He was amazed at the scantiness of clothing and has denied the existence of tailors, although earlier literary and inscriptional evidence points to the contrary. The Portuguese traveller Barbosa notes that, in the 16th century, large quantities of printed cotton were exported to Siam and Burma from Paleacate (Pulicat) on the Coromandel Coast. Service to the king or state was recognized by the award of a cloth with a title inscribed on it. In AD 1004, the Chola king Rajakesarivarman Perumanadigal granted the privilege of wearing an inscribed silk cloth to one Manija.

⁴ Friedrich Hirth, *Chau Ju-Kua: His Work on the Chinese and Arab Trade in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, Forgotten Books, 2018.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.25.

Weaving

Weavers were generally held in high esteem, but those of Kanchipuram alone had the right to use the *sangu* (conch) and *dandu* (palanquin). As with all other crafts in India, weaving and dyeing are hereditary occupations. Interestingly, many weavers in Tamil Nadu are of Telugu origin. The important weaving communities include the Sengundam Mudaliar, Pattunoolkaras, some Komatis, Kaikolar, Seniyar, Saliyar, Devangar, etc. The older printing areas were around Ponneri, Arcot, Pudukottai, Saidapet, Kumbakonam, Thanjavur and Nagapattinam. Before Kanchipuram became known for silk weaving, Kumbakonam and its surrounding - areas were regared as the traditional silk weaving centres. Kanchipuram has since practically became synonymous with silk weaving and the silk saree of Tamil Nadu is often referred to as a Kanchi silk. The uniqueness of a Kanchipuram silk saree⁶ is that the border and *pullu* are woven separately and then attached to the body of the saree. Generally, the design in the border is repeated across the *pallu*. We find patterns of the swan, parrot, peacock or elephant depicted along with creeper-like backgrounds. These forms were adopted from South Indian temple architecture and sculpture. The rich Kanchi silks are sometimes known as temple sarees, from the practice of gifting them to temple deities.

The art of silk weaving already existing around Kumbakonam was reinforced by Bengali traditions when Tippu Sultan sent an emissary to learn the trade. This resulted in the blouse materials of Ariyalur and Ayyampettai. The quality of silk in Tamil Nadu is excellent. For example, Kanchipuram silks are washed, even beaten on a granite stone, and have survived several generations. The body may be plain, striped, checked or covered with delicate buds known as mallimoggu (jasminebuds). Thanjavur specializes in weaving

⁶ <https://tamilelibrary.org/teli/handicrafts.html>

brocade sarees covered all over with *zari* (gold thread) and used for weddings and in temples. The borders of these sarees are rich and broad, heavy with gold, and the *pallu* is covered with designs from temple friezes. The *yaali* (mythical lion) and *hamsa* (mythical bird) continue to be common motifs. In addition to Kanchipuram, Kumbakonam and Thanjavur are important centres of silk weaving. *Arni* produces a light-weight variety of silk woven with a fly shuttle. Here, the *pallu* is a continuation of the saree warp and the border design is in *zari*. Arni silks are woven in checks outlined in gold and black, with the meshes of the checks in orange or red. In Tamil Nadu, the cotton follow the pattern of woven silk very closely. Cotton weaving is still very widespread-in Kanchipuram, Salem, Pudukottai, Madurai, Sankarankovi, Uraiyur, Karur and Coimbatore. The heavy cotton *dungari* from Kanchipuram was the origin of the later British *dungarees*. Coimbatore sarees are famous for their decorative floral borders. Uraiyur in Thiruchirapalli district, and Salem are noted for their fine count cotton sarees, although the latter is better known for men's *ueshtis*, both silk and cotton. The *kuyilkan* (cuckoo's eye) and *mayil -kan* (peacock's eye) border in three-shuttle weave is the exclusive monopoly of Salem weavers. The cottons of Madurai, particularly the white *ueshtis*, either plain or with a *zari* or coloured border, are favoured for their sturdy weave and fine quality.⁷ But Madurai is better known for its *chungidi* and *thombu* sarees. Made by a community known as the *Saurashtras*, who originally migrated from Gujarat, they are tie-dyed, with a contrasting border containing the traditional *Rudraaksham* or sovereign design, and a *pallu* with a paisley design in the corner, in *Jaamdani* style. The most indigenous or local elements are best seen in the Chettinad fabrics. They were originally produced in *Karaikudi* and are dyed in earthy hues such as mustard, brick red, and black. Locally known as *Kandaangi selai*, these sarees are worn at calf-length, thus enabling the woman to display her silver anklets.

⁷ Shalini Aggarwal, *Arts and Crafts in India (c.200 B.C. to c.300 A.D.)*, Maharshi Dayanand University, Haryana, 1998.

In the 18th century there was a booming *kalamkari*⁸ (pen painting) trade between India and Europe. The designs were known as *cheeti* in Tamil, from which it is said the European chintz is derived. In 1734, Monsieur de Beaulieu, a French naval officer, wrote a detailed account of the *kalam* work and the dyeing process as practiced in Pondicherry. Coimbatore was famous for its hand-painted *cheeti* over a white or gray background. The designs were bold, in free-hand and consisted of birds, animals, flowers and creepers. The borders were wide and decorated, with contrasting colours, painted in blue, the designs could be seen on both sides of the material's dark red background. The most popular vegetable dyes were rich reds, black, yellow and the native indigo. Though chemical dyes are increasingly used today, the art of *kalamkari* still retains the use of vegetable dyes.⁹

The designs which evolved during the Nayak period continue today, albeit with an element of distortion. The wall hangings of the Nayak period depict processions and religious themes with highly stylized figures. The design forms in vogue until the early part of the 17th century are depicted in the costumes of the figures, with enchanting geometrical patterns in the background echoing a suggestion of architectural concepts.

The Karupoor saree, which evolved under the patronage of the Maratha rulers, has a unique place among textiles. A combination of intricate weave and wax - resist hand-painted designs, was used exclusively for royal weddings. In the *pallu*, the design motifs are woven in cotton (*jaamdani* weave) and the border with *zari* weft. This combination of cotton and *zari* in the *Jaamdani* weaving technique was done in order to leave room for hand painting. The *zari* woven in patterns shines through the hand painted areas and the combination produces an effect at once rich and delicate. The body gold is in *ashrafu* (coin) design, whereas the *pallu* and border have intricate gold trees. Red was the base, and the outline was executed in black.

⁸ <https://www.paramparaproject.org/TN-traditional-craftmanship.html>

⁹ Shalini Aggarwal, *op.cit.*, pp.33-34.

To the same variety of sarees belong the hand - painted and wax- resist fabrics from Pudukottai, examples of which can be seen in the local museum. The tradition of *kalamkari* is carried on by a single family at Sickinaikenpet¹⁰ in Thanjavur district. The wall hangings, door frames and *thombais* (tubular hangings) have epic and Puraanic themes and are hand-painted in vegetable colours. However, the stylization of the figures has deviated greatly from tradition. In Thanjavur and Kumbakonam, cotton appliqué decorates the *rathas* or chariots used for the temple festival. The Madras handkerchief, also known as “bleeding Madras” because of the indigo dye which runs, was popular for its bold colours and checks. Today, fast colours are used in its production. Salem is the home of the Bhavani durrie, woven in silk and cotton in brilliant colours. The lotus decorates the centre, and the border has either flowing floral patterns or stylized parrots. The craft of lace - making was introduced into Tamil Nadu by Portuguese and Dutch missionaries. The lace-making industry of the State is generally acknowledged as the finest in the country, with a variety of cotton and silk lace, some including gold and silver thread. *Jaali* or net embroidery has also been popular. Embroidery was introduced by the Muslims who have left their imprint on the designs, the geometrical and floral shapes.¹¹

Textiles came to be associated with social and ritualistic events from very early times. Sacred images are clothed and the texts, whether on palm leaves or on paper, are tied in bright textile pieces.¹² The textiles of Tamil Nadu are among the richest in the country. Many traditions have continued unchanged over the centuries and the quality of the silks has ensured that several examples remain of the creations of the past. However, it is also true that many traditions have been lost and have been impossible to reproduce in spite of the tremendous effort made in the last few years. The Weaver’s Service Centre in Madras

¹⁰ *The Hindu*, Tamil Nadu Edition, Madurai, dated: 17.05.2017.

¹¹ Shalini Aggarwal, *op.cit.*, p.38.

¹² Ashok Narang, *op. cit.*, p.212.

has contributed greatly to the textile renaissance, reviving some of the glorious designs and weaves of bygone years.¹³

¹³ *Nanditha Krishna, op. cit.*, pp.38-39.

CHAPTER III

Bronze Sculptures and Metal Ornamentation

The most famous of India and Tamil Nadu's art forms is probably its bronzes. Over the centuries, they have reached aesthetic heights which place them among the greatest achievements of Indian art.¹ "Indus valley" or "Harappa" civilization had a much larger spread and apparently was well advanced. Among the surviving works of art of this civilization, the most beautiful perhaps is a miniature bronze girl with thin, stick - like limbs who holds a bowl against her thigh. There are two mutilated torsos in lime - stone and redstone from Harappa. There is a vital dynamic quality and plastic subtlety expressed in these statuettes that is purely Indian.² The Indus Valley people knew the art of toiletries and cosmetics.³

Of all the sculptural pieces the best preserved is a seven - inch high head and shoulder of a man: the face wearing a short beard and a closely cut moustache and the body draped in a shawl passing round the left shoulder and under the right arm, suggesting the image of a priest. This statue and other bearded heads found at Mohenjo-Daro have some similarity with the statuary at Sumeria.

There are a variety of objects made in terracotta which include all kinds of small figurines and ceramic vessels of various shapes and designs. Particularly charming are the clay animal figures which may well have been intended for toys. And small in scale. The numerous jars and bowls are painted with designs usually derived from nature and connected with fertility.

Among the objects found at the Indus sites are numerous small square steatite seals with carved designs along with pictographic scripts. The seals may have belonged to individuals who used them to mark property and authenticate contracts. The scenes the

¹ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.41.

² Kalpana Rajaram, *op.cit.*, p.110.

³ Rajeev Kumar Gohit, *Ancient History of India*, RBSA Publishers, Jaipur, 2011, p.45.

seals illustrate include a large number of bulls and occasionally other animals. According to expert opinion the animal seals are among the world's greatest examples of an artist's ability to embody the essentials of a given form in artistic shape. These are not portraits of any individual bulls. But universal repressions with 400 different signs have been found at the Indus valley and to this date there has been no confirmed decipherment.⁴ The Indus valley culture was known for its advancement in technology and the development of various arts, crafts and industries. The Indus valley culture produced many craftsman, artisans and skilled workers, who were adept in the arts of stone cutting, spinning and weaving, pottery, carpentry, toys making, house building, carts and boat making, and working in metals.⁵ A rare combination of beauty and power has culminated in a sophistication and unique sensitivity, further emphasized by variety and range.⁶ In South India, metal icons, especially of bronze, are extremely popular. Tamil Nadu is one of the famous bronze producing regions where the artisans or *sthapathis* produce stylistic images conforming to Pallava, Chola, Pandya and Nayak periods. The images of Trimurthi and Durga are the most common.⁷

Purpose

The art has continued uninterrupted till today, although the 20th century bronzes continue to be copies of the Pallava and Chola figures and have yet to develop an identity of their own. These metal images were born out of the community's need to connect the sanctity of the temple with the secular town around it. The main figure in the temple is generally of stone and occasionally of wood, stucco or other materials. The festival is known as *uthsavam* or *thiruvizhaa*. The *nithyothsavams* are daily festivals and the *mahothsavams* are annual or 'great' festivals. The daily procession of the deity around the

⁴ Kalpana Rajaram, *op.cit.*, p.111.

⁵ Mehta, J.L., *History of Ancient India*, Lotus Press, New Delhi, 2008, pp.102-103.

⁶ Nanditha Krishna, *op. cit.*, p.41.

⁷ Ashok Narang, *op.cit.*, pp.208-209.

village is an important event, eagerly awaited as part of the morning routine. In Vishnu temples, the *uthsavamurthis* are known as *kautukabera*. Metal images of the same form as the consecrated are placed in front of it and receive regular worship. The main deities are taken out in procession only during the annual festivals.

The Sangam literature of the beginning of the Christian era speaks of the daily procession of deities led by Lord Shiva and the evening festival (*anthivilaa*) both of Madurai. In the seventh century, Shaivite saints sang with reverence of the processional images. Inscriptions and literature refer to the jewellery adorning these deities, the flower garlands, music and dance -taken together, all these constituted an experience to savour.

Tamil Nadu is fortunate in that the *uthsavams* or *thiruvizhaas* are still celebrated with the same fervour and elaboration, thereby continuing the link with a colourful past. One of the strongest of these links is preserved in the art of bronze casting which still is strictly governed by the canons of iconography and iconometry. The chief canons include the *Maulisuthra*, *Naabhisuthra*, *Akshisuthra*, *Bhumisuthra*, *Kakshasuthra*, *Maanasara* and *Shilparathna*. The measurement for a bronze figure is the *thaala*. The *sthapathis* or sculptors were, and continue to be, well-versed in Sanskrit as well as Tamil, both of which are necessary for the study of the *Shilpa Shaastras* (canons of sculpture). Like all artisans in India, their knowledge and profession are hereditary. The image is first moulded in wax, then coated with clay strengthened with ground cotton, salt and charred husk. This coating is applied three times. Then the chosen metal is heated and poured into the mould, from which the wax had been heated and removed earlier. The mould is allowed to cool, carefully broken, and the image is brought out. The final touches are given by hand - the finishing, burnishing and perfecting of the minutest details.⁸

⁸ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.41.

The earliest metal objects come from a burial urn found at Adichanallur (circa 500 BC) on the banks of the river Thaamraparni. Thus the tradition of metal sculpture obviously has an ancient past and several historians even trace it as far back as the Harappan period. The ornamentation, dress, and even the method of moulding have changed through the ages, enabling us to date the figure. There is an inexplicable blank between the Adichanallur metalwork and the Pallava bronzes of the eighth century AD although; there are literary references to metal sculpture in this period. The Pallava figures are characterized by their elegant simplicity. As in the case of stone sculpture, the figures have broad, straight shoulders and wear heavy lower garments with a thickly rolled waist - cloth falling between the legs. The *poonal* (sacred thread) resembles a thick strap. The features are also thick set and heavy. The Pallava bronzes suggest that the minutest details were carved in the wax mould, leaving very little chiselling to be done after the image had been cast.

But the greatest bronzes of Tamil Nadu belong to the period of the Cholas, commencing in the 10th century AD. The wax model was, in contrast to the earlier Pallava one, quite rough, and the final chiselling assumed greater importance. From inscriptions, we know that copper was the primary metal and that the bronze images of the Chola⁹ period were known merely as *seppu thirumeni* (metal image). Later on, the *panchaloha* or five metals, (copper, tin, lead, silver and gold) became more popular, representing the five elements earth, air, ether, water and fire. Whereas the earlier images were of a copper-brass colour, the later ones have a different hue, suggesting more metals in the alloy.

⁹ <https://tamilelibrary.org/teli/handicrafts.html>

Patronage

The three great Cholas who were actively associated with the development of bronzes were Adithya I, Sembiyan Mahadevi and Rajaraja I. Adithya (AD 875-906) claimed to have built 108 temples along the river Kaveri, and some beautiful bronzes were created in his period. The great bronze Natarajas had appeared by the 10th century, during the reign of Paranthaka I (AD 907-955). Sembiyan Mahadevi, his successor, was a Chola queen of exquisite taste who commissioned several bronzes notable for their delicacy. But the greatest belong to the period of Rajaraja I, the builder of the Brihadeeshvara temple at Thanjavur. The Chola style of bronzes continued till the overthrow of the dynasty in the 13th century¹⁰ and under the Pandyas for another 100 years. However, a decline soon set in and the bronzes of the succeeding Vijayanagara and Nayak dynasties are stiff, stylized and baroque. The aesthetic value was lost in a new-found love of details and embellishment. The male figures of the Chola period are broad - shouldered and slim - waisted, majestic, supple and calm. The female figures of parvathi in particular, are delicate and bashful. The jewels consist of miniaturized pearls and gems, with a small halo or *shiraschakra* at the back. The simplicity of adornment, coupled with the graceful body movements and beautiful expressions raise the Chola bronzes to the level of great art.

Lord Nataraja

Of these, the outstanding figure is of Nataraja Shiva as the Lord of Dance who creates as he destroys, whose *aananda thaandava* (dance of joy) represents knowledge, happiness and the destruction of evil. The figure suggests vigorous movement within the *prabhaamandala* (the halo of fire) representing the cosmos, yet the precise balancing of the *thaandava* pose and the decorative details suggest an innate calm. The various moods

¹⁰Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.43.

are reflected in the face - joy, serenity and dignity. Shiva, Parvati and Naayanmaars, or Shaivite saints, form the majority and the best of the bronzes, due to the predominant Shaivism of the Chola period. In the past, there were about a dozen important bronze casting centres in Tamil Nadu. Of these, Kumbakonam alone survives as a major producer of bronzes and the art is concentrated in the village of Swamimalai. A few units may be found on the outskirts of Cuddalore and Thanjavur. The profession is still hereditary and the art a closely guarded secret.

Due to several centuries of neglect under the British, the bronze industry did not develop a 20th century idiom. The fillip given in the post - independence period has been restricted to copies¹¹ of Chola and Pallava figures. These are excellent and many craftsmen have even managed to capture the joyous abandon of the *aananda thaandava* in the figure of a Nataraja or a *Gajasamhaaramurti* (Shiva destroying the elephant demon). But the figures are still copies, and the craftsmen have yet to create a Nataraja of this century. The depiction of Ganesha has made considerable strides in the last few years, probably due to the contemporary popularity of the God. Ganesha dancing, sitting, standing, even resting, *Heramba*, Shakthi Ganesha and many more constitute an impressive variety of iconographic forms. Although they strides adhere to the *Aagamas*, the contemporary artist has exploited his creative ability to create many Ganeshas, unique to our times. Popular local cults, such as those of Karumaariamman, Mookambika, Kali and Mariamman are new subjects for bronze casting. It is interesting to see how iconographic rules for Shakthi images are adapted to portray these Goddesses, whose forms are not mentioned in the ancient texts.

Apart from the classical bronzes, Tamil Nadu also has a separate substratum of folk bronzes, particularly from Thanjavur and Salem. These are much smaller and include

¹¹ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.46.

figures of animals, sometimes with their riders, and small local deities, particularly female figures. The folk bronzes lack the skilled precision of the Chola figures and generally consist of a metal cast on a rough clay model. The details are chiselled later, but these are hardly noteworthy.

The distinguishing feature of the folk bronzes is their strong resemblance to terracotta figures, emphasizing the fact that the latter provided the original inspiration. While the established schools of bronze craftsmanship, spurred on by their royal patrons, went on to produce great works of art, the folk bronzes continued as a village craft. These are used as lamps, votive offerings, temple decorations and even as toys. Their charm lies in their earthy simplicity, their very real depictions of rural life and beliefs, punctuated with a mild abstraction that only village art can produce. The bronze *uthsavamurthis* taken out in procession around the town fostered several other crafts, such as the making of wooden chariots (*rathas*) and vehicles (*vaahanas*), appliqué cloth decorations, garland-making and flower decorations, the manufacture of intricate jewellery and gold and silver *kavachams* (covering plates made of beaten metal). While the others were renewable, the bronzes alone were permanent. It is fortunate that the system of popular fairs continues to give people an occasion to view the bronzes, as well as to keep alive the bronze-casting industry. Today, the bronzes of Tamil Nadu have far outgrown their role within the confines of the temple, and they are to be found adding touches of beauty to homes, offices and public areas.¹²

Metalware

Both the literature and the metal excavated by archaeologists establish the fact that the art of bronze casting has been continuously practiced for more than five millennia. The metal smith is known for various methods of metal working and has created forms

¹²Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.51.

with vision, conception and sensitivity of a sculptor. Copper and tin were the earliest non-ferrous metals to be used by man. Later, these were mixed to form an alloy called bronze. The Matsyapurana describes various methods of casting bronze images.¹³ The Indus valley people used stone implements but they were familiar with bronze metal. The tool kit excavated from Harappa goes to prove that these people used metals extensively. Utensils, images, toys, implements were made of bronze and other metals. They used wheeled vehicles for transport. Ornaments made of gold and silver and ivory have been recovered. They indicate high level of craftsmanship. The art of weaving cloth and writing was well developed. The beautiful relief figure on the seals and fine stone statues reveals a high aesthetic sense of the people.¹⁴

As with bronze casting brass and copper metal were also have a rich and ancient tradition in Tamil Nadu.¹⁵ A variety of metalwork can be seen from different parts of the country. Brassware from Tamil Nadu comprises of decorated traditional lamps, used in religious functions.¹⁶ The objects serve both religious and secular needs, as in the case of lamps, incense burners, utensils, nutcrackers and storage jars and boxes. However, utility is always the primary consideration, and no decoration can interfere with that aspect. The decorations may be secular or religious from acrobats carved on the handles of nutcrackers to religious symbols crowning the lamps. Although cast by *sthapathis* (sculptors) according to certain norms there is no stereotyping or uniformity and the metal ware testifies to the craftsman's varied skills.

¹³ Ashok Narang, *op. cit.*, p.208.

¹⁴ Radhey Shyam Chaurasia, *History of Ancient India*, Atlantic Publishers, New Delhi, 2008, p.23.

¹⁵ Nanditha Krishna, *op. cit.*, p.53.

¹⁶ Bhandari, N.K., *op. cit.*, p.85.

Lamp through the Ages

A noteworthy form of art metalware in Tamil Nadu is the beaten metal repousse, which has resulted in exquisite ornamentation. The *Deepam* or lamp is the best known of metalware in Tamil Nadu.¹⁷ It is considered to be the symbol of Agni (the God of fire) and Surya (the sun) the lamp is deemed auspicious. From the entry into the world of every human being to his exit, the lamp stands guard heightening the solemnity of the occasion, be it anniversary, initiation or holy wedlock. It's important function of giving light imparted, sanctity to the lamp. The early lamps of stone and shell became terracotta and metal lamps. The earliest shape of the body of the lamp was that of a bowl with a beak at the side for a wick. The *Shilpa shastras* (canons of sculpture) devote one full chapter to the characteristics, classification and production of lamps. It is prescribed that these lamps should have pedestals for "Mother Earth is accustomed to undergo all sorts of sufferings, but she will not put up with the heat of the lamps". Thus, the lamps Tamil Nadu were supported by pedestals or stands, through which the artists expressed his creativity. In due course, the pedestal became an integral part of the lamp which gave rise to new concepts such as *vriksha- deepam* (tree lamp).

The variety of lamps in Tamil Nadu is almost endless and each is characterized by its peculiar shape and use. They are generally grouped understanding lamps *aarathi* (votive) lamps, *Deepalakshmi*, hand lamps and chain lamps. The standing lamps are known as *kuthu-vilakku*. Consisting of around five wicked bowl balanced on a slim pedestal standing on a heavy base to prevent accidents and to catch the drippings these lamps are for domestic use, though they are also used on ceremonial occasions. There are wedding lamps of this type with tiers up to seven branches each, with each branch ending in a

¹⁷ Vijaya Ramaswamy, *Metallurgy and Traditional Metal Crafts in Tamil Nadu (with special reference to Bronze)*, Indian Journal of History of Science, 1994, pp.469-470.

similar five-wicked bowl, thus giving out sometimes about hundred flames to a single pedestal. The most common decoration on the top of the *kuthu-vilakku* is the *hamsa* or mythical swan but various religious figures and symbols are also popular. The *aarathi* or votive lamps are generally small in size and are held by the devotee or the priest. The handle is carved like a cobra, fish, peacock, monkey and in many more shapes. The number of wicks varies from 1 to 251.

To the accompaniment of prayers and *shalokas* (chants), the *aarathi* lamp may be used in the temple, or in the daily *pooja* of the house hold. The Deepalakshmi or *paavai vilakku* a common type of temple lamp, is in the form of a female figure holding a shallow bowl which contains the¹⁸ oil and wick. This form is characteristically Tamilian, and can be seen in almost every temple. A male figure carrying a light, however is very rare. There are several inscriptions recording the endowment of the *deepalakshmis* in South Indian temples in historical times with provisions such as land grants for lighting them. In North India, lamps with human motifs are found only in Bengal to a limited extent, and even those figures are southern derivatives. *Deepalakshmis* wear a loose saree over a tight - fitting lower garment. In rare cases, the figures stand on an elephant base. The hand lamps lack pedestals have larger and deeper bowls, and the back is usually decorated with religious symbols. Gajalakshmi the Goddess Lakshmi flanked on either side by elephants and lamps with parrots on the rim of the bowl are the most common hand lamps to be found in Hindu homes. These have been adapted by Indian Catholics and Muslims to bear the cross and crescent moon respectively. Hanging lamps consist of elaborately decorated bowls suspended by chains. The bowl may be a Gajalakshmi or Ganesha *deepam* and the chain is embellished with ornamental female figures at regular intervals.

¹⁸ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.53.

Utensils

The utensils of Tamil Nadu, once made of perishable materials like clay and stone, consist of numerous jars and pots. Many of the shapes and designs found in excavations from early times continue till today. These utensils can be divided into two major groups: those used for rituals and those used for secular purposes. With the increasing importance of the temple, the rituals required their own vessels. The *abhishekham* (consecration) of a *saaligraamam* in the case of Vishnu temples, and of a *spatika linga*, in the case of Shiva temples, is performed from a metal bowl. The collection of water has a small separate metal cup with a projection on one side. Vessels for the various ceremonies, such as the ritual bath and the morning, noon, evening and night *pooja*, called for different sizes and shapes, some of which are intricately carved. Thus, for storing water, the temples used very big vessels like the *andaa* and *gangaalam*, with geometric designs near the rim. For worship conducted in the house by the *yajamaana* (householder), utensils such as the *panchapaathra* (cup) and *uddharani* (spoon) came to play a major role. Vaishnavite or Shaivite marks were etched on some *uddharanis*.

The Brihadeeshvara temple in Thanjavur has a wonderful 10th century painting of the kitchen and its vessels.¹⁹ The beautiful figurine of the dancing girl belonging to the Indus valley civilization indicates the high level of workmanship attained by ancient craftsmen. The other high points reached by the craftsman in the field of metalworking are bronze sculptures belonging to the Chola rulers.²⁰ The Indus valley culture was known for its advancement in technology and the development of various arts, crafts and industries. The Indus valley culture produced many craftsman, artisans and skilled workers, who were

¹⁹ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, pp.57-58.

²⁰ Bhandari, N.K., *op.cit.*, p.84.

adept in the arts of stone cutting, spinning and weaving, pottery, carpentry, toys making, house building, cart and boat making, and working in metals.²¹

Cooking utensils also come in many different shapes and sizes. These are usually made of brass, an alloy of copper and zinc, while water is boiled and stored in copper, known for its medicinal properties. Either hammered into shape from sheet brass, sheet copper, or country brass, the vessels are cast in moulds or partly cast and partly beaten. Sheet brass (except scrap) or sheet copper is never melted and made into cast articles, but is always beaten into shape and joined if an article is to be made out of several pieces. Interestingly, many shapes of the smaller and simpler vessels can be traced to nature, such as the various gourds and flowers. Very few vessels are given handles, and even the larger ones, used for carrying water, are meant to be balanced on the hip, as carrying them by the rim is virtually unknown. Large utensils used in the temples or at²² weddings have two rings near the rim through which a pole is balanced on the shoulders of two men. The shapes are dictated by the use.

Water vessels and those used for preserving heat (such as rice cookers) have large bodies and narrow necks, while utensils used for vegetables, sweets, storage and serving have wide brims. Each utensil has a special name and a special use. The *kudam* fetches water, the *gangaalam* and *andaa* store it. Rice is cooked in a *thavalai*, and its liquid accompaniment in a *chutti paanai*. Sweets are made in flat, wide - mouthed utensils known as *urulis* which permit quick cooling and hardening. Each dish has a separate ladle or *karandi* for stirring and serving, its shape and length determined by the item of food. Thus rice is served with a flat *karandi*, the *saambaar karandi* terminates in a small cup, and the milk *karandi* has a small pot at the serving end.

²¹ Mehta, J.L., *op.cit.*, pp.102-103.

²² Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.58.

The utensils of the Muslims do not differ from those of the Hindus in the mode of manufacture and technique, though the Muslims use more copper and the Hindus more brass. The shapes of the utensils used by Muslims, however, exhibit a pronounced Persian influence, such as long spouts and trays with arabesque work and the crescent motif. The brass vessel is cast over a solid clay model covered and turned on a hand lathe with a layer of prepared wax. The turned model is again covered with a thick layer of clay in which a small hole is drilled through which the melted wax is removed and the molten metal poured in. This takes the place of the wax and the clay is removed to finish the article.

Areca nut boxes and nutcrackers have provided ample scope for creativity. It has been said that the habit of chewing *paan* or betel leaf was brought to India, particularly to Tamil Nadu, at a very early date, from the East Indian archipelago, where areca nut is very popular. It is the custom in Tamil Nadu to welcome the guest by offering betel leaves, a few slices of areca nut, and a little lime. An Ayurvedic treatise called the *Sushruta Samhita* refers to *paan*-chewing, a practice that has resulted in the production of decorated containers. Made of bronze or sheet brass, the boxes²³ have several small cups or partitions to hold betel, lime and other ingredients. Space is also provided for accommodating the nutcrackers. The nutcracker used to slice the areca nut is made in a variety of ingenious shapes, with animals, birds, flowers and human figures forming the handles.

Before the advent of plastics, the traditionally long-haired women of Tamil Nadu used metal combs, usually made of brass, with two or three long prongs. Wooden combs with several prongs were also used. The top of the comb was fashioned in the form of a female figure or animal, usually an antelope. Perfume was stored in metal containers decorated

²³ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.64.

with *yaali* and *hamsa* designs. Trays or shallow dishes made of brass - circular, hexagonal, octagonal or oval -are widely used in Tamil Nadu. These are found in the temple as well as in the household. Their surfaces are generally not flat, but bear relief figures representing Shaivite or Vaishnavite themes, geometrical patterns and flowers. The trays hold flowers, sweets, sugar, *kumkum*, turmeric and sandalwood paste. Other household and temple prayer items made of metal include the *samaashrayanam mudrai* or tattoos used by Vaishnavas, the Kannan *paadam* or feet of Lord Krishna, the *sadari* or feet used to bless the worshipper and the *shodashopachaaram*, items used in daily ritual.

The popular Thanjavur art plates feature designs of deities, birds, flowers, and geometric patterns beaten out from the back of copper and silver sheets. These are then encrusted on a brass tray, pot (*kudam*) or cup (*panchapaathra*). Generally, the designs follow a theme, such as the *dashaavatharas* of Vishnu or the miracles of Shiva. Formerly used for making ritual objects, this work is now restricted to wall hangings, which depict a deity made of silver in the centre and alternating copper and silver designs around the rim. A more elaborate form of this art is to be seen in the *kavacham* or coverings of the deity and the temple *vimaana* (spire). The design is drawn on the sheet metal and inwrought, some simply etched and others deeply cut.

Metal toys are chiefly made of brass, neatly polished and attractively finished. They are usually models of horses, cows or elephants, sometimes with a mounted figure, sometimes with an *ambaari* (howdah) or platform on which a small image may be placed. Most of the older toys are carefully modelled, but today's mass requirements have resulted in crude workmanship.

Metalware is as old as the megaliths of Tamil Nadu, and perhaps even older. This long tradition has maintained the old combination of strength and beauty. The variety of metals used -brass, copper, bronze, bell metal, silver and gold is matched by the wide

range of shapes and designs. The pragmatism of the Tamilian has always emphasized the utilitarian aspect but, within these parameters, the metal craftsman creates exciting nutcrackers, elegant utensils and fascinating toys.²⁴

²⁴ *Nanditha Krishna, op.cit.*, p.67.

CHAPTER IV

STONE CARVING SCULPTURES

After the great megaliths of Tamil Nadu, there is a period of total darkness in stone sculpture and architecture. Emerging in the sixth century AD is the rule of the Pallavas, with the rock - cut caves of Mamallapuram, its stone *rathas* (chariots) and stone shore temples, and the structural stone temples of Kanchipuram. Of all these, the greatest is “The Descent of the Ganga”, a monolithic fresco of carvings, depicting the vivacity of life beside the discipline of Arjuna’s penance. The style of the Pallava sculpture shows kinship with that of the Chalukyas of Aihole, Badami, and Pattadakal, and it is reasonable to suppose that related guilds of *shilpis* produced the sculptures of the two kingdoms. Apart from granite, there are a few sandstone temples in the State, but sandstone as a medium was hardly favoured in Tamil Nadu where granite is easily available.

The early Pandyas drew inspiration from the Pallavas. Their contribution was in the varied sculptural¹ and iconographic forms, some of which were introduced to Tamil Nadu for the first time. Apart from the numerous cave temples at Pillaiyarpatti, Aanamalai and Sittannavasal (better-known for its paintings), the unfinished sculptures of the monolithic rock at Vettuvankovil at Kalugumalai are notable for their power and elegance.

But the greatest stone temples and carvings appeared in the Chola period. The massive Brihadeeshvara temple at Thanjavur, with its profusion of carvings the gentler, more elegant temple at Gangaikondacholapuram, the Airavatheshavara temple at Darasuram and the Kampaharesvara temple at Thiribhuvanam are a few examples of what the Chola craftsman could achieve. Engineering skill, demonstrated in the lifting of the massive cupola on to the top of the *vimaana* in Thanjavur, combined with the chiseller’s

¹ <https://www.socialvillage.in/resources/40545-traditional-arts-crafts-in-tamilnadu>

art, were required to create these granite wonders. The sculptures² of Shiva and the *karanas* or poses of Bharatha Natyam reflect the Chola Kings religious and artistic inclinations. The Nataraja and a Chandesaanugrahamurthi of Gangaikondacholapuram are as forceful as the Chola bronzes, immortalising a moment in time. The Darasuram *ratha* gave birth to a rash of chariot - shaped stone temples which culminated in the Sun temple of Konarak in Orissa, influence by the Chola conquerors of the East. The Chola temples are the finest examples of the Dravida (southern) school of architecture. By this time, the role of the temple as the socio-economic nucleus of town life had been firmly established, and large complexes with *praakaaras* (circumambulatory passages), *mandapas* (pillared halls), and Devi shrines were introduced.

Temples

Several temples of Tamil Nadu have outstanding features because of which the state is often referred to as “the Land of Temples”. Chidambaram has beautiful panels depicting the 108 *karanas* of the *Natya Shaastra* (the canon of dance), as performed by women. Its various *sabhas* or halls are intended to inspire awe. Kanchipuram is the city of temples, starting from the earliest Pallava times down to the Nayak period and even later. If the Ekambareshwara temple is grand, the Varadaraaja temple has some noteworthy features, such as an exquisite monolithic stone chain. But the most famous of the temples is that of Meenakshi at Madurai, with its profusion of sculptures and magnificent proportions, the thousand - pillared *mandapas* and the pillars of stone its towering *gopurams* and larger than life sized reliefs. Madurai is the pinnacle of the stone sculptor’s skill, if not his

² Satyaban Naik, *Culture Based Product Design*, National Institute of Technology, Odisha, 2015.p.14.

artistry. The skill continues elsewhere as in the long corridor of the Rameshwaram temple, and it is a skill which continues till the present day.³

Today, granite carving is confined to the area around Mamallapuram and Chingleput, probably because of the existence of the Mamallapuram School of Sculpture set up by the Government. As in bronze, 20th century sculpture has not yet evolved an idiom of its own, and many of the carvings are copies of earlier periods. However, a few sculptors have made a mark, and their work adorns temples all over the world. Granite images are essential for the construction of the *sthirabera* or the fixed consecrated icons. Today this sculpture is concentrated around Mamallapuram, where artisans chisel away at granite blocks to produce massive pillars as well as small icons. There are also a few pockets elsewhere in the state, where stone carving is practised.⁴

The sculptures belong to the Vishwakarma or Kammaalar community. The stone artists, woodworkers, temple planners, jewellers and metal craftsmen came from this community. In Tamil Nadu, shilpis live chiefly in Thirunelveli, Ramnad, Madurai, Chinglepet and North Arcot districts. Since it has no stone, Thanjavur has mainly metal craftsmen. The quality of the material is an extremely important part of the sculptural process. Just as the *Shilpa Shaastras* set out the measurements and techniques of sculpting, they have also gone into great detail regarding the quality of stone, its maturity, texture, colour and so on.

The details and great delicacy of rendering require that the stone used in sculpture⁵ remains hard, without losing its shape or chipping off unexpectedly. The stability and durability of the final form depends a great deal on the homogeneity of the stone. For this

³ Nanditha Krishna, *op. cit.*, p.117.

⁴ <https://www.incredibleindia.org/content/incredible-india-v2/en/destinations/chennai/art-and-crafts.html>

reason, the traditional artists work with the indigenous varieties available in the state, as it is extremely durable for construction purposes. The stones have to be selected carefully for their texture. The stone is cut by moving a series of wedges about 5 to 7.5 cm deep. These wedges are driven in carefully with heavy 4 kg hammers, resulting in the rocks breaking apart with clean⁶ edges. Till recently, even the quarry workmen belonged to the artist - craftsman community and hence the art was a continuous process from material sizing to the finished pieces. Good stone should also have no flaws, namely *kalanga* or stain, *rekha* or patch, and *bindu* or spot. The sculptural masterpieces created in Mamallapuram are not of the best variety of stone. But, since the task there was not to create images for worship but for aesthetic purposes, the secondary nature of the stone was considered acceptable.

Tools

The tools used by stone sculptures are made of mild steel in various sizes. They are the hammer and the chisel, the main tools of sculptors even today. The action of the sculptor is to peck out the stone, and not cut it. To prevent it from cracking due to the vibration of the instrument, the image is always carved when the stone is laid flat on the ground, irrespective of its seated or standing posture. Unlike other materials, stone has some inherent lacunae. Metal is capable of adopting daring form and the clear outlines it defines give dramatic shadow and light effects. Wood can be carved with almost unlimited complexity and hence produces an impression of elaboration and lightness. Stone, on the other hand, needs to be handled with care. To make the stone more rigid, the artist uses metal holdfasts to link unsupported limbs while working and later removes them.⁷

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.122.

⁷ *Ibid.* p.124.

Tradition

A major tradition of stone carving seems to be focused around temples in Tamil Nadu. The innumerable figures with their exquisite expressions, fine detailing of ornaments and dress, the traditional poses of the epic heroes from Hindu mythology are all gifts of creativity. The glory of stonework is truly revealed in sculpture and architectural facades. In Tamil Nadu, the *stapathis* are engaged in the temple construction and repair works in Thanjavur, Tiruchirapalli, Mahabalipuram, Ramanathapuram, Kanyakumari and other places. Vessels for storage, bowls and simply ornamented single-wick lamps are some of the common stone carving products of Tamil Nadu.⁸

The themes for most of the sculptures have always been religious in nature. Much of the elaboration has a strong basis in the mythology and Puraanic tradition of India. There is an elaborate use of symbolism to convey the meaning of abstract intangible truths. The artist uses dance and Yoga postures a great deal to heighten the effect of the composition. This lends both grace and movement to a frozen art form. Above all, the expression on the face of the image is held to be the most important part of the sculpture. Where images for worship are concerned, the face is carefully carved to evoke a feeling of tranquillity, reverence, and love in the heart of the devotee. After the completion of a sculptural piece, a ceremony known as *nayanon-milan*⁹ is conducted, wherein the image is invested with sight, life and breath, thus becoming a virtual living force. And only then, the image ceremoniously placed in the *garbhagriha* or sanctum sanctorum.

A subsidiary form of carving is soapstone or *maakal* carving, found in the region between Pondicherry and Cuddalore and around Salem. An easy material to manipulate soapstone does not achieve the sensitivity of granite. It is primarily the material used to create the lathe-turned stoneware utensils, known as *kalchutti*, used for making tamarind

⁸ Ashok Narang, *op.cit.*, pp.219-220.

⁹ Nanditha Krishna, *op. cit.*, p.124.

and lime-based dishes, particularly the *kozhambus* and buttermilk of Tamil cuisine. In recent times, the exorbitant prices of granite carvings have made the soapstone figures of deities extremely competitive and popular. These figures are sold around places of pilgrimage and tourist centres, catering to a moving population. They are generally small, about half a metre in height and, along with metal images, are kept in the family *pooja* room. Soapstone is very pliable - it can be cut with a handsaw and chiselled with simple tools. But this pliability which makes it incapable of producing the emotional undertones of the harder granite. ¹⁰

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 129.

CHAPTER V

JEWELLERY

Tamil Nadu is renowned for the pinnacle of excellence reached in the beauty and elegance of stone - set jewellery. The origin of the use of jewellery goes back to the very dawn of civilization, when primitive man and woman, taking a cue from the flora and fauna around them, decorated themselves with reeds, flowers, feathers, and beads carved out of wood, stone and bone. Shells, berries, wings of butterflies and beetles were all used with the advance of civilization, the material changed to copper ivory, agate and semi-precious stones, and later to silver, gold and precious stones.¹ Many crafts “such as shell working, ceramics, and agate and glazed steatite bead making” were used in the making of necklaces, bangles, and other ornaments from all phases of Harappan sites and some of these crafts are still practiced in the subcontinent today.²

Jewellery formed such an important part of adornment as in India, continuously and through thousands of years. Jewellery was crafted not just for humans but also for the Gods, ceremonial elephants and horses.³ Although, in unsettled periods of Indian history, Jewellery became a means of savings and has been a method of providing property to daughters in the form of *sthree-dhana*. The love of jewellery in India is really an expression of the aesthetic impulse of the people and their joy in the creation of beauty.

The love of ornaments can be traced to our tribal heritage, as evidenced by the flower, bird and fish motifs which are predominant to this day. In Tamil Nadu, for example, flowers encrusted with stones dominate jewellery designs. Leaves of the sacred *pipal* (bo) tree, the betel leaf, jasmine buds, the lotus, the shembagappoo (the champa or frangipani) and chrysanthemum form the basic design of most ornaments.

¹ Nanditha Krishna, *op. cit.*, p.69.

² Rajeev Kumar Gohit, *op. cit.*, p.50.

³ Bhandari, N.K., *op. cit.*, p.87.

Equally popular are the peacock, parrot and swan. The ancient origin of jewellery in Tamil Nadu can be seen from the sculptures and carvings in temples, a veritable cornucopia of the jeweller's art. Most of the figures of men and women are scantily clad, but of jewellery, from head to toe, there is no dearth.

Ancient Tamil literature abounds in references to jewellery. The *Silappadikaaram* (The Epic of the Anklet) is based on a story built around the anklet of Kannagi, wife of Kovalan. Puhar, where they lived, is described as a city of wealth, abounding in jewels of gold, pearls and precious stones. Jewellers were held in such high regard that the main street of Puhar was occupied by them and they lived where worked there.

Jewels of Courtesan

The jewels of the courtesan, Madhavi, who lured Kovalan, are described in great detail. She wore a *peeli*, a jewel worn on the third toe to this day. She had ornaments encircling her thighs, and around her waist was a belt of 32 strands of large pearls. Her armlets were encrusted with pearls, and her bracelets with precious stones. Her forearms tinkled with bangles of different types – gold bangles, *navarathna* bangles (nine-stone bangles called *pariyakam* in those days), conch and coral bangles. She also wore a ring shaped like the mouth of an open fish (this inverted v-shaped ring, the *nali*, is still worn today). And she had other rings of precious stones and diamonds. Around her neck, she wore a necklace of chains and a string of precious gems held together by an ornamental clasp, covering the nape. She wore serrated earrings set with alternating diamonds and emeralds.⁴

Through thousands of years, the jewellery of Tamil Nadu progressed from its tribal heritage to greater sophistication and elegance. However, it is obvious that even as far back as the Sangam era, it had reached the height of excellence and refinement, and the

⁴ Nandithna Krishna, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

designs and ornaments of today's traditional stone - set gold jewellery are practically the same as those worn two millennia ago. Different pieces of jewellery adorned each part of the body, literally from head to toe. Each ornament was designed to fit into and blend with the shape of the body, following the lines of the body or limb, as if carved into the part adorned by the jewel.

The Tamils, having been great seafaring people and traders from the very dawn of history, were familiar with gems imported from beyond the seas, even before the Christian era. Marco Polo in the 13th century, speaks of the kings of the Coromandel country (the eastern coast of Tamil Nadu), describing one of them as wearing golden bracelets set with the richest pearls, necklaces of rubies, emeralds and sapphire, anklets, at his feet and gold rings on his toes. He wore a rosary of 104 large rubies and pearls.

The missionary Abbe Dobois, in his account of this region, mentions that even men wore ear ornaments and ascetics (*sanyaasis*) also wore them for health reasons (though they used copper to show their non-attachment to gold or wealth). The belief in piercing the ears for health reasons has been prevalent since ancient times.

With the advent of nose jewellery in the medieval period (probably brought in by the Muslim invaders), gold worn on pierced nostrils was believed to cure sinus infection and head colds. The seeds of the *rudraaksham* (uthrasam) tree, often decorated with gold clasps, are used even today as a rosary during worship. They are believed to be beneficial in controlling blood pressure.⁵

Navarathna

Another belief still prevalent is in the efficacy of the *navarathna* or nine sacred gems in controlling the nine planets. The origin of this belief goes back to the worship of Murugan, the main deity worshipped by the Tamils, also known as Skanda,

⁵ *Ibid.*,p.72.

Karthikeya or Subrahmanya. The ancient text, the *Skandapuraana*, has a charming story of how these nine stones became so powerful. The *devas*, celestial beings, approached Lord Shiva for help in destroying the demon Padmasura, who was harassing them. Shiva, in his anger against the demon, opened his third eye, out of which fiery sparks blazed forth. Frightened by this sight, Parvati ran away from Shiva, and as she did so her tinkling anklets broke and the nine gems embedded in them scattered in all directions. When Shiva reassumed his peaceful aspect, he saw a different form of his beloved Parvati in each of the nine stones and, through his divine powers, he created nine warriors out of them to assist his son Karthikeya (Murugan) in destroying the demon.

These nine gems are considered so powerful that they are worn to this day to enhance the powers of a beneficial planet or to minimize the ill - effects of a malefic planet. The nine stones usually associated with the planets are the ruby (for Ravi, the Sun), pearl (for Chandra, the moon), coral (for Kuja or mars), topaz (for Guru or Jupiter), diamond (for Shukra or Venus), sapphire (for Sani or Saturn), zircon (for Rahu) and cat's eye (for Ketu). A *navarathna* ring consisting of all nine stones are considered especially efficacious, but great care is taken to see that the stones are placed in a particular order, each one having a special position.

Ornaments

Gold worn on the body, especially when bathing, was believed to have medicinal properties.⁶ In fact gold was, and is, so highly regarded that it is never demeaned by being worn on the feet, where it can be soiled. Only kings and icons in temples were permitted to wear gold anklets. The ornaments of Tamil Nadu, southern Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have many similarities. Although there are individual pieces unique to

⁶ <https://www.greavesindia.co.uk/the-tamil-nadu-handicrafts-to-bring-home/>

each region, others like the *Oddiyaanam* (gold waist belt), *vanki* (armlet), and *jimikki* (ear-drop) are common to all parts of South India.

Starting with jewellery worn on the head, the elaborate *thalaisaamaan* is a bridal decoration. Since the *devadaasis* or temple dancers of old considered themselves brides of the temple deity, they wore a bride's jewels while dancing. This tradition still continues and has resulted in South Indian bridal jewellery being mistakenly called Bharatha Natyam dance jewellery. The *thalaisaamaan* consists of heavy stone-set jewellery, with rubies or red stones predominating, but interspersed with emeralds and uncut diamonds. One piece of this jewel is worn on the centre parting and another tied along the hair-line on the forehead. Decorative pieces shaped like the sun and the moon are worn on either side of the head to invoke the blessings of these celestial beings, the sun for good health, brilliance and power, the moon for romance and a life of peace and calm.

The decoration of the hair does not stop with the front and top of the head. On the back of the head is worn the *naagar*, a five-headed snake in gold or a *raakkodi* (or *raakkadi*), a circular piece, stone-encrusted with a swan in the centre. When a *jadanaagam* (literally meaning hair-serpent) is worn, the *raakkodi* is followed by a stone-set crescent moon and a third piece shaped like the fragrant *thaazhambu* (screw pine) flower. Then commences the actual *jadanaagam*, the most elaborate jewel found anywhere in India for hair decoration. Worn on plaited hair, it is a jewel now practically extinct. A woman's crowning glory, her hair, has been the subject of flights of fancy by Indian poets - they liken the raven tresses slithering down in a plaited braid to a serpent.

The *Jadanaagam* proper commences with a ruby and diamond studded many-headed divine cobra, Anantha, with rows of coils (the latter serves as the couch of Lord Vishnu). This is followed by a hair - piece of diminishing thickness consisting of flowers

and buds cleverly interlaced, so that the jewel is soft and supple and appears to be a part of the braided hair. Another unusual hair ornament is the *Shevarikottai*, a golden buckle used to attach an artificial switch of hair to the chignon. For plaited hair not decorated with a *Jadanaagam*, a circular *Thirugusaamanthi poo*, also called *thirugu poo*, is worn in the middle of the braid. It is made either of diamonds, red stones or plain gold, depending on the wearer's wealth.

Jewellery is literally worn from the cradle. The *uchchippooteeka* is a small louts-shaped ornament worn by little boys and girls on top of the head on the right side believed to be a copy of the jewel worn by the child Krishna. This is another piece practically extinct now. There are several kinds of jewellery to adorn the ear. In the deep southern districts of Tamil Nadu, older women enlarge the hole in the ear lobe by wearing rolled palm leaves which are made larger and larger, increasing the size of the hole to nearly three centimeters in diameter. A *paambadam*, a jewel of six earrings of different shapes, is then worn, dragging the ear half-way down to the shoulder. Men in rural areas even today wear ear-studs of single stones called *kadukkan*. The normal ear jewel of women consists of ear-studs, lotus-shaped, of rubies or diamonds, called the *kammal*. Below this hangs the *jimikki*, a bell-shaped ear-drop, either in gold or stones studded. Sometimes another ear-drop, a *lolaakku*, is worn which can be of any design, though usually it has a floral motif. A beautiful jewel is the *mattal* of gold or pearls attached at the lower end of the *kammal* and hooked on to the hair above the ear. Its purpose is to support the weight of the ornaments. Jewellery worn on the outer and inner ear had gone out of fashion but is coming back amongst the young.

The jewel most commonly worn on the nose, on the left or right side, just above the nostril, is the single stone *mookupottu*. Another nose jewel which appeared in the South for the first time around the 17th century is the *bullaakku*. This diamond - studded jewel

is suspended from the pierced central⁷ membrane of the nose and falls on the centre of the upper lip ending in a single pearl. Though once worn by all classes and today only by Bharatha Natyam dancers, it was, in the early decades of this century, a symbol of aristocracy, invariably used by women of the upper strata of society and of princely families. Neck jewellery is a world apart, and the variety is endless. The basic jewel for a married woman is the *thaali* or *mangalasuthra*, the marriage talisman. First tied on string and then replaced by a gold chain, the important part of the *thaali* is the pendant, whose design is determined by the community to which the woman belongs. The traditional *addigai* is a necklace of large cabochon rubies set in ascending order ending in a lotus-shaped pendant. Today it is often set with diamonds which, however, can never compete with the beauty of the red-stoned *kempaddigai*. The necklace of mangoes, the *maangaamaalai*, consists of stone-studded gold mangoes strung together with a huge pendant of encrusted peacocks. This has now become part of the Bharatha Natyam, dance costume. Strings of pearls with large stone-studded pendants have been popular from time immemorial, as pearls are found in the seas off Tuticorin and pearl-diving was once a lucrative trade. In ancient India it was believed that flawless pearls prevented misfortune. They were therefore worn by princes and became part of a bride's trousseau. Often, a gold amulet enclosing sacred words formed the pendant of a pearl necklace. Equally strong was the belief in the power of a tiger's claw in preventing ill-luck. These claws were set in gold, framed with stones and made into neck ornaments.

Besides gold chains of various designs, the gold-coin-necklace, the *kaasumaalai*, is typical of this region, the size and weight of the coins depending on the wealth of the wearer. The *salangai* are gold beads strung together interspersed with black or coral beads. The gold *kanti* and the ruby *rathna kanti* are necklace worn on festive occasions.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.77-79.

The *asili* (known in North India as the *haasli*) is a stiff stone-set necklaces which is believed to be a protection for the wearer's collar-bone. Of the jewels worn on the upper arm, the inverted-V-designed *vanki* is the most beautiful, some very elaborately inlaid with stones, others of pure gold. An effect of coiled snakes is often part of this jewel, tracing its origin to snake or *naaga* worship. The inverted-v effect may be achieved by two parrots or two peacocks carved on either side. The *vanki* is so beautifully designed that it fits over the arm without any strain to the wearer.

The *naagavathu* is an armlet of gold with a stone-studded crest in the centre; the name derives from its appearance of a serpent encircling the arm. The *kadayam* is an armlet worn by young girls. There is a wide range of bangles or *valai* and *kankanam* either of gold or set with stones. *Gettikkaappu* are plain gold bracelets worn tight around the wrist, and the *thoda* is a bracelet with a stone-set crest. Matching the *vanki* is the inverted v-shaped ring called the *nali*, unique to South India. It is presented to a bride, usually by her maternal aunt.

Another jewel unique to the South is the waist belt, the *Oddiyaanam*, worn tight around the waist. Plain silver or gold belts used to be worn all the time by women as they were believed to keep the waist slim. Also, narrow waists accentuated the hips, this being a sign of beauty in Tamil culture. *Oddiyaanams* with stone-encrusted centers or *mogappus* are of a wide range, each rivalling the other in beauty. On the feet are worn *golusu* or silver anklets. *Puduchcheri golusu* of a chain design hail from Pondicherry. *Gajja golusu*⁸ are heavy anklets with bells that tinkle. *Thandai* are stiff anklets with bells inside which also tinkle and add to the graceful movements of the wearer. A plain stiff anklet, the *kaal kaappu* protects the ankle of the wearer and was believed to be necessary

⁸ <https://www.socialvillage.in/resources/40545-traditional-arts-crafts-in-tamilnadu>

for children to wear. On the toes, again, only silver is worn. On the second toe are worn the heavy silver *metti*, two on each foot, which produce a musical sound as they strike the floor. To keep the *metti* in place is the *siththu*, made of two rows of silver wires and worn tight on the toe. The *peeli* is designed like a crest and is worn on the third toe.

The great Indian concept of *R'ta* or cosmic order is integrated into the jewellery of Tamil Nadu. This has resulted in perfect symmetry in the designs of ornaments - what is on the left side of a jewel is mirror-matched on the right side. There is never any discordance. Even the rare cases of asymmetry in the shape of two different ornaments, is gracefully balanced, as in the case of the *nathu* on one side of the nose and the *besari* on the other.

Jewellery in Tamil Nadu has always had closed settings, with stones deeply embedded in gold. Open-setting work is virtually unknown. A three-dimensional effect is achieved with the use of wax, which forms the base over which the design is fashioned in gold and the stones encrusted. Thus, the jewellery appears heavier than it actually is.

Tribes such as the Todas, Badagas and Kotas of the Nilgiris wear silver and other metal jewellery. The items include bracelets, earrings and necklaces. The ornaments are huge and heavy, and intricately carved. A popular Toda jewel is a necklace with pendants of bent wires. Shells are also used for making jewels. The Kadar tribes of the Aanamalais have less intricate work and use a variety of beads. But the greatest variety of beads, made of seeds, fruits, glass, and wood are to be found among the gypsies of Tamil Nadu, the Nari Kuravas, whose livelihood depends on the sale of these beads to rural children.

Unlike many other parts of India, elaborate jewellery is still worn in Tamil Nadu. But it is unfortunate that polished stones are replacing uncut diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and emeralds, and Western designs in necklaces are invading the market, destroying a

rich heritage in jewellery rarely seen anywhere else in the world. However, it is hoped that the innate grace of the people, their love of beauty, elegance and refinement will prevail, and will not be lost in the maelstrom of modernization. ⁹

⁹*Nanditha Krishna, op.cit.*, pp.82-85.

CHAPTER VI

TERRACOTTAS

The word Terracotta stands for figurines of clay usually baked or burnt clay. It is one of the most ancient forms of plastic art clay, the medium of Terracotta is one of the easily obtainable and beautiful gifts of nature to mankind. It is very handy and cheap. So man at the very threshold of civilization began to make ceramics, dolls and deities in clay. This art became famous in the ancient world. A continuous stream of terracotta figurines through all the different ages is seen in India and particularly in Tamil Nadu. They have their peculiar local characteristics. They were made entirely with the help of hands and moulds. Paint was applied in most of the terracotta figurines, generally of red, pink, light yellow or black colour. The colour must have been applied either by means of a brush or dipping the whole piece in the pot containing flour.

The history of Terracotta figurines in India extends over a period of 3000 years. At Harappa, Mohenjo-Daro and other chalcolithic sites, Terracotta have been found in large number. Terracotta figurines discovered in the Indus valley are in human forms - both male and female and in the form of animals. In the human figurines the eyes are large and round affixed separately. The nose is prominent and is formed by pinching the clay together. The arms are held at the side. The female figurines wear a broad girdle. Large earrings and necklace are worn in some figurines. Terracotta figurines throw much light on the dress, ornaments and hair styles.¹

Guarding the entrance to every village in Tamil Nadu is an enormous terracotta horse, the horse of Ayyanaar, the watchman of the village and the commander of the demon hosts. It is Ayyanaar who protects the village from the evil of drought, disease, enemies and restless departed spirits, sporting an enormous moustache, fierce teeth and with his eyes wide open to keep vigil, he stands at the entrance to the village or near the

¹ Revathy Girish, *Cultural Heritage of India*, Wisdom Press, New Delhi, 2010, pp.55-56.

water tank, surrounded by his horses and commanders, or *veterans*. He is regarded as a good and benevolent protector, whose ritual is Brahminical in nature and generally eschews animal sacrifice. Described as the largest terracotta sculptures ever built in the history of mankind, the horses of Ayyanaar range from less than half a metre to over six metres in height. While those at the village entrance are guardians, reflecting Ayyanaar's protective powers, smaller versions are gifted to Ayyanaar as votive offerings by devotees. Apart from horses, Ayyanaar is also surrounded by soldiers, bulls and elephants, the last particularly popular among fishermen.²

Pottery

Pottery is the measure of a country's civilization. Being one of the oldest crafts, man has expressing his feelings and his aesthetics in clay. A piece of pottery has a visual message in its shape and colour. It is the most sensual of all arts. It is not only to be looked at, but also to be handled carefully. No wonder then, pottery has been called the lyric of handicrafts. Lyrical because of its irresistible and universal appeal. But, it is the association of religion with this art that has given it a deeper significance and another dimension too. Legends reveal that Brahma created man out of clay. The same thing reflects when a potter creates so many pots and toys out of it. Hence, the name *prajapati* is given to a potter.³

Pottery is found in very large quantities at all ancient sites and may well be regarded as the index to the economic and artistic standards of the population - standards which may also be reflected in the few sculptural or other artistic pieces that survive.⁴ Some beautiful specimens of coloured as well as glazed pottery indicate that the Indus valley

² Nanditha Krishna, *op. cit.*, p.87.

³ Bhandari, N.K., *op. cit.*, pp.97-98.

⁴ Basham, A.L., *Cultural History of India*, Oxford University Press, p.18.

was a skilled craftsman who could give both colour, shape and delicacy to his pots.⁵ The Indus people used very characteristic sturdy red ware, made of well - levigated and very well fired clay. Often it had a red slip and was painted over, in black pigment with a variety of pleasing designs, floral as well as geometric. Sometime birds, animals, and human figures were depicted.⁶ Among the most original products of the Indus civilization are the lively and exuberant terracotta statuettes. The subjects most often represented, on seals of steatite in particular, include animals such as tigers, buffalo, and oxen, which are shown either alone or yoked to small carts. Moulded with great realism, it is possible that these articles may have been used as toys. The heads of female figurines are characterized by their richly elaborate and varied hairstyles. It is believed these figures were intended to portray the Mother Goddess.⁷

Terracotta Figurines

The terracotta figurines, human as well as animal, show vigour variety, and ingenuity. The often illustrated short-horned bull from Mohenjo-Daro and a similar one from Kalibangan are among the most powerful portrayals of the animal from any ancient civilization. The human head from Kalibangan, though only an inch in height, is a keen competitor, from the point of view of expression and art, with the head of the famous steatite figure from Mohenjo-Daro. And then there are the terracotta toys, some of which are to be noted for their ingenuity. For example, a bull with a mobile head or a monkey going up and down a string. The Indus people had a highly developed art of making stone sculptures in the round. There is a striking steatite figure of a bearded man, supposed to be a priest, from Mohenjo-Daro. The inward-looking eyes and the serene expression induce a reflective, meditative mood. In the art of metal sculpture too, great

⁵ Revathy Girish, *op. cit.*, p.52.

⁶ Basham, A.L., *op.cit.*, p.18.

⁷ Piyush Chauhan, *Indian Architecture*, Axis Books Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, 2011, pp.81-82.

heights were achieved. The famous bronze female figure from Mohenjo-Daro, supposed to represent dancing girl, with her right hand poised on the hip, her bracelet-covered left arm swung to rest on a bent left leg, a necklace dangling between her breasts, and above all her well-braided head haughtily thrown back, is a perfect piece of art.⁸

As pottery is probably the most ancient of crafts, the earliest terracotta in Tamil Nadu are human and animal figures from Paiyampalli, dating to a Neolithic period between 3000 and 1000 BC. The figures are crude and represent terracotta art in its infancy. Black and red - ware pottery belonging to megalithic sites, dating to a period between 500 BC and AD 100, are found in several places such as Sanur, Amrithamangalam and Kunrathur in Chingleput district. At a related non-megalithic site at Adichanallur in Thirunelveli district, there is a more primitive form of black and red ware. A rich terracotta site of this period is the Nilgiri hills, which abounds in human and animal figures, both religious and secular. These are hand-moulded either completely or partially and have incised dot impressions on the body. Several parts are made separately and then joined together. Their linear composition renders them static, the only dynamism conveyed by the movement of the hands. Moulded figures were unknown in the early periods.

Between about the third century BC and the fourth century AD, sites such as Arikamedu, Kanchipuram, Thirukkampuliyur, Alagarai, Uraiyur and Kaveripoompattinam produced large quantities of terracotta objects. The figures religious as well as secular include village deities, *Vriksha Devathas* (spirits of the trees), *Naagalingas*, Vaishnavite and Shaivite deities and their symbols, Buddhist and Jain symbols and figures (especially in Kaveripoompattinam) of women in royal headgear,

⁸ Basham, A.L., *op.cit.* pp.18-19.

dancers, men and women, including aborigines, in various poses, head - dresses, garments and ornaments and, finally, terracotta jewellery and musical instruments.⁹

The terracotta traditional figures of deities on ceremonial and auspicious occasions bring out the religious nature of their pottery. Terracotta sculpture was also commonly used in architectural edifices. The Buddhist viharas of pala period and some mosques of the Mughal period are beautiful examples of the use of terracotta in architecture.¹⁰ The ornamentation on the clay included a myriad of painted designs and incised and appliquéd patterns. Clay vessels were also used as burial urns (*mudumakkal thazhi*) all over the Tamil country. The art of terracotta making continues at the same two levels till today. The first is for everyday use in the villages and extends to the making of mud huts and kitchens; and the second, the figures of Gods, Goddesses, their attendants, votive objects and, most important, the horses.

Terracotta pottery today is generally very simple and only painted at weddings. Salem alone had developed a black pottery. Ranging from water-drawing and storing pots to cooking vessels, their shapes depend on their use. They are given importance during Pongal, the harvest festival heralding the arrival of *Utharaayanam*, the sun in¹¹ the northern hemisphere. On Bhogi, the previous day, the old mud vessels in the house are ritually burnt, symbolising the destruction of the period of darkness. The next day, on the birth of Utharaayanam, the new pots are kept out in the freshly cleaned and, if possible, lime-washed kitchen. The position of prime importance is given to the rice pot, which is decorated with the *vibhooti* or sacred ash and *kumkum*. A fresh young turmeric plant is tied around the neck of the pot and the top is covered with white cloth. Inside is a combination of rice, lentils, sugarcane and jaggery, symbolising the fruits of

⁹ Nanditha Krishna, *op. cit.*, p.87.

¹⁰ Ashok Narang, *op.cit.*, p.208.

¹¹ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.87.

the harvest. The dish, also known as *pongal*, is allowed to overflow on to the sides of the pot, indicating a bountiful harvest.

The kitchen is made of clay. On a low platform or *medai*, there is a single stove or *aduppu* and a double stove or *kodi aduppu*, built of brick and clay and fed by wood for fuel. Extra stoves are made up of bricks placed strategically. Even when the mud walls are lime-washed, the *medai* and *aduppu* are left in their natural colour. An important daily ritual is washing the stove and platform, and decorating them with *kolam* or symbolic designs made of rice flour.

Apart from the cooking pots, other terracotta items in the house include large vessels for storing grain, the *thulasi maadam* or decorated platform for the thulasi plant, found in every home, and clay toys for the children. At the wedding of certain castes, the ceremonies cannot begin till, the potter supplies his vividly painted pots. Coated with a lime base, they are decorated with brightly - painted flora, fauna, Vishnu's wheel and conch and geometric designs.¹² The potter lights terracotta *ahals* or small lamps placed on a wooden stand and performs a *pooja* to the pots. At the potter's wedding this is the most important single ritual. The pots symbolise continuity of life, of creation, destruction and rebirth, as in the fresh creation of pots from old ones.

The potter is a man of importance in an Indian village, for he provides the utensils required in every home. In Tamil Nadu the potters are known as the *Kuyavar*, *Kulaalar* or *Velar*. They trace their origins to the union of a Brahmin man and a Shudra woman and, often to, Vishwakarma, the divine craftsman himself. Their social position is high and they wear the *poonal* or sacred thread. At village temples, particularly those involving animal sacrifices which are shunned by the Brahmins, the potters officiate as priests. Their importance is due to the fact that they are associated with the life process

¹² Satyaban Naik, *Culture Based Product Design*, National Institute of Technology, Odisha, 2015.

of the village from birth, when the breaking of the birth sac is symbolised by the pot, till death, which a mud pot is broken at the funeral pyre.

The making of a terracotta figure is of momentous importance beginning at the time when it is first ordered. It may be either a new image, or one specially made for a festival, or the ‘renewing’ of an existing figure. In the last two cases, a handful of the mud used to make the earlier image is put into the new image.¹³ The order is given on an auspicious day, while the eyes and other features of the face, the character are also sculpted on an auspicious day. The figure is brought to the village on the shoulders of the senior male citizens and the celebrations begin, with a lot of noise, fanfare and blood-letting. The potter acts as the *poojaari* or priest, for it is only his touch of the eyes which can confer ‘life’ on the idol. Most of the village deities are made of terracotta. Each village generally has an *Ammankovil* or temple to the Mother Goddess, with a shrine for her male consort, a temple to Pillaiyaar or Ganesha, and the great horses or *kudirais* of Ayyanaar, the *kaaval deivam* or guardian deity of the village.

Goddess

The most popular *amman* is Maariamman, followed by Kaali. Maariamman is the vindictive and dreaded goddess of disease, particularly small-pox. Both Maariamman and Kaali are propitiated with animal sacrifices, the former with the blood of sheep and fowl and the latter with the blood of buffaloes. Other female deities include the headless *Amman*, a form of Parashurama’s mother Renuka Devi, whose head is generally replaced by a *Kalasham* or pot containing a coconut and mango leaves, and Draupadi *amman*. The Saptha Matrikas are known in Tamil Nadu as the seven virgins or sisters, the Saptha Kannigais, Aakaasha Kannigais and Kannimaars. They are the tutelary deities of the water tank and are situated far away from Maariamman. There are several local

¹³ *The Hindu*, Tamil Nadu Edition, Madurai, dated: 17.05.2017.

goddesses such as Kanniamman, ¹⁴Kuayiamman, Pidaari, Rajarajeshwari, Meenakshi, Karumaari and a host of others.

Most of the village Goddesses are usually worshipped with blood and liquor. As their status is enhanced, they are identified with the consorts of Vishnu and Shiva and the blood sacrifices are replaced by less gory Brahminic rituals. Generally, the village Goddesses are primitive looking terracottas, ¹⁵sometimes even a mere mound of clay, covered with sandal paste, turmeric and *kumkum* and occasionally painted with earth colours. ¹⁶As the village temple gains money and sophistication, these figures are replaced by stone images. The male deities, sometimes the consorts of these *ammans*, are also made of terracotta. Karuppan, Chittan, Bhairavar (a form of Shiva), Veerabhadra, who severs the head of Daksha (and who, interestingly, has Jain connections), and Madurai Veeran, the popular hero of Madurai are among several others. Madurai Veeran sits on a horse, with a raised sword, supported by Muniyaandi, an attendant demon, at the shrine of Maariamman. Both Madurai Veeran and Muniyaandi are disreputable characters propitiated with animal sacrifices. In contrast to the more primitive-looking female figures, the male figures are very powerful and attractive in appearance, made with great care, with strong features and drapery lines and attractive ornamentation. Another important terracotta shrine is the *Naaga* or serpent shrine, situated under a *pipal* tree and near an ant-hill. Made of clay, it reproduces the inter-twined body of a snake and is propitiated for its power of protection and rejuvenation.

¹⁴ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.90.

¹⁵ <https://www.greavesindia.co.uk/the-tamil-nadu-handicrafts-to-bring-home/>

¹⁶ Shalini Aggarwal, *Arts and Crafts in India (c.200 B.C. to c.300 A.D.)*, Maharshi Dayanand University, Haryana, 1998.

Procedure

Making a terracotta figure involves several days of work for the potter, whose wife and children are his assistants and critics. The moist clay is mixed with straw and sand to achieve the proper consistency. In the case of a horse, it is rolled into four cylinders with a piece of wood. The four cylinders are joined to become the legs, and the body is built up gradually, with rolls of clay, up to the neck. The trimmings, consisting of bells, mirrors, grotesque faces (*kirthimukha*) and sometimes *makaras* (crocodiles) are made separately and joined to the main figure. The bells are supposed to warn miscreants of Ayyanaar's arrival, while the *kirthimukhas* and *makaras* frighten ¹⁷them off. The horse's head is made separately and supported by pots and sticks while it dries, to prevent sagging. All the parts are joined together, after they dry and on the auspicious tenth day, the image of Ayyanaar, seated on the horse, is given its features, to create the character. The whole is baked in a rustic kiln of unfired pots placed around the figure, fuelled by a combination of straw and *verati* or dried cow-dung, and covered with mud. In the case of large figures, the various parts of the body are made separately and fired, then joined together and fired again. Sometimes the figures are painted, the faces red, denoting anger, and the neck blue denoting calm. The rest of the body and decorations are also painted in vivid colours.

Style

While the earlier Ayyanaars were made along simple lines, the later ones are identified by larger eyeballs and more ferocious brows. As time passed, the eyebrows become straighter and there was an increase of straight and angular lines. Later still, the moustache increased in size and the figures were brightly painted. The oldest Ayyanaars and horses are probably to be found in Salem district. Today, Salem and Pudukottai

¹⁷ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.93.

districts are the sites of the manufacture of the large terracotta horses, although the smaller figures human, divine and animal are made all over the state. Whereas in the past all terracottas were individually made and fired, the increasing market, particularly for terracotta art items, has resulted in the development and use of moulds. Sometimes Ayyanaar's horses and commanders are made of stucco. While stucco art faithfully copies the terracotta forms, it has been unable to reproduce its grace and beauty, and the stucco figures have become stiff and lifeless.

Glazed ceramics are a more recent development in Tamil Nadu. Karigiri has developed a highly-glazed form of biscuit ware, with incised patterns, Persian styles, and a blue or green glaze. Auroville at Pondicherry has created a heavy kiln-dried pottery which resembles stoneware but retains the feel of clay. The traditional figures of the village Goddesses and heroes are also produced in rich ceramic colours. Some of the traditional pottery designs have now been developed to make contemporary tableware.¹⁸

Vinayaka Chaturthi is an occasion when clay Ganeshas are made and sold in large numbers. Ranging from a few centimetres to a metre in height, they may be glazed, painted, baked, or even unbaked. The last are the most popular, as the figures are lowered into the well on the day after the *pooja*, and the unbaked figures crumble easily. Unlike the enormous Ganeshas made for communal gatherings in Maharashtra, the festival in Tamil Nadu is restricted to the home. For the festival, each family buys a Ganesha, which is generally within thirty centimetres in height. It is interesting to note that, whereas the stone images, develop a permanent life once consecrated, the terracotta images come to life only for the duration of the festival and lose their powers soon after. The creation of the image its limited life span and its destruction, leading to yet another

¹⁸Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.95.

creation of an image, represent the birth, life, death and rejuvenation of all nature. Thus terracottas possess a unique position as representative of the life cycle itself.¹⁹

¹⁹ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.101.

CHAPTER VII

WOODCRAFTS AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

The finest wood carving in Tamil Nadu is associated with its temples. There are huge wooden temple cars (*ther*) attached to most larger temples, the numerous mounts (*vaahanas*) and the small pillared shrines (*rathams*) for the deities. Occasionally, beautiful woodcraft is found in the elaborately carved wooden arches, doorways and guardian (*dvaarapaala*) panels at the entrance of the temples.

Tradition

The traditional woodcarvers and carpenters throughout Tamil Nadu, like the stonecutters, silversmiths, goldsmiths and blacksmiths, belong to the Kammaalar caste. Divisions within the caste are by work. Among the carpenters, *thacharaachaari* families still traditionally specialise in specific areas of temple, household or agricultural carpentry. Within these groups the *sthapathis* master craftsman in house building, traditionally organized the carpenters and were responsible for the building ceremonies which were conducted according to the *Shaastraic* texts. As patronage for traditional arts demanding fine detailing has disappeared, the number of craftsmen engaged in this art has also dropped sharply. Even during the last century, migration of craftsmen occurred in those areas where patronage was highest. Currently in Tamil Nadu,¹ small concentrations of carpenters (50-400 families) exist in several areas such as Karaikudi, Kottaiyur, Devakottai, Madurai, Erode and Salem. Earlier, an area was distinguished by its speciality, such as the wood and glass work of Thanjavur, but many of the original specialities have been lost or diffused among several areas as craftsmen changed their styles to accommodate demand. The carpenter family is still a familiar adjunct to almost

¹ <https://indiathedestiny.com/india-art-culture/crafts/tamil-nadu-crafts/>

every village. Even here, the carpenter with the best skill acquires a wide reputation and draws clients from all the nearby areas.

Despite the antiquity of carpentry and wood carving in Tamil Nadu, very little has survived in wood from before the 18th century. Textual evidence, as well as evidence of woodcarving techniques duplicated in stone, point to a well-developed art of carving from the earliest documented times. The most visual evidence is the early stone monolithic *rathas* of the Pallavas of the seventh century in Mamallapuram, which systematically imitate in stone the wooden² origins of their temple prototypes, including their carved beam endings and arched ceilings. Early temple icons were also traditionally in wood, and at least one possibly very early icon survives in a ruined Pallava temple at Kanchipuram today.

The early sixth century text, *Brihath Samhitha* by Varahamihira, known in Tamil Nadu describes all the attributes of wood and speaks of its sanctity, outlining the many types of indigenous trees and how one identifies auspicious trees, what wood is to be used in carving icons and in house building, and what ceremonies are to be performed in the process of using this wood. Tamil texts like the *Mayamatha* (circa 10th century) which was thought to have been used by the Cholas or the North Indian *Shilpa Shaastras* (circa 11th century) which also elaborate on the carpenter himself, all correspond to the *Brihath Samhitha* in their general treatment of wood.

Temple Art

Wooden temple art, which was earlier the height of Tamil woodcarving, is a dying art today. Its most eloquent survivor is the temple car (*ther*). These cars vary in size up to eight meters of intricate carving and consist of multiple set in panels of a myriad deities, mythical animals like *yaalis* and *makaras*, real animals, *ganas*, dancers, erotic figures

² <https://www.incredibleindia.org/content/incredible-indiav2/en/destinations/chennai/art-and-crafts.html>

and decorative floral motifs. Detailed and stylized in high relief and occasionally very sensitively carved, the panels have their counterparts in the earlier stone and lime figures of nearby temples.³

Like a huge *vimaana* suspended on four to eight massive wheels, the temple car serves as a shrine and platform for the temple deity. Height and colour are added by elaborate decorations of colourful cloth panels tied to a wooden structure surmounting the carved base. The temple car carries the *uthsavam* (festival) deity on the highest platform, crowned and bedecked with jewels and profusely garlanded with flowers. Accompanying the deity on the wooden base are a large painted wooden charioteer, two painted wooden guardians and two prancing white horses. Fully decorated, the car is pulled with thick ropes by devotees through the streets of the village or town during a special festival once a year. This tradition is an ancient one. Although the earliest remaining cars are most likely datable to the 18th and 19th centuries, the tradition has well established antecedents both in literature, inscriptions and in stone. By the 12th century, the later Chola temples in Melakkadambur and Darasuram were many built as stone chariots on wheels. As with many of the temple concepts, these wooden chariots also may have developed out of the earlier symbolism of kingship embodied by the royal chariot as described in the early Tamil literature of the Sangam period.

Today, these cars can be found at all major temples, and many exquisite ones still exist in the vicinity of older temples now languishing in small villages throughout Tamil Nadu.

As with the temple car processions, several festivals occur throughout the year when the deity, profusely decorated with jewels and flowers and riding on his wooden carved *vaahana*, is paraded through the streets. For example, during the ten days preceding the

³ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.103.

Tamil New Year (14th April) the deity is taken daily in procession, usually on the following mounts: *singam* (lion), *kaamadhenu* (winged cow), *annapakshi* (mythical bird), Ravana at Kailasa, *Vimaana* (flying chariot), *vrishabham* (bull), horse, smaller temple car, *ratha* and the *pushpapalaka* (a type of open shrine). Besides all or some of these, a temple may also possess an elephant mount and a cobra mount. These wooden mounts are either painted or embossed with brass - plating, silver - plating, or silver with gold. Generally, the plating is also undertaken by the carpenter.

Much wooden temple art, like its stone counterpart, was painted. The traditional colours were blue, green, red, turmeric and white. The early technique of vegetable colouring and preparations used on the wood has, to a large extent, been lost. The 19th and early 20th century techniques of grinding cakes of colour to a fine powder which was mixed with a white lead primer and then strained through a cloth are still remembered, though not practiced due to the lack of demand, lack of the mixture and the ease with which modern enamel paints can be applied. Thanjavur was a centre of excellence in this art during the 19th century.

Woodworks

Woodwork in Tamil houses, though limited in its application, has been a continued tradition and remains the major source of employment for carpenters.⁴ The average Hindu house of middle class and affluent Tamil families was traditionally built of brick and lime, with sloping wood and red tiled roofs. Each house had a raised veranda in front and at least one open courtyard in the interior. Detailing on woodwork was prevalent on the columns that supported the veranda and the sloping roof on the interior courtyard.

⁴ <https://www.paramparaproject.org/TN-traditional-craftmanship.html>

The front door was also given special attention as a sacred threshold and one or more carved panels representing Hindu deities and auspicious Hindu motifs like the *hamsa* (mythical swan), *Padma* (lotus), *Poornakumbha* (cornucopia), *Kaamadhenu*, and patterned floral motifs crowned the door. The choice and combination of motifs as well as the style of carving and in some cases, the type of wood used, varied from region to region and, often from caste to caste. Geometrical motifs were rare. The amount of detailing in wood appears to have depended primarily on affluence, and in most of the rural homes very little ornamental woodwork in architecture is to be found.

Tamil Nadu is however, dotted throughout with the remains of elegant houses of merchants and zamindars and pretty royalty dating from the mid 19th to the early 20th century. These houses display an ornateness in carving and detail lacking in less affluent homes. It is a tragedy that many of these houses have already been destroyed and each year more of them are sold for their woodwork and subsequently demolished. Although the tradition of double -storeyed houses is described in the epic *Silappadikaaram*, nothing⁵ of the earlier opulence of architectural woodcraft has survived the hot, humid climate of Tamil Nadu.

Padmanabhapuram Palace

One striking exception is the exquisite wooden Padmanabhapuram palace in Kanyakumari district located in Tamil Nadu. The palace was earlier the seat of the Travancore kings. Continuously enlarged over a 200-year period, the three - storeyed completely wooden inner palace is believed to date from the 17th century. The building plan which relies primarily on wood, even for its walls, the intricately carved roof gables, lathe - turned columns, carved window grills, decorated wooden ceilings and techniques of beaming and motifs are particular to Kerala and specifically to Travancore.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.106-107.

In the vicinity of the Padmanabhapuram palace, there are several other wooden homes (*tharavaad*) also in the Kerala style. These homes are characterized by their wooden walls, their systems of storage and their separate granary. The granary is a small, elegant, self-contained building located in front of the house with an arched open entrance which must be passed through, to reach the main house. The architectural traditions of Kerala are prevalent in the thickly wooded bilingual Tamil - Malayalam border districts of Tamil Nadu, such as Kanyakumari and Coimbatore. They disappear along with the intensive use of wood in house construction as the landscape becomes drier and less forested.

Chettiar Houses

In the heart of Tamil Nadu, the Nagarathar Chettiars, wealthy merchants with business connections in South East Asia, became the patrons for much of the intricate architectural wood carving in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Their large, ornate homes, often reaching one city block in length, are concentrated in their 76 ancestral villages in Chettinad, comprising parts of Ramnad, Pudukottai and Thiruchirapalli districts. Wood carving was singularly important to the Chettiars, and they imported quantities of good Burmese teak for all their columns and doors. Several hundred families of carpenters migrated from Thirunelveli and the surrounding areas to Chettinad to meet the demand and, by the 20th century, Chettinad carpenters had become well-known for their skill and precision.

The houses are characterized primarily by massive doorways up to five metres in height, with intricately carved panels of deities, often Gajalakshmi, or of the *Ramapattaabhishekam*, the coronation of marriage of Rama, above the door, and with intricate side panels of guardian soldiers on rearing horses, a motif popular even in stone under the Nayak kings of Madurai. Rows of delicate carvings of deer, *hamsa*, lotus,

rudraaksham beads, and sometimes horses and floral motifs line the most ornate doors. The sanctity of each threshold is marked even within the house by a single panel of carved deities on all the interiors doors. These are often short, only one and a half meters high. It was thought that a view of the deity over the door, and the act of bending to enter the door, would induce reverence and humility in the occupant and bring prosperity to the house.

Other wooden features of the Chettiar house are the rows of wooden columns with intricately carved capitals in stylized floral motifs, often set with parrots and occasionally with deities. The use of flattened circles to indicate patterns was common in the Ramnad area at the turn of the century. Later patterns, usually stylized floral motifs, were bolder and less intricate in their carving, but attractive in their proportions. These columns support the roofs of the outside veranda and the raised platforms used for seating at either end of the main courtyard. The slanting roof of the courtyard is supported either by a series of the same slightly more elongated wooden columns with wooden corbels, or more often by stone columns capped with wooden corbels. Unlike the northern *havelis*, Chettiar houses devote little attention to window detailing except for the occasional *yaali* carvings on the struts supporting the roof overhang or the window shades.

Further decoration in the homes was confined to paintings on ceilings and upper parts of walls and windows, imported tiling, and elaborate figures made of a lime, sand and agger mixture which decorated the exterior façade and gate. Furniture was uncommon in the Tamil Nadu home as seating was on raised platforms. Decorative furniture items were the baby cot, (a British - influenced item in affluent Hindu homes), child-walker, trunks, cupboards, and low boxes for cash used in stores and business houses.

Ceremonial wooden items were common in wealthy homes. These consisted of small shrines for the *pooja* rooms, low carved stools for marriages,⁶ carved fans for the deity, small wooden deities, fertility couples, and various small ceremonial containers. Special wooden carved panels of deities, or symbols of the deity fixed to either end of a metre-long pole, were other important ceremonial items. These panels (*kaavadi*) are carried even today on the shoulders of a person to fulfill a vow to Murugan, or Karthikeya. Intricately carved wooden kitchen instruments, such as grinders, vegetable cutters and serving ladle holders, given as part of a large dowry at marriage, and smaller objects like carved wooden covers for manuscripts, spices and *kumkum* boxes, games and some toys like wooden dolls and elephants also exhibit the range of skills of the carpenter.

In the late 19th century, the British attempted to revive craft skills for their export potential. Training courses for carpenters ⁷were organized in Tamil Nadu, primarily in Madras at the Government College for Arts and Crafts. During this period, carved screens, picture frames, easels, jewellery chests, and furniture of heavy English Victorian style such as cabinets, desks, chairs, tables, and sideboards were produced primarily in Burmese teak and rosewood, and decorated with Hindu and floral motifs. These were used primarily by the British, wealthy merchants and royalty.

Although the tools used in the 1980s are the same crude implements of centuries ago, carpenter is one of the few craft areas which has kept pace with a changing market. Carpenters, whose fathers and grandfathers practiced rites sanctifying their work and were often called to give intricate detailing, are now mainly employed in manufacturing utilitarian items such as doors, windows and simple furniture or agricultural implements.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.109-110.

⁷ <https://tamilibrary.org/teli/handicrafts.html>

Except for a few areas like Kanyakumari, where the local carpenter still supplies his bullock carts with the traditional carved lotus panel, most woodcraft is plain. The families still practicing carving and temple work are very few. Major carving today consists of panels of deities and free-standing figures and animals such as horses, which are given an antique painted look, primarily for the export market. These figures have their inspiration in the temple car panels and *Vaahanas*.

Although the majority of carpenters have dropped out of school early to start practicing their craft, others have pursued their studies, and taken Government training in the hope of getting regular long – term carpentry jobs. These same carpenters, if they belong to the Kammaalar caste, still trace their beginnings to Vishwakarma the Creator, and many of them still celebrate the annual Ravana festival peculiar to their caste. At this festival, it is said that, after Sri Lanka had burned, Vishwakarma commanded the Kammaalars to take up their tools and rebuild the kingdom.

Musical Instruments

With the important role played by music and dance in the cultural life of Tamil Nadu, it is inevitable that the making of musical instruments should become a major craft. Most of the centres of this craft are situated around Thanjavur, which has also produced some of the country's greatest musicians.⁸

Percussion Instruments

The Tamils classify their instruments not only according to their types but also according to the different occasions on which they are used. The *naadaswaram* is an essential part of the marriage ceremony and the *kombu* is associated with religious festivities. Percussion instruments are sometimes used to make announcements, just as

⁸ Nanditha Krishna, *Folk Arts of Tamilnadu*, C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation, Chennai, 2006, pp.43-45.

the tomtoms in Africa are used to pass on messages from one village to another. They announce the auspicious procession of village deities, as well as funeral processions of certain castes. In the past, general proclamations made by the king were announced to the beat of drums a practice known as *thandora*.

The *Silappadikaaram* mentions the *yaazh* an ancient Tamil instrument similar to the harp or lute. Though obsolete now, it occupied a prominent place in the world of music in ancient times and references to it abound in the Tamil classics. There were several types of *yaazh*, from the simple curved bamboo bow to elaborately carved wooden instruments in the shape of crocodiles, boats, fishes and so on.

With the advent of the *Veena*, the various types of *Yaazh* which were capable of emitting only a single note were relegated to the background. Unlike the *Yaazh* with its limited scope, the *Veena* is capable of producing a wide range of sounds. Made of jack wood the various parts of the *Veena*, namely the *kudam* (pot, top plank, neck, and *Yaali* (which represents a lion's face) are first assembled and a mixture of honey wax and black powder is applied to the top plank. The bridge is then set on level and the position of the frets 24 in number, is determined according to the *Swarasthaanam*, which literally means 'place of *swaras* '(the notes). The frets, the bridge and the side-plate are all made of brass. Thanjavur is a renowned centre for the manufacture of Veenas and the families employed in making the instrument have been following the traditions set by their forefathers. It takes about ten days for a craftsman to complete a single *Veena*.

Essentially used to keep *Shruthi*, which may be loosely defined as 'musical tone', the *thamburaa* is similar in manufacture and appearance to the *Veena* but for the *yaali* face and the neck which are absent here. The Tamil *thamburaa* has a wooden base, unlike the north Indian instrument which has a base made of a marrow. The wood used for making musical instruments undergoes an elaborate process of seasoning. The flute,

known as the *Kuzhal* in Tamil, is a wind instrument associated with lord Krishna. The general term given for this is *Vangiyam*. The *Vangiya vaadyams* made of bamboo, sandalwood, bronze, *sengaali* and *karungaali* (types of wood). The bamboo is first dried in the sun and then baked in fire and seasoned. The holes, 12 in number, are gouged out of the length of the bamboo and are placed at definite intervals, based on the *Swarasthaanam*. The flute is generally made to order, since it is normally not as much in demand as, say, the stringed instruments. Tribes such as the Kadars and Todas, have their own simple varieties of bamboo flutes.

The *Naadaswaram* is another wind instrument, made of *aachamaram*, a species of wood. *Naadaswaram* - playing was initially confined to the families of barbers, and even now only these families are employed in the making of the instrument, which plays an important role in temple festivities. A unique feature of the Thiruvavur temple in Thanjavur district is the *Naadaswaram* made out of soapstone which is played every day during the *pooja*.

Ancient Tamil Nadu appears to have specialized in drums. A large number of kettle drums, double-headed drums, earthenware drums, single - headed drums, tambourines, tabors and tapering drums are listed in Tamil literary works. They were instruments which provided musical accompaniment. Different kinds of raw materials were used for manufacturing the *muzhavu-vaadyas* (percussion instruments) like *kanjam*, *karungaali* wood, *sengaali* wood, *vempal*, *palaa* and *kuramaram*. Among the best known and most commonly used drums is the *mridangam*, which is shaped like a barrel. The two mouth-ends are covered with buffalo-hide, drawn taut with the help of leather thongs. The sides of a log of wood, generally jackwood, are sawed off, then turned on a hand lathe. The *thavil*, made of jackwood, also employs the process of turning. Like the *mridangam*, this is a circular barrel with buffalo-hide drawn taut on either end. The *ganjiraa* is a circular

piece of jackwood, scooped out and covered with the skin of the *udumbu*, a type of giant lizard, with a few coins around its circumference to provide additional music.

Panchamukhavaadyam

Manamadurai in Ramnad District is the only place where mud is available in the requisite consistency for the making of the *ghatam*, which is similar in shape to a pot. The *Shruthi* is determined according to the thickness of the walls of the pot. The *Panchamukhavaadyam* or the five-faced percussion instrument is unique. As its name implies, it is made up of five small drum-like structures welded on to a similar but larger sized structure, highly decorated with engravings of the *yaali* and floral patterns, with a narrow bottom made of brass and copper. There are also two brass *kudams* or pots alongside, the mouths of which are secured tightly with cow-hide; together, the instrument is known as the *panchamkhavaadyam* with *kudamuzhaa*. An important ritual of the Thiruvarur temple is the playing of this unique instrument at its *Moonru Kaala Pooja*, which is performed in the morning, at noon and in the evening.

Folk Instruments

The foremost of the folk instruments can be said to be the *Villadi Vaadyam*. This consists of an enormous mud pot, like the *Ghatam*, to the neck of which is attached long strip of bamboo, on to which are attached at intervals, small round brass bells. The instrument is played with a table tennis racquet - like instrument made of cow-hide, which is beaten against the mouth of the pot, while the other hand shakes the cane with the bells on it.

Temple Instruments

Among other important temple instruments are the *Surya Pirai* percussion instruments made of thin parchment; the *kombu* or horn, used during temple festivities and in martial music; the *gowrikalam*, a wind instrument made of brass tubes fitted to

each other; and the *Udukkai*, a drum shaped like an hourglass, with a shell of brass, wood or clay, laced with twine and used for exorcism. The list of instruments is endless, each with its unique construction and function but made of either hide or jackwood. Hallowed by its association with Vishnu, the conch or *sangu* is used in temples, and during religious ceremonies and processions. It is the most ancient wind instrument known to man. Blown through a small hole made in the spiral, the conch is elaborately decorated with metal engravings which cover it and elongate the shell.

The materials used in the manufacture of musical instruments and their accessories are jackwood (preferred for its quality of *naadam* or tone), blackwood, redwood, ivory, *rakta chandana*, *kadira* wood, ebony, silver oak, pine, Himalayan fir, red and white cedar, *margosa*, gourd, bamboo, cane, reed, earthenware, the skin of sheep, calf and buffalo, and metals like silver, bronze, copper, and iron. Strings are made of gut, metal, silk and seasoned plant fibres. In very ancient times, the strings were made of *darbha* grass, properly seasoned and twisted. Once upon a time, it is said, even stones were chiseled and polished till they were fit to be tapped for music in the temples of Tamil Nadu. Supporting this belief are the *Sapthaswara thoon* or the seven-note musical pillars of the Meenakshi Amman Temple at Madurai, which produce a beautiful resonance when struck - a permanent to the Tamilian's involvement in music.⁹

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.112-115.

CHAPTER VIII

BASKETRY AND FIBRE CRAFT

The villages of Tamil Nadu are dotted with palm trees coconut, date and palmyra - and over the centuries the palm has become a major source of raw material for basketry and related products. Bamboo, cane, grasses, fibres and reeds are also used in the making of baskets, thatch, ropes, mats and many other things, since these are the cheapest and most easily available natural materials. Though basketry is practiced throughout the State, only a few centers are engaged in mass production and trading. Concentrations of workers are to be found in Dharmapuri, Salem, Coimbatore, South Arcot and Thiruchirapalli districts.

Tamil Nadu famers depend mainly on bamboo baskets to store and carry foodgrains, in which case the inner and outer surfaces of the baskets are covered with cow dung. These baskets are also used for packing and transporting fruits and flowers. Bamboo is generally considered a delicate wood, to be carefully utilized. Cane which is sturdier, goes chiefly into the making of furniture, bowls, and other items of household use. These are made in Madras, North Arcot and Thanjavur districts. An even sturdier material is the stem of the forest plant called *azhingi*, from which baskets are fashioned. Because the material is extremely strong and can withstand rough handling, the baskets are employed in the construction trade to carry bricks, mortar and mud.¹

Basketry and Mat Weaving

Basketry and Mat Weaving is one of the very oldest of man's creations done by joining grass with grass and interlacing leaves, with the minimum of tools. The grass mat was used for religious purposes like sitting down to pray, meditate or offer worship. Bamboo, cane, jute, reeds, grasses and palm leaves are used as raw material for basketry and mats. Coiled basketry is the earliest known craft form in this genre and has an

¹ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.141.

affinity with weavings. Jute and coconut fibres are used in the Southern States. The grass is used to create lovely dolls, toys and caskets. Tamil Nadu is famed for its kora grass mats.²

Baskets are also made out of palmyra fibers and leaves which are braided in various patterns, each named after a fruit, vegetable or flower. The stem of the date palm provides baskets very similar to the bamboo products used in homes. Like basketry Mat - Weaving is a very ancient craft and is carried on through Tamil Nadu. Regarded as the common mans bed, mats of exquisite design and quality are made from various types of grass, seeds and leaves, including those of the screw pine and the date and coconut palm. These mats, usually of the coarse variety in counts ranging from 16 to 26, are manufactured in the districts of North and South Arcot, Salem, Thiruchirapalli and Thanjavur. The medium coarse variety, ranging from 30 to 50 counts, is produced in Thirunelveli district.

But Pathamadai, a village in this district, produces a far finer variety of mats, with counts that range between 100 and 140. The famous Pathamadai mats are made from *Korai* grass, which grows in abundance along the banks of rivers and in marshy places. It is said that the best mats come only from the wild variety of *korai*. The grass is collected from the marshes twice a year - in September/October and February/ March. Then, sitting in the rain where the grass is still damp and soft, the mat weaver slices it into very fine threads, as thin as a human hair.

While the weft in the Pathamadai mats is of reed, the warp is of cotton or silk, depending upon the quality required. This warp consists usually of quadruple twisted 100 - count yarn, that is, four strands of the 100 - count yarn are taken hold of at one end and twisted on a *charkha* to produce a single thread of great strength. The warp is thus

² Ashok Narang, *op. cit.*, pp.226-227.

prepared by the men, but the actual weaving is done by the women. They sit upon a wooden bench with the warp threads stretched below them and a bamboo tripod carrying the reed in front. Explaining the weaving process, V. Natarajan writes “A single grass is taken and dipped in a cup of water. One end of this wet grass is inserted in a hole of a long fine stick, which can be compared to a gigantic needle.³ With the help of this stick the grass is passed into the loom. Afterwards the stick is removed and the grass is held on both sides by both hands and slightly twisted to give uniform roundness and strength. Then the reed is pressed against it several times to keep it in position. A woman can weave about 15 cm of 100 count or about 7.5 cm of 140 count per day.”

After the weaving is complete, the mat is compressed to eliminate any unevenness, a process that takes between two to four hours. Thus, the weaver needs nearly 12 days to finish a single 100 - counts mat and up to 22 days for one of 140 counts. In comparison, most mats made in India use coarse yarn and can be turned out at the rate of two or three a day. The best Pathamadai mats weigh only 400 grams and are so pliable that they can easily be folded without causing any damage.⁴

The mats are either in their natural single colour or combined in bands and stripes with the traditional red, green and black. Speaking of these mats, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay observes the ivory - white mat, simple with no trace of design, is a superb piece, for its very simplicity has an allure all its own, with its soft liquid surface. The design called *malaikulam* has squares in the centre in various colours, then geometrical designs, and the border is left plain white. The design *Gopuram* (temple tower) has only two colours, the natural and green with the towering roof in the centre.

³ Nanditha Krishna, *op. cit.*, p.141.

⁴ <https://tamilibrary.org/teli/handicrafts.html>

The old patterns consist mainly of stripes, usually at the two ends, or little streaks through the body. In fact, these bring out the beauty of the texture more effectively.

In the days gone by, the mats were coloured with vegetable dyes from such plants as *Sappaangukattai*. The finely - powdered dried bark and leaves were sprinkled over the split *korai* grass, which would then be folded and soaked in salt water. The vessel was allowed to stand in the sun for about ten days until the grass was uniformly dyed. Today the large - scale use of synthetic dyes gives the artisans a range of many colours.

History

There is an interesting history behind the fine – quality of Pathamadai mats. Their development is attributed to one Hassan Bawa Labbai, who lived about a century ago and whose forefathers were engaged in making coarse mats. It is said that Hassan was once drying *korai* grass in the sun, when there was a downpour accompanied by squally winds, his *korai* grass was blown off into the river. After the rain had stopped he salvaged the thoroughly - soaked grass and found, to his surprise, that it was soft and smooth. He discovered that he could split the *korai* into strands of great fineness - hitherto he had been able to obtain counts of 30 to 40, but now, he had obtain to strands of 100 to 200. So he commenced weaving with these strands. The mat he produced was of such softness that he repeated the process of soaking the grass in the river and then splitting it. From that time onwards, out of his looms flowed mats of exquisite quality. Soon his fellow artisans discovered his secret, and today the Labia community of Pathamadai produces superb mats, which stand unsurpassed and unrivalled in the country.

Apart from the *korai* grass mats. Tamil Nadu also produces mats made from the screw pine, date palm and palmyra leaf. These are used to pack jiggery, tamarind and other agricultural produce. The coconut leaf mats, which provide thatch for roofs, are

made in almost every village in the State. Used to erect temporary sheds or *pandals*, they can be built in elaborate architectural shapes on ceremonial occasions.

In several areas of Tamil Nadu, the palmyra leaf is transformed into a great many utility items, marked with high imagination and fine skill. These include fruit trays, picnic baskets, shopping bags, handbags, screens, *chiks* and glass-holders. Ramanathapuram district is famous for its beautiful sieves and winnows, while Daripatnam specialises in hand fans and square mats. Best known, perhaps, is Rameshwaram for its highly decorative square baskets with their raised patterns, which make excellent trinket boxes. A wide range of toys is produced, including animals, birds and rattles.

Fibre Craft

Fibre craft has been developed among the women of Tamil Nadu, particularly in Kanyakumari district. Using banana, sisal, aloe, screw pine and pineapple fibre, the women turn out table mats and many kinds of bags. A variation of reeds and fibres is pith, which is used to make models of Temples and dynamic ⁵toys. Because it lends itself to colouring, painted pith toys are a common sight at festivals. A grain - oriented craft is that of paddy or *nellu* garlands, hung over the front door and kitchen to ward off the evil eye. The demand for Tamil Nadu basketry and fibre products is on the increase, not only within India but also from abroad. This is hardly surprising because, these crafts, depending on the ingenuity of human hands, defy competition from the mechanical sphere. Their most important aspect, however, is that they play a vital role in the rural and tribal economy, providing employment to many millions in the countryside.⁶

⁵ Nanditha Krishna, *op. cit.*, pp.145-146.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.151.

CHAPTER IX

PAINTINGS

Paintings as an art form has flourished in India from very early periods as is evident from literary sources and also from the remnants that have been discovered. Numerous paintings or isolated paintings, framed drawings and long scroll of paintings, representing a complete legend. In another book Vishnudharmottara, the section Chitrastotra describes the basic tenets of Paintings. According to this treatise, the six limbs of paintings are: variety of form, proportion, infusion of emotions, creation of luster and iridescence, portrayal of likeness and colour mixing to produce the effect of modeling. The Vinayapitaka (3 - 4 century BC) describes, the existence of painted figures in many royal buildings. In the paintings of Pre - historic (Mesolithic) period, musical instruments like the harp figure to show that the, awareness of creation of sound and the concept of rhythm had appeared.¹ Thousands of years later, paintings appear on the seals of the Harappa Civilization. The Indus valley people were very fond of painting. Different kinds of figures and designs were drawn on earthen wares and utensils. The Indus valley people had achieved a great skill in drawing the figures of men, animals and various other objects of nature.²

In the early human and half animal. In the paintings of the later period, men are depicted as riding on cattle and elephants, battle scenes, royal processions, men riding garrisoned horses, etc. The Pallavas also left behind excellent examples of paintings in temples. The Cholas promoted both paintings and sculptures.³

The turbulent conditions that existed in Northern India during the Middle Ages resulted in an exodus of artists and poets to the South, and the Vijayanagara kingdom fostered a great burgeoning of the arts, particularly of paintings. The Vijayanagara artist was responsible for the development of three distinct schools of art - the Deccani School,

¹ Ashok Narang, *op.cit.*, pp.227-228.

² .Revathy Girish, *op.cit.*, p.52.

³ Ashok Narang, *op.cit.*, p.228.

the Mysore school and the Thanjavur School. The Mysore school reached its zenith during the rule of Mumtaz Ali Krishnaraja Wodeyar in the 18th century, while in Thanjavur, the Maratha kings developed a distinct style of painting. The credit for the development and establishment of this ornate style of 'Tanjore Paintings,' as they are known, goes to Serfoji Maharaja of Thanjavur.

Primary Colours

The paintings are characterized by the use of primary colours, generally avoiding mixtures, with stylized modelling effects by shading the inside of the contours. Jewels, drapery and architectural elements like pillars and canopies are slightly raised as in low relief by the use of a special plaster covered with pure gold - leaf and embedded with semi - precious stones in different hues. Sometimes gold-coated silver-leaf was used. Colourful glass pieces and occasionally pearls were used to embellish the Thanjavur painting, which feature gave it an edge over the Mysore painting. The painter himself produced the colours, which were prepared along the lines described in ancient texts. Besides minerals,⁴ he used the leaves and flowers of certain plants. In modern times, waterproof plywood, which has the advantage of being available in any size, is used. Thick brown paper or thin cardboard is pasted, utilizing *maida* (flour) or tamarind seed paste as an adhesive. The paper is fixed on the wooden plank with the help of a rich paste of the required thickness. Over this paste, unbleached long cloth or mull is spread smoothly, avoiding wrinkles. This surface is then coated with a combination of gum Arabic, French chalk powder, copper sulphate and a little *gopi* (yellow powder). Thus treated, the surface is later played with a rounded glass, usually a paper - weight or a bottle. To obtain the best results, the surface has to be absolutely smooth. Formerly, sketching charcoal was obtained from straight twigs of the

⁴ *Deccan Herald*, dated: 21.01.2014.

tamarind tree, which were cut to a suitable size and placed on a heated iron table. The charred twigs were then used as sketching charcoal.

Colours of mineral origin were reduced to powder in a mortar and, after being soaked in water for several hours, were made into a fine paste before being applied. When primary colours were mixed, they were ground in the mortar for proper blending, to obtain the distinct colours needed.⁵ Brushes for painting were generally made of squirrel's hair. These were needed for delicate work. For drawing superfine lines, brushes made of the pointed blade of a special variety of grass had to be used. Today, these conventional stipulations are, however, dispensed with, if easier and equally effective alternatives are available.

Features of Tanjavur Painting

A rough sketch of the picture is drawn with a crayon. For pictures of larger proportions, if a copy of the standard picture is available, a perforated stencil is used to draw the outline. The next step is to draw the sketch and then paint the farthest objects such as the sky or river. The animal and human figures, their dress and ornaments, need greater attention, and here the taste and the choice of the painter generally reveal his artistic inclinations. It is the degree of embellishment that is the distinguishing feature of a Thanjavur painting. Hence the importance of the gesso work or gold - covering of portions of jewellery. The gold work is generally taken up in the morning. When the picture and base of the gold -foil is moist, so as to hold the foil firmly. When the foil extends beyond the required margin, colour is used to cover it; then the gold covered portions are outlined in black. Once the paint is dry and the finishing touches are complete, it is glazed. The painting now looks resplendent because of the use of gold and the richness of the colours.

⁵ <https://www.greavesindia.co.uk/the-tamil-nadu-handicrafts-to-bring-home/>

The Thanjavur artist does not regard a portrait as a study of character - the individuality of the subject is identified to a lesser extent than the general decorative effect. In these paintings the figures are depicted in proportion to their importance; the principal figure therefore is always on a large scale than the rest. Representations of deities under ornate canopies with finely - executed pillars, draperies folded in gentle scallops, garlands of ropes, chandeliers, cushions and furniture, all lend an aura of opulence. The dark - hued Lord Krishna is sometimes depicted as a fair cherub, indicating European influence.⁶

Thanjavur paintings date from the middle of the 18th to the middle of the 19th century. They were painted on wood, glass, mica, ivory and on walls. With the advent of British rule, Englishmen at the kings' court and musicians playing different instruments were painted along with the main subject. Because the painters were Vaishnavites, the subjects were usually Rama, Krishna, Lakshmi, Narasimha, and so on. But the Shaivites introduced Uma Maheshwara, Ganesha, Nataraja, Murugan, Meenakshi, Parvati and other Shaivite deities. This style of painting slowly disappeared because of the time involved and the prohibitive cost. But in recent times, there is a definite revival and Thanjavur paintings⁷ are once again becoming very popular. Even today, there are a few families belonging to the original Raja clan living in Thanjavur, Srirangam and Kumbakonam who carry on this traditional art.

Apart from the gem and gold - leaf encrusted paintings of Thanjavur there is a separate though undoubtedly related - tradition of painting on glass, mica and ivory which was introduced around the 18th century. The glass paintings, in particular, constituted a difficult genre, as the sequence of steps had to be reversed to achieve the desired result. Thus, after the picture was drawn, it was shaded in first and then decorated with gold leaf a

⁶ <https://indiathedestiny.com/india-art-culture/crafts/tamil-nadu-crafts/>

⁷ <https://www.incredibleindia.org/content/incredible-india-v2/en/destinations/chennai/art-and-crafts.html>

process that resulted in a⁸ flat, single-dimensional effect, with doll - like figures. But the painting has the vital quality of folk art, which is its major redeeming feature. There is a remarkable directness of expression, and the message and symbolism are unerring.

It is believed that a group of Chinese artists lived and worked for many of the rulers and merchants whom they painted, and glass paintings are believed to have been introduced into India as a result of Chinese influence. The themes of glass paintings were religious or depictions of women or portraits of patrons. The religious paintings are highly decorative and flat, and the paintings of women heavily stylized. It is in the execution of portraits that an effort was made to infuse reality, to compliment the subjects of the artist's work. There is a dignity and even gentleness in treating these subjects. The British influence is evident in the Victorian architecture of the background, the furniture and even oval format. The fact that religious themes were ideal for the *pooja* made them instantly popular, and most of the traditional homes in Tamil Nadu still contain glass paintings which are an integral part of the family prayer room.⁹

⁸ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, pp.131-132.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.139.

CHAPTER X

FESTIVAL CRAFTS AND FOLK TOYS

In the social and economic fabric of Tamil life, festivals are occasions of the highest importance. Families are reunited, religious vows are renewed, and outlets are provided for the creative talents of the people. With special care, the housewife decorates the threshold of her home with the ritual *kolam*, tracing elaborate designs with rice flour paste. And a host of craftsmen - potters, toy-makers, sculptors - ready their wares for the seasonal markets that cater to the thousands of pilgrims who throng religious centers at festival time.

Bhogi

Most of the festivals in Tamil Nadu are connected with the change of seasons or with phases of the sun and moon. Thus in January, the last day of Dakshinaayanam, or the sun's southerly course, is Bhogi, a day that precedes Pongal, the harvest festival. The term Bhogi literally means "the festival of physical enjoyment" and the name probably originated in the gathering of the harvest. This festival is held in honour of Indra, God of the heavens and master of the clouds and rains, which shower abundance and prosperity over the land.

The well - known myth of Krishna and mount Govardhana is associated with the festival. On the day of Bhogi during the Dwaapara Yuga, Krishna wanted to teach the arrogant Indra a lesson, ordered the Yadavas of Brindavan to worship the mountain instead of the God. Incensed by this, Indra caused torrential rains to flood the Yadava territory. Krishna thereupon lifted mount Govardhana and held it aloft for the Yadavas to shelter under. Eventually Indra recognized Lord Vishnu in Krishna, repented his folly and was forgiven, and the Yadavas reverted to his worship. According to tradition, before daybreak on the festival day, the home is thoroughly cleaned and the accumulated rubbish of the past year is burnt. Old earthenware pots are destroyed and new ones were bought. From four to six weeks earlier, the potters have been at their wheels, turning out vessels of many types. On the day of

Bhogi, it is the custom for little boys to roam around beating the *thapatai*, a drum made of terracotta or wood with skin stretched over its ends.

Pongal

The following day is Pongal, when the sun enters the zodiac house of Capricorn (*makara*). On the day of the festival, newly - harvested rice is cooked first, in fresh terracotta pots by villagers and usually in bell – metal vessels by city – dwellers. The cooked rice also called Pongal is offered to the Sun God as an oblation, together with newly harvested sugarcane. The *Silappadikaaram* hails the harvest festival with the words, “Praise be to the Sun”! The Pongal *pooja* is performed in the courtyard of the typical Tamil Nadu house, in a spot where bright sunlight falls. The celebration of the festival varies from area to area, and each caste and community has its own special type of *kolam*. In Chettinad, *kolam* is called the *naduu-veedu* among Brahmins, and it depicts the chariot of the Sun God. The doorways of houses are festooned with green mango leaves or fronds of coconut palm. And the day is considered auspicious for such ventures as sinking a well or buying a house.

The third and last day of the celebration is called Maattu Pongal after the custom of cooking Pongal for the cows to feed on. As cattle constitute a farmer’s chief asset, a day is set aside for thanksgiving to the cow. The animal is bathed, its horns are trimmed, polished, painted and hung with brass bells, tassels, and garlands of flowers; its forehead and neck are adorned with ornaments of conch - shell. In the evening there is a staging of *Jallikattu*, a uniquely¹ Tamil style of bull-fighting, in which the animal has to be caught bare - handed and garlanded. Formerly a piece of cloth containing gold mohurs was tied to the horns-the reward for the young man who could overpower the bull.

¹ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.153.

Chithra Pournami

Chithra Pournami, which falls in the Chithirai (April) month of the Tamil calendar, is celebrated in honour of Chithraguptha, chief accountant of *Yama*, the God of death. He is said to record men's omissions and commissions in order to punish or reward them after death. To win the blessings of Chithraguptha, people draw a square *kolam* within which is a crude depiction of a man, to represent the divine accountant. A small palm and stylus - replaced today by paper and pencil are placed in front of this *kolam*. After the *pooja*, all the family members gather before the *kolam* to invoke Chithraguptha's blessings. It is said that it was on this day, one particular year, that the constellation Chithraa, which rises over the hills at Kuttalam in Thirunelveli, made its first appearance.

Thai Poosam

Thai Poosam is observed on the day over which the asterism Pushya (in the zodiac sign of cancer) presides, in the Tamil month of Thai, corresponding to January - February. Legend has it that, Lord Subrahmanya (Murugan) was given his *vel* (lance) by Parvati on this day, and it is celebrated with great fervour at Palani, a famous pilgrimage center. Here, the devotees carry the icon of Murugan around the city, and the *kaavadi*, a palanquin-like structure. The origin of the *Kaavadi* is associated with the Sage Agasthya who wanted to transport two hillocks to the South from Mount Kailasa. However, he was unable to proceed beyond Burchavanam and therefore sought the help of *Idumban* leader of the *Asuras*. To achieve his task, Idumban was invested with certain powers, with the rod of Brahma and the services of the eight serpents. The contraption he devised from these is said to resemble the modern - day *Kaavadi*. Along the way, Idumban got tired and placed his burden down. This enraged Murugan, an altercation ensued, after which Idumban lost consciousness. He was restored to life only after his wife pleaded with the Lord. All this is believed to have taken place at Palani, which accounts for the festival's observance there.

Varalakshmi Vratam

The latent talents of the housewife are put to the test in Varalakshmi Vratam, another festival that traces its origin to legend. The story goes that Shiva and Parvati were once engaged in a game of chess. Though Parvati was winning game after game, Shiva kept claiming victory; so parvati naturally asked for an umpire. Chithrameni was chosen for this role but, being Shiva's attendant, he unfairly supported the latter. Parvati was so angry that she cursed Chithrameni and transformed him into a leper. He was forgiven only after she had extracted a promise that he would perform Varalakshmi Vratam. This worship of the Goddess of wealth is performed largely by woman to invoke the blessings of Lakshmi on them, their husbands and their children, to preserve them, their *Maangalya* or married status. Housewives vie with each other in draws the *kolam* for this *pooja*, which depicts the lotus in its myriad forms. The lotus symbolizes Lakshmi, Patroness of farmers, who also presides over fertility and represents the umbilical cord - the life - force that sustains creation.

On the day before the *pooja* Lakshmi's face is drawn on a *Kumbha* (a terracotta pot), into which lime, rice and a few coins have been dropped and which is topped with mango leaves and a coconut smeared with turmeric and sandalwood paste. Then, on a silver pot covered with sandal paste, the face of Lakshmi is painted - the eyes with collyrium, the lips with red *kumkum*, the nose and ears with turmeric. She is adorned with jewellery and flowers. Sometimes a bejewelled silver mask is used instead and the pot is covered with a skirt. The mask, the terracotta pot and silver vessel all provide occupation for the craftsman.

Gokulaashtami

Gokulaashtami celebrates the birth of lord Krishna which falls on the *ashtami* or the eighth day of the month *avani* (August - September). The *kolam* leading to the prayer room traces the outline of small feet, signifying the entry of the infant Krishna into the house. Special food such as *cheedai*, *Murukku* and milk sweets, are offered as oblations.

Vinayaka Chathurthi

Vinayaka Pillaiyaar, Ganapathi or Ganesha is the most popular deity of Tamil Nadu, and even the smallest hamlet has a temple for his worship celebrated in the month of Avani. His *pooja* is performed to acquire strength of will for success in all undertakings. The well-known story of how Ganesha has an elephant head may be recalled briefly. Asked by Parvati to guard her bathing quarters, Ganesha refused Shiva admission, for which he was beheaded. It was only in response to Parvati's entreaties that Shiva asked his attendants to go to the forest and bring back the head of the first living being they saw, which happened to be an elephant. And this is how the elephant head was placed on Ganapathi's shoulders. In the villages, Vinayaka Chathurthi offers ample scope for the people's creativity. All the children's try to fashion the clay of Ganesha's elephant face, trunk curved at the tip, the crown, his four arms, one holding a *modaka*, his favourite sweet, big belly, two stumpy legs, and his *vaahana*, the *mooshika* (mouse or shrew). The scarlet and black-eyed seeds of the *kunrimani* (crabs eye) are used as Vinayaka's eyes. Formerly, the figures were made out of the mud of an ant-hill, but nowadays clay has taken over. The *kudai* (umbrella), a contemporary addition, is made of crepe paper and coloured tassels. Unable to cope with the demand for the idol, the craftsmen now moulds on which they handpress the pliable clay to cast the image.

Navaraathri

Perhaps the festival dearest to Tamil hearts is Navaraathri (nine nights) or Bommai Kolu -the festival of dolls- observed for nine days starting, soon after the new moon of the Tamil month Purattaasi (September-October). In each house-hold, a wide stepped stand is erected to display the dolls. These represent the various Gods and Goddesses which are arranged to depict stories from the epics and the *Puraanas*. *Kolu* is planned in an almost competitive spirit and the occasion provides an opportunity for doll-makers to excel. Even

in temples, a grand display of *Kolu* is set out.

Terracotta Dolls

Traditionally, the dolls are made of terracotta and then painted. Each craftsman produces a few new moulds every season to add to his already existing stock. The *Kolu* presents a great variety - oscillating toys from Thanjavur, clay toys from Panruti, papier-mache toys, miniature household articles, animals and birds and many more. The festival is in honour of the Mother Goddess in her varied aspects - Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. The nine days are equally distributed between these three, and the tenth day is considered as a day of victory, when evil was overpowered by the Supreme Mother. On *navami*, the ninth day, people worship the tools of their trade. On the tenth day, or Vijaya- Dashami, Rama's *Pattaabhishekam* (coronation) is celebrated in most of the Tamil houses. It is believed that Rama himself celebrated *Vasanth Navaraathiri* in the forest while looking for Seetha, and that he returned to Ayodhya after victory on the tenth day along with her. On this auspicious day, new business ventures, the *Aksharaabhyaasa* (the first learning of the alphabet), or the first music lesson are begun.

Festival of Lights

Deepavali, the festival of lights, is also called Naraka Chathurdasi in Tamil Nadu. According to legend, Naraka, a demon ruling over parts of East India, started wreaking havoc upon men and Gods. They sought Krishna's intercession, and it was on the third day before dawn that the demon was destroyed. Naraka's last prayer was that those who observed this day with a ritual bath, feasting and fireworks would go to heaven. Celebrations begin fortnight before Deepavali, with special bazaars set up to sell fireworks. These herald the victory of Krishna over Naraka, and they must be lit before the coming of dawn. As it is the monsoon period in Tamil Nadu, the fireworks substitute for the *Deepam* (lamp), rows of which light up the festival in the North. Months before the festival, the crackers start being

handmade at Sivakasi, the country's largest fireworks producer.

Karthigai Deepam

Also called the festival of lights in Tamil Nadu is Karthigai Deepam, which falls in the month of Karthigai (November - December) an outstanding feature of this celebration is the huge lamp that is lit high on a hill at Thiruvannamalai, a place sanctified by its enormous temple to Shiva. In the home, women light row upon row of terracotta lamps (*mannvilakku*) as well as large brass lamps called *Kuthu Vilakku*. Potters and metal² - workers are hard at work during this season producing all manner of lamps for the festival, because a new lamp, whether of terracotta or metal, has to be bought and lit along with the older ones.

Cult of Mariamman

The same craftsmen are also kept busy making the *Karagam*, an observance associated with the cult of Mariamman. The *Karagam* consists of terracotta or brass vessels, tapering in size and placed one on top of other. It is crowned with a small tower of neem leaves smeared with saffron and vermillion. The *Karagam* is carried on the head of a devotee, who is usually dressed like a warrior and who sometimes performs acrobatics while balancing the vessels. Known as *aatta Karagam*, this balancing act is accompanied by special musical instruments - the *Pampaadi*, *urumi*, *thavil*, *naadaswaram* and *Thamakku*.

Brahmothsavam

In addition to individual celebrations, there are periods of community worship and festivities in Tamil Nadu, called brahmothsavams, these are observed at different times in different parts of the State and last for 10 to 15 days. The Brahmothsavam at Madurai falls in the Vaikaasi month of the Tamil calendar (May-June) and the Panguni Uthiram, honouring Parvati's devotion to Shiva, is held during panguni (March-April). The main feature of this celebration is that the presiding deity, his consorts, and lesser deities are taken around the

²Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, pp.156-158.

streets in *ther* or *ratham*. Every day at fortnight, the deities are elaborately decorated with flowers and jewels and paraded in his or her particular *vaahana* or vehicle. On the last day, only the temple's presiding deity and his or her consort are carried ceremonially in procession. A unique aspect of the Panguni Uthiram is that the *Vaahanas*, which are nearly three metres in height, commemorate the well - known devotees of Shiva, from Nandi to Ravana. On one day, the 63 Naayanmaars or saints of Shaivism are honoured as 63 individual icons. On the last day, the *ther* is dragged through the streets by the devotees.

A product of skilled craftsmanship, the *ther* is built of wood with intricate designs and carvings. An ornamental canopy raises tier upon tier to assume towering dimensions. Colourful applied *thoranams* (lintel pieces) and *thombais* (long, cylindrical hangings) are suspended from the *ther* which is dragged along by the people by means of thick palm – fibre ropes. This is the time not only for worship and prayer but also for the craftsmen to sell their wares to the devotees who have gathered for the temple car festival.

Kandoori Festival

The various Muslim festivals also provide an opportunity to witness the high quality of festival crafts. Thus, during the annual Kandoori celebrations in memory of Saint Quadar Wali, green flags decorated with wooden ships are carried in procession from Nagapattinam to Nagore. This perpetuates the legend attributed to the saint who saved a ship from sinking near Singapore after he had seen a vision.

Annai Velanganni Festival

An annual Christian festival held at Velanganni near Nagapattinam honours Mary, known as Annai Valanganni by the local population, Mary is said to have great healing powers and many pilgrims go to the church, light candles, and take a vow to offer the limb or afflicted part in gold or silver, if cured of the ailment. There is therefore a large market for gold and silver workers who fashion these delicate pieces. Candle - making is also one of the

chief occupations of the people of Velanganni. Festival days in Tamil Nadu reveals the great wealth of the state's arts and crafts. More important, they draw attention to the importance of the craftsman in the religious and social life of the people. For it is he who creates the image which the priest will later imbue with divinity.³

Folk Toys

India has a glorious tradition in toys. The excavations from Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro have thrown up a magnificent profusion of clay toys. A large variety of materials are used for the manufacture of toys and dolls. Red wood, cow dung, papier-mache, paper and clay are some of them. Clay toys are made in almost all the states in folk style.⁴ Clay craft is probably the earliest of man's creations. Clay pottery is an ancient art form in India and particularly in Tamil Nadu.⁵ Almost every region of India is renowned for its distinctive tradition of toys.⁶ Some are closely connected with seasonal religious festivals.

Ivory Carving

Our account of this phase of classical art is likely to remain incomplete without a reference to the art of the Indian ivory-carvers. They knew from very early times the various uses of the tusk of the elephant for domestic as well as for artistic and decorative purposes. Ivory carving has been an ancient craft in India. Ivory objects, mostly of domestic use, have been unearthed in excavations at several places, including the excavations at the Indus valley sites which goes back to about the third millennium B.C. In ancient literature, frequent mention is made of ivory carvers. The Kamasutra of Vatsyayana mentions dolls and toys made of ivory as suitable gifts to a newly married wife. The Amarakosha also mentions dolls made of ivory as a speciality of the Panchala country. The Brihat Samhita of Varahamihira mentions ivory as a suitable material for inlay with wooden furnitures and incidentally also

³Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.160-161.

⁴ Ashok Narang, *op. cit.*, p.222.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.200.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.222.

refers to the portion of the tusk suitable for such works. The remains of ancient ivory-carving are however, very rare, probably because of the extremely fragile nature of the material and the disintegrating climate of the country. The lack of remains does not necessarily indicate that the art was not practiced in India, as of such a practice we have abundant references in ancient literature, and of these only a few have been quoted above.⁷

Toy Industries in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu provides a rich panorama of toys fashioned out of almost every conceivable material, from clay to cloth. Each of these represents a splendid synthesis of folk art and nature, the essence of which permeates the toy, making it at once vital and vibrant. The most popular of these toys are made of clay and terracotta, an industry that has been firmly established in Pondicherry, Madras, Kanchipuram, and parts of Arcot. The craft pockets situated in these areas are of ancient origin; the craft itself began a hereditary tradition in the artisan's family.

Pondicherry Clay Toys

The toy industry in Pondicherry is several centuries old and, though predominantly based on⁸ clay, has today expanded to include papier - mache and plaster of Paris toys. It is largely concentrated in Kosapalayam, the craftsmen belonging to the Kosavan or Kuyavan community. The range extends from religious toys to household items and animals, painted in natural earthy tints. Today, a large variety of toys are coloured with enamel paints. There is, however, an established convention under which certain colours are used to depict men and women in different walks of life. A rich orange indicates, men and women of the priestly class, while greys and russet indicate, those engaged in manual labour. In the case of a groom and bride, and the entire bridal entourage are resplendent in shimmering orange or pink. The affluent characters are differentiated by the colour and brightness of their clothing from the

⁷ Bhandari, N.K., *op.cit.*, pp.202-203.

⁸ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, p.161.

lesser folk who are painted in grey, to highlight the difference. Thus, at no juncture does the craftsman lose touch with reality and even as the child is transported from his world to the sphere of imagination, he passes through a process of learning with these toys.

The sales are seasonal, but with the onset of Navaraathri and the *Kolu* (doll) festival the trade thrives and sales are very brisk. Apart from the painted clay toys, Pondicherry was once known for its painted or gilt - covered wooden toys. This craft is practically extinct today. In Madras, the clay toy industry represents an array of the celestial and the supernatural, and the toys are manufactured by about 300 artisan families from Cuddalore, now settled in Kosapet. Kanchipuram is yet another centre of clay toy making.

Manufacturing Clay Toys

Clay toys are manufactured in two distinct stages the preparation of the mould and the colouring of the finished products. Plaster of Paris is mixed with tapioca powder and then made into a paste and dried till it, can be rolled into layers. This is then pressed into the die and the necessary moulds, are obtained. The raw material used for the manufacture of these toys is rock clay. The moist clay is, in turn, pressed into the mould which, prior to this, is dusted with French chalk so that the end products can be easily detached. Once removed, they are exposed to sunlight for a day. The dried clay toys are now ready for colouring. While the men knead the clay, roll it into layers; make the moulds and models the women transform the drab clay into richly - coloured toys with their brushes dipped in paints contained in coconut shells. The children are also actively involved in the process, performing odd jobs, cleaning, and so on. The finishing touches are given by the women, supervised by the master craftsmen.

Lathe - turned, lacquered, wooden toys, particularly miniature cooling vessels and walkers are known as *kadasal*. These are brightly coloured, inexpensive and very popular all over the state. Soapstone (*maakal*) is also used for making miniature cooking utensils.

Panruti, near Cuddalore in South Arcot district, is famous for its clay toys, many of which are still painted with vegetable colours. And Karigiri, near Vellore, is known particularly for its toy animals. Madurai has a unique centre which specializes in a large variety of metal creations, particularly brass insects.

Thanjavur Dancing Doll

Thanjavur was once reputed for its elegant and excellent oscillating toys, now concentrated more in the neighboring districts of Kumbakonam and Mayavaram. The famous dancing doll of Thanjavur, though not exactly a toy, nevertheless deserves mention. This is made of papier -mache; the paper pulp is mixed with clay and applied to a cut mould by hand, a process involving great skill and delicacy of touch. The doll is made in four parts the circular base with the legs attached, the lower part of the body from the waist downward, the upper body and arms, and the head. Each part is delicately balanced on wires so that the slightest touch sets the whole doll dancing.

Pith Toys

The making of pith toys centres chiefly around Kumbakonam. Pith is the hard core of a water reed found profusely in tanks, swamps and lakes in Thanjavur district. The reed is gathered and dried till all the superfluous hair is shed. The ivory coloured reed, which is soft, smooth and extremely pliable, is then fashioned into various playthings.

Mannapadu is known for toy animals made out of palm leaf. The leaves, dipped in appropriate colour dyes, are interwoven so as to transform the original leaf into splendid and fanciful creations. Sometimes, the stem of the leaf is used for further strength and support. Almost all these are cottage industries, and the craft⁹ is pursued by the family of the craftsman at his residence. Very few are employed from outside, the art by and large being

⁹ Coomaraswamy K. Ananda, *Introduction to Indian Art*, Theosophical Publishing House, Madras, 1923. (p.v,vii)

the sole prerogative of the craftsmen's kith and kin. In a way, in the remotest parts of Tamil Nadu, the practice of toy making jointly, as in the case of other crafts, has helped to bring the family much closer, re - establishing family ties and accentuating it as one group, an exclusive unit.¹⁰

¹⁰ Nanditha Krishna, *op.cit.*, pp.163-164.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

The crafts sector provides livelihood to a large number of people and makes an enormous contribution to India's export and foreign exchange earnings. It is estimated that today, there are over 12 million artisans and crafts persons working in the crafts sector. Recognizing the importance of the crafts sector, the Government enhance opportunities for employment and income from crafts sustain craft as an economic activity by enhancing its market, both domestic and international preserve the traditional beauty and skills of crafts and make them once again an integral part of daily life.

The biggest threat to the crafts sector in India are from industrial manufacturers, in India and abroad, who produce cheap products in large quantities and are quick to diversify to meet changing trends and fashions. Today globalization and liberalization of trade policies have meant that quality handmade products from all other countries can enter and compete with the existing crafts industry in India. Within the country, the crafts industry has to compete with large multinationals and corporate as young people buy branded clothing and lifestyle products. Good marketing strategies and expensive advertising campaigns by these large corporate have put the Indian crafts community at an extreme disadvantage. The lacks of raw material, working capital, educational facilities and poor understanding of the changing markets have made the crafts community extremely vulnerable. We need to provide the crafts community with a global market perspective and expertise in design and development to meet these new demands.

In the process of economic development the crafts communities need to be involved in finding new and innovative ways to help their crafts to survive, as they are creative people with many ideas and have adapted too many changes over the years. Craft development should be a means to promote cultural wisdom and family values. Showing

respect to crafts communities should also be a part of our concerns. It is important to bring them and their needs into the consultative process when planning craft promotion.

Today, the world is threatened by global warming, pollution, unhealthy living conditions and destruction of the environment. Conscientious tourists have now begun to ask if products have been grown organically, and whether the crafts process and production are sustainable in terms of the environment. There are many crafts that are not based on sound environmental principles. Crafts production is in itself not always eco-friendly. Dyes and mordants pollute rivers; wood-based skills denude our forests. There are items like ivory and sandalwood whose sale is restricted, protected animal skins and parts the sale of which is completely banned. Tourists, both foreign and domestic, must be informed why these products are not for sale and of the national effort to save India's wildlife and forests. When encouraging and promoting crafts, attempt should be made to improve the working environment of craftspeople and to find new, innovative ways to protect natural resources, farm renewable resources like trees and bamboo, reduce pollution, and the exploitation of nature. Crafts that follow sustainable practice, that are organic and that do not exploit human beings should be clearly marked and labelled so that the growing conscientious market is well served by the crafts industry.

A review of the progress and development of Indian arts and crafts is necessary for the proper understanding of the high culture and refinement of the ancient Indians. Judged by the standard of art, Indian civilization must be regarded as occupying a very high place indeed among those of antiquity. It exhibits not only grace and refinement but technical skill and patient industry of a very high order. Indian art offers the most vivid testimony to the wonderful resources in men and money possessed by the rulers and the religious spirit that dominated the entire population. These depict that India was one of the most progressive, prosperous and glorious country of the world during ancient days,

consequently its culture spread in foreign countries also during ancient time. However, with new technologies, research methods, and archaeological discoveries, we are able to view the history of human artistic achievement in a greater focus than ever before.

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**RAJIV GANDHI – THE YOUNGEST INDIAN
PRIME MINISTER**

Project submitted to

St.Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi

affiliated to

Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

By

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This is to certify that the project entitled
"RAJIV GANDHI - THE YOUNGEST INDIAN PRIME MINISTER",
submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to
Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, in partial fulfillment of
the requirements of St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, for the
award of the degree of Master of Arts in History and is a work done during
the year 2020 - 2021 by S . Karthika a bonafide student of the Department
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project entitled "**Rajiv Gandhi – The Youngest Indian Prime Minister**", "submitted to St.Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History, is my original work and it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

Place: Thoothukudi

Date: 10.04.2021

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Signature of the Candidate

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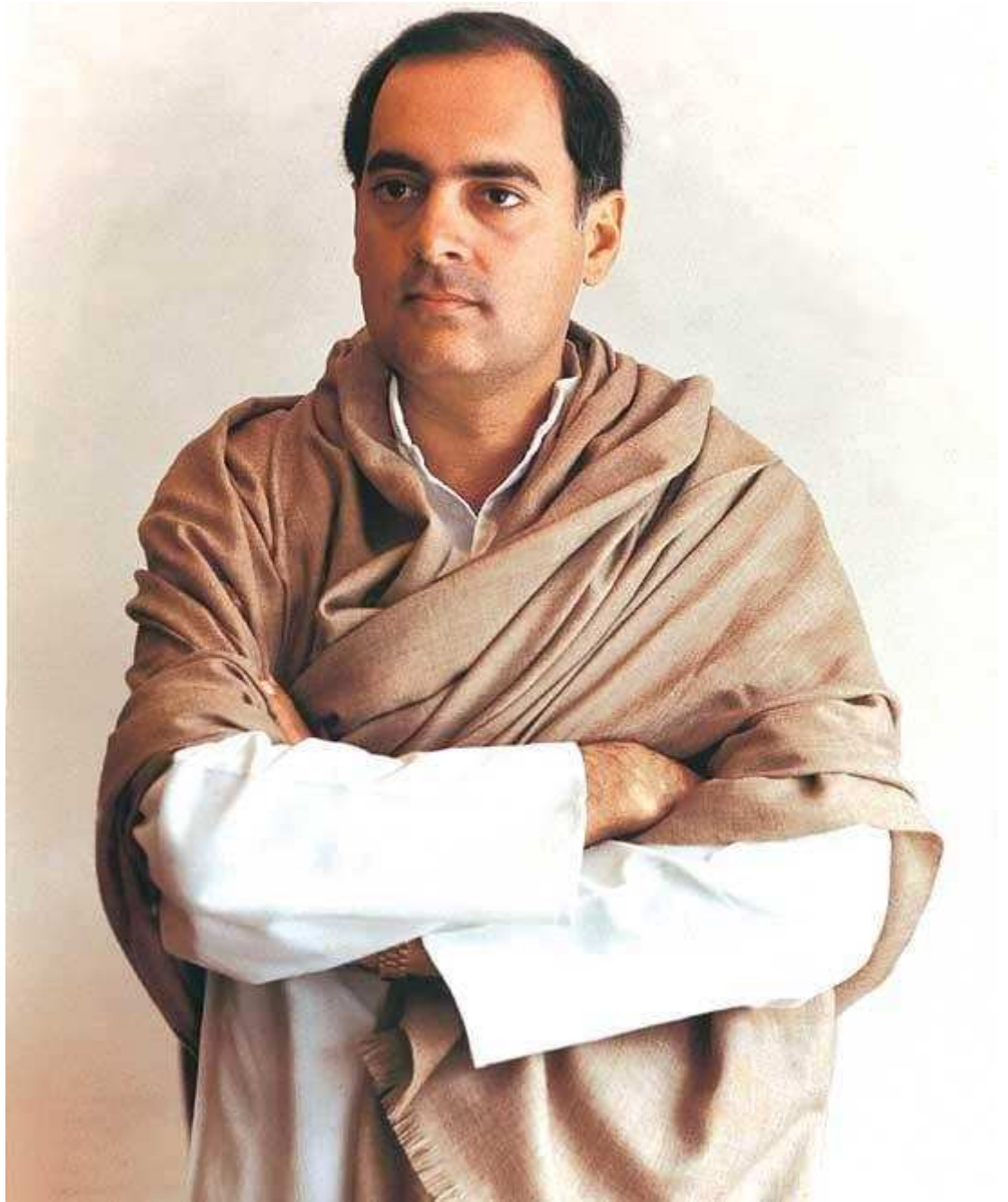
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ABBREVIATIONS

1. AIIMS	-	All India Institutes of Medical Sciences
2. CIA	-	Central Intelligence Agency
3. IAF	-	Indian Air Force
4. IB	-	Intelligence Bureau
5. IED	-	Improvised Explosive Device
6. IGNO	-	Indira Gandhi National Open University
7. IPKF	-	Indian Peace Keeping Force
8. IT	-	Information Technology
9. LTTE	-	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
10. MTNL	-	Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited
11. NPE	-	National Policy for Education
12. PM	-	Prime Minister
13. R&AW	-	Research and Analysis Wing
14. RDX	-	Research Department Explosive
15. VSNL	-	Videsh Sanchar Network Limited

**RAJIV GANDHI – THE YOUNGEST INDIAN
PRIME MINISTER**



RAJIV GANDHI (1984 - 1989)

INTRODUCTION

Rajiv Gandhi was an Indian politician who served as the 6th Prime Minister of India from 1984 to 1989. He took office after the 1984 assassination of his mother, prime minister Indira Gandhi, to become the youngest Indian Prime Minister at the age of 40. Rajiv Gandhi was from the politically powerful Nehru family.

Even though he belonged to a politically active family, he himself was never inclined towards the obvious domain. He would much rather spend time with his wife and his two children, than step into the turmoil of Indian political life. Rajiv was a homely person and was very passionate about flying. After obtaining his commercial pilot's license, he flew for the Indian Airlines for some time and was highly satisfied with his job. However fate something else in store for him.

The demise of his brother Sanjay changed Rajiv's life. It was then that he took his first step into the public life at the behest of his mother who looked upon him as the support which previously Sanjay provided in her political activities.

In 1991 the Indian government posthumously awarded Rajiv Gandhi the Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian award. At the Indian leadership conclave in 2009, the Revolutionary Leader of Modern India award was conferred posthumously on Rajiv Gandhi.¹

Aim and Purpose of the Study

The aim and purpose of the study is to find out and understand more about the former youngest Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi. The aim of the project is to highlight the regime of Rajiv Gandhi and the welfare schemes that he introduced to the people of India as a Prime Minister. The main purpose of the study is to bring out

¹ Meena Agarwal, *Rajiv Gandhi*, Diamond Pocket Books, New Delhi, 2015, p.47.

his contribution to the Indian politics. This project could make some impression on the mind of the young generation, to involve and bring out good things in their life.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

- To find out the various welfare schemes of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.
- To find out the changes that took place during Rajiv Gandhi's period in the Indian politics.
- To highlight the Rajiv's Prestrokiya.
- To describe the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.

Sources of Study

Different sources have been used in this project. Source materials have been classified into primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are mainly based on newspapers, magazines, and reports. The secondary sources are mainly books and articles related to Rajiv Gandhi.

Methodology

The methodology adopted in this study is analytical and descriptive method. The source materials have been critically analysed and investigated. The descriptive method is used in the presentation of the study in order to make the project understandable to the readers.

Outline of the Chapters

The project is divided into five chapters excluding Introduction and Conclusion.

- The first chapter, '**Early Life**', explains the childhood and family life of Rajiv Gandhi.
- The second chapter, '**As Prime Minister**' explains the Prime Ministership of Rajiv Gandhi.
- The third chapter, '**Rajiv Gandhi Regime**' explains the regime of Rajiv Gandhi.
- The fourth chapter, '**Important Achievements of Rajiv Gandhi Government**' explains the most important achievements of the Rajiv Gandhi government.
- The fifth chapter, '**The Assassination**' explains the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.

All the chapters are summarized in the conclusion.

CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE

Rajiv Gandhi, the first son of Feroze and Indira Gandhi, he was born on 20th August 1944 at Mumbai. He studied at Welham's school and Doon school at Dehra Dun and St. Columbia's school, New Delhi. In 1960 he passed the senior Cambridge Examination, and soon he was sent to London at Imperial College, and in 1962 he moved to Trinity Cambridge for a course in mechanical engineering.

Rajiv Gandhi was born into India's most famous political family. His grandfather, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, was a leading political leader of the Congress party a pivotal figure in the Indian independence movement and the first Prime Minister of independent India. He was also a key figure in international politics in the post-war period and patriarch of the Nehru-Gandhi family, one of the most influential forces in Indian politics. Nehru is popularly referred to as Panditji (scholar) and Pandit Nehru. The son of a wealthy Indian barrister and politician Motilal Nehru, Nehru became a leader of the left-wing of the Indian National Congress at a remarkably young age. Rising to congress president under the mentorship of Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru was a charismatic, radical leader, advocating complete independence from the British Empire and was eventually recognized as Gandhi's political heir. A lifelong liberal intellectually, Nehru was also an advocate for Fabian socialism and the public sector as the means by which long- standing challenges of economic development could be addressed.²

Serving as congress president, Nehru raised the flag of independent India in New Delhi on August 15, 1947, and served as Prime Minister.

²Naresh Kinger, *Rajiv Gandhi A Biography*, Sahni Publication, Delhi, 2009, p.7.

Rajiv Gandhi is not related to Mahatma Gandhi despite his name. The Gandhi surname was acquired by Indira Nehru after marrying Feroze Gandhi.

While studying at Somerville College, University of Oxford, England during the late 1930s, Indira became a member of the radical pro-independence London based India League.³

In her years in continental Europe and the UK she met a Parsi, Feroze Gandhi, who was an Indian politician and journalist. He was a member of India's first parliament.

Feroze Gandhi was born into a Parsi family, and was educated at the city Anglo- vernacular High school and Ewing Christian College followed by the London School of Economics. He abandoned his studies in 1930 to join the struggle for Indian independence.

Feroze grew close to the Nehru family especially Indira's mother Kamala Nehru and Indira. Feroze helped nurse the ailing Kamala and briefly traveled with Nehru, Kamala and Indira to Europe. Nehru and Kamala were not pleased with the match. Indira and Feroze grew more close to each other in England. They eventually married on 16th March 1942 at Anand Bhawan Allahabad in a private Adi Dharm Brahmo Vedic ceremony still noted for its unconventionality and illegality, just before the beginning of the Quit India Movement - the final all-out national revolt launched by Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress party. In September 1942 they were arrested by the British authorities and detained without charge. She was ultimately released on 13th May 1943 having spent over 243 days in jail. In 1944 she gave birth to Rajiv Gandhi with Feroze Gandhi, followed two years later by Sanjay Gandhi.⁴

³Meena Agrawal, *Rajiv Gandhi*, op.cit., p.26.

⁴*Ibid.*, p.28.

During the chaotic partition of India in 1947, she helped organize refugee camps and provide medical care for the millions of refugees from Pakistan. This was her first exercise in major public service and a valuable experience for the tumult of the coming years.

The Gandhi's later settled in Allahabad where Feroze worked with a Congress Party newspaper and an insurance company. Their marriage started out well but deteriorated later as she moved to New Delhi to be at the side of her father the Prime Minister at the time, who was living alone in a high-pressure environment at Teen Murti Bhavan. She became his confidant secretary and nurse. Her son's lived with her but she eventually became permanently separated from Feroze though they remained married.

When India's first general election approached in 1951, Indira managed the campaigns of both Nehru and her husband, who was contesting the constituency of Rae Bareilly. Feroze had not consulted Nehru on his choice to run and even though he was elected he opted to live in a separate house in Delhi. Feroze quickly developed a reputation for being a fighter against corruption by exposing a major scandal in the nationalized insurance industry, resulting in the resignation of the Finance Minister, a Nehru aide.

At the height of the tension Indira and Feroze Gandhi separated. Rajiv and his younger brother Sanjay were raised in Allahabad and Delhi with their mother. However, in 1958, shortly after re-election, Feroze suffered a heart attack, which dramatically healed their broken marriage. At his side to help him recuperate in Kashmir, their family grew closer. But Feroze died on September 8, 1960, while Indira was abroad with Nehru on a foreign visit.

During 1959 and 1960, Indira Gandhi ran for and was elected the president of the Indian National Congress. Her term of office was uneventful. She also acted as her father's chief of staff. Nehru was known as a vocal opponent of nepotism and she did not contest a seat in the 1962 election.⁵

Nehru died on May 27, 1964 and Indira Gandhi at the urgings of the new Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, contested election and joined the Government being immediately appointed Minister for Information and Broadcasting. She went to Madras when the riots over Hindi becoming the national language broke out in Non-Hindi speaking states of the south. There she spoke to government officials soothed the anger of community leaders and supervised reconstruction efforts for the affected areas. Shastri and senior Ministers were embarrassed owing to their lack of such initiative.⁶ Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's actions were probably not directly aimed at Shastri or her own political elevation. She reportedly lacked interest in the day-to-day functioning of her Ministry but was media-savvy and adept at the art of politics and image-making.

During the succession struggles after 1965 between Mrs. Gandhi and her rivals the Central Congress (party) leadership in several states moved to displace upper caste leaders from State Congress (party) organizations and replace them with backward caste persons and to mobilize the votes of the latter castes to defeat its rivals in the state Congress (party) and in the opposition. The consequences of these interventions some of which may justly be perceived as socially progressive have nevertheless often had the consequences of intensifying inter-ethnic regional conflicts.

When the India-Pakistan War of 1965 broke out Mrs. Gandhi was vacationing in the border region of Srinagar. Although warned by the Army that Pakistani

⁵*Ibid.*, pp.29-30.

⁶Alexander, P. C., *Through the Corridors of Power: An Insiders Story*, Harper Collins India, New Delhi, 2004, p.222.

insurgents had penetrated very close to the city she refused to relocate to Jammu or Delhi. She rallied local government and welcomed media attention in effect reassuring the nation.⁷ Shastri died in Tashkent hours after signing the peace agreement with Pakistan's Ayub Khan mediated by the Soviets.

The then Congress party President K. Kamaraj was instrumental in making Indira Gandhi the Prime Minister after the sudden demise of Shastri despite the opposition from Morarji Desai who was later defeated by the members of the Congress parliamentary party, where Indira Gandhi beat Morarji Desai by 355 votes to 169 to become the fourth Prime Minister of India and the first woman to hold that position.

Mrs. Gandhi soon showed an ability to win elections and outmaneuver opponents through populism. She introduced more left-wing economic policies and promoted agricultural productivity. A crushing victory in the 1971 war with Pakistan was followed by a period of instability that led her to impose a state of emergency in 1975. She paid for the authoritarian excesses of the period with three years in opposition. Returned to office in 1980 she became increasingly involved in an escalating conflict with separatists in Punjab that eventually led to her assassination by her own bodyguards in 1984.

Rajiv Gandhi entered the portals of Cambridge in 1962. Here in England, he met Sonia Maino, the young lady he would eventually marry.⁸ The wedding took place in New Delhi in 1968.

Rajiv Gandhi was passionate about flying. He joined a flying training course with Indian Airlines in 1967. He got his Boeing commander's license in 1980. His

⁷Janardan Thakur, *Prime Minister: Nehru to Vajpayee*, BPI Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai, 1999, p.217.

⁸Ranbir Singh, *Rajiv Gandhi*, Enkay Publishers, New Delhi, 1992, p. 34.

colleagues at Indian Airlines have many good things to say of him. For one he never threw his weight around. He was a gentleman to the core.

He was not politically inclined though he lived at No 1, Safdarjung with his mother Indira Gandhi. The death of his younger brother, Sanjay changed Rajiv's domestic and professional life. Reluctantly perhaps at the behest of Indira he joined active politics.

He won a seat to the Lok Sabha from Amethi in 1981. About politics Rajiv Gandhi said " I had no love for politics. I treasured the privacy of my happy family life.. Sanjay was killed in the prime of his life There is a loneliness only a bereaved mother can know.... She (my mother) called to me in her loneliness. I went to her side. From her I learnt my first political lessons".

Rajiv became Prime Minister immediately after Indira's assassination. In 1984 he came to power with a massive majority. The elder son of Indira, Rajiv was a true-blue democrat. He fervently believed in the freedom of the press. Later on in his career, as Leader of the Opposition he performed well in the Lok Sabha. To him the nation came first.

He was convinced that the democratic system needs a strong opposition that performs the role of a constructive critic. He said "I want a good opposition ... I want an opposition that can stand across the floor and argue about policies."⁹

On foreign policy, he noted " In the larger global context we must rise above the stoking of petty problems unworthy of our larger destiny. He prioritized good neighborly relations.

⁹*Ibid.*, pp.218-222.

He wanted a world free of conflicts. He was a firm believer in VasudhaivaKutumbakam "one world - ism". His creed was Gandhian "non violence". The cause of nuclear disarmament was dear to his heart.

Rajiv Gandhi was a champion of the cause of the oppressed internationally. He hated discrimination on the basis of race, colour, religion, language, or any other distinction. He particularly disliked casteism a social disease that still plagues India. When he became Prime Minister he said, "Nothing is more important than the unity and integrity of our nation. India is indivisible. Secularism is the bedrock of our nationhood. It implies more than tolerance. It involves an active effort for harmony. No religion preaches hatred and intolerance."¹⁰

Rajiv wanted a self reliant, selfsufficient, strong and a prosperous India. He believed that technology properly harnessed could wipe out poverty from his country. He understood however that agriculture was the nucleus of India's economy. He wished to extend the Green Revolution to all parts of India. He encouraged dry land farming through technology mission. He empathized with farmers. As far as possible he tried to allow for remunerative prices for agricultural products. He introduced modern technology in agriculture. Food production rose considerably during his tenure as Prime Minister.¹¹

Rajiv's story is that of an unassuming man who rose to great heights driven by the call of duty. The best tribute to Rajiv would be that each and every Indian imbibes the lesson of sacrifice that Rajiv wished his countrymen to learn. Finally, Rajiv did not belong to any caste to any community to any country. He truly epitomized "Sarvadharmam Sambhavam" and "VasudhaivaKutumbakam".

¹⁰Mehta Ved, *Rajiv Gandhi and Rama's Kingdom*, Yale University press, New Delhi, 1995, p.98.

¹¹Janardan Thakur, *op.cit.*, p.245.

He belonged to mankind. His story is that of the man next door who became a colossus by virtue of his sense of humaneness. Rajiv is not history. Rajiv is living history. The lamp Rajiv lit, the lamp of goodness in public life, will light the way for the youth everywhere in the world. Rajiv's dream was one world, one mankind, and peaceful co-existence.¹²

¹²*Ibid.*, p.246.

CHAPTER II

AS PRIME MINISTER

On 31st October 1984, when Mr. Rajiv Gandhi was being administered the oath of office and secrecy as the Prime Minister of India, it seemed on seeing him at that time as if a student of sixth standard had been given a question paper of twelfth standard to solve. What a look of wonderment mixed with worry could be seen on Rajiv Gandhi's face at that time! What a misfortune it was of Rajiv that he could not even smile and acknowledge the greetings that people were extending him on becoming the Prime Minister of India!¹³

There was a time when at midnight when the whole of India was sleeping, the destiny of India was being placed in the hands of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. What a happy occasion that was! Thirty seven years after that, when the great daughter of India was sleeping the everlasting sleep and the whole of India was crying, then the same Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's grandson was being administered the oath of office and secrecy as the Prime Minister of India. As it had been decided before 1947 that when India became independent Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru would become the Prime Minister, similarly this was also a foregone conclusion that one day Rajiv would become the Prime Minister of India. But, nobody knew at that time that it would happen so suddenly, that he would be called in the midst of a tour and given the news of his mother's assassination and be sent to the Rashtrapati Bhawan to take the oath of office as the Prime Minister.¹⁴

There is a difference between death and assassination. Death is a natural process, whereas assassination is an unnatural and inhuman act. Death is a certain and

¹³Janardan Thakur, *op.cit.*, p.265.

¹⁴Sharma, S.K., *Prime Minister of India Nehru to Manmohan Singh*, Vikas Publication, New Delhi, 2007,p.414.

undeniable truth, but assassination can be prevented. After Mrs. Gandhi's brutal assassination, paying their tributes to her, somebody had said that the day that Mrs. Gandhi gave the order to the army to enter into the premises of the Golden Temple, she signed her death warrant. Mrs. Gandhi's name was on top of the hit-list of the terrorists and Rajiv Gandhi's name was also not far behind. When both of them had got threatening letters from the terrorists, then nobody had thought that she would really become a victim of their bullets, not even Rajiv Gandhi. Nobody thought that a day would come when Rajiv Gandhi would lift the bullet-ridden body of his mother on his own shoulders.¹⁵

When Rajiv Gandhi was taking the oath as the Prime Minister, then a number of expressions crossed his face. Despite being silent, his face was a picture of grim determination. It would have been a picture of determination also if Mrs. Gandhi had died a natural death. But, then the form of the determination would have been different. At that time his face would said "O Mother ! I take the pledge to complete your unfinished work. Bless me, Mother!" At this time also the feeling behind the determined look must have been the same as written above, but maybe the words were not exactly the same.

When Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru became the Prime Minister of India, all the children of the country called by the name " chacha Nehru". When his daughter, Indira Gandhi, became the Prime Minister of the country, all the children of the country knew the erstwhile leader of the 'vanarsena' (Monkey Brigade). But, when Rajiv Gandhi became the Prime Minister or was made the Prime Minister, then nobody knew much about him or even his date of birth.¹⁶ A member of parliament had even written the place of his birth as prayag, and another lady writer who has been a

¹⁵Attar Chand, *Rajiv Gandhi His Mind and Ideology*, Gian Publishing House, New Delhi, 1991, p.25.

¹⁶Sharma, S.K., *op.cit.*, p. 418.

friend of Mrs. Gandhi has written his place of birth as Allahabad. Yes, about his date of birth, there are no conflicting opinions. But, at that time no one knew much about Rajiv.

Rajiv was a novice in politics. The ordinary people knew only this much about Rajiv that he was a pilot before joining politics. They knew that Mrs. Gandhi had forced Rajiv to come into politics after the death of her younger son. On the repeated requests of the Congress workers, she had brought Rajiv into politics against his wishes. They also knew that his wife was a foreigner who had not taken Indian citizenship for many years. All this also they came to know due to the publicity of these facts by the opposition.¹⁷

Thoughtful personality

Despite being so inexperienced in politics, he had some qualities for which, during her lifetime, Indira Gandhi had appointed him as the General Secretary of the Congress party. And now, after Mrs. Gandhi's brutal assassination, the Congress parliamentary party had chosen him for the position of the Prime Minister of India. This was not only because they wanted to take advantage of his late grandfather's and his late mother's images, but it was also because besides having a progressive outlook, Rajiv also had a thoughtful and wise personality.¹⁸

In brief, it can be said that when Rajiv Gandhi was made the Prime Minister, he did not have much experience of politics, and in such a situation, he would have faced many problems. At that time the same question arose in everyone's guidance, having spent three years as a member of parliament, and being the General Secretary of the biggest party of the country would Rajiv be able to adjust himself to the current

¹⁷Philippe Humbert, *The Rajiv Gandhi Years: Sunshine and Shadows*, Vimot Publishers, New Delhi, 1992, p.34.

¹⁸Aiyer Mani Shankar, *In Rajiv Footprints: One year in parliament*, Konark Publishers, New Delhi, 1993, p.72.

situation and become a successful Prime Minister and president of the Congress party? Whether like his grandfather and mother he would be a Prime Minister for a long time or for his entire lifetime? or if he would rule for a few years and then be removed from power?

It was natural for such questions to crop up because not only was Rajiv Gandhi inexperienced, but also because there were a lot of old and experienced leader in the party and in the cabinet. Here it is necessary to mention that it is not as difficult to manipulate an inexperienced and younger leader according to one's own wishes as compared to an older and experienced leader.¹⁹In truth, there were a lot of big and experienced politicians present in the party who could lay claim to the post of the Prime Minister, but if they had taken over the reins of power , then their rule would have lasted for only a short while, like it had happened with Janata party before that, or after that there was a possibility of the party splitting up.

Symbol of political stability

The greatest need of the country is political stability. The party which is capable of giving political stability can get the votes of the citizens and achieve a majority in the parliament. At the time Indira Gandhi was assassinated, Congress was the only party which could provide a stable government to the country. Even some opposition members knew and accepted this.²⁰

Rajiv Gandhi had limited qualities whereas the problems of the country were unlimited. In this situation, the question arose whether he would be able to increase these limited qualities and be successful in reducing the unlimited number of problems that the country was facing. Before proceeding further on this subject, it is necessary to take a brief look at the problems that India was facing at that time.

¹⁹Pradhan, R.D., *Working with Rajiv Gandhi*, South Asia Books, New Delhi, 1996, p.98.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p.99.

Biggest democracy

India is the biggest democracy of the world. It would have been beneficial for India if the citizens of her had been more hard working, more dedicated, and more progressive. India's growing population has been a major problem for it since many years. It is the need of the hour that the burgeoning population was controlled, but in a way which is acceptable to the people. During emergency, Sanjay Gandhi had taken a very effective step in this direction, but in a very unpopular way. This was the reason that most of these people who had got vasectomies done during the emergency due to force, greed or fear had the process reversed later. Even now they are giving birth to the fifth, sixth, or seventh daughter in their desire to have a male child. This huge population could neither have proper physical growth nor proper mental development. Rajiv Gandhi not only had to stop this growing population, but also had to ensure their proper physical and mental development. A large population disturbs everything, from the common citizens of the country to the economy of the country. By solving this big problem, not only would the hearts of all people be won, but the economy would also become stronger. Rajiv Gandhi had to solve this problem also. He had not only to try to bring the inflation rates lower, but also to make the exchange rate of the rupee in relation to the currencies of other countries higher.²¹

Country full of diversity

India is the world's largest democracy, which has 28 states and 8 union territories. All the states and union territories have different languages, dresses, eating habits, and lifestyle. On the one hand, all this creates diversity in the country and on the other hand, this also gives rise to political, social and economic problems.

²¹Jaincik, *Rajiv Gandhi and Parliament*, CBS Publishers and distributors, New Delhi, 1992, p.310.

Secularism

Due to the violence that had spread after the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the country and the citizens had to suffer huge losses. The riots that had taken place in 1947 had been a result of the partition of the country; but the riots of 1984 were due to the division of the hearts of the people. If people with divided hearts live in the same country then this problem acquires a more dangerous form.²² The Sikh community had become separated in a way from the rest of the society due to these riots. In whom does the feeling of revenge not arise? It is not necessary that everyone knows the meaning of secularism. It is not necessary that everyone follows the policy of secularism in this world. The biggest problem in front of the new Prime Minister was how to keep two utensils together without both of them banging against each other. This problem is small from the outside but bigger from inside.²³

Friendly relations with neighbouring countries

There are no two opinions about the fact that Pakistan was eager to fight with India, no matter how much the then President of Pakistan, Zia-Ul-Haq, made efforts for peace talks with India. No matter how much he talked of peace keeping in mind Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's broadcast of 12th November was obvious and even past experience had told the Indians that there was not even a little desire for peace in the heart of the Pakistanis. The terrorists caught in Punjab provided such evidence. China had also formed friendly relations with Pakistan. Rajiv Gandhi had to face these problems also.²⁴

Although Sri Lanka is almost negligible in strength compared to India, at that time in Sri Lanka the feeling of the Tamils of Indian origin were being trampled upon.

²²Healy Kathleen, *Rajiv Gandhi: The Years of power*, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1989, p.229.

²³*Ibid.*, p.230.

²⁴Bhambri, *Indian Politics Since Independence Vol.I*, Shipra Publication, New Delhi, 1995, p.62.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi had thought a lot about this problem and had also adopted a very wise and diplomatic approach in this matter due to which the whole world had become sympathetic towards the Tamils. Inexperienced as Rajiv Gandhi was in national politics, he was even more inexperienced in international politics. Rajiv Gandhi had to take concrete steps to stop what was happening to the Tamils in Sri Lanka.²⁵

Lok Sabha elections

It had been decided that the eighth Lok Sabha elections would be held in the end of December 1984, and it was also certain that the Congress party would be able to maintain its majority in these elections. But it depended on Rajiv and the other congressmen how big a majority the Congress would be able to get although there was a big wave of sympathy in the country in Rajiv's favour at that time. It was upto Rajiv to utilize this opportunity to his advantage.²⁶

The passing of the budget

The annual budget of the country is a test not for the finance minister, but for the Prime Minister of the country. How would Rajiv Gandhi, who till now did not even have any knowledge of his household expenses, be able to analyse the budget which was going to be presented in the parliament in three months time? This was a very big and important test that Rajiv had to clear, due to which a very negative impact could have been formed of his image.

Before discussing Rajiv's image it is very necessary to make it clear that after Indira Gandhi's death, there was nothing that could be considered an abstacle in Rajiv's path. Everything was in his favour, from the party members to the citizens, to his clean image. His mother had been brutally assassinated, the responsibility for

²⁵*Ibid.*, p.63.

²⁶Pradhan, R.D., *op.cit.*, p.114.

running the whole country had been entrusted to him, and he alone had to shoulder such a big responsibility. Any citizens, talking about Rajiv, would use the adjective 'poor' with his name. Now it was upto Rajiv, his actions would now either improve his image stronger or sully it. It remained to be seen how in the present circumstances he would enhance his good image.²⁷

The internal situation of the Congress

But, before thinking about the opposition, Rajiv had to think about his own party because here also there were a lot of people with varying natures and varying intelligence. After all, before looking into the problems of the country. Rajiv had to set his own house in order. There were leaders who had become a problem for the Congress whether it be in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Kerala or other states. In Bihar, Rajasthan and up also there were many internal upheavals within the party. As someone has rightly said, "God save us from our friends, we know how to deal with our enemies." So, it was clear that they could formulate a policy to deal with the opposition, but how could they deal with their own party workers?.²⁸

All in all it can be said that Rajiv had just come into politics, and he was given the task of pleasing 70 crore Indians. On the one hand, this was a very difficult test for him, on the other hand, it was also a test for the whole nation which had entrusted it's fate to him. Keeping all these facts in mind, it can be said that just as an era ended with the death of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, likewise a new era started with Rajiv Gandhi's becoming the Prime Minister. How would this new era develop, only future could tell.²⁹

²⁷Gurcharan Das, *India unbound: From Independence to the Global information Age*, Penquin Books, New Delhi, 2002, p.209.

²⁸Bhabani Sen Gupta, *Rajiv Gandhi: A Political Study*, Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1989, p.110.

²⁹ Bhambri, *op.cit.*, p.75.

With Rajiv Gandhi, a new generation also took over that generation which the people of the whole world were looking at with curiosity, trepidation, and hope.

Relations with other countries

Many premiers of other countries and other leaders who came for Mrs. Indira Gandhi's funeral had assured Rajiv of their cooperation and support. Some had also invited him to their countries. But, in the world of international politics. Such promises and sweet talk are just a part of routine formality. Any country which believes in such promises always suffers.³⁰ Cartoonist Laxman had commanded on this in a cartoon so appropriately that it is difficult to describe it in words. In that cartoon, all the leaders of the countries who had come to offer their condolences were going back by ship after offering their condolences, and Rajiv Gandhi who was watching them from afar was thinking ; if the leaders did only half of what they had said, then , he (Rajiv) would not have any problem left.

The whole world knew that Rajiv Gandhi had many big, burning issues as heritage. The biggest was to tackle the separatist forces in the country and to establish peace and harmony and to thwart the intentions of these separatist forces which wanted to harm the unity of the country.³¹

³⁰Shashi Tharoor, *India From Midnight to the Millennium*, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 2000, p.188.

³¹*Ibid.*, p.189.

CHAPTER III

RAJIV GANDHI REGIME

Following the assassination of Indira Gandhi on 31 October, 1984, the Congress Parliamentary Party passed a resolution recommending Rajiv Gandhi as the party's candidate for the post of Prime Minister and recommending his name to the President.

Anti-Sikh Riots

Incensed by the assassination of Indira Gandhi by her own Sikh bodyguards, the infuriated mob indulged in mindless rampage against Sikhs. For two days Delhi, particularly the fringe 're-settlement colonies' witnessed large scale riots. The frenzied mobs targeted Sikh-owned shops and business places; they were looted and torched. The indiscriminate killings, burnings, raping and arson continued for a couple of days unabated. It remained of the partition communal carnage of 1947. Rajiv Gandhi, who was mourning the death of his mother, swung into action. Army was asked to take over the responsibility for maintaining law and order in the entire city. Refugee camps for riot victims were organized. A Special Action Group was constituted to help in bringing relief and succour to the beleaguered victims. A programme of action was chalked out. Relief in the form of tents, medicines, blankets, food and water was given on war-footing. Proper security arrangements were made in every camp. Top most priority was accorded to relief work. Rajiv Gandhi displayed "extraordinary qualities of leadership in crisis management".³²

³²Dhawan, S. K., *Day by Day Account of Rajiv Gandhi 1944-1991, (Vol-1)*, Wave publications, New Delhi, 1993, p.371.

Bhopal Gas Tragedy

On 3 December 1984, there was leak in the Union Carbide chemical gas plant, which proved to be disastrous. The Union Carbide, a US multi-national pesticide company was set up in 1978. Despite the strong objection raised by M. N. Bach, Administrator of the Municipal Corporation, the plant was located in a residential area in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, because labour was plentiful and cheap. Bach was transferred. There had been leakages in the plant in 1978, 1981 and 1983, but the leak on the morning of 3 December 1984 was a human tragedy, exacting a heavy toll of men, women, children and cattle.³³ Rajiv Gandhi cut short his election campaign tour, rushed to Bhopal, the scene of gory carnage, consoled the survivors and promised compensation. The Bhopal poisonous gas leak tragedy was "the worst environmental disaster the world has ever known".

1984 Elections

With a view to acquire popular mandate, Rajiv Gandhi advanced by a month the date of general elections scheduled for late January 1985. In the election campaigns Rajiv Gandhi presented himself as Mr. Clean. His core campaign theme was integrity, unity and stability of India. He admitted past mistakes and assured that they would be corrected. He promised to usher India into the Twenty First Century.

Rajiv Gandhi won a landslide victory in the elections, thanks to the "sympathy wave". "In a way 1984 elections were fought by a dead hero whose tragic death loomed large over the country's voters". He secured 80% of the seats, 401 out of 508 in the Lok Sabha. In fact, he got a greater number of votes than had ever been secured by either Jawaharlal Nehru or Indira Gandhi. In the election 64.1% of votes were polled and the share of Congress vote was 49%. The people trusted Rajiv Gandhi and

³³Naresh Kinger, *op.cit.*, p. 46.

entrusted with him a massive national mandate. Rajiv Gandhi's position as Prime Minister was legitimatised.

Rajiv- Longowal Accord, July 1985

Rajiv Gandhi's first act as Prime Minister was the fire-fighting Operation of containing the anti-sikh riots. He constituted an investigating machinery to trace out the culprits and then to punish them. Then his major policy initiative was to find an amicable solution to the Punjab problem. In January 1985, the Akali leaders including its President H. S. Longowal were released. The tense political situation created by the Blue Star Operation started to cool down. Terrorism died down. Disenchanted by militancy, mass agitation and extremism, Longowal, President of Akali Dal, entered into negotiations with Rajiv Gandhi.³⁴

On 24 July 1985, Longowal reached an accord with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and his Cabinet. The accord was reached after protracted negotiations. It was a memorandum of understanding. The salient points of the accord were:

- The Government of India agreed to consider the proposal of bringing out an all-India Gurudwara legislation.
- The Anandpur Sahib resolution, in so far as it dealt with center-state relations, shall be referred to the Sarkaria Commission.
- Chandigarh was to become the capital solely of Punjab.
- Official commission would determine the extent of Hindi speaking territories to be transferred to Hariyana in lieu of Chandigarh.
- The farmers of Punjab, Hariyana and Rajasthan will continue to get water from the Ravi- Beas system as on 1 July 1985.

³⁴*Palanithurai, op.cit.*, p.76.

- Along with ex-gratia payment to those innocents killed in agitation after 1 August 1982, compensation for property damaged will also be paid. Longowal stated that the Anandpur Sahib Resolution was not intended to undermine the Indian Union.

The Rajiv- Longowal Accord was hailed as a diplomatic break through in the Punjab problem.

The Assam Accord, 15 August 1985

During Indira Gandhi's regime, Assam was placed under the president's rule since March 1982. The problem of illegal immigrants in Assam remained unsolved. Rajiv Gandhi Paid urgent attention to the disturbances in Assam.

On 15 August 1985, he reached an agreement with the All Assam Students Union. According to the Accord 1) the immigrants who had entered Assam between 1951 and 1961 would be given full citizenship 2) those who came into the state after 1971 would be deported; 3) the entrants between 1961 and 1971 would be denied voting rights for ten years but would enjoy all other rights; 4) the central government would set up a new oil refinery, in addition to the existing three refineries; 5) the jute mills and Ashok Paper Mill at Jogighopa would be reopened. The accord was welcomed widely, as it would remove the bitterness generated in the state. The Assam Agreement added a feather on the cap of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, a milestone in the state's history and a finest Independence Day gift to the people of Assam.

Rajiv-Laldenga Accord, 1986

Mizoram was a flash-point in the North-East. The Mizo National Front (MNF), led by L. C. Laldenga, in March 1966, declared independence from Assam. Subsequently, the Mizo Hills district from Assam was converted into a Union Territory called Mizoram. Still insurgent activities persisted. In 1982, Indira Gandhi

made a deal with Laldenga and won the 1984 election to the Mizoram Legislature Assembly. In 1986, Rajiv Gandhi signed the historic accord granting full statehood to Mizoram. Then the incumbent Congress Chief Minister was replaced by Laldenga. The Accord added another colourful feather on Rajiv's cap.

The Shah Bano Case, 1985 - 86

Shah Bano, 62 years old, had been married to Mohammad Ahmed Khan for 46 years and had borne him 4 children, was divorced by her husband. She filed a maintenance claim with the local magistrate court in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, against her husband (1978). The Magistrate decided in favour of Shah Bano. Since the maintenance allowance of Rs.25 per month was too meagre, she appealed to the High Court which revised the amount to Rs.179 and paise 20! Her husband refused to bear the decreed amount and appealed to the Supreme Court which in its landmark judgement, while reaffirming the High Court Verdict in favour of Shah Bano, held that divorced Muslim women, like other Indian women, were entitled to maintenance and raised the maintenance allowance to Rs.500 per month. The judgement was a martial blow to the personal law of Muslims.³⁵

The Muslim liberals hailed the court decision as a significant step forward bringing Muslim women into the mainstream of the modern world. But the Muslim clerics and fundamentalists attacked the judgement as meddling with the Muslim Personal Law and lambasted the Supreme Court as " prejudiced, discriminatory and full of contradiction".

The Banatwala Bill, introduced in 1986, by a private M.P., G.M. Banatwala, the General Secretary of the Indian Union Muslim League, sought to amend the criminal procedure code so as to deny maintenance to divorced Muslim women. Rajiv

³⁵Parsa Venkateshwar Rao, *Rajiv Gandhi to Narendra Modi*, Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2019, p.444.

Gandhi was caught in the crossfire of Shah Bano case and Banatwala Bill.³⁶ Rajiv Gandhi Government introduced the Muslim Women's (Protection of Rights of Divorce) Bill on 25 February 1986. "Rajiv's Muslim Women's Bill was seen as a terrible blunder all around".

Congress Centenary Celebration Speech, Dec 1985

In his inaugural address at the centennial celebration of the Indian National Congress, Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister and the President of Congress unleashed a scathing attack on the government servants, the police, tax collectors and his own party people. He referred to the proverb of the fence eating the crop, net of avarice, self-aggrandisement, corrupt ways, linkages with the vested interests, sanctimonious posturing, lack of spirit of service and sacrifice, absence of sense of social awareness or concern for the public weal and so on. Rajiv's centennial celebration harangue and outburst exhibited the impatience of an exuberant youth, though the speech was well-meant and well-intended.³⁷

Corruption, Scandal and Controversies

i) Bofors Scandal

On 16 April 1986, when opposition in Parliament was blaming Rajiv's Government as 'steeped in corruption', the Swadeshi National Radio, came out with the sensational story that in 1986 the Bofors unit of Nobel industries, Sweden, the largest Swedish arms manufacturer had already paid a total of 5 million dollars into an account, code-named LOTUS, at the Schweizer Bank in Geneva. The contract was alleged to have been authorized by Rajiv Gandhi in 1986 when he was the Prime Minister and Defence Minister.

³⁶Shashi Tharoor, *India from Midnight to the Millennium*, Oxford University Press, Mumbai, 2010, p.222.

³⁷*Indian Express*, dated: 07.03.2010, p.11.

ii) German Submarine Scandal

Soon after V. P. Singh took charge of the new portfolio of defence, he stumbled on a huge kickback paid for the government contract to buy four submarines from a West German company, Howaldtswerke Deutsche Werft (HDW). Rajiv Gandhi was furious when he came to know that an enquiry into the submarine deal was ordered by V. P. Singh without consulting him. Soon, V. P. Singh resign from the government. The opposition and the press praised Singh's honesty and blamed Rajiv's suspected cover-up.

iii) Fair Fax Controversy, 1986-87

The corruption scandals were compounded by the Fairfax controversy. A series of articles published in the Indian Express alleging the Chairman of Reliance Industries, Dhirubhai Ambani, a business Titan, had imported machinery illegally, V. P. Singh in October 1986, had authorized the Fairfax Group, a private management consultant firm specializing in detective work, to prob the allegations. The matter came to light only in January 1987. It was alleged that Fair Fax had unearthed evidence of kickbacks being paid to government agents by foreign companies for securing defence contracts, implicating Amitabh Bachchan and his brother Ajitabh Bachchan who was in Switzerland. Rajiv's credibility was doubted since he was the Prime Minister and Defence Minister during that time.

State Elections, June 1987

Rajiv Gandhi regarded the mid-term election for three key state assemblies of West Bengal, Kerala and Jammu and Kashmir as a ' referendum' on his capacity to govern the country. The Congress fared badly in West Bengal and Kerala, thought it could scrap through in Jammu and Kashmir. Similarly, in the state elections held in June 1987 in Hariyana, the Congress was swept out. His hold over the party and the

government was clearly on the wane and he "lost his credibility, and with it, his ability to govern".³⁸

Rajiv in Tamil Nadu, 1988

Tamil Nadu was under President's rule for one year (1988-89). The Bharat Bandh on 15 March 1988 by non-Congress labour unions and the strike by government servants and teachers on 22 June had created law and order problems. State Assembly election were notified on 21 January 1989. During 1988, Rajiv Gandhi had been visiting Tamil Nadu at regular intervals in anticipation of elections. During 1988 he made eleven trips to the state. In one such visit, Rajiv Gandhi had called a meeting of the District Officers to discuss the proposed Panchayat Raj Legislation. The Anti-Defamation Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha in September 1988.³⁹

Babri Masjid Issue, 1989

At the beginning of 1986, when Rajiv Gandhi was firmly on the saddle of Government, the militant Hindus renewed their demand for the construction of a temple to Ram on the site of the Babri Masjid. The BJP supported the demand. This provoked Muslim counter demand leading to communal confrontation. On February 1986, Lucknow High Court ordered that Hindus be allowed to worship in the Babri Mosque premises, outside the demarcated area.

The Rajiv Government opened the gates of Masjid for worship. On 30 September 1989, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad organized a Shila Puja (consecration of temple bricks). On 9 November 1998, the foundation was laid for the Ram Temple, a hundred and ninety two feet away from the mosque. "Babri Masjid has haunted every

³⁸*India Today*, dated: 29.03.2010, p.16.

³⁹*Indian Express*, dated: 27.06.2006, p.12.

government since Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi took the decision to open the locks on the site".

Memorable Measures

Rajiv Gandhi also initiated the following memorable Measures: The Jawaharlal Rozgar Yojana Employment Plan, inaugurated to mark the birth centenary of Nehru, provided employment to at least one member of every rural family for 50-100 days in the year. The National Perspective Plan for Women recommended that 50% of grassroots functionaries should be women. A new Ministry for Environment was created and environmental clearance for big projects was made mandatory. A massive effort was made to clean the holy river Ganga. The Consumer Protection Act was meant to guarantee consumer sovereignty. Seven Zonal Cultural Centres were setup in different parts of the country to encourage local and regional arts and culture. Festivals of India were organized in foreign countries to popularize Indian cultural heritage. These multi-dimensional measures were much appreciated.

After resigning from the Rajiv's Cabinet, V. P. Singh contested the by-election in June 1988 in Allahabad. The election was being presented as a referendum on Rajiv Gandhi's policies, particularly on Bofors and corruption at large.⁴⁰

⁴⁰G.O. Ms. No. 406, *Home Department*, dated: 24.04.2000.

CHAPTER IV

IMPORTANT ACHIEVEMENT OF RAJIV GANDHI

GOVERNMENT

Rajiv Gandhi entered politics on 16th February 1981, addressing a national farmer's rally in Delhi. As a Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi introduced policies and reforms that broadened then existing economic model which was based on Soviet Union's "protectionist government" policies. He introduced reforms that reduced taxes on the technological industry, and reformed import policies related to telecommunications, defence and commercial airlines. His policies were aimed at modernising industries, in a bid to attract higher foreign investment in the economy. The achievements of Rajiv Gandhi are:

I) Information Technology and Telecommunications in India

Rajiv Gandhi is often credited with bringing in Telecommunications to India, but a head start in software exports was brought in through a policy introduced by his mother, weeks before her assassination.

The 1984 policy providing the provision for exports through satellites links was approved by the Indira Gandhi cabinet but was announced by Rajiv Gandhi's government on 18th November 1984. Gandhi, along with the Public Information Infrastructure and Innovation Advisor, Sam Pitroda, is responsible for shaping India's foreign and domestic telecommunication policies.⁴¹

⁴¹Wajahat Habibullah, *My years with Rajiv: Triumph and Tragedy*, Westland Publications private Limited, Chennai, 2020, p.257.

Pitroda was a naturalised US citizen, but renounced his citizenship to work for the Indian government, when he was invited to return to India in 1984 by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

In 1987, as an advisor to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, Pitroda headed six technology mission related to telecommunications, water, literacy, immunization, dairy and oil seeds. He was the founder and Chairman of India's Telecom commission. He is considered as one among many to bringing the telecommunications revolution in India.⁴²

Prior to the 1984 Information Technology (IT) policy, software specialist were not recognized as entrepreneurs, and software was not considered as a business. This made people of this sector ineligible for bank loans, leaving them devoid of startup capital.

Post 1984, Pitroda with the help of the government set out to build a series of rural and urban telephone exchanges across the country, in an effort to bring phones to the masses.⁴³

Technology Missions

One of the ingenious innovative policy initiatives was the setting up of Technology Mission. Guided by Sam Pitroda, six technology missions were established: 1) The Drinking water Mission; 2) The Literacy Mission; 3) The Immunization Mission; 4) The White-revolution Mission; 5) The Edible Oil Mission; 6) The Telephone Mission. These technology oriented missions were problem solving time bound projects. They applied science and technology to solve the perennial

⁴²Naresh Kinger, *op.cit.*, p.8.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p.9.

problems of providing safe protected drinking water to all Indian villages; attacking mass illiteracy; immunization of pregnant women and children; promoting milk production; increasing edible oil production; and to bring one telephone to every village in India by the end of the 20th century. These missions heralded a multiple rural revolution in India.⁴⁴

C – DOT

Pitroda started the centre for Development of Telematic, which is a government owned telecommunications technology development center, in 1984. It was initially mandated with designing and developing digital exchanges. Eventually, C-DOT expanded to develop intelligent computer software applications.

Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited and Videsh Sanchar Network Limited

In 1986, the Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) was created by the government of India to oversee the telephone services of Delhi and Mumbai.

In the same year the Videsh Sanchar Network Limited (VSNL) was established by the government, to cater to overseas communication services.

II) Anti-Defection Laws (52nd Amendment)

The Government of India under Rajiv Gandhi presented the 52nd Amendment to the constitution in 1985, the Anti Defection Law contained in the Tenth Schedule of the constitution. Indira Gandhi first introduced a constitution amendment bill

⁴⁴*Bhabani Sen Gupta, op.cit.*, p.117.

against defection in May 1973, but was overtaken by the emergency and eventually buried.⁴⁵

The amendment bill saw an opposition walk-out in the parliament upon being enacted. It proposed putting an end to the then 35 years of legislative anarchism in India politics by making floor-crossing almost impossible.⁴⁶

Members of either houses of parliament or state legislature would cease to be a member if, they resigned from the part from which they were selected, abstained from voting or routed against their own party, or if the party itself forced their eviction from it.

The move came as a result of dissidence from within the Congress party in which party men openly revolted against the leadership.⁴⁷

iii)New Education Policy

Expansion of National Policy for Education (NPE)

The National Policy for Education is a policy by the government of India to promote education amongst the people of India. The policy is aimed at providing education from elementary levels to University and college levels, both in rural and urban India.

The first NPE was first introduced by Indira Gandhi's government in 1968, in which 'radical restructuring' of the education system was called for along with the

⁴⁵*Bhambri, c. P., op.cit., p.82.*

⁴⁶*Healy Kathleen, op.cit., p.245.*

⁴⁷*Ibid., p.246.*

equalization of educational opportunities; for the purpose of achieving national integration and greater cultural and economic development.⁴⁸

In May 1986, the Rajiv Gandhi government introduced a New NPE. Under this policy, special emphasis would be given to the removal of disparities and equalization of educational opportunities, especially for women, scheduled castes (SC) and scheduled Tribes communities.

Operation blockboard

Operation blockboard is a centrally sponsored scheme which was started in 1987 after the Rajiv Gandhi government introduced the New NPE of 1986. The objective of the scheme is providing students studying in primary settings with the necessary Institutions equipment and instructional materials to facilities their education.

Operation Block Board envisaged 1) two reasonably large rooms; 2) necessary toys and games material; 3) blackboards; 4) maps; 5) charts; 6) other learning materials. The specific items to be provided in each school under Operation Blackboard were specified. Single teacher schools were be replaced by providing one more teacher per school during the Eighth Five Year Plan period.⁴⁹

Navodaya Vidyalaya

The programme of starting Navodaya vidyalaya has two aspects: one was for the potentially high achievers; and the other was for the gifted students who can be expected to make original contribution in their subject areas. This was proposed to

⁴⁸Kirusna Anant, *India Since Independence: Making Sense of Indian Politics*, Pearson Education India, New Delhi, 2010, p.257.

⁴⁹Verinder Grover, *Indian Political System: Trends and Challenges*, Deep and Deep Publications, Mumbai, 1997, p.366.

start one Navodaya vidyalaya in each district throughout the country during the seventh five year plan period. These schools were intended to make available good quality secondary education irrespective of the parent's capacity to pay and their socio-economic background. The schools were criticized as elitist.⁵⁰

Autonomous Colleges

The New Education Policy gave a good push to the scheme of autonomous colleges. The scheme envisaged that about 500 such colleges should be developed during the seventh plan period, and more important, the existing uncreative and outmoded affiliating system shall be replaced by the new system. To achieve this objective, the university acts were to be amended.

Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)

The IGNOU, is a government designated central university located at Maidan Garhi, New Delhi. The university was set up the government of India under, Rajiv Gandhi in 1985, with a budget of Rs. 20 lakhs.

The university was set up after the parliament of India passed the Indira Gandhi National Open University Act 1985.

IGNOU was founded to provide distance and open education and providing higher education opportunities to all segments of society. The university aims at setting standards for distance and open education in India, and to increase the quality of human resource of the country.⁵¹

⁵⁰Indu Prakash Singh, *The aborted Revolution*, University of Michigan, New Delhi, 2010, p.235.

⁵¹Palanithurai, G., *Memorable Quotes from Rajiv Gandhi and on Rajiv Gandhi*, Concept publishing company, New Delhi, 2015, p.256.

IV) Improving ties with United States of America

Unlike his mother, who headed a socialistic government with affiliations to the Soviet Union, Rajiv Gandhi was inclined towards developing military ties with USA and showed that he could move India's Foreign policy in new and innovative directions.

According to a declassified Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) document, Gandhi's visits to the Soviet Union, middle East, France and USA in May 1985 highlighted signals about Rajiv Gandhi's evolving personal and diplomatic style.

It was his apparent willingness to give fair hearing to others points of view. Which showed that he was willing to cut through emotionally charged issues to achieve problem solving. The reports observed that Gandhi made apparent efforts to improve his performance points, with an aim of projecting a positive image.

The Directorate General of intelligence further said in its outlook, Gandhi was more favourably inclined towards the west and the USA than his mother Indira Gandhi. It also observed that Gandhi's 'reasoned approach' to issues suggested that his opening to the west could not be 'easily derailed'. The report further said, in a separate box titled ' Gandhi and High Tech' , that Gandhi's visit confirmed and clarified his widely advertised penchant for Western ' High Technology'.⁵²

V) Maldives Coup D' Etat

The 1980 witnessed a series of coup d'etat attempts being staged against Maimoon Abdul Gayoom's presidency in the Republic of Maldives. The first two attempts in 1980 and 1983 were not considered serious. However, a third attempt was

⁵²Tanvir Khan, *Great Personalities of the world*, V & S Publications, New Delhi, 2012, p. 56.

staged by Abdulla Luthufi in 1988 which involved armed mercenaries of a Tamil secessionist organization from Sri Lanka, the People's Liberation of Tamil Eelam(PLOTE), to overthrow the government of Gayoom.

About 80 armed PLOTE mercenaries landed in the capital city of Male before dawn aboard speed boats, dispatched from a freighter. An earlier group, disguised as visitors had already infiltrated the capital city earlier. All major government buildings, the airport, sea-port, TV and radio station had been captured by the mercenaries. President Gayoom managed to escape, however, fleeing from house to house until finally asking military intervention from India, the United States and the United Kingdom.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi immediately dispatched 1,600 paratroopers to restore order in male.⁵³

The operation began on the night of 3rd November 1988, when the aircraft Illyushin 11-76 of Indian Air force airlifted elements of the 50th independent parachute brigade, commanded by Brigadier FarukhBalsara, the Battalion of the parachute regiment and the 17th parachute field regiment from Agra Air Force station and flew them continuously over 2,000 kilometres over to the Male international Airport on Hulgule Island.

The paratroopers were transported to Male within nine hours of the president's appeal. President Gayoom was rescued by the Indian Army, after they had secured the airfield and crossed over to Male using commandeered boats. Order was restored to President Gayoom's government within hours.

⁵³Tanvir Khan, *op.cit.*, p. 58.

Though some of the mercenaries fled towards Sri Lanka in a hijacked freighter, others unable to reach the ship were rounded up and handed over to the Maldives government. The mercenaries who escaped in the freighter were intercepted by the Indian Navy frigates 'Godavari' and 'Belwa' and captured.

The swift operation by the military and precise intelligence information were successful in eliminating the Coup d'etat attempt in the Island nation.

VI) Intervention in SriLankan civil war

The history of the civil war in Sri Lanka goes back to the 1940, where the British occupations left India in 1947 and Sri Lanka in 1948. At the time there was a sudden surge in nationalist sentiments in Sri Lanka post - independence. The Ceylon citizenship Act caused over 7 lakh Tamilians to have no citizenship and over the years, some 3 lakh Thamilians were deported back to India.⁵⁴

With the Indira Gandhi government came a socialist regime that saw Indira develop close ties with USSR. Sri Lanka was forming close relations with USA and was also warming their ties to Pakistan much to the anger of Indira Gandhi.

After the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971, there was a surge or organized resistances from the Tamils in Sri Lanka. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rose to prominence in 1976, and became the main fighting faction amidst others. It is alleged that the Research and Analysis wing were responsible for training the Tigers. Political parties in Tamil Nadu openly supported the Tamil rebel group, and training camps for many of these groups were set up in TamilNadu. The Morarji Desai government sought to weaken the jurisdiction of Researchand

⁵⁴Deshmukh, *A Cabinet Secretary Looks Back*, New Delhi, 2004, p. 240.

Analysis(R&AW) as Desai saw it as a personal army of Indira Gandhi with the waning of their oversight on the tigers, the situation escalated in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan government effectively enforced a blockade on Tamil dominated regions. This gave rise to a scarcity in food and supplies, to a point where Rajiv Gandhi gave into pressure from Tamil parties within India, and provided aid to the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Food and supplies were dropped in those regions on orders of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

In a move that came as a surprise to everyone, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi signed the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord with the then President Jayawardene. In it there was an agreement to send in a peace keeping force to contain the situation and maintain peace in Sri Lanka.

Rajiv Gandhi then sent in the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to supposedly disarm the Tigers, but encountered their refusal to comply as a result of various political reasons. The Tigers responded brutally by strapping burning tires to the necks of some Indian paracommandos, effectively killing them. This prompted India to disarm the Tigers by force. As a result of serious engagements, and back and forth exchanges between the IPKF, and the LTTE, there were many human rights violations against the Peace Keeping Force. The massacre in Jafna Teaching Hospital is one such example.

In 1989, president Ranasighe Premadasa came to power which further intensified the war in Sri Lanka. He was vital in supplying arms and support to the

LTTE in their fight against the IPKF. With things taking an ugly turn, he asked India to withdraw its forces from Sri Lanka.⁵⁵

Following this, India promptly withdrew from the island nation. The events of this civil war were what led to the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi on 21st May 1991, while campaigning for the Lok Sabha congress candidate at Sriperumbudur, a village approximately 40 kilometres from Madras.

Justice K.T Thomas issued the Supreme Court judgement that Gandhi was killed by LTTE chief, Prabhakaran, as a result of him sending the IPKF atrocities against Sri Lankan Tamils.⁵⁶

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, p.242.

⁵⁶*Deshmukh, B. G., op.cit.*, p.243.

CHAPTER V

THE ASSISSINATION

Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF)

India and Sri Lanka signed an accord on 29 July, 1987. The purpose was to meet the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam demands, though the militant outfit was not a signatory to it. Prabhakaran (Leader of LTTE), however, had been invited to Delhi and assured that his views would be given due consideration.

The accord brought the responsibility of ending Tiger insurgency squarely on the shoulders of India. A fact which eventually led to grim conflict between the IPKF and the LTTE. Ironically, the accord was unpopular amongst all concerned parties. The Indians wanted no part of a war in a foreign land, the Sri Lankans saw the IPKF as an occupying force, and the LTTE showed scant respect for the accord or the Indian army.

In October 1987, the Indian army arrested 17 Tamil militants whom it handed over to the Sri Lankan Government. 12 of the militants died; they swallowed cyanide pills. Thereafter, the LTTE came into direct confrontation with the IPKF.

Gradually, the strength of the IPKF was raised to 45000, but it had trouble subduing the LTTE.⁵⁷

Jayawardene (president of Sri Lanka) lost the election at the end of 1988 and Premadasa, known for his anti- India stand, came to power. He wanted the IPKF out by 29 July, 1989 but Rajiv was unwilling to comply. He had his own compulsions and

⁵⁷Neena Gopal, *The Assassination of Rajiv Gandhi*, Penguin Random House India, New Delhi, 2016, p. 205.

so did Premadasa. But Rajiv eventually realized the impracticality of staying on in Sri Lanka, so the Indian troops began pulling out around April 1989. The withdrawal gained momentum after Rajiv lost the general election in 1989.

The IPKF episode gave the opponent of Rajiv ammunition to take potshots at his policies. But it may be argued that Rajiv had little choice but to intervene in Sri Lanka. If he had side stepped the conflict in India's backyard, some other country, perhaps even Pakistan, would have jumped into the fray. This would have caused considerable embarrassment for India.⁵⁸

In his statement in the Lok Sabha, 25 April, 1985, Rajiv had pointed out that the influx of Tamil refugees into India showed no signs of abating. Moreover, the traditional activities of Indian fishermen in the Palk Straits were seriously hampered by the conflict in Sri Lanka. He told the Lok Sabha that he was setting up a Special Advisory Group to continue efforts for resolving the problem. He wanted a viable solution, which would be acceptable to all concerned parties. But he had not taken into account the intransigence of the Tamil militants.⁵⁹

The Day Before

Sonia writes of her last day with her husband, " On the morning of 20 May, Rajiv and I drove to the polling booth at 7.30 a.m. to cast our votes. On the way back, I told him how I had nearly panicked when I could not find the Congress party symbol on that huge ballot paper. He laughed. He held my hand with that gentle reassuring touch which had always helped to dispel any feeling of anxiety or hurt. It was time for

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p.206.

⁵⁹Faraz Ahmad, *Assassination of Rajiv Gandhi An Inside Job?*, Vitasta Publishing Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2015, p.110.

him to leave for his next tour. In the evening he was to touch Delhi again, but only to change from the helicopter to a plane ".

"That afternoon, we received a message that he was on his way home. He walked in beaming. We were delighted at the unexpected chance to spend a few more minutes together. He had a quick wash and snack. He spoke briefly on the phone to Rahul, to wish him well for his coming test and to give him how I had nearly panicked when I could not find Congress Party symbol on that huge ballot paper... He laughed. He held my hand with that gentle reassuring touch which had always helped to dispel any feeling of anxiety or hurt. It was time for him to leave for his next tour. In the evening he was to touch Delhi again, but only to change from the helicopter to a plane..."⁶⁰

"That afternoon, we received a message... that he was on his way home. He walked in beaming. We were delighted at the unexpected chance to spend a few more minutes together. He had a quick wash and a snack. He spoke briefly on the phone to Rahul, to wish him well for his coming test and to give him his love. He said goodbye to Priyanka. Once again, it was time for him to go. I would now see him, as he himself announced cheerfully, in "just two more days" We bade each other a tender good bye... And he was off. I watched him peeping from behind the curtain, till he disappeared from view... This time forever."⁶¹

In retrospect, it seems eerie that Rajiv came back home to bid a final goodbye to his son, daughter and wife. But he had no inkling of what awaited him, or if he had, he said nothing of it.

⁶⁰*Neena Gopal, op.cit.*, p.209.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, p.210.

This is in sharp contrast to what Rajiv wrote about his mother's intuition of her coming end, " I am convinced that Dadi knew that she was going to die on that day. I don't know how or why she knew, but she did. Many things that she did, indicated that she had prepared to leave us, not because she really wanted to, but because life had given her very hard decisions to make and she had chosen to do what was required of her as a leader of her people."⁶²

Black "Tigress"

Rajiv reached Sriperumbudur a little after 10 pm. A thin crowd waited for him there. It was 21 May, 1991. In the crowd of cheering women, Dhanu, the LTTE militant clutched the sandalwood garland, apparently, to welcome Rajiv. And waited, perhaps heart thumping, for her guileless, unsuspecting prey.

The assassin wore a mustard kameej and a green salwar to the killing. One wonders if she spent time deciding what to wear to her rendezvous with death. The brash colours could have had some deep - seated symbolic meaning for her, or may be they were her favourite colours. Maybe, she chose this attire to draw attention away from her dull black complexion and prominent features, which may have aroused suspicion. We will never know.⁶³

Witnesses who remembered her, said, she was about five feet tall and undistinguished with thick black hair. Her white buckteeth glistened against her ebony skin.

She seemed unbecomingly ugly, a nobody. She was accompanied by an oafish bespectacled man in a crumpled kurta pyjama, holding a scribbling pad. Was

⁶²Faraz Ahmad, *op.cit.*, p.112.

⁶³*The Hindu*, dated: 27.09.2009, p. 12.

he pretending to be a journalist or was he recording a "historic" moment to pass on to Prabhakaran? No one knows. He was not amongst the dead or wounded.

It's so bizarre that the history of a great nation could be rewritten by a bunch of misshapen, misled killers. There are no Abhimanyus here, no karnaa, no Duryodhana. Just a handful of cold-blooded assassins bent on taking a precious human life. They deserve no sympathy, no ode, and no glorification. They deserve only death. Perhaps, a death that would deter assassins everywhere.⁶⁴

The killing fields

The blast ripped open Dhanu. And it produced a flash that rose nine feet high; thereafter descended a blanket of smoke and gloom.

The death zone was a radius of 3 meters around the epicenter of the blast. Nobody in the area survived. Bodies lay scattered, limbs broken, piled one upon the other.

The Intelligence Bureau (IB) rebuilt the scenario, piece by agonizing piece, the Research Department Explosive (RDX) device was on the body of the woman who wore the mustard kameez, and steel balls were packed into the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) to heighten its destructive power. Rajiv Gandhi and Dhanu bore the brunt of the impact.

Pieces of flesh and bones pierced the blood soaked red carpet on which only minutes ago, petals were strewn to welcome Rajiv Gandhi. Recovered articles included : a double layered denim cloth jacket, belt with Velcro stripes made to fit a woman's body (the belt, evidently concealed the IED), shreds of a mustard

⁶⁴Kirusna Anant, *India Since Independence: Making Sense of Indian Politics*, Pearson Education India, 2010, p. 257.

colouredkameez and a green embroidered salwar mangled with smashed body parts of the bomber, batteries and intricate wiring, parts of a frame of a spectacle and pieces of other items that indicated that the woman, Dhanu, carried the bomb hidden inside her clothes and that she triggered the blast as she bent to seemingly touch Rajiv Gandhi's feet.⁶⁵

The age old words "murder will out" comes to mind with the recovery of a well preserved camera of the photographer, Haribabu. He died in the explosion but he left behind 10 photo shots of the crime in action. The last photo was that of the explosion.

The Hours After

May 21, 10:30 pm, 10 Janpath - Shock, deathly silence and nerve racking tension. Close to midnight, Sonia Gandhi, the last beloved wife (now a widow), of Rajiv Gandhi was the last to know that her husband had died in the terrorists attack at Sriperumbudur. Priyanka, true to Nehru-Gandhi tradition, took charge. It is said that she made sure no one disturbed her mother. Sonia succumbed to grief and tears in the privacy of her room.

Whenever she emerged she hid her pain behind dark glasses. Mother and daughter reached Madras in an IAF (Indian Air Force) plane; around 4.20 a.m Suman Dubey received them. His clothes were blood stained. The previous night, at Sriperumbudur he was 20 paces behind Rajiv Gandhi.

⁶⁵Ahluwalia, Meenakshi, *Assassination of Rajiv Gandhi*, SAGE Publication, New Delhi, 1991, p.234.

Then the blast happened and hell broke loose. He prayed for his friend's safety, but this time, he prayed in vain. Jayanti Natrajan, Rajya Sabha member, was the first to identify Rajiv.

Sonia was driven to the General Hospital from the airport where the entry in the mortuary read, "No. 390- Rajeeve Gandhi, Bham Explosion" Death, it would appear, is a great equalizer. Rajiv Gandhi, former PM, lay in a ramshackle hospital with a tag " No. 390". The postmortem was done around 1:30 a.m. in a dim lit morgue. The body, finally encased in a dignified coffin, was taken to the plane. Sonia was inconsolable. Priyanka broke down and hugged her dad's coffin and cried her heart out. She had often referred to Rajiv as the " handsome man". Look what a bunch of terrorists had done to her "handsomest man".⁶⁶

Rajiv's head and face were shattered. There were deep lacerations on his chest and waist. Only his fair complexioned arms and the lower portions of his legs retained their original form and shape. At the All India Institute of Medical (AIIMS), it took 2 hours to do the embalming. Normally, the procedure takes half that time. Delhi was tense once more. The administration was haunted by the happenings of 1984. However, nothing seriously untoward happened. The country sank into resounding silence. It marked the end of an era.

The Teen Murti, where Rajiv's earthly remains lay in state, Sonia sat silent, grieving, in a white sari. The Congress offered (rather insisted), that Sonia take over the party. She declined. She was being given the prime ministership on a platter - and she didn't want it.

⁶⁶Meena Agarwal, *op.cit.*, p.56.

Her children wanted nothing to do with politics. Politicking was certainly far from her mind. Even the thought of food nauseated her. She ate nothing for four days and nights. A woman had been robbed of her dearest adornment, her husband and all they could offer her was the chieftainship of the Congress. She wanted no part of it.

And Rahul? What can you say of a lad who flies in from Harvard to attend his father's funeral, yet even in the numbing grief, has the humanity and decency to help out an elderly mourner (the old man was having difficulty tying his own shoelaces.) This kid has inherited all the goodness of his father. He is introverted and rather protective of his mother and sister. But Sonia worried for him. Just as Indira fretted about Rajiv, when Feroze died. At one stage, Sonia requested Dhawan to have her left alone with Rajiv's body.⁶⁷

Sonia and Priyanka spent a few minutes alone with Rajiv. This would be the last time Rajiv would be leaving home; what did she recollect in the 5 precious minutes. We can only guess. Sources say, Rahul was shocked beyond comprehension by his father's death. It was as if his own words " one day, I'll return for his funeral, if he doesn't get adequate security" had come true. Rahul stayed longest beside his father's body. He stood there grieving, often alone. He seemed to have grown up overnight.

They all said that he was very much like his father - strong, firm, stoic. Priyanka too, remained composed in public, comforting, consoling her bereaved mother. This is how Rajiv would have wished her to be - a column of strength for Sonia. Priyanka is an extremely sensitive yet strong willed person. Her dignified composure through the mourning period could not but impress. She is said to be

⁶⁷Neena Gopal, *op.cit.*, p.211.

extremely warm and considerate - going out of her way to care for even the children of servants who have worked for the family.

Farewell Rajiv

Rajiv Gandhi's final journey began on 24 May 1991. His flower-bedecked coffin, aboard an army vehicle, started for Shakti Sthal. About 4 laksh people lined the route of the cortege. It was 106 degrees F in the shade. In Rajiv's funeral, one witnessed an expression of the true love the people had for him. There were few dry eyes. Grown men wept uninhibitedly; kings, princes, president, prime ministers and diplomats attended the cremation.⁶⁸

Sonia's worst nightmare had come true. This was the sight, the moment, she had dreaded, the past ten years, knowing fully well that it would take one lunatic to blow up her world into smithereens. In retrospect, one can only say that she was perhaps right not to have approved of Rajiv entering politics.

Sonia seemed strangely lost and hollow at the cremation. It was as if she was going through the motions but her mind, her soul, was elsewhere... perhaps at the Varsity Restaurant at Cambridge. But she retained control of herself. If she cried, she cried behind the over size sunglasses. She directed her children to replace dislodged logs.

She placed a " tulsimala " on her husband's body as her last respects. With the setting May sun as the backdrop, the buglers sounded their instruments and the pundits chanted their mantras. And Rajiv's remains were swallowed up by the raging

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p.212.

fire. Sonia's final gesture was so typically Indian. She touched her husband's feet and withdrew with palms joined in a silent "pranam".⁶⁹

The Crime, The Criminals, The Motive, The Punishment

The hit team :Dhanu, child of poet, Raja Ratnam; Nehru; Haribabu, photographer; Padma and her son and Nalini. Others remain traceless, incognito. The squad had done a "dry run" at one of V.P Singh's meeting. They were jubilant at their success. Haribabu had photo shot the entire operation.

A Special Investigating Team (SIT) of the CBI headed by D.R Karthikeyan was created by the Government. It was to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators. The Special Investigating Team got its first breakthrough from the intact camera of Haribabu. The photographer perished but he left behind 10 invaluable shots which included a picture of Dhanu and Sivarasan. The last shot was of the blast.

By August, 1991, the Special Investigating Team was sure of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam connection, after it apprehended Sivarasan and accomplices. Eye-witnesses to the crime provided crucial information, which solved the jigsaw puzzle.

Professor P. Chandra Shekharan disclosed, (just a day after the killing), that the assassin was a woman, who wore a belt, which hid an Improvised Explosive Device (IED).

Karthikeyan, speaking to Frontline (May 1992) said, " In the first seven days after the assassination, the world media speculated whether the crime would remain a mystery forever. But within 10 days, we found some slender clues. Within 20 days,

⁶⁹Faraz Ahmad, *op.cit.*, p.115.

we made the first arrests; we unearthed substantial evidence in 60 days; within 90 days we tracked down the main conspirators in Bangalore."⁷⁰

The charge sheet named 41 persons as accused: 3, including Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam top gun, Prabhakaran, were absconding, 12 were dead, the rest were tried by the designated court. The trial was in camera. The prosecution documents ran to 10,000 pages.

The court sentenced the 26 accused to death. The accused appealed in the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court (3 judge bench) noted, " We would like to record our appreciation for the Special Investigating Team (SIT) constituted by the Central Bureau of Investigation to investigate the case. Under the stewardship of Mr. D.R. Karthikeyan, Special Investigating Team did assiduous work and was able to solve the crime within a short time. Investigations were meticulous, loose ends tied to bring out a clear picture of conspiracy and the part played by each of the conspirators. Members of SIT performed their job with dedication and determination.

The succeeded in their mission but their only regret perhaps was that they could not capture Sivarasan alive. The Supreme Court confirmed the death sentence for four and commuted life imprisonment for four others.⁷¹

The Supreme Court noted, " A crime committed on Indian soil against a popular national leader, a former Prime Minister of India, for political decision taken by him in his capacity as the head of the executive and which met with the approval of Parliament by persons running political organization in a foreign country and their agents in concert with some Indians for the reason that it did not suit their political objectives and of their organizations, cannot but be a rarest of the rare case."

⁷⁰Neena Gopal, op.cit., p.223.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, p.224.

The aforesaid was noted with regards to Nalini's death sentence. The Court concluded that Prabhakaran ordered this assassination to avenge himself against Rajiv Gandhi, and that he (Prabhakaran) also feared that Rajiv Gandhi may return to power.

Murder Most Foul

That, Rajiv Gandhi's murder was the handiwork of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam has been decisively settled by the Supreme Court of India. Yet, certain issues remain to be tied up. For example, evidence indicates that there are influential Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam collaborators in India who may have overtly or covertly facilitated Rajiv Gandhi's assassination. Because the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi is not merely a sad event which tragically made Sonia a widow.⁷²

It is the perfidy that a foreign terrorists organization chose to assassinate a national leader on Indian soil at the time of the general election, which, therefore, we ought to regard as an insult to our national self-respect and a challenge to our national sovereignty."⁷³

⁷²*Faraz Ahmad, op.cit.*, p.125.

⁷³*Ibid.*, p.126.

CONCLUSION

Rajiv Gandhi was the youngest Prime Minister of India, and though he introduced the digital age, it was mired with controversies.

Incidents such as the Bhopal disaster and the Shah Bano Case, caused many to question the intent and motives of the Congress government.

The Bofors Scam, perhaps, is the biggest event that tainted the clean and corrupt free image of Rajiv Gandhi. V.P. Singh, the Finance Minister of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, and his successor, found compromising evidence relating to the government and corruption. This was known as the Bofors Scandal, in which millions of dollars and payoffs were given by Bofors, a Swedish Arms Manufacture, to the Indian Government for the sale of field Howitzer Guns. Prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was implicated in this, though he was posthumously cleared of all charges in 2004.

However, Rajiv Gandhi is also responsible for strengthening India's ties with USA at a time when the latter was critical of Indira Gandhi's socialist policies in India. He was also responsible for laying the foundations of telecommunications and information technology in India.

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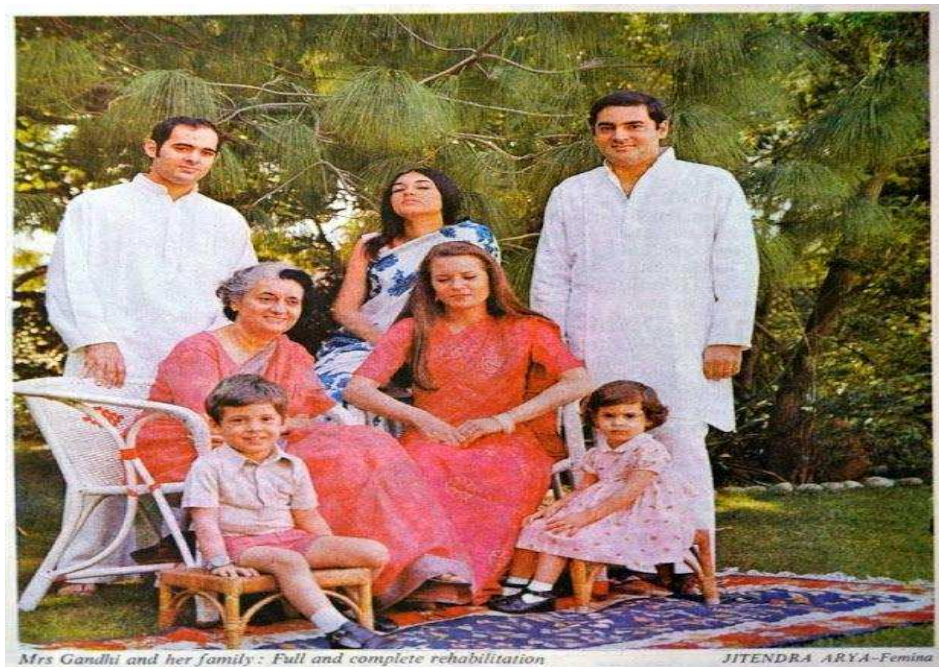
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Rajiv Gandhi with his family



Mrs Gandhi and her family: Full and complete rehabilitation

JITENDRA ARYA-Femina

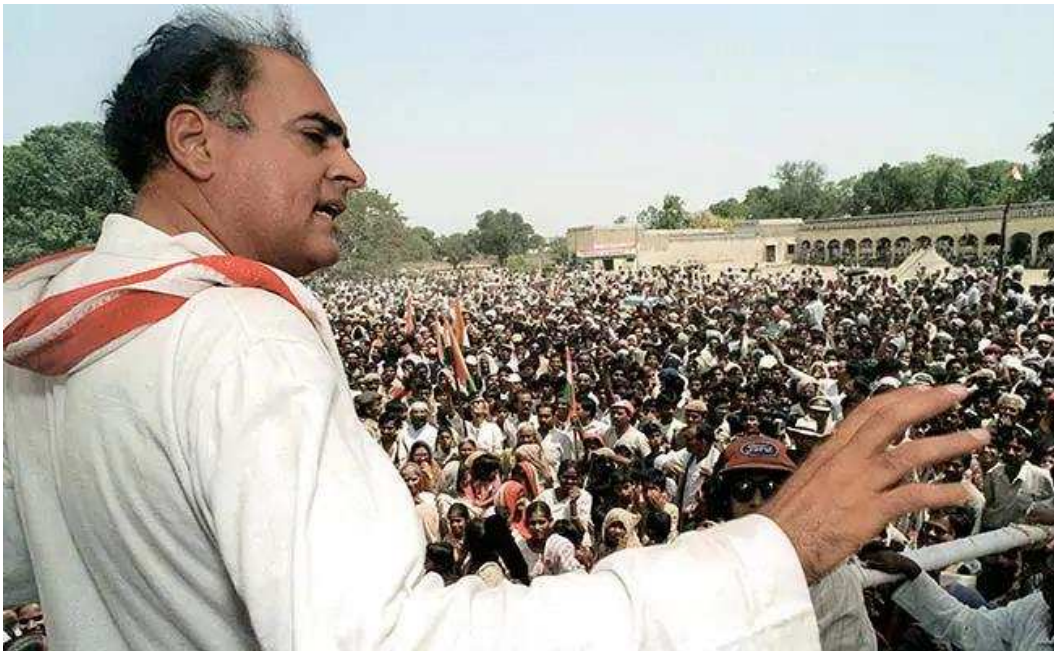
Tribute to Rajiv Gandhi



Rajiv Gandhi Foundation



Rajiv Gandhi in 1989 election campaign at Faizabad



Last moment of Rajiv Gandhi at Sriperumbudur



Rajiv Gandhi Assassination



Rajiv Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi at the Doon School





Remains of clothing worn by Rajiv Gandhi during his assassination



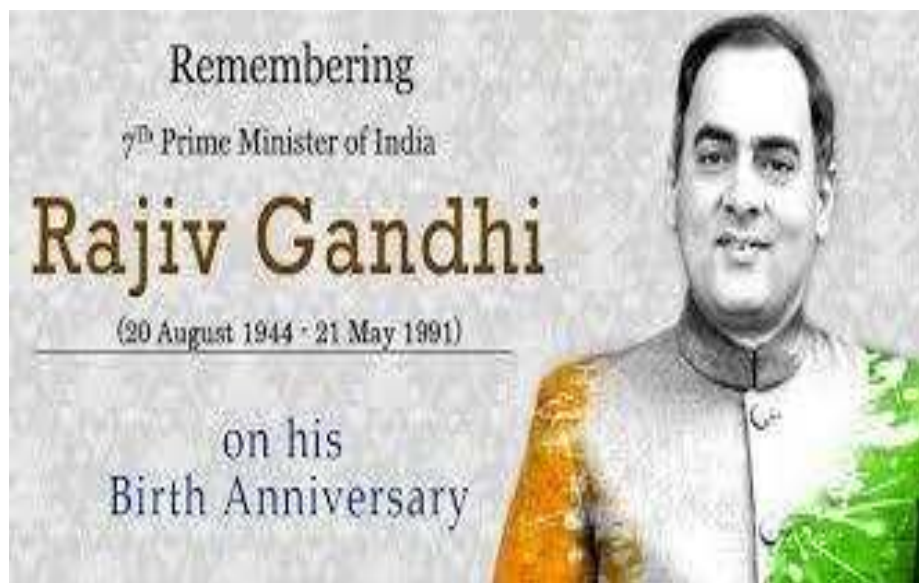
Rajiv Gandhi memorial at Sriperumbudur



Jawaharlal Nehru and Rajiv Gandhi on horseback



Independence Day speech



1984 Lok Sabha Election



Rajiv Gandhi Stamp



Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel – The Architect of United India

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for the award of the degree of

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St. Mary's College (Autonomous)

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III MA History

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project entitled "Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel –
An Architect of United India" submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous),
Thoothukudi affiliated to the Manonmaniam Sundaranar University,
Tirunelveli for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History is my original
work and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree,
diploma or similar title.

Place: Thoothukudi

Date: 04-2021

Signature of the Candidate

V.Karthika
(V.Karthika)

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Introduction

The men who guided the course of history, those who changed the thought and habit of their fellow humans and those who worked for the welfare of mankind or otherwise served the country are generally fit subjects of research. The subject need not sit pretty atop life's Mount Everest. It is enough if one reaches a hill-top by his own efforts. To attempt to do research on the life of a well known figure in public life particularly of one whose political career had spanned nearly five eventful decades, is indeed a difficult task.

A remarkable feature of India's freedom movement is the valuable service rendered at different stages by a long line of distinguished persons at the national and local levels who felt a deep and genuine affection for the motherland. These men gave a healthy tone to our public life through records of personal purity and uncompromising adherence to convictions which have become all too rare in the years pendency and after.

Most social and political activities are activated by a variety of motives: they may wish to earn money, advance their careers, defeat personal enemies, achieve public or private ends and so on. There is another category of leaders who came with firm principles and strong convictions and dedicated their lives to achieve the goals for which those persons and principles stood. To this last category belonged Sri Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel freedom fighter, first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister of India. He is well known as a national integrationist and the Iron Man of India.

Objectives of the study

1. To study how Sardar Patel built united India.
2. To discuss hurdles which Patel faced in uniting India.
3. To study Patel's decisions to strengthen united India after independence.
4. To assess Patel's contribution with a historical view.

Methodology

Different research methods have been used in this project. They are analytical method and descriptive method. The source materials have been critically analysed and investigated. The descriptive method is used in the presentation of the study in order to make the project understandable to the readers.

Review of Literature

The present study on “Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel - An Architect of United India - A study” is based on historical method. Primary and secondary and published and unpublished sources are utilized. Biographies of freedom fighters, biographies on Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel written by different authors and contemporary books available in different libraries are consulted.

Chapterisation

This project divided into four chapters including introduction and conclusion. The first chapter it deals with Patel's childhood, education, problems of his career and difficulties of early political life. In the second chapter it deals emergence of his political leadership with Bardoli Sathyagraha Movement which was well recognised and acknowledged by the entire nation. Patel displayed his leadership qualities and had been emerged as a leader.

In the third and fourth chapters which elucidate vividly how all princely states (native states) joined into Indian union by relentless and meritorious efforts of Vallabhbhai Patel. Patel's determination, perseverance and farsightedness are analyzed. In the concluding chapter it estimates and analysis elaborately and critically contributions and achievements of Patel to the nation.

Chapter One

Early Life

The Rebellion of 1857 was an important event which challenged authority of British East India Company's rule. In history this is known as First War of Indian Independence Movement. Eighteen years after India's First war of Independence, which the British called the Indian Mutiny, a boy was born on A.D. 31st October 1875 at Nadiad in the Kaira District of Gujarat, nearly 40 miles South-East of Ahmedabad. Zaverbhai who lived to age of 94 had five sons whom he gave names bearing religious significance. In order of seniority they were: Somabhai (meaning the sun), Narasibhai (Narasingh god), Vithalbai (Vithalnathji), Vallabhbhai (Vallabhacharya) and Kashibhai (Kashi or Varanasi). The first two engaged themselves in agriculture, two turning out to be more enterprising, became barristers and India's foremost fiery political leaders, and the youngest a practicing lawyer. In his strong, stout build, in his power of endurance and capacity to bear hardship, in his fearless, bold temperament, in his determination, firmness and resoluteness, Patel was like his father. Patel's mother, Ladbai, also moulded his character.¹

The boy's father had participated in the 1857 war and he himself was to grow into a great, fiery relentless freedom fighter while his birth-place was to be the storm-

¹Kamal Shankar Srivastava and Sangeeta Srivastva, *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, APH Publishing, New Delhi, 2011, p.10.

centre of another freedom struggle—a unique agrarian non-violent revolt in 1917 launched by Mahatma Gandhi for the first time in India after his return from South Africa in 1915.

The boy was named Vallabhai Zaveribhai Patel later known to millions of his countrymen as Sardar Patel—a title he earned not by virtue of his birth, but for his unique leadership in the Bardoli Sathyagraha in 1928. He was the fourth son of Zaverbhai Galabhai Patel, a petty land-owner from Karamsad a small village about five miles from Anand. Patel's origin was humble. His parents were of average means.

A people are shaped physically, mentally or otherwise by the land they live in. And the land makes them hardy, honest, and self- respecting. Like some other notable areas in India, this has been true of Punjab as the sword arm of India which bore the brunt of many foreign invasions from the north-west and it was from that land that Patel's ancestors the Patidars, are reported to have migrated to Gujarat some centuries past. In a way, Kaira too was uniquely situated, crossed by so many of the chief lines of traffic between upper and Central India and the coast, the Gulf of Cambay separating it from the Arabian Sea.²

Between 746-1290, it was ruled by different Rajput dynasties. Towards the end of the 14th century, it passed under the rule of the Muslim kings of Ahmedabad and in 1573 transferred to the Mughals. Todarmal, Akbar's legendary Revenue Minister had Kaira surveyed in 1590. Between 1720 and 1750 the district was 'the scene of almost unceasing

²Narendra Singh Sarila, *The Shadow of Great Game the Untold Story of India's Partition*, India, 2005,p.432.

conflicts between the Marathas and the Muslim Viceroys and nobles. Except for a period of ten years when it was in the hands of the Babi Family of Ahmedabad, Kaira was ruled either by the Peshwa or the Gaikwar.

In 1803, under the Treaty of Bassein, the Gaikwar ceded to the British Nadiad, Matar and Mahudha and granted in perpetual gift the fort and town of Kaira as a proof of his friendship and as testimony of his sense of the benefit he received from the alliance with the Honourable Company's Government. In 1805, the British turned Kaira into a large military station. The results of the British rule were not unmixed good. The chiefs and large landholders felt weakened and depressed the district officer and among them the heads of villages were stripped of power and influence and the men of capital suffered both as traders and money-lenders.

In Nadiad, the opposition was the keenest. Under the influence of the Desai community, some village headmen to collect the revenues. The British succeeded in breaking down the opposition. Assistant Collector Captain Barnewall was sent to arrange a settlement directly with the cultivators. He came down upon the leaders with a heavy hand.³

The British, however, continued to govern Kaira with a firm hand. John Malcolm, Governor of Bombay Presidency, who visited Kaira in 1830, admitted that the revenue

³Bipan Chandra, *Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern Indian*, Orient Longman Limited, New Dheli, 1979, pp.162-163.

'rates were high and ought in some cases to be lowered.' He said, *"The cultivators'* condition should never be lost sight of. For a time they may go on paying a high rent, but the strain must gradually impoverish them and in the end will cause a sudden large and inevitable defalcation in the public revenue". Malcolm's visit was in connection with the distressing condition of the cultivators.

Collector Williamson had earlier 'ascribed the various tumults and risings of the Gujaratis to their famines, which frequently reduced whole families and villages to the state of broken men.' In 1826 a fall in prices of agricultural produce had set in and 'rapidly increased till the collapse of 1831... To meet these difficulties, rates were considerably lowered and by postponing the dates of revenue installments further relief was given. In the next year after a further reduction of rates, all complaints ceased. Such were the early years of British rule of Kaira. Gandhi found an identical situation prior to the launching of the Satyagraha in 1917. The name *Kaira* comes from *Ketaka*, the Sanskrit form of *Kevda* - the sweet-scented Pandanus.⁴

It was during such awakened times of the century that Patel was born amongst a people who were bold, courageous and virile but honest and self-respecting. Patel's father, Zaverbhai, was a LevaPatidar—a class of cultivators known for their sober, simple character, quiet nature, industrious habits, honest disposition and straight-forward dealings. Not only were they among the best farmers in Gujarat but perhaps in the whole of India.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp.134-136.

The migrants were settled in 12 kaira villages of which the most important were six: Nadiad, Vaso, Karamsad, Bhadran, Dharmaj and Sojitra. The Patidars from these were considered to be superior to the rest. Karamsad seems to have been given to Patel's ancestors, of whom Galabhai was his grandfather and Nathabhai and Sakhidas his great grandfathers.

They owned about 40 acres of land. Galabhai, Zaverbhai's father was the only son of Sakhidas who in turn happened to be the only son of Nathabhai. On Sakhidas's death, Zaverbhai and his three brothers inherited 10 acres of land each. Zaverbhai was thus a petty landlord of moderate means.

Patel himself was in this regard his father's image: firm, determined and demanding; and like his father too he was least tolerant of injustice, and ever ready to fight it out. Both father and son were of independent temperament and hated flattery. Patel along with his elder brother Vithalbhbai had also inherited from his father the great quality of becoming a firebrand freedom fighter.

It is well known that Zaverbhai moved by nationalist fervour, had joined the Rani of Jhansi in the 1857 War of Independence. When it petered out Zaverbhai was taken prisoner by Malharrao Holkar. One day Holkar was playing chess within sight of his prisoner and whenever he made a wrong move Zaverbhai made bold not only to point out the mistake but suggested instead the right one. Astonished and pleased the Holkar not

only returned to Zaverbhai his freedom but the two struck up a friendship. His son exhibited a similar genius in making the right moves on the country's chessboard in his settlement with the Princes.⁵

Patel inherited motherly instincts- the spirit of service that was so dominant in her also taste cleanliness and the orderliness he observed throughout his life. Like all Hindu mothers of her times she narrated to her sons the epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, which seemed to have had a great impact on her two sons- both Patel and Vithalbhai. These great epics instilled in Patel's mind warrior-like qualities and awakened in him a restless spirit and an irresistible desire to fight against injustice - first at school and later on the political stage of India. Patel possessed an ingenious mind as a schoolboy - far from the ordinary. Even he had no particular academic distinction to his credit some of his eventful school-life happenings did cast shadows of the man he was ultimately going to be. He was a rebel whose exceptional organisational abilities were recognized by his schoolmates and teachers.

Patel completed seven standards of Gujarati from the Government school of Karamsad. He was practically self-taught. But he learnt a great deal from his father who used to take him to the fields every morning and teach him tables and simple sums⁶.

⁵Shivaram, B., *India's Freedom Movement*, Orient Longman Limited, New Delhi, 1972, pp.137-140.

⁶ Tamil Priyan, *Sarathar Vallabhbhai Patel Life Style*, Classic Publication, Chennai, 2015, pp.10-13.

Patel had no inclination to stay in his village. Though less vocal by temperament his ambitions were as high as Vithalbhai's who was already studying English at Nadiad and was staying with his maternal uncle. Zaverbhai could not send Patel there as he did not want to burden his brother-in law with the responsibility of his second son as well. A private English school up to the third standard opened at Karamsad, which Patel joined though for a year only. Thereafter, he was sent to petlad where the local school had English up to the fifth standard. Patel was keen to pursue his study of English. The desire seemed to be in keeping with the prevailing spirit of the times.

In the very first year at Nadiad, in his sixth standard, he organised a strike in his school which lasted three days. It was over a fellow student whom a haughty, high-handed teacher, taking pride in caning boys had turned out of the class for failing to bring from his parent the fine-money imposed on him the previous day. Even though he himself was a boy Patel could not stomach such injustice. At his call, the class staged a walkout. To make matters worse, he persuaded the entire school to go on strike. He even organised picketing! He conducted his operations from the headquarters he had set up in the travellers' rest-house at Nadiad, which he had taken possession of and where the strikers rested by turns. On the third day of the agitation, the headmaster thought it prudent to reach an 'honourable' settlement with Patel on the assurance that no excessive and unjust punishment would be meted out in future. Patel was then hardly eighteen. Such successful adventures established Patel's leadership in school. From Nadiad, Patel moved to Baroda to join a school there. But his stay did not last longer than a month. During this short period he gave ample evidence of his irrepressible rebellious nature. Since he preferred to opt for Gujarati in place of Sanskrit, much against the wishes of his class teacher the latter

tauntingly called him *Mahapurush*(A Great Man). Patel passed the Matriculation examination from the Nadiad High School in 1897.

During those days a Matriculate could become a lawyer by taking the Pleaders examination. Since he had neither the money nor the time to spend on higher studies, he took the short-cut and became a pleader in 1900.⁷ But his independent nature did not permit him to accept the offer of his brother, Vithalbhai and some others to join them as their junior. He did not want to start life like that it didn't matter if that meant coming up the hard way. His choice fell on Godhra. Vithalbhai, who had practiced there since 1895 had shifted to Borsad. Patel could hopefully take over some of his practice to begin with.

In July 1900, Patel and his wife Javerbai, arrived at Godhra, bringing with them hardly anything barring a handful of household articles and a few legal books. The first year ended with his earning Rs. 600 -on an average of Rs. 50 a month. An opportunity arrived two years later. In 1902, Patel shifted to Borsad. It was a taluka headquarters and had the highest number of criminal cases not only in Kaira district of which it formed a part, but in the whole of Bombay Presidency. The people were simple, honest, but virile.⁸

Patel's move from Godhra to Borsad was also for another reason: to be nearer to Vithalbhai who had got into hot waters with the local magistracy. He had

⁷ Sharma,H.D.,*100 Great Live*,Rupa Publication, New Delhi, 2006,p.433.

⁸Kalpna Rajaram,*Constitution of India and Indian Polity*, Spectrum Book Publishers, New Delhi,1994,p.450.

annoyed the Resident First Class Magistrate, the Mamlatdar and the First Class Sub-Judge by getting a commission appointed to enquire into complaints of bribery and corruption against a former Sub-Judge. They all looked for an occasion to wreak vengeance on Vithalbhai. Patel's '*operation rescue*' was a camouflaged move. The brothers lived apart though they secretly helped each other financially in times of need. This gave the impression that the brothers were not on good terms. But like a shrewd lawyer Patel waited patiently for an opportunity when he could retrieve the situation for Vithalbhai and restore his status and prestige.

The opportunity came soon. Patel happened to be engaged in a case in which the Mamlatdar was involved. No one except he could save the Mamlatdar from his predicament. He ignored the Mamlatdar's approaches, but finally agreed to help him only on Vithalbhai's recommendation! The judiciary was left with no choice but to patch up with vithalbhai.⁹

As a criminal lawyer, Patel mostly took up the defence of those involved in police cases for murder, dacoity and similar crimes. He was in a hurry to earn as much as he could in the shortest possible time so as to be able to proceed to England to become a barrister. Patel practiced at Borsad for nearly eight years till the year 1910 during which period he had built a name for himself as a most successful criminal lawyer. He had set up

⁹Iyengar, A.S., *Role of Press and Indian Freedom Struggle*, A.P.H. Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, 2001, pp. 194-204-288.

a happy home too, with a daughter Manibehn and a son Dahyabhai born in 1904 and 1905.

Towards the closing years of his Borsad stay a great personal tragedy befell him: the death of his wife on 11th January 1909. He bore it with rare fortitude and courage. When Javebai died, Patel was thirty-three. The tragedy shattered his home life. His children were only four and five years old respectively. And he had yet many important things to achieve in life. Brushing aside pressures from his parents and relations he decided not to marry for the second time. Such a decision was also in keeping with the family tradition.

Patel wanted to be a great man and in those days to become a great man meant to become a lawyer or a barrister. But the real solution he knew lay in his becoming a barrister himself. Patel had to overcome two hurdles: first, how to finance his visit to London; second, how to set aside any objection from his family.

Patel was 'anxious to go overseas to see the people of England, who living 7000 miles away were able to rule us for so long, as also 'to imitate the British and their ways closely.' Without that, he felt he couldn't be a successful barrister. Such a metamorphosis, physical as well as mental most educated Indians of his times had slavishly undergone. Patel was no exception. And neither was Gandhi.

In an effort to cross the second hurdle Patel contrived an ingenious device as a test case to break any possible social barrier. Along with three other friends he hatched a plan instigating one of them LakshmishankarKarunashankarto secretly leave for England

to become a barrister. Lakshmishankar was chosen because he had the financial means to put the plan into action. Unlike others he belonged to rich parents his father being a money-lender from Borsad.¹⁰

At the instigation of Patel and others he stole money from his father's safe, returned to Nadiad where the others waited for him and from there he was packed off to Bombay en route to England. Lakshmishankar's father kept on enquiring about his son. But all were tight-lipped. The secret was out only when Lakshmishankar sent his father a cable from Aden asking for more money. On his return, whenever Lakshmishankar reminded Patel that, as originally planned, it was now his turn to go, he would give the evasive reply, "*I am preparing for it.*"

That was literally true. Patel had to have enough money to implement his plan. Leading a simple, austere life and practicing as much as he could he saved enough from his earnings as a pleader. By 1905 he was ready to fulfil the second ambition of his life. A passage was arranged through Thomas Cook & Sons. But fate played a joke on him to upset his plans. Addressed as V.J. Patel, his passport and other travel documents, which carried no photographs those days, were delivered by mistake by the postman to Vithalbhai who too had been nursing the hope of going to England to become a barrister. But he had saved no money.

¹⁰ Gupta, D.C., *Indian National Movement and Constitutional Development*, Vikas Publishing House Pvt, Ltd, New Delhi, 1970, pp.115-116-146.

Exercising an elder's prerogative in a Hindu family, Vithalbhai took it to be his opportunity first - not the younger brother's, no matter if the latter had sweated to save money for this visit. As a true Hindu, Patel bowed to his brother's wishes without a grumble. Not only did he surrender his travel documents to Vithalbhai but also willingly agreed to bear his entire expenses.¹¹

Even with this sacrifice on Patel's part, the elder brother still faced another problem. With whom was he to leave his wife? Again, the younger brother came to his help by willingly putting up his sister-in-law at his Borsad house. Hardly a few days had passed when the two women quarreled seriously. Since his sister-in-law had no place to go to and Patel had taken upon himself the responsibility of looking after her during Vithalbhai's absence, he underwent another sacrifice. He sent his wife to his in-laws and let her remain there till he could honorably 'return' his sister-in-law to his brother on Vithalbhai's return from England.

Vithalbhai returned to India in 1908. Meanwhile Patel had continued to collect the required money once again by working still harder at the Bar. He would have proceeded to England without further delay but for his wife's death in January 1909. A year later in August, he managed to leave for England. Being reserved and secretive by nature, Patel had kept his plan a closely guarded secret. The earlier one, though a secret, had been betrayed by the postman. This time too, none knew about it except Vithalbhai

¹¹Ramachandra Guha, *India After Gandhi*, A.P.H. Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, 2007, p.889.

with whom he had to correspond in order to gain some knowledge of the country he was to visit and the studies he was to pursue. Another person who could merely smell of the plan was his younger brother Kashibhai who in the true style of a detective had spied on him. He had collected bits of torn letters Vithalbhai had written to Patel which he pieced together to know of the secret.

But as a dutiful brother, he kept it to himself, not letting even their parents know. A day prior to his departure from Borsad, Patel disclosed his plan to two of his friends, JivanlalBavabhaiDeve and TulsidasGaribdas Patel as he wanted them to look after Kashibhai who had come to Borsad after qualifying as a pleader and who was to take over his brother's house and practice.¹²

Patel had kept the whole of Borsad guessing what was he up to? Nobody knew. On the departure day when a ghorragarry was being loaded with his luggage, the Postmaster ventured to ask Patel if he was leaving for England. To such a simple query, the answer was evasive "*It is not yet certain.*" Its coldness dampened the courage of the Postmaster.

He felt dissuaded to pursue the matter further, but truefully commented after Patel had left, "*Look at this fellow! He has left. But he talked to me soevasively.*" Patel continued to be an enigma even on his return from England. Instead of going to Karamsad to see his parents, he went to Borsad. When asked for the reason, his simple reply was, "I

¹²Clarry Collins, *Freedom at Midnight*, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, 1976,p.499.

had gone from Borsad. So I have come Patel was thirty-five when he sailed for England. He was seen off at Bombay by none excepting Vithalbai.

He had a clear-cut objective before him a definite determined purpose for which he was going to England—to return home as a barrister within the shortest possible time. On board the ship Patel put on the European dress for the first time. Till then he had worn a dhoti, turban, a long coat often unbuttoned, and open slippers that required no socks to wear.

Another change he underwent was the use of a fork and knife at the dining table. Almost all the passengers were Europeans.¹³

Seeing western life so closely, there could have been many temptations for Patel. But he was not the person to allow distractions to take him away from the only purpose of his journey to England. In the fulfillment of it he had begun serious studies on board the vessel itself and completed Roman Law before reaching Marseilles. His lone Indian companion on board was a Thakur from Kathiawar whose company he kept in London too on landing by staying at Hotel Cecil. But it was far beyond his means.

He was to live in England within his savings. Therefore, he moved out the next day, and put up with a friend for a couple of days before finally shifting to a moderately-priced boarding house at 23, Aldrige Villa, Bayswater.

¹³Clarry Collins, *Op.cit.*,p.450.

Patel joined the Middle Temple. Straightaway he plunged into serious studies, devoting not less than eleven hours every day. His limited means imposed many hardships on him. Unable to possess many of the books he badly needed he depended on the Middle Temple library which was about ten to twelve miles away from the place of his residence. Daily he walked up that much distance both ways. He reached the library at nine in the morning and stayed on till six in the evening in between taking his frugal lunch and tea. Soon after joining the Middle Temple Patel took an examination in Roman Law in which he stood first. The full course of studies meant twelve terms four in a year. One who passed with honours could take the final examination on the completion of the sixth term, which meant cutting down the total period of three years to half. Patel qualified for such a concession.¹⁴

He stood bracketed 'first' in the preliminary examination in the paper on Equity, sharing the prize of \$ 5 with one G. Davis, who later entered the Indian Civil Service and retired as the Chief Justice of the Sind High Court. Patel took the final examination in June 1912 and was called to the Bar on 27th January 1913. He obtained a first class first, winning the prize of \$ 50. Patel did not desire to stay in England a day longer than was necessary.

Having passed the final examination in June 1912, he considered it a waste of time to stay on till January 1913 for the Call Night-not even bothering about the solemn

¹⁴Clarry Collins, *Op.cit.*,p.451.

grandeur of the occasion which filled many a would-be great men with a sense of pride. He was very keen on returning home immediately. His savings were just enough for that and he had come to London straight from Borsad without visiting his parents at Karamsad.

Above all, Ahmedabad- the city of his dreams-was beckoning him to come and fulfil the second ambition of his life: to start practicing as a barrister on par with barristers with whom he had crossed swords earlier at Borsad as a district court pleader. He had also no desire to see the famed beauty of cities like Naples and Venice or make a trip to Switzerland to see the splendour of the Alps.¹⁵

No attraction, however alluring could change his mind or purpose. Patel, therefore, applied for an exemption on the basis of his excellent record at the Inn. His request was given due consideration by the Constitution Committee, which however, feared that a precedent once set up would attract others to take advantage of it thus lowering the solemnity and dignity of the Call Night. Patel's request was, therefore turned down and he had to live in England for the next six months or so. He utilized the time to extensively tour the British Isles.

The Call Night on 27 January, 1913 was no ordinary night for Patel. It symbolized the culmination of his unremitting toil over a year and a half. It was the fulfillment of his most cherished ambition for which he had laboured for well over a decade. On the Call Night, in the Middle Temple Hall assembled the students whose Call

¹⁵Khilnani,N.M.,*India's Road to Independence (1857-19470)*,Sterling Publishers Private Limitd, Delhi, 1987,p.180.

had been approved by the British Parliament. The atmosphere was sombre and exuded the dignity of the Honorable and learned Society of Barristers

The ceremony was tradition-bound. The students pre-eminent among whom was Patel for having stood first took their places in the order in which they were to be called. Like the others he too wore a wig and gown over a dark suit. The Master Tresurer, the Master Reader and the other Masters sat on the dais. Each student was individually presented to the Master Tresurer by the Master Reader.¹⁶

The former called him '*in the name of the Bench ... to the Degree of the Utter Bar.*' Thereafter, in keeping with the ancient tradition Patel entered his name at the Cupboard in the Book containing the Roll of the Barristers of the Inn. The ceremony concluded with a dinner that night. Prior to the call, Patel was required to find out a Benchers who could propose his name and another who could second it. But Patel knew none. He chose one from the list of Benchers, and approached him. Not only did he willingly agree to oblige Patel, but even found a supporter for him. He turned out to be a cousin of the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court, Basil Scott. The night after the Call, he invited Patel to dinner. But the latter had to regretfully decline it, as he was sailing home the very next day. But the Benchers pleased with Patel's performance in the Bar examination volunteered to give him a letter of introduction to Basil Scott.

¹⁶Ramachandra Guha, *The National Bestseller Makers of Modern India*, Penguin Publishers, New Delhi, 2010, pp. 12-13-370.

Patel reached Bombay on 13th February. He called upon Basil Scott, who was extremely courteous in his welcome solicitous in advising him to set up practice in Bombay, and even offered him a job in the Government Law School. But Patel's heart was in Ahmedabad, where he was to build up a lucrative practice fast. So, he politely refused the kind offer of the Chief justice. The new barrister caused a flutter in the Ahmedabad bar.¹⁷ Patel was 'a smart young man, dressed in well-cut clothes, with a felt hat worn slightly, stern and reserved his eyes piercing and bright not given to many words, receiving visitors with just a simple greeting but not entering into any conversation and of a firm and pensive expression, almost as of one looked down upon the world with a sort of superiority complex, talking with an air of confidence and superiority whenever he opened his lips....His personality and demeanor attracted them (the junior bar) but they had mixed feelings of respect awe and perhaps of subdued resentment at the way he seemed to look at others. It did not take Patel long to conquer the barrister-dominated Bar.¹⁸

In 1905, when the Bengal Partition agitation was sweeping the land Patel was quietly building up his legal practice at Borsad. Being the son of a rebel his mind must have been disturbed by the happenings in the country. But he saw no reason to allow himself to be carried away from his immediate goal of life: to earn enough for a passage to England and return as a barrister. He could become one not before 1913, by which time

¹⁷Edward Thompson, Garrett., *History of British rule in India*, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 1999, p.670.

¹⁸Iyengar, A.S., *Role of Press and Indian Freedom Struggle*, A.P.H. Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, 2001, pp.194-204-288.

Vithalbhai had already given up his legal practice and entered public life by joining the Bombay Legislative Council. Once again it fell to Patel's lot to support his brother.

There was an understanding between the two as Patel admitted that *"one of us should serve the country and the other the family."* He added with his characteristic well-meaning humour *"My brother gave up his flourishing practice and started on a career of public service, while I bore the burden of maintaining the household. I had, thus, to commit all the sins, and he performed all the good deeds but I reconciled myself with the thought that I could claim at least a share in his good work!."*¹⁹

Barrister Patel merrily practiced at Ahmedabad from 1913 onwards. His hitherto hurt ego as a pleader of Borsad found satisfaction from his great success in the law courts - against the very barristers and lawyers who had wounded his pride earlier. Now as a barrister amongst them he too enjoyed the same status and his confidence in his ability as a criminal lawyer got a further fillip.

Patel moved towards his future guru only 1917, in the year of Gandhi's three victories in quick succession one the Viceroy's compliance with his request to abolish indentured labour by a fixed date two the removal by a Viceregal Decree of the much-hated Customs barrier at Viramgam in Kathiawar to which Gandhi belonged and three

¹⁹Misra, B.B., *The Indian Political Parties an Historical Analysis of Political Behavior up to 1947*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1976, p.457.

Gandhi's victory at Champaran in Bihar against the British Indigo planters in May 1917.

The last one was unique.

It rocketed the future Mahatma to all-India fame. Tilak had given the people the political mantra - '*Swatantra mera janam siddh adhikar hai, aur mein ise lekar rahoonga.*' Freedom is my birthright, and I will have it' - which had electrified the atmosphere in towns and cities. It was however left to Gandhi to translate that mantra into action: to turn it into a reality by carrying it to India's teeming millions in her villages. In Champaran, it was a new spectacle of a great surge of thousands of indigo cultivators rising as - to Gandhi's call. Such an eventuality was hitherto unthinkable. Gandhi emerged as a great leader of the oppressed peasantry. Champaran had a sweeping effect on Patel's mind an effect that was deep far-reaching and life-long.²⁰

It moved a mind that was resolute and analytical a mind not influenced by sentiment but governed by reason. One summer afternoon at the Gujarat Club, Patel Harilal Desai, both Secretaries of the Gujarat Sabha and G.V. Mavalankar, Joint Secretary, were as usual gossiping when the news of Champaran was received. Gandhi's preference for imprisonment of his inquiry into the indigo planters' high-handedness 'electrified all of us', writes Mavalankar, Desai jumped up and waving his hand exclaimed, "Mavalankar, here's a brave man. We must have him as our President" of the Gujarat Sabha.

²⁰Gokhale, B.K., *The Constitution of India*, A.R. Sheth & Co, Mumbai, 1972, p.379.

True to his nature, Patel quietly listened without betraying emotions. In reality, as the coming months unveiled, he was more 'electrified' than the other two. In Gandhi's Champaran victory, Patel saw the beginnings of a new agrarian revolution which was most welcome to him as the son of the soil. Gandhi appeared to him to be the man who had arrived in Kaira in 1917 to carry out such a revolution. This realisation irresistibly drew Patel towards Gandhi.

In June 1917, Gandhi again hit the headlines. He showed unusual boldness on Annie Besant's internment by drafting a mass petition to be passed at public meetings throughout India. It was a radical departure from old politics.²¹

Besides pleading for Besant's freedom, the petition appealed to Secretary of State Montague and Viceroy Chelmsford to grant the reforms formulated by the Congress-League scheme under the Lucknow Pact of December 1916. Whom did Gandhi represent? Not the Congress nor the Home Rule League. He had yet no place in either. He represented the Gujarat Sabha, which was established in 1884 to petition people's grievances to the Government.

One such public meeting was held at Borsad. Patel brought with him copies of the petition from Ahmedabad on behalf of the Gujarat Sabha while Indulal Yagnik proceeded to Borsad from Bombay with the same copies printed by the Home Rule League. They met at

²¹Allan, J., *Cambridge Shorter of India*, S.Chand of the Cambridge University, Mumbai, 1969, p.399.

Nadiad. Yagnik found in Patel a man of stern disposition. He ‘felt rather nervous’ and was ‘put out by seeing the proud barrister in person ... dressed tiptop in western style, complete with a high starched collar, a coloured necktie, a velvet hat’ and a pair of black shining shoes.

He had his collars laundered not in Ahmedabad but by Bombay’s best laundry. Barrister Patel travelled Second Class - a luxury for Indians in those days.

Despite his forbidding appearance Patel greeted Yagnik with ‘a friendly twinkle in his eye’ and thus ‘placed me completely at ease’, and laid ‘the basis of a human bond’ that endured during their lifetime. Patel’s participation in the meeting at Borsad was the beginning of a great change in him. His interest in politics had been kindled.

This became all the more clear towards the end of 1917 at the Provincial Conference organised by the Gujarat Sabha at Godhra where Patel had started his legal practice first 17 years ago. Gandhi presided over the conference. Both Tilak and Jinnah were present. Patel attended as ordinary delegate and did not speak at all, but a significant change was noticeable in his person. The European dress had gone; instead, he wore a dhoti, a long, loose shirt and a short alpaca coat. An Indian black cap had replaced the English felt hat and his shining black shoes had given place to ordinary chappals.²²

²²Seervai, H.M., *Partition of India Legend and Reality*, Universal Law Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, 1989 p.119.

The conference appointed a permanent committee with Gandhi as the President and Patel and Yagnik as Secretaries. The conference proved a turning-point in Patel's life. At a meeting of the Sabha's working committee, Gandhi stated, "*the time has come when we need whole time workers - not those who shall be like seasonal birds.*" He began asking one by one of those present if they would accept his proposition. The first to be approached was a barrister from Ahmedabad who declined by saying, "*I am not a sanyasi. I have a family, and children.*" Then came Patel's turn - also a barrister with two motherless children he had to look after, besides other family responsibilities. Patel did not take a second to give his consent

By a firm, unhesitating resolve, he placed his life at the disposal of his guru, Gandhi. From then onwards the scoffer turned into Gandhi's chela (follower) and developed an unquestioned loyalty and devotion to his would-be master. And not much later, many nicknamed him Gandhi's 'blind follower'.

Chapter Two

Patel and Bardoli Satyagraha

The dazzling success of the Bardoli satyagraha helped Patel climb to new heights of political eminence. In a most apt description, Gandhi said, "*Vallabhbhai found his Vallabh (God) in Bardoli.*" It was the fulfilment of the fond hope with which his parents had named him after Vallabhacharya. Annie Besant declared: '*Let us Bardolise the country.*'

Judging from the total obedience Patel commanded and the iron discipline he had imposed on the 87,000 non-cooperating peasants, they came to the conclusion, to quote TheTimes of India that Patel had 'instituted there a Bolshevik Regime in which he plays the role of Lenin'. The immediate cause of the Satyagraha was the arbitrary enhancement of land revenue by the Government in 1927. But the seeds of the satyagraha had been sown by Gandhi himself earlier during the Non-Cooperation Movement when he had selected the taluk as the 'starting point of one of the biggest experiments in history. Gandhi's choice of Bardoli had a historic background. Its people knew Gandhi from his South African

Satyagraha days, when the United Society of Johannesburg had given him valuable support.²³

Both the president and the secretary of the society were from Bardoli. The people of Bardoli were industrious, skilful and thrifty: 'their frank and open faces bear a natural stamp of purity: and they had a sense of sacredness about their pledges and their vows.' The invitation to Gandhi in 1921 had come from two brothers, Kalyanji Mehtha and Kuverji Mehtha. Since 1911 they had been running the Patidar Vidyarthi Ashram in Surat, which imparted preliminary education to boys proceeding to South Africa.

From 1920 onwards, answering Gandhi's call for non-cooperation, they turned out from their school students imbued with national spirit. Kalyanji Mehtha climbed that the British, when they first came to India, had landed at the Surat port and had established their first factory there.²⁴

Since from Surat they had extended their domain over the rest of the country, it was only appropriate that Surat should set afoot a moment to say farewell to them. He and some other public spirited men from Surat saw in the Bardoli Satyagraha such a movement an opportunity to through the British out of India. Gandhi had visited Bardoli in 1921 to satisfy himself through personal on the spot inquiries. He had a number of meetings with village representatives. He had also consulted a former Diwan of Cambay,

²³Sarvepalli, Gopal, *Op.cit.*, p.400.

²⁴Desikachari, S.V., *Reading the Constitutional History of India (1757- 1947)*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1983, p.786.

Mahadev Rao, who belonged to Bardoli and had settled there on retirement. He had told Gandhi that the people of Bardoli were simple minded and straightforward; though not conversant with politics, they were capable of giving a fight and were ready for the proposed Sathyagraha - at least fifty per cent of them. Thus satisfied, Gandhi had sent an ultimatum to the Viceroy, a decision regarding which the Congress Working Committee had taken at Surat on 31st January 1921.

But the Sathyagraha never took off. It was given up about the time it was to start because of the Chauri Chaura Riots in Uttar Pradesh in which 21 Policemen were burnt alive. The Bardoli workers who had put in months of preparations were apposed to such a decision. As Gandhi's deputy, Patel took the decision in his stride and said, *"He is our commander. We are fighting the battle on his principles. We should, therefore, follow him"*. Bardoli, nevertheless, suffered frustration. In such a situation of gloom and despair, it fell on Patel to keep the people's spirits buoyed up. This he accomplished through Gandhian constructive work from the four principle centers at Bardoli, Sarbhon, Varad and Vankaner - places which distinguished themselves later in the Bardoli Sathyagraha of 1928 and the work so carried out had bound the villagers to the workers with a tie of indissoluble union.²⁵

The announcement of the new land revenue settlements towards the end of 1925 made Bardoli seethe with discontent. Such revenue settlements, as a rule, were carried out

²⁵Alex Von Tunzel Man, N., *Indian Summer (The Secret History of the End of an Empire)*, New York, 2007, pp.178-179-280.

every 30 years, primarily to assess the economic condition of agriculturists. The previous one had taken place in 1896. A fresh one was due in 1926.

By this time Patel was trained with the association of Gandhi. He imbibed his ideas. Kalyanji and Kuverji along with some other called on Patel at Ahmedabad and requested him to give a lead to the Bardoli peasants. Patel laid down some conditions and asked them to come back after giving due concentration to his warning against the dire consequence of a Satyagraha campaign which might be indefinitely prolonged.

This was around 20th January, whereas the collections were to begin from 5th February. The taluk leaders, as decided by Patel, visited villages to ascertain people's resolve. They reported a unanimity and keenness about offering Satyagraha. They added force to their request by bringing with them on their second visit such season 'soldiers' as Darbarsaheb Gopaldas, Mahanlal Pandya and Ravishankar Maharaj, who were ready to join the Satyagraha. All of them had been Patel's trusted Lieutenants in earlier battles. Nothing could have been more assuring to Patel than their help and the peasants' resolve. Since Gandhi's consent was still required Patel told them "*You go and see Bapu. I will follow you.*"²⁶

Patel went a step further. He had an assurance from each village that full tax would not be paid and that in the meetings addressed by him half those present would be women. Asked to explain this merely said, "*You will understand it later.*" Patel arrived in

²⁶Shridevi, S., *Gandhi and the Emancipation of Indian Woman*, Gandhi Sathya Prachuranalayam, 1969, p.809.

Bardoli on 4th February - a day prior to the start of the collection of the enhanced land revenue to preside over a conference of peasants who not only accepted his contention not to precipitate matters but left it to him to chalk out a course of action he considered best.

Patel really felt for the oppressed peasants but outwardly he looked harsh and firm but quiet. He did not appear to be a man in a hurry. He still wanted to examine and cross examine the people before leading them into the battle. Besides conferring with his workers, he met representatives from some 80 villages. When satisfied, he addressed a public meeting of about 10,000 peasants whom he told with his characteristic bluntness,

"I shall stand by the side of anyone who is prepared to take risks. In 1921, we were on the point of being put to the test, but unforeseen circumstances intervened and we had no opportunity of giving a demonstration of our strength. Now the hour has struck. But are you really ready?".

He warned them against reaching a hasty decision. He gave then seven days to think it over. Patel had a double purpose in the postponement of the Satyagraha by a week: first, to administer shock therapy to the people with a view to steeling their resolve; secondly, to explore possibilities of a compromise through the Gandhian principle of negotiation.²⁷

²⁷Mahajan,V.D., *The National Movement in India* , Sterling Publishers Pvt Ltd ,Calcutta,1979, pp.810-812.

Three members of the Legislative Council present at the conference stated that they had exhausted every constitutional means at their disposal. Therefore, they entrusted their case to one who could take them along the path of non-violent resistance and suffering. Patel's generalship of the Satyagraha was now accepted by one and all. His immediate task at Bardoli was over. He returned to Ahmedabad on 5th February. On the 6th February, he wrote to the Governor, drawing his attention to the flagrant injustice being done under the revised settlement.

The Government did not communicate till 11th February, whereas the final date returned to Bardoli on the 12th February. Once again he talked to the peasants with his usual bluntness, *"I still ask you to think twice before you take the plunge. Do not derive comfort from the feeling that you have as your leader a fighter like myself. Forget me and forget my companions. Fight, if you feel that you must resist oppression and injustice. Do not take the plunge lightly. If you miserably fail, you will not rise again for several years. But if you succeed, you will have done much to lay the foundations of Swaraj"*. His speeches became more firm, determined and even challenging. *"We have"*, he told a conference of the peasants, *"done everything we could. Now there remains only one way - to oppose force with force"*.²⁸

Patel then strengthened the hearts of the peasants. Patel was not dispirited by the prevailing uncertain climate. He knew how to weld these people into a unified fighting

²⁸Jayapalan, N., *History of the Freedom Movement*, Ashish Publishing House, 1988, pp.404-418.

force, and make them exude courage, hope and buoyancy. He told a group of peasants' representatives, "If you can give me only a hundred true men who will fight unto death, I assure you that success is certain. *'But he wanted all the 17,000 landholders to join the fight and 'not to reap the unmerited benefit of the suffering of a hundred.'*"

The Government was alarmed by the new spirit of rebellion that swept Bardoli. The commissioner of Northern Division, W.W. Smart, who was holidaying at a seaside resort, was ordered to return and camp at Surat, so as to be 15 to 20 miles from Bardoli town, the headquarters of the struggle. The District Collector, not knowing what was happening in his taluka as he had paid no visit for some time was asked to visit Bardoli immediately. On arrival, to his shock and dismay he found a chilling welcome. With all the shops shut and doors of all the houses closed, Bardoli town was under a total boycott. He got no conveyance to go to a nearby village Sarbhon, where he reached with great difficulty.

He sent for the village Patel, who had the courage to tell him, The people will not listen to us. They are indifferent to forfeitures and confiscations. *The people will not listen to us. They are indifferent to forfeitures and confiscations.* **Annoyed** over his humiliation and helplessness, he ordered the Talatis to prepare plans for auction of land and seizure of buffaloes. To affect these speedily and subject the people to terror, 'a number of Pathans of questionable character were brought in from Bombay.' *Undeterred, the peasants reacted 'in a firmer manner than ever before to fight against the Government*

and they imposed a most severe form of boycott of the officers.' The officers, in Patel's view, were not their enemies.²⁹

He, therefore, ordered that the peasants should remain unflinching in their resolve not to pay land revenue and even deny the officers the use of a bullock-cart or labour, but the officers were not to be harassed by stoppage of supply of essential commodities like milk, vegetables, foodstuffs or medicines, as also the services of a barber or a washerman.

Patel organised the Satyagraha on the military pattern. He himself was the Supreme Commander or Senapati. The battlefield covered about 92 villages. He had horse - riders to bring him messages from the remotest once. The battle itself involved some 87,000 peasants from the Bardolitaluk and ValodMahal. Operation wise, there were 18 sectors, 12 being in the former and six in the latter.

Bardoli served as the head quarters of the Supreme Commander, who had, like a General, his personal staff to help him carry out his various duties. Patel's Personal Secretary, Swamy Anand conducted the Supreme Commander's correspondence as also looked after dissemination of war information. The fierceness of the battle lay in the people's sufferings. Over 87,000 peasant Satyagrahis, along with their womenfolk, children and their 'beloved cattle', voluntarily locked themselves up in their small and insanitary

²⁹Desikachari,S.V., *Reading in the Constitutional History of India (1757- 1947)*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1983,p.786.

houses for over three months' to avoid attachments by officials. The Collector gets no conveyance at the Railway Station without Vallabhbhai's sanction.³⁰

As days passed, the Satyagraha picked up more and more strength and there were bursts of brilliant flashes of Patel's fighting mood, which also revealed his genius for detail. Speaking on Bardoli Day celebrations throughout India on 12th June, Patel said '*So long as a square foot of land, belonging to a peasant or to a participant in this fight, remains forfeited this fight will continue. For the sake of such land, thousands of peasants are ready to die.*'

By mid-June the Satyagraha reached its climax. Patel and 11 Talatis of the Bardolitaluka resigned. The resignations were a blow to the Government machinery. They dampened the spirits of officials, but injected new courage into the satyagrahis.

At the all - India level, Vithalbhai Patel, President of the Central Legislative Assembly, presented the Bardoli case to the Viceroy. The Satyagraha reached a critical stage with thousands of peasants pledging their support to it at the district conferences held at Surat, Broach, Nadiad and Ahmedabad.³¹

On 13th July the Viceroy conferred with the Governor at Simla. Following this the Commissioner sent a message to Patel that the Governor was arriving at Surat and would like to meet him on the 18th JULY. Along with his six Lieutenants Patel met the

³⁰Desikachari, S.V., *Op.cit.*, pp.420-425.

³¹Bimal Jalan, *India's Politics A View from the Backbench*, Penguin Group Books India Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, p163.

Governor for a total of six hours no settlement could be reached. The Governor insisted on payment of the enhanced assessment or alternatively payment by a third party on behalf of the Bardoli peasants of deposit equivalent to the enhanced assessment. Patel could not accept such a suggestion; while the Governor rejected its terms. The British-owned Pioneer and The Statesmen thought that the Government's conditions were unreasonable.

Since Mehtha's 'diplomacy was beyond our wits,' compromise was reached and the institution of an inquiry was announced by the Government exactly on the terms Patel had suggested. The inquiry committee vindicated Patel's stand. Comprising Reginald Maxwell (later Home Member of the Viceroy's- Executive Council) and Robert Broomfield (later a High Court Judge), the committee recommended an increase in the settlement rates of 5.7 percent as against 22 per cent sanctioned by the Government. Consequently, the Government announced restoration of lands confiscated and sold release of all prisoners and reinstatement of Patels and Talatis who had submitted their resignations. To make matters move swiftly and smoothly the Government replaced Collector J.E.B. Hartshorne, who had often declared that sold lands would never be restored by Hugh Garrett who persuaded the purchasers to return the lands. Satisfied with the Government's decisions and the actions it took so promptly, Patel thanked all concerned including the Government.

At the same time he instructed the peasants, "*Now we have to pay up the whole assessment, not the enhanced one. I hope you will keep yourselves in readiness to pay the world assessment.*" And thus ended the Bardoli Satyagraha, '*pursued by a peaceful peasantry with truth and patient suffering...* against an enemy who could any day have

crushed them to atoms. But the Bardoli peasants demonstrated to the world that truth and non-violence cannot be crushed. Bardoli rocketed Patel to great fame. He shone in the luminous glow of his great victory though his elation seemed to be like that of a shy bride. Congratulations poured in from all parts of India and abroad. Gandhi was the first to pay most deserving tribute to Patel, *'without whose firmness as well as gentleness the settlement would have been impossible.'*

As President of the Calcutta Congress, Motilal Nehru called it *'a splendid triumph,'* and described Patel as *'that matchless General'* and the peasants as *'the Balaklava Battalion of Bardoli'*. At the Calcutta session of the Congress in 1928, President Motilal Nehru moved a resolution congratulating those who had contributed to the success of the Bardoli Satyagraha. The audience clamoured to see the hero who reluctantly stood up in his place from amidst the delegates from Gujarat. Not satisfied the people insisted upon his appearing on the stage Patel in his shyness declined to oblige them. He was forcibly pushed to the dais. There were repeated cheers for quite sometime. Overwhelmed by such a spontaneous show of affection Patel spoke a few words, *"I thank you for having congratulated the peasants of Bardoli. If you are genuinely appreciative of what they have done, I hope you will follow in their footsteps."*

In a speech in Bombay on 4th May 1929, Patel referred to the comparison made earlier between the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and the Bardoli Satyagraha and said, *"The Bardoli Satyagraha was considered to be an imitation of bolshevism, and I was given the title of an Indian Lenin. But my entire knowledge of Lenin is limited to what I have learnt*

from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's small book Soviet Russia. I admit I am completely ignorant of the Soviet system.'

However, by calling Patel the '*Indian Lenin*,' The British did him a great honour and Bardoli placed Patel on new pinnacle of glory and greatness equalled by none in the Congress except Gandhi. Bardoli was a great personal triumph for Patel. He was the recipient of a most endearing life-long title-far nobler much more satisfying and even glorifying than any high sounding and well- acclaimed titles.

Like Gandhi becoming Mahatma a decade earlier, the title of "*Sardar*" was conferred upon Patel as a token of the Bardoli people's appreciation, reverence and faith in his powers of command and judgment as a leader in times of crisis. The conferment came not in a glittering durbar hall, but at a village public meeting amidst rustic environment of Nanitalod in Bardolitaluka, when a tall sturdy former KuverjiDurlabh Patel got up from amidst the crowd and shouted in a clear, loud voice, "*you are our Sardar. I welcome you.*"

An ordinary word. Meaning only a leader. But it possessed extraordinary power because of an inherent truth and so powerful as to leave an imprint on the sands of Indian history. It brought to surface the qualities of a Sardar that Patel had within him. Bardoli proved him to be a true and great leader. The word also mirrored, from India's traditional viewpoint, Sardar's qualities of sincerity, simplicity and truthfulness that Patel had exhibited. The speaker, KuverjiDurlabh Patel, little realised that what he spontaneously uttered had the potential of making history. From that movement onwards Patel came to be known as SardarVallabhbhai Patel- not the Sardar of Gujarat alone but of the whole of India and

accepted has such by the high and low within the party and outside. For Patel it was a historic transformation as it set him on the road to an all- India leadership.

Chapter Three

Integration of Indian States

In the 1946 election for the Congress presidency, Patel stepped down in favor of Nehru at the request of Gandhi. The election's importance stemmed from the fact that the elected president would lead free India's first government. Gandhi asked all 16 states representatives and Congress to elect the right person and Sardar Patel's name was proposed by 13 states representatives out of 16, but Patel respected Gandhi's request of not be the first Prime Minister. As a Home Minister, Patel merged all parts of India under federal control but Jammu and Kashmir was left out because of Nehru.

After the election of Nehru as the party's president, Patel began directing the Congress campaign for the general elections of the Constituent Assembly of India. In the election, the Congress won a large majority of the elected seats, dominating the Hindu electorate. But the Muslim League led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah won a large majority of Muslim electorate seats. The League had resolved in 1940 to demand Pakistan an independent state for Muslim and was a fierce governments in all provinces save Sindh, Punjab and Bengal, where it entered into coalitions with other parties.

When the British mission proposed two plans for transfer of power, there was considerable opposition within the Congress to both. The plan of 16th May 1946 proposed a loose federation with extensive provincial autonomy and the "grouping" of provinces based on religious-majority. The plan of 16th June 1946 proposed the partition of India on religious lines,

with over 600 princely states free to choose between independent or accession to either Dominion. The League approved both plans, while the Congress flatly rejected the 16th June proposal. Gandhi criticised the 16th May proposal as being inherently divisive, but Patel, realising that rejecting the proposal would mean that only the League would be invited to form a government, lobbied the Congress working committee hard to give it's assent to the 16th May proposal. Patel engaged the British envoys Sir Stafford Cripps and Lord Bethick Lawrence and obtained an assurance that the "grouping" clause would not be given practical force, Patel converted Nehru, Rajendra Prasad and Rajagopalachari to accept the plan. When the League retracted its approval of the 16th May plan, the viceroy Lord Wavell invited the Congress to form the government. Under Nehru, who was styled the "Vice President of the Viceroy's Executive council," Patel took charge of the departments of home affairs and information and broadcasting. He moved into a government house on 1, Aurangzeb Road in Delhi. This would be his home till his death in 1950.

Vallabhbhai Patel was one of the first Congress leaders to accept the partition of India as a solution to the rising Muslim Separatist Movement led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah. He had been outraged by Jinnah's Direct Action campaign, which had provoked communal violence across India and by the Viceroy's vetoes of his home department plans to stop the violence on the grounds of constitutionality.

Patel severely criticised the viceroy's induction of League ministers into the government and the revalidation of the grouping scheme by the British without Congress approval. Although further outraged at the League's boycott of the assembly and non-acceptance of the plan of 16th May despite entering government, he was also aware that Jinnah

did enjoy popular support amongst Muslims and that an open conflict between him and the nationalists could degenerate into a Hindu- Muslim Civil War of Disastrous consequences.

The continuation of a divided and weak Central Government would in Patel's mind, result in the wider fragmentation of India by encouraging more than 600 princely states towards Independence. Between the months of December 1946 and January 1947,

Patel worked with civil servant V.P. Menon on the latter's suggestion for a separate Dominion of Pakistan created out of Muslim -majority provinces. Communal violence in Bengal and Punjab in January and March 1947 further convinced Patel of the soundness of partition.

Patel, a fierce critic of Jinnah's demand that the Hindu-majority areas of Punjab and Bengal be included in a Muslim state obtained the partition of those provinces, thus blocking any possibility of their inclusion in Pakistan. Patel's decisiveness on the partition of Punjab and Bengal had won him many supporters and admirers amongst the Indian public, which had tired of the League's tactics, but he was criticised by Gandhi, Nehru, secular Muslims and socialists for a perceived eagerness to do so.

When Lord Louis Mountbatten formally proposed the plan on 3rd June 1947, Patel gave his approval and lobbied Nehru and other Congress leaders to accept the proposal. Knowing Gandhi's deep anguish regarding proposals of partition, Patel engaged him in frank discussion in private meetings over the perceived practical unworkability of any Congress-League coalition, the rising violence and the threat of civil war.

Following Gandhi's and Congress' approval of the plan, Patel represented India on the partition council, where he oversaw the division of public assets and selected the Indian council of ministers with Nehru. However, neither he nor any other Indian leaders had foreseen the intense violence and population transfer that would take place with partition. Patel would take the lead in organising relief and emergency supplies, establishing refugee camps and visiting the border areas with Pakistani leaders to encourage peace. Despite these efforts, the death toll is estimated at between five hundred thousand to a million people. The estimated number of refugees in both countries exceeds 15 million.

Understanding that Delhi and Punjab Policemen, accused of organising attacks on Muslims, were personally affected by the tragedies of partition, Patel called out the Indian Army with South Indian Regiments to restore order, imposing strict curfews and shoot-at-sight orders.

Visiting the Nizamuddin Auliya Dargah area in Delhi, where thousands of Delhi Muslims feared attacks, he prayed at the shrine, visited the people and reinforced the presence of Police. He suppressed from the press reports of atrocities in Pakistan against Hindus and Sikhs to prevent retaliatory violence. Establishing the Delhi Emergency Committee to restore order and organising relief efforts for refugees in the capital,

Patel publicly warned officials against partiality and neglect. When reports reached Patel that large groups of Sikhs were preparing to attack Muslim convoys heading for Pakistan, Patel hurried to Amritsar and met Sikh and Hindu leaders. Arguing that attacking helpless people was cowardly and dishonourable, Patel emphasised that Sikh actions would result in further attacks against Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan.

He assured the community leaders that if they worked to establish peace and order and guarantee the safety of Muslims, the Indian government would react forcefully to any failures of Pakistan to do the same. Additionally, Patel addressed a massive crowd of approximately 200,000 refugees who had surrounded his car after the meeting:

"Here, in this same city, the blood of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims mingled in the bloodbath of Jallianwala Bagh. I am grieved to think that things have come to such a pass that no Muslim can go about in Amritsar and no Hindu or Sikh can even think of living in Lahore. The butchery of innocent and defenceless men, women and children does not behave brave men ...I am quite certain that India's interest lies in getting all her men and women across the border and sending out all Muslims from East Punjab. I have come to you with a specific appeal. Pledge the safety of Muslim refugees crossing the city. Any obstacles or hindrances will only worsen the plight of our refugees who are already performing prodigious feats of endurance. If we have to fight, we must fight clean.

Such a fight must await an appropriate time and conditions and you must be watchful in choosing your ground. To fight against the refugees is no fight at all. No laws of humanity or war among honourable men permit the murder of people who have sought shelter and protection. Let there be truce for three months in which both sides can exchange their refugees. This sort of truce is permitted even by Laws of War .Let us take the initiative in breaking this vicious circle of attacks and counter-attacks. Hold your hands for a week and see what happens. Make way for the refugees with your own force of volunteers and let them deliver the refugees safely at our frontier."

Following his dialogue with community leaders and his speech, no further attacks occurred against Muslim refugees and a wider peace and order was re-established soon over the entire area. However, Patel was criticised by Nehru, secular Muslims and taxed by Gandhi over his alleged wish to see Muslims from other parts of India depart. While Patel vehemently denied such allegations, the acrimony with Maulana Azad and other secular Muslim leaders increased when Patel refused to dismiss Delhi's Sikh Police Commissioner who was accused of discrimination.

Hindu and Sikh leaders also accused Patel and other leaders if not taking Pakistan sufficiently to task over the attacks on their communities there and Muslim leaders further criticised him for allegedly neglecting the needs of Muslims leaving for Pakistan and concentrating resources for incoming Hindu and Sikh refugees. Patel clashed with Nehru and Azad over the allocation of houses in Delhi vacated by Muslims leaving for Pakistan-Nehru and Azad desired to allocate them for displaced Muslims, while Patel argued that no government professing secularism must make such exclusions. However, Patel was publicly defended by Gandhi and received widespread admiration and support for speaking frankly on communal issues and acting decisively and resourcefully to quell disorder and violence.

Political Integration of India

This event formed the cornerstone of Patel's popularity in post-independence era and even today, he is remembered as the man who united India. He is, in this regard compared to Otto Von Bismarck of Germany, who did the same thing in 1860s .Under the 3rd June plan, more than 600 princely states were given the option of joining either India or Pakistan, or choosing Independence . Indian nationalists and large segments of the public feared that if these states did not accede, most of the people and territory would be fragmented.

The Congress as well as senior British officials considered Patel the best man for the task of achieving unification of the princely states with the Indian Dominion. Gandhi had said to Patel "the problem of the states is so difficult that you alone can solve it." He was considered a statesman of integrity with the practical acumen and resolve to accomplish a monumental task. Patel asked V.P.Menon, a senior civil servant with whom he had worked over the partition of India, to become his right-hand as chief secretary of the states ministry. On 6th May 1947 Patel began lobbying the Princes, attempting to make them receptive towards dialogue with the future government and trying to forestall potential conflicts.

Patel used social meetings and unofficial surrounding to engage most monarchs, inviting them to lunch and tea at his home in Delhi. At these meetings, Patel stated that there was no inherent conflict between the Congress and the princely order. Nonetheless, he stressed that the princes would need to accede to India in good faith by 15th August 1947. Patel invoked the patriotism of India's monarchs, asking them to join in the freedom of their nation and act as responsible rulers who cared about the future of their people. He persuade the princes of 565 states of the impossibility of Independence from the Indian republic especially in the presence of growing opposition from their subjects.

He proposed favourable terms for the merger including creation of privy purses for the descendants of the rulers. While encouraging the rulers to act with patriotism Patel did not rule out force, setting a deadline of 15th August 1947 for them to sign the instrument of accession document. All but three of the states willingly merged into the Indian union only Jammu and Kashmir, Junagadh, and Hyderabad did not fall into his basket. Junagadh was especially important to Patel since it was in his home state of Gujarat. The Nawab Bhutto acceded to Pakistan. It was however quite far from Pakistan and 80% of its population was Hindu. Patel combined diplomacy with force, demanding that Pakistan annul the accession, and that the Nawab acceded to India.³²

He sent the Army to occupy three principalities of Junagadh to show his resolve. Following widespread protests and the formation of a Civil Government or Aarzi Hukumat, both Bhutto and the Nawab fled to Karachi and under Patel's orders, Indian Army and police units marched into the state. A plebiscite later organised produced a 99.5% vote for merger with India in a speech at the Bahauddin College in Junagadh following the latter's take-over, Patel emphasised his feeling of pungency on Hyderabad, which he felt was more vital to India than Kashmir: *"If Hyderabad does not see the writing on the wall, it goes the way Junagadh has gone. Pakistan attempted to set off Kashmir against Junagadh. When we raised the question of settlement in a democratic way, they (Pakistan) at once told us that they would consider it if we applied that policy to Kashmir. Our reply was that we would agree to Kashmir if they agreed to Hyderabad"*.

³² Biban Chandra, *Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India*, Orient Longman Limited, New Delhi, 1979, pp. 162-163.

Hyderabad was the largest of the princely states and included parts of present-day Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra states. Its ruler, the Nizam Osman Ali Khan was a Muslim, although over 80% of its people were Hindu. The Nizam sought independent or accession with Pakistan.

Muslim forces loyal to Nizam called the Razakars under Qasim Razvi pressed the Nizam to hold against India, while organising attacks on people on Indian soil. Even though a standstill Agreement was signed due to the desperate efforts of Lord Mountbatten to avoid a war the Nizam rejected deals and changed his positions. In September 1948, Patel emphasised in cabinet meetings that India should talk no more and reconciled Nehru and the Governor-General, Chakravarti Rajagopalachari to military action. Following preparations, Patel ordered the Indian Army to integrated Hyderabad (in his capacity as Acting prime Minister) when Nehru was touring Europe.

The action was termed *Operation Polo*, in which thousands of Razakar forces had been killed, but Hyderabad was comfortably secured into the Indian Union. The main aim of Mountbatten and Nehru in avoiding a forced annexation was to prevent an outbreak of Hindu-Muslim violence. Patel insisted that if Hyderabad was allowed to continue with its antics, the prestige of the government would fall and then neither Hindus nor Muslims would feel secure in its realm. After defeating Nizam, Patel retained him as the ceremonial chief of state, and held talks with him.

Governor General Rajagopalachari, Nehru and Patel formed the triumvirate which ruled India from 1948 to 1950. Prime Minister Nehru was intensely popular with the masses, but Patel enjoyed the loyalty and faith of rank and file congressmen, state leaders and India's Civil

Service. Patel was a senior leader in the Constituent Assembly of India and was responsible in a large measure for shaping India's constitution. Patel was a key force behind the appointment of Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee and the inclusion of leaders from a diverse political spectrum in the process of writing the constitution.

Patel was the chairman of the committees responsible for minorities, tribe and excluded areas, fundamental rights and provincial constitutions. Patel piloted a model constitution for the provinces in the assembly, which contained limited powers for the State Governor who would defer to the president he clarified it was not the intention to let the governor exercise power which could impede an elected government. He worked closely with Muslim leaders to end separate electorates and the more potent demand for reservation of seats for minorities. Patel would hold personal dialogues with leaders of other minorities on the question, and was responsible for the measure that allows the president to appoint Anglo-Indians to Parliament.³³

His intervention was key to the passage of two articles that protected civil servants from political involvement and guaranteed their terms and privileges. He was also instrumental in the founding the Indian Administrative Service and the Indian Police Service and for his defence of Indian Civil Servants from political attack he is known as the "*Patron Saint*" of India's Services. When a delegation of Gujarati farmers came to him citing their inability to send their milk production to the markets without being fleeced by intermediaries Patel exhorted them

³³Biban Chandra, *Op.cit.*, pp.162-163.

to organise the processing and sale of milk by themselves and guided them to create the Kaira District Co-operative Milk Producers' Union Limited, which preceded the Amul Milk Products Brand.

Patel also pledged the reconstruction of the ancient but dilapidated Somnath Temple in Saurashtra he oversaw the creation of a public trust and restoration work and pledged to dedicate the temple upon the completion of work (the work was completed after Patel's death, and the temple was inaugurated by the first President of India, Rajendra Prasad). When the Pakistan invasion of Kashmir began in September 1947, Patel immediately wanted to send troops into Kashmir. But agreeing with Nehru and Mountbatten, he waited till Kashmir's monarch had accepted to India.

During his lifetime, Vallabhbhai Patel received criticism of an alleged bias against Muslims during the time of partition. He was criticised by nationalist Muslims such as Maulana Azad as well as Hindu nationalists for readily plumping for partition. Patel was criticised by supporters of Subhash Chandra Bose for acting coercively to put down politicians not supportive of Gandhi. Socialist politicians such as Jaya Prakash Narayan and Asoka Mehta criticised him for his personal proximity to Indian industrialists such as the Birla and Sarabhai families. Some historians have criticised Patel's actions on the integration of princely states as undermining the right of self-determination for those states.

However, Patel is credited for being almost single-handedly responsible for unifying India on the eve of Independence. He won the admiration of many Indians for speaking frankly on the issue of Hindu-Muslim relations and not saying from using military force to integrate India. His skills of leadership and practical judgement were hailed by British statesmen his

opponents in the freedom struggle such as Lord Wavell, Cripps, Bethick Lawrence and Mountbatten.

Some historians and admirers of Patel such as Rajendra Prasad and industrialists J.R.D. Tata have expressed opinions that Patel would have made a better Prime Minister for India than Nehru. Nehru's critics and Patel's admirers cite Nehru's belated embrace of Patel's advice regarding the United Nation Organisation and Kashmir and the integration of Goa by military action.

Chapter Four

Patel and Annexation of Kashmir

There are some turning points in history which alter the course of events. One such turning point for the Kashmir Valley was on 4th November 1947. Srinagar's fate hung by a thread. The Pakistani raider fully armed and outnumbering Indian troops, were just four miles outside the city. On that fateful morning of 4th November, when Srinagar faced the grim prospect of falling into the hands of marauding tribesmen and the people shivered both in fear of the impending calamity and the biting cold weather, Patel, accompanied by his daughter, Manibehn, and Sardar Baldev Singh, the Defence Minister, flew into Srinagar.

He went straight to the Brigade Headquarters to know of the situation from Brigadier Sen. Patel's visit saved the situation in two ways: first, prompt military support to Indian units insufficiently equipped both in men and materials, which alone could prevent Srinagar from falling into the hands of tribesmen. Capture of Srinagar would have given Pakistan a permanent foot-hold in the Valley and Pakistan would have easily secured the Maharaja's accession. India would have thus lost Kashmir for good.

Secondly, Patel could apprise Nehru and the government of the real situation in the Valley. This saved Sen from the embarrassment he was facing on account of a contradictory report sent by an Army officer of his rank, General(then Brigadier) B.M. Kaul, whom Nehru had deputed to report. Patel's second strategic step to save Kashmir was to send V.P. Menon to

Srinagar soon after the raiders were on the move from Baramulla with instructions that the Maharaja should at once move to Jammu and be out of Pakistan's reach.

Abdullah and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad made capital out of this by alleging that the Maharaja 'collected all his valuables, loaded them into all the trucks he could lay hands on, and bolted with his family to Jammu.' Sen lost no time to scotch this canard, whose ill-conceived intent poisoned the minds of the Kashmir Muslims against the Dogra Hindus of Jammu and even against India in course of time. Sen bluntly told them that the 'statement was not wholly accurate... Nor had the Maharaja "bolted" ... He had been persuaded for political reasons to leave Srinagar and take up residence in another part of his State.

Had he remained in Srinagar and fallen into tribal hands, to him. Patel's third strategic step was to establish and strengthen expeditiously, defying climate and terrain, the State's territorial integration with India through a communications system: telegraph, telephones, wireless, but the most important, an all-weather road for transport of men and materials to Srinagar.

Till partition, Kashmir had two motorable road-links with India: one from Abbotabad to Srinagar; the other via Sialkot to Jammu and Srinagar. India's only link had been snapped with Sialkot having gone with India. Patel took upon himself the task of building the road-link. He had an assurance from the Minister of Communications, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, that 'although the normal time for the completion of such construction is two months, it may be possible to complete it much earlier.' As a vital link, a road was hurriedly constructed from Pathankot to Jammu, which ran almost parallel to the Pakistan border. Not only was this road to be made good

for heavy vehicular traffic, but the portion between Jammu and Srinagar had to be widened and improved.

Patel's three strategic steps- his visit to Srinagar on 4th November, his asking the Maharaja to shift from Srinagar to Jammu and the building of a permanent all weather road-link between India and the State - saved Kashmir from falling into the hands of Pakistan.³⁴ And all this was done just in the nick of time. It was a touch and go affair. Patel admitted to V.T. Krishnamachari, *"The Maharaja came to us very late. Had he delayed by a day, things would have been beyond redemption altogether,"* In reply, Krishnamachari confirmed what most people thought, *"It is a blessings that, in spite of initial handicaps, the situation in Kashmir has now much improved. Kashmir and all Indian States generally owe a deep gratitude to you and the Government of India for the timely assistance which has preserved the integrity of Kashmir."*

Abdullah had agreed to Kashmir's accession apparently not so much on secular considerations as to ensure, first and foremost, his freedom from Jinnah, whose hatred for him is evident from the cynical remark, *"Oh, that tall man who sings the Koran and exploits the people,"* Liaquat Ali had contemptuously called him: *"This Quisling- an agent of the Congress for many years, who struts about the stage bartering the life, honour and freedom of the people for the sake of personal profit and power,"* The Maharaja's attitude too had a background. He drew inspiration, like the Nizam and Bhopal from the British politicians' pronouncements on the Prince's right to exercise independence on the termination of paramountcy as also his scare of

³⁴ Menon, V.P., *Integration of the Indian States*, Orient Longman Ltd, Chennai, 1956, p.110.

what Abdullah might do to him on gaining power with Nehru's backing. If the Maharaja wobbled, it was primarily due to his being placed between the devil and the deep sea -Jinnah on one hand; Abdullah on the other. Since Jinnah's accessibility to reach Srinagar and Jammu was easier than India's at the time when the road-link between Pathankot and Jammu had not yet been built, the Maharaja's vacillation seemed natural.

V.P.Menon gives the Maharaja the benefit of the doubt: 'In fairness to Maharaja Hari Singh, it must be said that, situated as he was, it was not easy for him to come to a decision. If he acceded to Pakistan, the non-Muslims of Jammu and Ladakh, as well as considerable sections of Muslims led by the National Conference, would definitely have resented such action. On the other hand, accession to India would have provoked adverse reactions in Gilgit and certain areas contiguous to Pakistan.' But the man who put him at the end of his rope was Nehru for his emotional attachment for Kashmir, the land of his ancestors; equally so for his attachment to Abdullah, for whom he had a blind eye and refused to read what was at the back of Abdullah's mind. According to his biographer, Servepalli Gopal, Nehru looked upon Abdullah as 'an old friend and colleague and blood-brother.' To Nehru, Abdullah was above suspicion. He could do no wrong. Nor could he think of evil. For Nehru, Abdullah was Kashmir and Kashmir was Abdullah.

The Maharaja's vacillation and Nehru's deep- rooted hatred of the Maharaja had their origin in the happenings in Kashmir in May 1946. That was the time when in New Delhi the Cabinet Mission was busy trying to find out a solution where by power could be transferred to India. Ignoring that, Abdullah launched his 'Quit Kashmir' agitation against the Maharaja in imitation of Gandhi's 'Quit India' Movement of 1942 and sure of Nehru's backing. The

agitation, even many Congress leaders conceded, was inopportune, thoughtless and even malevolent, directed towards an Indian, not a foreigner and motivated by purely personal considerations. The agitation could have proved contagious, affecting other states in India, which would have come in the way of Congress efforts to gain freedom for the country. To ward off any such developments, Patel had to define the official Congress policy on 8th June, 1946 while addressing the General Council of the All-India States People's Conference. The time has arrived Patel said, "when it is necessary for the Indian people to deal with the states problem on the basis of a collective approach to the princes as a whole and not to fritter away their energies in isolated battles...We do not want to start any movement in the states. We are not to make settlement with individual States, but with the entire Princely Order at one time. There are so many of them, and they cannot be tackled individually." A year later, Mountbatten followed Patel's principle of 'collective approach' in settling with the Princes in adopting the 'common-form accession' Mountbatten, like Patel earlier, had come to the conclusion that 'separate negotiation with each State is out of the question'.

The two pursued the same path, but their ends were different. Mountbatten was to settle with the Princes, hand them over to either India or Pakistan and quit; Patel's was to integrate the States into an all-India pattern and build on their foundations a new, strong, homogeneous country. But Nehru's deviation from that path created the Kashmir problem. Contradictory to the Congress State policy, Abdullah had demanded that 'Maharaja Hari Singh should quit the Valley bag and baggage and leave the Kashmiries alone to decide their future by themselves 'Such a 'fraudulent' slogan being anti-Dogra, PremNathBazaz, a leading Kashmiri Pandit leader and once a close associate of Abdullah in the National Conference, points out, would be very welcome to the Muslims of the Valley among whom the Nationalists (of the

National Conference) had lost enormously.’ The slogan meant two things: one, the National Conference was out to end the Hindu rule’, and second, ‘the Conference has finally determined to exterminate despotism and autocracy root and branch. This again was contrary to the Congress policy towards the Princes in the rest of India- Hindus and Muslims alike. Abdullah also dreamed of a ‘New Kashmir’.

The dream was spelt out in a manifesto, which according to Bazaz, envisaged a Communist form of government. Abdullah’s demand for the deposition of the Maharaja not only antagonized the Dogra Hindus of Jammu, but even stirred up apprehensions in the minds of the Valley Pandits. This led to communal riots in Srinagar. Fearing his arrest by the Maharaja, Abdullah left for Delhi by car to seek Nehru’s help. But before he could cross the State border, he was taken into custody.

Nehru rushed to Srinagar to protest from within the state. He ignored the advice of his senior colleagues; also Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad’s statement, in contradiction to Abdullah’s stand, from Delhi where he had reached by evading arrest: The National Conference demanded the establishment of responsible government in the State’ and did not desire to harm the Royal family in any way. Nevertheless, Nehru’s hasty step caused deep apprehension in the mind of the Maharaja. Even the Kashmiri Pandits (his own community), in a telegram of 4th June stated, ‘The statements of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru ...are universally condemned and resented by Hindus of Kashmir. By encouraging Sheikh Abdullah’s fascist and communal programme, he is doing the greatest disservice to the people of Kashmir. His unwarranted and wrong statements ... inflame Muslims against Hindus.” Nehru’s bias in favour of Abdullah was evident from what he had said in August 1945 at the annual session of the National Conference

at Sopore in the Valley, 'If non-Muslims want to live in Kashmir, they should join the National Conference or bid goodbye to the country... If Pandits do not join it, no safeguards and weightages will protect them.'

Nehru left Delhi on 18th June for Srinagar. At Lahore on the 19th June he warned the Maharaja that 'there can be no peace unless Abdullah was released.' For defying the ban on his entry into the State, he was detained at Uri. Nehru's action did not carry support of Congress High Command. Azad, the President, summoned him back over the telephone. Patel voiced his disapproval by saying that Nehru had 'taken action individually as President of the All-India States People's Conference on his own responsibility.' Privately, he characterized it as an act of 'emotional insanity.' Privately, he further clarified the position, *The Congress as an organisation has kept out of this movement in Kashmir. We have managed to ease the situation by calling him (Nehru) back from Kashmir and arranging to send him there again to fulfil his mission with the permission of the State.* Prior to his second visit on 24th July,

Nehru assured Patel, *"It is not my intention to raise any major issues in Kashmir at this stage... I do not propose to hold public meeting and the like..."*

This time there was a marked change in Nehru's attitude and pronouncements. After interviewing Abdullah in jail, he admitted that 'the leaders of the National Conference had committed mistakes by starting the Quit Kashmir movement, but it was not fair to leave them to their fate.' None of the senior Congress leaders appeared to have shared Nehru's views. Kripalani who visited Srinagar in May, had stated that he was convinced that the 'Quit Kashmir Movement was abusive and mischievous; the Maharaja was a son of the State and it

was, therefore, absurd to ask him to quit and that there could be no comparison between the Quit Kashmir agitation and the Quit India movement.' He also disapproved of the slogan denouncing the Treaty of Amritsar. Nehru's unsuccessful visit created more problems than it

solved. Nehru took Abdullah's continuance in jail as an affront to his person. His defeat and frustration drove his hatred towards the Maharaja deeper. This created bitter apprehensions and hatred in the mind of the Maharaja towards India's future Prime Minister. That was during mid-1946.

A different anxiety however overtook the Maharaja when the British decided to transfer power and quit India. Like other Indian princes, he began to wobble: whether to remain independent or to accede to Pakistan under pressure for Indian had no direct road-link with the State at that time, though the State had contiguity with India. Abdullah's growing anxiety was mainly on personal account. It posed a threat to his future. Casting aside his pride, he climbed down from his earlier stand and sent the Maharaja a message from his prison cell, advising him to at once accede to the Indian Union and not to remain independent as the leaders of the Muslim Conference wanted him to do. A new wind of change blew in September with the appointment of a new Prime Minister, Mehr Chand Mahajan. Nehru's first act was to ask him to see that Sheikh Abdullah was set free.' Nehru pursued the matter by writing to Patel on 27th September: Your advice will naturally go a long way either to the Maharaja or to Mahajan... We have definitely a great asset in the National Conference provided it is properly handled. It would be a pity to lose this. Sheikh Abdullah has repeatedly given assurances of wishing to cooperate and of being opposed to Pakistan; also to abide by my advice. On Patel's advice Abdullah was released. On coming out of prison, he called upon the Maharaja and offered him a Nazarana as a token of his

loyalty. The letter he had sent earlier from the prison read: In spite of what has happened in the past, *I assure Your Highness that myself and my party have never harbored any sentiment of disloyalty towards Your Highness's person, throne or dynasty...* I assure Your Highness the fullest and loyal support of myself and my organisation...Before I close this letter, I beg to assure Your Highness once again of my steadfast loyalty and pray that God may grant me opportunity enough to let this county attain under Your Highness's aegis such an era of peace, prosperity and good government that it may be second to none and be an ideal for others to follow.'

The Maharaja understood that Abdullah's profession of loyalty was a mere pretence. He told Mahajan that Nehru had a soft corner for the Sheikh and was very friendly with him and as the Sheikh's ambition is to become the Prime Minister of Kashmir, he would take the earliest opportunity to prevail upon Pandit Nehru to put him in power. Once in power, he would revive his "Quit Kashmir" move and become all powerful himself. 'Kashmir acceded to India on 26th October 1947 .The handing over of the Instrument of Accession was preceded by high drama at Nehru's residence in New Delhi.

The Instrument of Accession

The Instrument of Accession is a legal document executed by Maharaja Hari Singh, ruler of the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir, on 26th October 1947. By executing this document under the provisions of the Indian Independence Act of 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh agreed to acceded to the Dominion of India.

In a letter sent to Maharaja Hari Singh on 27th October 1947, the then Governor-General of India, Lord Mountbatten accepted the accession with a remark, *"it is my Government's wish that as soon as law and order have been restored in Jammu and Kashmir and her soil cleared of the invader the question of the State's accession should be settled by a reference to the people."* Lord Mountbatten's remark and the offer made by the Government of India to conduct a plebiscite or referendum to determine the future status of Kashmir led to a dispute between India and Pakistan regarding the legality of the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India. India claims that the accession is unconditional and final while Pakistan maintains that the accession is fraudulent. The accession to India is celebrated on Accession Day, which is held annually on 26th October.

The full text of the Instrument of Accession (Jammu and Kashmir) executed by Maharaja Hari Singh on 26th October 1947 and accepted by Lord Mountbatten of Burma, Governor-General of India, on 27th October 1947 (excluding the schedule mentioned in its third point) is as follows:

"Whereas the Indian Independence Act 1947, provides that as from the fifteenth day of August, 1947, there shall be set up an Independent Dominion known as India, and that the Government of India Act, 1935 shall, with such omission, additions, adaptations and modifications as the governor-general may by order specify, be applicable to the Dominion of India.

And whereas the Government of India Act, 1935, as so adapted by the Governor-General, provides that an Indian State may accede to the Dominion of India by an Instrument of Accession executed by the Ruler thereof.

Now, therefore, I Shriman Inder Mahander Rajrajeswar Maharajadhiraj Shri Hari Singhji, Ruler of Jammu and Kashmir State, in the exercise of my sovereignty in and over my said State do hereby execute this my Instrument of Accession and

I hereby declare that I accede to the Dominion of India with the intent that the Governor-General of India, the Dominion Legislature, the Federal Court and any other Dominion authority established for the purposes of the Dominion shall, by virtue of this my Instrument of Accession but subject always to the terms thereof and for the purposes only of the Dominion, exercise in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir (hereinafter referred to as "this State") such functions as may be vested in them by or under the Government of India Act, 1935, as in force in the Dominion of India, on the 15th day of August, 1947, (which Act as so in force is hereafter referred to as "the Act").

I hereby assume the obligation of ensuring that due effect is given to the provisions of the Act within this state so far as they are applicable therein by virtue of this my Instrument of Accession.

I accept the matters specified in the schedule hereto as the matters with respect to which the Dominion Legislatures may make laws for this state.

I hereby declare that I accede to the Dominion of India on the assurance that if an agreement is made between the Governor General and the ruler of this state whereby any functions in relation to the administration in this state of any law of the Dominion Legislature shall be exercised by the ruler of this state, then any such agreement shall be deemed to form part of this Instrument and shall be construed and have effect accordingly.

The terms of this my Instrument of accession shall not be varied by any amendment of the Act or of the Indian Independence Act of 1947 unless such amendment is accepted by me by an Instrument supplementary to this Instrument.

Nothing in this Instrument shall empower the Dominion Legislature to make any law for this state authorizing the compulsory acquisition of land for any purpose, but I hereby undertake that should the Dominion for the purposes of a Dominion law which applies in this state deem it necessary to acquire any land, I will at their request acquire the land at their expense or if the land belongs to me transfer it to them on such terms as may be agreed, or, in default of agreement, determined by an arbitrator to be appointed by the Chief Justice of India.

Nothing in this Instrument shall be deemed to commit me in any way to acceptance of any future Constitution of India or to fetter my discretion to enter into arrangements with the Government of India under any such future constitution.

Nothing in this Instrument affects the continuance of my sovereignty in and over this state or save as provided by or under this Instrument, the exercise of any powers, authority and rights now enjoyed by me as Ruler of this state or the validity of any law at present in force in this state.

I hereby declare that I execute this Instrument on behalf of this state and that any reference in this Instrument to me or to the ruler of the state is to be construed as including to my heirs and successors.

Given under my hand this 26th day of OCTOBER nineteen hundred and forty seven.

Hari Singh

Maharajadhiraj of Jammu and Kashmir State.

I do hereby accept this Instrument of Accession. Dated this twenty seventh day of October, nineteen hundred and forty seven.

Some scholars have questioned the official date of the signing of the accession document by the Maharaja. They maintain that it was signed on 27th October rather than 26th October. However, the fact that the Governor General accepted the accession on 27th October, the day the Indian troops were airlifted to Kashmir, is generally accepted. An Indian commentator Prem Shankar Jha, has argued that the accession was actually signed by the Maharaja on 25th October 1947, just before he left Srinagar for Jammu.

Conclusion

Stafford Cripps, thought that it would take at least ten to fifteen years to liquidate the Indian States and to merge them with the rest of India. It was a welcome surprise to him and a great tribute to the ability of Sardar Patel-that the integration of the States with the rest of India has not taken even ten to fifteen months. His feat was revolutionary perhaps unique in world history for its speed and bloodlessness. For such a historic achievement, Patel has been compared with, Bismarck who had likewise consolidated Germany by integrating a handful of Princely States and who was considered '*the greatest master of diplomacy*' in Europe.

Patel's task was stupendous and even complex than Bismarck's 565 States were reduced to 26 administrative units of the Indian Union and democracy was extended to 80 million people comprising 27% of India's population in a matter of months, not years. Patel had in contrast, the looks of a simple, unsophisticated peasant with whom he had completely identified in his traditional dress of dhoti, kurta, jubba and a pair of country made chappals. Patel's Gandhian humility was fully mirrored in his statement after his victory in the '*Police Action*' in Hyderabad, "*On the chess board of this world, we are like small or trivial pawns, and are instrumental, at times, for small or bigger events... Let us express our gratitude to God.*"

Patel's approach was Gandhian - Non -violent, highminded, principled statesmanship, which believed in befriending, rather than in eliminating the princes. Patel did not hesitate to speak to them harsh truths to make them realise the consequences of their own actions. He, indeed, spoke to them homely truth in a homely manner, in a paternal tone which was invariably

kind, but sometimes admonishing, so as to make them understand the great lesson of Indian history one of fragmentation through disunity, succumbing to successive waves of invaders.

Patel was symbol of national unity and discipline. His view was that Indians should think in terms of Nation. They should develop nationalism and national outlook. They should feel that India belongs to everyone. Gandhi's mission ended on India's gaining freedom. Patel's opinion was over with the integration of the States and with the inauguration on 26th January 1950 of a Republican Constitution for India. He had by then completed his great task of repainting India in '*one colour*', about which he stated with a sense of pride on 14th May 1950. There are no differences now between the states and provinces. All units will practically be governed by a uniform set of laws. In the history of India, there never was such consolidation of the land as it is today.'

Last Days of Patel

In the second week of November, Patel had his old intestinal trouble. He wrote to Rajagopalachari on the 16th May 1950 '*My intestine trouble still persists and there is some pain which is occasionally quite severe.*' On 7th December 1950 there was recurrence of his heart trouble. By the 10th he had abdominal trouble again. With some improvement in his condition the following day, doctors decided to shift him from the cold of New Delhi to the mild climate of Bombay. His flight on the 12th was in a way a sentimental journey about which he seemed to have had some premonition. It was reflected in his Independence Day message on 15th August: '*In my life, I have now reached a stage when time is of the essence. Age has not diminished the passion which I bear to see my country great and to ensure that the foundations of our freedom are well and securely laid. Bodily infirmity has not dimmed my ardor to exert my utmost for the*

peace, prosperity and advancement of the Motherland. But “the bird of time has a little way to fly, and lo! It is on the wing.’ For his forty-five-year-old daughter, Manibehn, the last three days of Patel’s struggle with life were most excruciating - oscillating between hope and despair.

She had looked after him for decades most devotedly, remaining a spinster to serve her father as a house-keeper and as a political helper, ever keeping a vigil on him by day or by night - always by his side whether in the scorching heat of Delhi or in the freezing cold of Kashmir which they specially visited in November 1947.

Her heart was torn apart to see the life of her father slowly ebbing away. Hers was a great personal loss: parting company with a life-long companion, they being the only two souls in the house. When narcotics failed to have any effect, records Manibehn, half awake, half in stupor, his mind was full of thoughts and words would come out of his mouth-words referring to some work or other. To the last he was thinking of the nation.

Patel’s condition worsened on the night of 14th December 1950. He expired on the 15th October 1950 at 9.37 in the morning. The whole country plunged into deep mourning. At Bombay, a sea of people surged towards Birla House. President Rajendra Prasad, Prime Minister Nehru and other leaders, including Central Ministers and Chief Ministers, flew in to pay their last homage to their departed colleague. His body lay dressed in his familiar dhoti, jubba and waistcoat, as millions of his countrymen had seen him during the past half a century of his political career. Paying her last homage, Manibehn put a saffron mark on his forehead and ‘garlanded him with a hank of yarn’ spun by her. His face presented a picture of sublime serenity. A green tulsi leaf between his lips was the only indication of death. Besides a mass of

fresh flowers, a copy of the Bhagvad Gita lay open on his body. His cremation in Sonapur, Mumbai, was attended by large crowds, Nehru, Rajagopalachari and President Prasad.

He first shaped the Congress party into a disciplined engine of political power and then directed it, ruthlessly and with a single-minded determination, towards the end which his colleagues had taught the people of India to desire. He possessed 'great organising ability, cold courage and inflexibility of purpose.' It is well known that India was first united by Maurya Chandra Guptha who was called the National King of India. Ashoka kept it intact.

India was disintegrated after downfall of Maurya dynasty. Later Guptas united India. It progressed well under the dynamic leadership of Guptas. After downfall of the Guptas again India was disintegrated. Delhi Sultans and Mughals united and consolidated it. After death of Arungzeb, the country was again disintegrated. After some time Britishers united it. In 1947 India attained independence. At that time India was land of many princely states. The great leader Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel united it with strong and determined efforts.

The Government of India took lot of steps to strengthen and consolidate India which should not be disintegrated again. After getting independence from British clutches, the great enlighten Indian leaders framed a constitution to rule this country democratically by protecting life, liberty, rights and property of people. Governments have been changed many a time without shedding a drop of blood. This is greatness of Indian democracy. In future India will not be disintegrated forever. As long as India remains as united and integrated country, Patel will be remembered in the hearts of every Indian as the architect of united India.

For many decades after his death, there was a perceived lack of effort from the Government of India, the national media and the Congress Party regarding the commemoration of Patel's life and work. However, Patel is lionised as a hero in Gujarat and his family home in Karamsad is still preserved in his memory. Patel was officially awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honour posthumously in 1991. Patel's birthday on 31st October, is celebrated nationally in India as Sardar Jayanti. The Sardar Patel National Memorial was established in 1980 at the Moti Shahi Mahal in Ahmedabad. It comprises a museum, a gallery of portraits and historical pictures and a library which stores important documents and books associated with Patel and his life. Amongst the exhibits are many of Patel's personal effects and relics from various periods of his personal and political life.

Sardar Patel Memorial Trust

The Sardar Patel Memorial Trust is an organisation dedicated to preserving the work and memory of Indian political leader Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. It does a variety of work - publishing books and magazines on Patel's life and work, maintaining public displays and memorials, as well as hosting the annual Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Memorial Lectures.

Sardar Patel University

Sardar Patel University is a university in Gujarat state of India. It is named after Independence leader Shree Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (31st October 1875 – 15th December 1950). It was founded in 1955 by Shree Bhailal D. Patel, known as '*Bhaikaka*'. The university was established by an Act of the Legislative Assembly of the then Bombay province in December 1955 and was recognised under 2f of the UGC Act in October 1968. The university has many

affiliated colleges as listed below. Originally the university had the status of a rural university but now the university has diversified with the motto of "Excellence Matters". The university is the first among all the universities in Gujarat to volunteer for the accreditation in 2000 and was accredited with the four star status by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council.

Sardar Patel Vidyalaya

Sardar Patel Vidyalaya (SPV) is a premier school in New Delhi, India, located in the heart of the city at Lodi Estate. It has about 1500 students from the nursery level to the 12th grade and has about 200 teachers and supporting staff members. The school is named after the leaders of the Indian independent movement and independent India's first Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Statue of Unity

The Statue of Unity is a colossal statue of Indian statesman and independence activist Vallabhbhai Patel (1875–1950), who was the first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister of independent India and an adherent of Mahatma Gandhi during the nonviolent Indian Independence movement. The statue is located in the state of Gujarat, India. It is the world's tallest statue with a height of 182 metres (597 feet). It is located on the Narmada River in the Kevadiya Colony, facing the Sardar Sarovar Dam 100 kilometres (62 mi) Southeast of the city of Vadodara and 150 kilometres (93 mi) from Surat. Kevadiya railway station is located at a distance of just 5 kilometres from Statue of Unity.

The project was first announced in 2010 and the construction of the statue started in October 2013 by Larsen & Toubro with a total construction cost of ₹2,989 crore. It was

designed by Indian sculptor Ram V. Sutar and was inaugurated by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 31st October 2018, the 143rd anniversary of Sardar Patel's birth.

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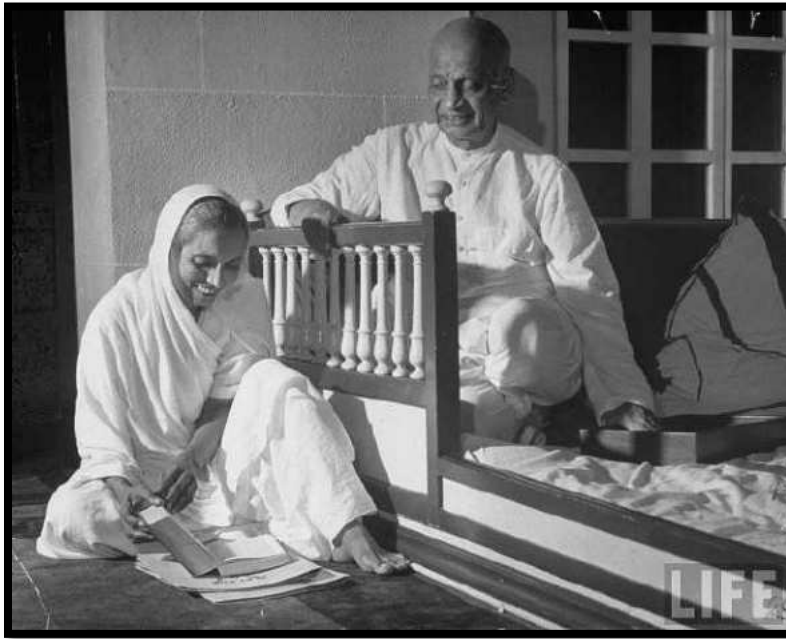
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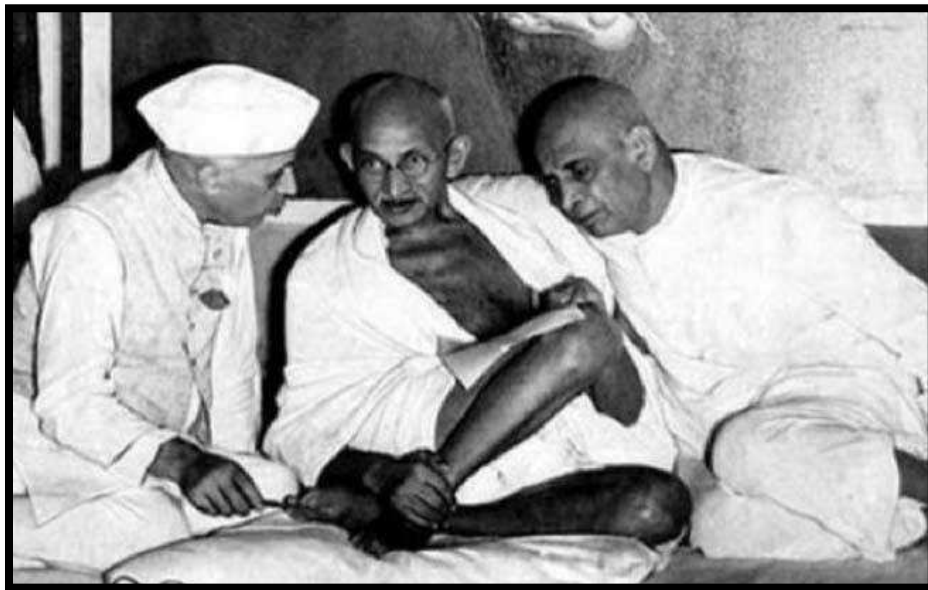
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel



Patel and His Family



Patel and His Daughter Manibehn



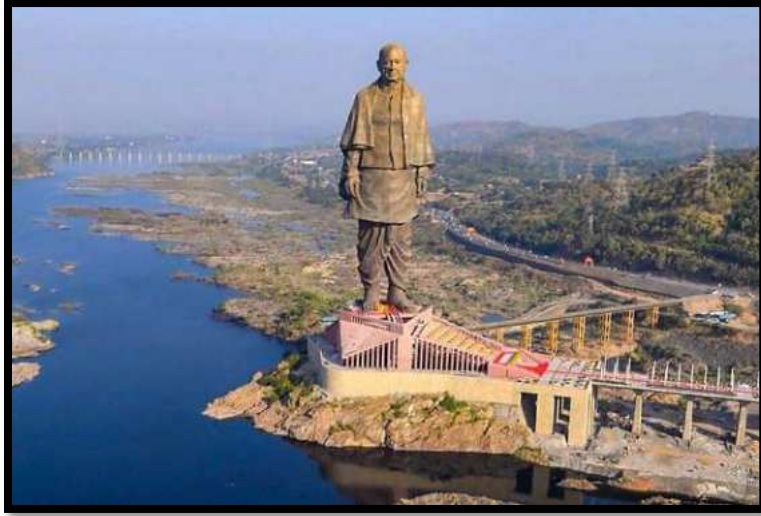
Jawharlal Nehru, Gandhi and Pate



Bardoli Satyagraha



Partition of India



Statue of Unity

JUSTICE PARTY-THE VOICE OF THE VOICELESS

Project submitted to

St.Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi

affiliated to

Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

By

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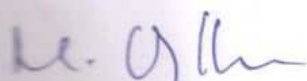
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project entitled **"JUSTICE PARTY- THE VOICE OF THE VOICELESS"**, submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History and is a work done during the year 2020 – 2021 by S. Mageswari a bonafide student of the Department of History, St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi.

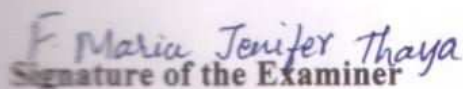


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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project entitled "**JUSTICE PARTY- THE VOICE OF THE VOICELESS**" submitted to St.Mary's College (Autonomous), Theothukudi affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History, is my original work and it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

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Signature of Candidate

Date: 10.4.2021

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INTRODUCTION

The formation of the Justice party in 1916 was an important mile stone in the history of the Tamil Nadu. The political awakening, due to the impact of Western ideas and institutions and the administrative influence for over a century, contributed to its organization. The Brahminical dominance in the political and administrative system brought about a deep communal division between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins during the late nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century. The establishment of the Justice Party represented the non-Brahmin reaction against the Brahmins who practically monopolized high government appointments and higher education. The main objective of the Justice Party was to promote education, social, economic, political and moral progress of all non-Brahmin communities.

The Justice Party ruled the Tamil Nadu under the Dyarchy system for a period of thirteen years and introduced many reforms. They attempted to carry on social and economic measures for the benefit of the non-Brahmins. The Party gave representation to non-Brahmin communities in the public services and improved the status of the depressed classes. The administrative measures of the Justice Party received popular appeal. In spite of severe limitations the Justice Party enacted several legislations for socio, economic reforms for the establishment of an egalitarian society.

The Justice Party was born to express the views of the non-Brahmin castes in Tamil Nadu, who constituted 97% of the population and aimed at checking the virtual monopoly of all public offices and government jobs by the Brahmins, a small minority of 3% of the population. It did a commendable work in promoting the social and economic interests of non-Brahmins in Tamil Nadu and provided a political front

to fight the Brahmin monopoly and nepotism. It also set right the imbalance in the representation of different communities and improved the status of depressed classes

The formation of Justice Party was a turning point in the history of Tamil Nadu and it emerged to fight monopoly of Brahmins in almost all spheres of humanity and to secure social Justice for the non-Brahmins. When this party was organized, the term 'non-Brahmin' provided the broadest base for unified political action, because it included the Muslims, all depressed classes and the Anglo-Indians. Due to the initiative taken by T.M.Nair, the co-founder of this party the Adi-Dravida leaders like M.C.Raja and R.Sinivasan joined into the Justice Party in later years and thereby ushered a good beginning to the consolidation of non-Brahmin forces in the annals of Tamil Nadu politics.

Aims and Purpose of the study

The main aim and purpose of the study is to record the necessity for the emergence of Justice Party, the efforts taken by the non-Brahmin leaders for the well being of the Non –Brahmins, and to appreciate the contributions made by the Justice party for the benefit of non-Brahmins.

Sources of the study

Different source materials have been used to write this project. The primary source materials are Government Reports, Letters G.O'S etc. The secondary sources are the books written by various authors.

Methodology

The methodology adopted in this study are analytical and descriptive method. The source materials have been critically analysed and investigated. The descriptive

method is used in the presentation of the study in order to make the project understandable to the readers.

Chapterization

This project has five chapters excluding an introduction and conclusion. The first chapter speaks about the Historical Background. The second chapter deals with the Genesis of Justice Party. The third chapter describes Ministries of Justice Party. The fourth chapter narrates the Achievements of Justice Party and the fifth chapter deals with Transformation into Dravida Kazhagam.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Justice party was a well conceived political party with definite social and political ideologies. Politically it aimed gaining the power of the government transferred to the hands of Non-Brahmins. Socially it was a revolt against Varnashrama Dharma. It was a political party started with a manifesto which proclaimed its objectives.¹ The Justice Party represented not only the aspirations of the on-Brahmin communities but also symbolized their long smouldering fear and suspicion towards the Brahmins. It was a well organised attempt by an elite group who were politically articulate to establish the identity of the Non Brahmin communities. Its policies and programmes make it evident that it was a party organised on the liberal British tradition' with a tinge of French radicalism. It believed in the principles of parliamentary democracy and social equality of all sections of people. Hence it challenge to the preponderance of Brahmins.²

Brahmin Monopoly and Dominance

The Brahmins in Madras Presidency enjoyed a higher position in India's social hierarchy. By the 1850s, Telugu and Tamil Brahmins comprising only 3.2% of the population began to increase their political power by filling most of the jobs which were open to Indian men at that time.³ They dominated the administrative services and the newly created urban professions in the 19th and early 20th century.⁴ The higher literacy and English language proficiency among Brahmins were instrumental

¹ Ralhan, O.P., *Encyclopedia of Political Parties Series: Non-Brahmin Movements*, Anmol Publications Pvt.Ltd., New Delhi, 1998, p.143.

² *Ibid.*, p. 142-143.

³ Irschick Irschick, F., *Political and Social Conflict in South India; The non-Brahmin movement and Tamil Separatism, 1916–1929*. University of California Press, 1969, pp. 1–26

⁴ Myron Weiner and Ergun Ozbudun, *Competitive elections in developing countries*, American Enterprise Institute, 1987, p. 61.

in this ascendancy. The political, social, and economical divide between Brahmins and non-Brahmins became more apparent in the beginning of the 20th century. Indian came to be appointed to the posts of Executive Councilors in Madras Government in 1909. It was always held by Brahmins. All the four Indian Judges appointed to the Madras High court from the Brahmin community. In 1914 the post of Secretary to Government was created and a Brahmin Official was at once appointed to that post. The dominance of Brahmins was also evident in the membership of the Madras Legislative Council. The Indian secretary to the Board of Revenue was also a Brahmin.⁵ During 1910–20, eight out of the nine official members (appointed by the Governor of Madras) were Brahmins. Apart from the appointed members, Brahmins also formed the majority of the members elected to the council from the district boards and municipalities. During this period the Madras Province Congress Committee (regional branch of the Indian National Congress) was also dominated by Brahmins. Of the 11 major newspapers and magazines in the presidency, two; *The Madras Mail* and *Madras Times* were run by Europeans sympathetic to the crown, three were evangelical non-political periodicals, four *The Hindu*, *Indian Review*, *Swadesamithran* and *Andhra Pathrika* were published by Brahmins while *New India*, run by Annie Besant was sympathetic to the Brahmins.

Dravidian Sentiments

The ethnic concept of Dravidian origin of non- Brahmins fostered among them a strong sentiment of cultural unity and a new identity to combat the dominance of Brahmins. Rev. Robert Caldwell published a book under the title “A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages.” This book

⁵ Venugopal, P., *Justice Party and Social Justice*, The Periyar Self-Respect Propagate Institution, Madras, 1992, P.7.

explained that Dravidian culture had a greatness and antiquity which far surpassed the Aryan's culture and a considerable number of roots of Sanskrit words was of Dravidian origin and Tamil literature was noted for its "sophistication both in its manner of expression and in the ideas that it conveyed". The antiquity and the purity of the Tamil language as expounded by Rev. Robert Caldwell stimulated the Dravidian consciousness among the non- Brahmins and gave them a new identity and rallying point.⁶ G.U. Pope, a Lecturer in Tamil Oxford University who translated the great Tamil literary works like "Thirukural", "Thiruvagasam," stated that "Saivism is the old pre-historic religion of South India existing from pre- Aryan times" and "the Vedic religion was introduced in South India by the Aryan Settlers".

M.S. Purnalingam Pillai in his book "Tamil Literature" explained how Saiv Siddhanandha system differed from Aryan's pantheism and "it is the indigenous philosophy of South India and the choicest product of the Tamilian intellect." The Sangam classics originally written in manuscripts and in palm leaves came to be printed on account of the efforts taken by Arumuga Navalar, Damodaram Pillai of Jafna. A large number of books of ancient Tamil Literature which had fallen into oblivion were re- discovered and put into print. They revealed the ancient glory, richness and splendor of the Tamil language and literature. It brought about a profound change in the outlook of Tamil Scholars and they elaborated how the Dravidian civilization is distinct and separate from the Aryans civilization and the Sanskritised Vedic culture. P. Sundaram Pillai, Professor of Philosophy in Maharaja College, Trivandrum wrote an article in Madras standard under the heading "Basic Element in Hindu Civilisation". In that article he expressed the view "that South India and particularly the Tamil area was culturally self- sufficient and could be

⁶ Rangaraju,G., *Colonial Design and Dravidian Awakening in Tamil Nadu*, Pava Publications, Chennai, 2006, pp.11-13.

independent of the arts and philosophy Sanskrit and the North, and Tamil ruled over the entire world before Sanskrit came to the South”.

The great Tamil scholars Maraimalai Adigal and Thiru Somasundara Bharathi advocated that Dravidians were autochthons of South India and they possessed a very rich civilization of their own before the advent of the Aryans and South India “owed nothing to Aryan culture but rather gave the Aryans a readymade civilization”.⁷ All these writings of Tamil Scholars about the glorious past grandeur of Tamil culture, literature and history inculcated the Dravidian consciousness in non- Brahmins and gave them a new a identity and sense of cultural superiority and confidence. The concept that non- Brahmins are the descendants of the Dravidians whose culture and civilization was more ancient and renowned than that of the Brahmins of Aryan descent gave a new social awareness and intellectual awakening and infused a political consciousness and unity that resulted in the formation of the Justice party.⁸

Anti Brahmin Sentiments

Anti – Brahmins sentiments constituting the rallying point for the formation justice party. The Varnashrama Dharma of the Aryans introduced the four Varnas, namely: The Brahmins, the priestly class; Kshatriyas, the military and the governing class; Vysyas, traders and agriculturists and Sudras, the menial working class. The attempt to classify the people of South India as members of the four Varnas, as was done in northern India did not succeed. The Hindu society in the south was divided into three groups, the Brahmins, Sudras and Adi Dravidas. The derogatory term “Sudras” came to be applied to the non-Brahmins of the southern states, though they were traders, agriculturists and following other avocations. The wealthy and educated

⁷ *Ibid.*,p.78.

⁸ Venugopal,P., op.cit.,pp.19-20.

non-Brahmins resented the appellation “Sudras” to denote them and considered it derogatory to their status and position in society. A relentless crusade was carried on by non- Brahmin leaders against referring all non-Brahmins as “Sudras”.

The Brahmins, the highest caste in Hindu social hierarchy asserted their supremacy at all times and at all places. Their separate residential area in the village was called “Agaraharam”. Their exclusiveness and their arrogance with their distinctive patterns of speech, dress and diet and their orthodoxy and out-moded religious practice perpetuated an unjust and iniquitous social order.⁹ The anti-Brahmin sentiments which provided the rallying point to unite the non-Brahmins were another contributing factor for the birth of the Justice party.

Policies of British

The British role in the development of the non-Brahmin movement is broadly accepted by some historians. The statistics used by non-Brahmin leaders in their 1916 manifesto were prepared by senior Indian Civil Service officers for submission to the public services commission.¹⁰ The Mylapore Brahmin faction rose to prominence in the early 20th century. England, while acknowledging its usefulness, was wary and supported non-Brahmins for several government posts. They sought to weaken the Mylaporean Brahmins by incorporating non-Brahmins in several government posts. An early example was the appointment of C. Sankaran Nair to a high court bench job in 1903 by Lord Ampthill solely because Nair was a non-Brahmin. The job fell vacant after Bashyam Iyengar left. V. Krishnaswami Iyer was expected to succeed him. He was a vocal opponent of the Mylapore Brahmins and advocated the induction of non-

⁹ *Ibid.*,p.20-21

¹⁰ Washbrook, David A., *The Emergence of Provincial Politics: The Madras Presidency 1870–1920*, Cambridge University Press,Cambridge, 1977, pp. 283–285

Brahmin members in the government. In 1912, under the influence of Sir Alexander Cardew, the Madras Secretariat, for the first time used Brahmin or non-Brahmin as a criterion for job appointments. By 1918, it was maintaining a list of Brahmins and non-Brahmins, preferring the latter.¹¹

Annie Besant and Home Rule Movement

From the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century there was widespread political agitation in India for securing Self Government. In view of the active participation of India in the war effort Britain indicated that steps would be taken towards responsible representative self-government after the war. At this juncture the catalyst which triggered the formation of a non Brahmin political organisation was the foundation of the Home Rule Movement by Mrs. Annie Besant. Already the non-Brahmins looked with suspicion at Congress as a Brahmin controlled organisation. Their suspicion grew stronger when Mrs. Besant joined the Congress and began her work for Home Rule.

Mrs. Besant had become President of the Theosophical Society in 1907. Her Theosophical movement in Madras placed emphasis on the Brahminical tradition, culture and its alleged past greatness. The leaders of the movement, both in their lectures and writing-, extolled the virtues of ancient Aryan civilization and Sanskrit literature. In Madras city as well as in the districts Sanskrit schools were started, societies for the promotion of Aryan morals established, and Hindu religious literature disseminated through catechisms and tracts. Mrs. Besant quickly established herself as the outstanding revivalist of Smarta Hinduism in South India.¹² In addition to encouraging scholarly researches in Sanskrit she was largely instrumental in arousing

¹¹ Baker, Christopher John , *The Politics of South India 1920–1937*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, 1976, pp. 31–32.

¹² Joseph, George Gheverghese , *G, The life and times of a Kerala Christian nationalist*. Orient Blackswan. New Delhi, 2003 ,pp. 240–241.

cultural and religious nationalism among the Brahmin politicians in Madras city.¹³

Mrs. Besant organised the Madras Hindu Association in January 1904.¹⁴ She justified the fourfold caste system, supporting her argument from Sanskrit literature.¹⁵

When Mrs. Besant extended her activities of the Congress and initiated the Home Rule League in Madras in September 1916, non-Brahmins felt that the success of the Home Rule Movement in the event of Reforms would result in the entrenchment of Brahmins in the administration of the country. Therefore the non-Brahmin leaders felt that there was greater need among them to unite and counteract Mrs. Besant's Home Rule Movement than ever before.

In the above situations the non-Brahmin leaders felt the necessity to unite the non-Brahmins against the Brahmins, which resulted in the formation of Justice Party.

¹³Irschick, Eugene F., *op.cit.*, pp. 102–103

¹⁴Sundararajan Saroja, *March to freedom in Madras Presidency, 1916–1947*. Lalitha Publications., Madras, 1989, p. 546.

¹⁵More, J. B. Prashant, *The Political Evolution of Muslims in Tamilnadu and Madras, 1930–1947*. Orient Longman, Hyderabad, 1997, p. 163.

GENESIS OF JUSTICE PARTY

The 19th century witnessed an enormous transformation in almost all spheres of life, religious, social, economic, political and cultural. But India was still in the grip of traditions, detrimental to its progress and growth. None the less the foreign rule was in a way a blessing in disguise to the Indians. It influenced their life through many channels. As a result two revolutions took place in India namely, the National Revolution and the social revolution. The former made India to emerge as a new nation whereas the latter brought about enormous social changes, challenging the stagnating traditional culture.

In Madras there was a wide gap between Brahmins and non-Brahmins in the social hierarchy and glaring disparity in the matter of employment in government departments. The educational backwardness of Madras until the middle of the 19th century may have been responsible for the lack of effective leadership. There was no personal initiative in the field of reform in the Madras Presidency till the first decade of the twentieth century.¹

Emergence of the Dravidian or non-Brahmin politics in the second decade of the twentieth century constitutes a land mark in the history of south India. The long smoldering discontent, hatred and suspicion of the elite non-Brahmins of the Madras Presidency towards the Brahmins got institutionalized under the nomenclature of the South Indian Liberal Federation. Its primary aim was to promote the political interests of the non-Brahmins and its watch words were “equal opportunities for all and injustice to none”² Further Dravidian leaders had devoted themselves to the intellectual awakening and the development of the people. They spread the ideas

¹ Shihir Kumar Mithra, *Resurgent India*, Bombay, 1963, p.58.

² Rajaraman, P., *Glimpses of Social Movement in Peninsular India*, Chennai, 2013, p.55.

against tradition and customs and preached for rationalist approach. They also created spiritual awaking through rationalism. Dravidian leaders criticized the authoritarianism and traditionalism and denounced superstitious practices and caste divisions. Further they also sought to reform Hinduism within.³

Formation of Madras Dravidian Association

A few aggrieved non- Brahmin officials of the Revenue Board and other government institutions who suffered from the partiality and unfair treatment of the Brahmin superiors formed an organization called 'The Madras United League'. Prominent among those non-Brahmin officials were Saravana Pillai, G. Veerasami Naidu. Duraisamy Mudaliyar and Narayanasamy Naidu. Through the initiative was taken by a set of government officials to form an association for the cause of non-Brahmins, the leadership and guidance came from Dr. C. Natesa Mudaliyar, a non-official and service minded Doctor of Triplicane.⁴ Many prominent citizens of Madras including C.Karunakara Menon, the Editor of Indian Patriot an English daily and P. Ramarayananar (Rajah of Pangal) lend their support to such an effort. Before this League blossomed into a full- fledged non- Brahmin organization, its nomenclature was changed into Madras Dravidian Association at its first annual meeting. It started functioning from 10th November, 1912 with new rules and regulations. P. Ramarayananar, the Rajah of Panagal, was elected as the president of the Association, Dr. T.M.Nair as vice- president and Dr. C. Natesa Mudaliar, as the Secretary. This organization tied to safeguard the political, social and economic interests of the Dravidian people. It's declared aspiration became the establishment of

³ Nambi Arooran, K., *The Tamil Renaissance and Dravidian Nationalism, 1905-1944*, Koodal Publications, Madurai, 1980,p.98.

⁴ Rajaraman,p., *The Justice Party –A Historical Perspective*, 1916-1937,p.69.

a Dravidian State under the British Raj and the formation of a Government of by and for the Non- Brahmins.⁵

Dravidian Home

Dr. C. Natesa Mudaliyar, then a medical student in Madras founded “The Dravidian Home” in 1914, a hostel for non- Brahmin students at Akbar Sahib Street in Triplicane. He founded this Home for the reasons that the non- Brahmin students were unable to find hostel accommodations, they were not allowed to eat in Brahmin hotels in Madras because of caste banders and had the difficulty in pursuing their higher studies. To strengthen non-Brahmin unity at that time, he began the Dravidian Association hostel which was aptly named as the Dravidian Home with the purpose of advancing non- Brahmin political power. The establishment of the Dravidian Home was the first practical step of a small but influential group of non-Brahmins in Madras city to organize themselves.⁶

The Defeat of Non- Brahmin Leaders

The election to the imperial legislative council took place in 1916. The Madras Legislative Council had to elect two members to the imperial Legislative council. There were seven contestants. The majority of the council members were Brahmins. The congress fielded V.S Srinivasa Sastri for the South Districts and B.N. Sharma for the Northern Districts. Non –Brahmin leaders had fielded Dr. T.M. Nair against the Brahmin candidate V.S. Srinivasa Sastri.⁷ Ramarayaningar was defeated by K.V. Ponusamy Iyengar, a Zamindar of Tiruchirappalli, K.V. Reddi Naidu faced a similar defeat in the council election. This defeat of non- Brahmin candidates in the election of 1916 not only brought about disappointment among non- Brahmin leaders, it also

⁵ Seshadri,G.S., *The Dravida Kazhagham in Madras*, Indian Affairs Record III,No.1,1957,P.3.

⁶ Ibid.,p.4.

⁷ Prakasam,A., *Political Study*, Madras,1971,p.10.

aggravated the feeling of communal minority between Brahmins and non- Brahmins. It was also felt that unless the political power of the Brahmins was broken, there would be no opportunity for the resurgence non- Brahmin communities.⁸

Non- Brahmin letters

The more important of the two Dravidian Association publications is a series of 21 letters concerning in the position and the desires of certain non- Brahmin caste groups in Madras Presidency. Many of which were to become the principal aims of the non- Brahmin Movement. The letters are addressed Dear Govinda Rajalu , Dear Mudaluai, Dear Naidu and so on.⁹ The letters emphasized that non- Brahmins were disunited and jealous of one another that they were unwilling to take advantage of education but instead remain attached to their traditional occupations as business men on dubashas (clerks). Non- Brahmins are badly treated by non-Brahman employers and Brahman fellow workers alike but they themselves are not to be blamed for not aspiring to influential positions in the government service. Non-Brahmins mesmerized by the scriptures of manu are the victims of their own sense of inferiority. If they were even to become important in the public life of Madras Presidency, they must organize a movement to unite the Dravidians and must establish a “national” college employing the Dravidian vernaculars.¹⁰

South Indian liberal federation

Following the publication of Non-Brahmin letters successful attempts were made by Natesa Mudaliyar, the secretary of the Madras Dravidian Association to reconcile two non-Brahmin leaders Dr.T.M.Nair and Thiagaraya chetty, who were both important figures in the Madras city. The party differences were forgotten and

⁸ Saraswathi, *Minorities in Madras State*, Impex India, 1974, p.66.

⁹ Non-Brahmin Letters, p. 28.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

decided to cooperate with each other. Finally on 20th November 1916 by a group of about thirty non-Brahmins, including P. Thaagaroya Chetti and Dr. T. M. Nair, Natesa Mudaliar, Raja of Bobbili and C.Sankaran Nair met at the Victoria Hall in Madras city.¹¹ It was resolved to start a company for publishing newspapers advocating the cause of the non-Brahmin community in this meeting. The idea to bring out daily newspapers came foremost in the minds of the non-Brahmin leaders because of the Brahmin control of the two of the three leading dailies in Madras city. The English daily Hindu, started in 1878 as a weekly and was turned into a tri-weekly in 1883, and into a daily in 1889 was published by S. Kasturiranga Iyengar, while the only Tamil daily Swadesamitran, started in 1882 as a weekly and became a daily in 1889 was published by A. Rangaswami Iyengar.

Both were highly nationalistic in spirit and both vigorously advocated Home Rule. The Brahmin hegemony over journalism stemmed from two factors : first, as pointed out earlier, the Brahmins constituted an elite group in society, and secondly, their recognised position of leadership in society enabled them to assert themselves as protagonists of the nationalist movement. Therefore the non-Brahmin leaders founded the South Indian People's Association primarily for conducting daily newspapers to guide, define and publicise the views of the non-Brahmins on public questions. The first issue of the Association's English daily Justice appeared on 26 February 1917. The Tamil daily Dravidian was started in June 1917 and for Telugu readers Andhraprakasika, the well Telugu weekly was started.¹²

¹¹ Varghese Jeyaraj, S., *Socio-Economic History of Tamil Nadu, 1565-1967*, Anns Publications, Uthamapalayam, 2017, p.245.

¹² The Hindu, 22 Dec. 1916.

Later the South Indian People's Association was named as the South Indian Liberal Federation.¹³ Its purpose was to promote the political interest of non-Brahmins. It was the real beginning of the non-Brahmin Movement.

Non- Brahmin Manifesto

On 20 December 1916, in The Hindu, the non-Brahmin party group made its public announcement in the form of Non-Brahmin Manifesto. It was addressed to non- Brahmin gentlemen under the signature of P. Theagaraya Chetty. It marked the inception of the non- Brahmin movement. The Manifesto laid emphasis not in favour of any measures which was designed to undermine the influence and authority of the British rulers, who also in the present circumstances of India were able to hold the scale even between creed and class to develop that sense of unity.¹⁴ It went on to claim that the Non-Brahmins constituted forty million out of forty and a half million population of the Madras Presidency. They were the bulk of the tax payers including a large majority of zamindars, agriculturists and landholders. They had little or no power to influence the masses for general political advancement of the country. The non-Brahmins had no political organization or spokesmen or a press to protect their common interest. It argued with the convincing statistics quoting evidence of Sir Alexander Cardew, then chief Secretary to the Government of Madras before the Public Service Commission, that the Brahmins were overwhelmingly predominant in the public services in the University of Madras, in the High court and in all political appointments. The Brahmins formed 'a small rigidly exclusive caste'. In the provincial Civil Services, held between 1892 and 1904, out of sixteen successful candidates, fifteen were Brahmins giving a ratio of ninety four per cent Brahmin

¹³ Ralhan, O.P., *Encyclopedia of Political Parties Series: Non-Brahmin Movements*, Anmol Publications Pvt.Ltd., New Delhi, 1998, p.136.

¹⁴ Saraswathi, *op.cit.*, p.42.

successes. In the competition for the appointment of Assistant Engineers, during the same period, seventeen Brahmins and four non-Brahmins were selected as successful candidates. Similarly in the competitive examination held for the Account Departments, out of 140 Deputy Collectors in Madras at that time, seventy seven were Brahmins, thirty non-Brahmins and the rest others. In the Subordinate Judicial Service, the major portion of the appointments was in the hands of Brahmins. Again in 1913, out of 128 permanent District Munsiffs, ninety three were Brahmins, twenty five non-Brahmins and the rest others. The Brahmins monopolized all Government services and this led to the practical exclusion of the non-Brahmin classes. It concluded with an appeal to the non- Brahmins who formed not less than 40 million out of 41.5 million of the population of this Presidency to do everything possible to ensure the general development of their community on a broad and enduring basis and to quit their attitude of silence and inaction and definitely assert and press their claims against the virtual domination of the Brahmin caste.¹⁵

Birth of the Justice Party

Dr. Nair took the job of framing up the rules and regulations of the South Indian Liberal Federation. He borrowed the ideas not only from the liberal British tradition, but also from French radicalism. Indeed even the name of the party organ was adopted from Clemenceau's 'Justice' Opponents of the SILF referred to it as "the Justice Party" and the SILF itself felt that this somehow captured the spirit of its movement and adopted the label as its unofficial name.¹⁶ In due course it officially came to be known as 'the Justice Party' after the name of its English daily Justice.¹⁷ Nair soon became the most prominent spokesman of the party. He defined its object

¹⁵ The Hindu, 20 December, 1916, p.3.

¹⁶ Hardgrave Robert, L., *The Dravidian Movement*, Bombay, 1965, p.16.

¹⁷ Rangaraju, G., *Colonial Design and Dravidian Awakening in Tamilnadu*, Pavai Publications, 2006, p.60

as justice for all Dravidians through the establishment of a separate State under the watchful guidance of British rule. According to him, the Justice Party would support every act of government beneficial to the people and oppose any which would be injurious to their interest.

Objectives of Justice Party

The Objectives of Justice Party were embodied in a constitution issued in 1917. They were:

- "(a) to create and promote the education, social, economic, political, material and moral progress of all communities in Southern India other than Brahmins,
- (b) to discuss public questions and make a true and timely representation to Government of the views and interests of the people of Southern India with the object of safeguarding and promoting the interests of all communities other than Brahmins and
- (c) to disseminate by public lectures, by distribution of literature and by other means sound and liberal views in regard to public opinion ".¹⁸

Development and popularity of the Justice party

The first conference of the justice party was held at Coimbatore in August 1917. The Rajah of Panagal, previously a member of the Imperial Legislative Council, was elected as its first President. To spread its ideas, conferences were conducted frequently in different parts of the Madras Presidency. In December 1917, P.Thegaraya Chetty called a Conference of non- Brahmins. He expressed the part's view for gradual reforms towards representative government. He also made a plea for communal representation in the Legislative council. He bitterly attacked the caste

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.60-61.

system and condemned it as a tool of Brahmin oppression.¹⁹ The conference passed resolution for the fusion of all non- Brahmin castes. Legislation was urged for the removal of legal hindrance which restricted inter- caste marriages and for the removal of all restrictions which prevented Adi- Dravidas (Untouchables) and other Depressed Classes from the free use of public wells and tanks.²⁰

In response to a resolution of the conference, the 'Spur Tank' meeting was held in early 1918 to mobilize public opinion in madras. It stood against 'the curse of untouchability'. The meeting was attended by several thousands. There were inflammatory speeches against the Brahmins. They were to be labored wherever they were found and Brahmin ways were to be violated. In accordance with the 1917 declaration, Montague, Secretary of State for India with the Viceroy Lord Chelmsford came to India to interview the leaders of India for political reforms.²¹ The request of the Justice Party was turned down by Montague, but an appointment for Madras Presidency Association, under the leadership of T.V.Kalyanasundaram was accepted by the British administration. It was the non-Brahmin wing of Home Rule Party. Outraged at the action of Montague, Nair advised the Justice Party members to boycott Montague's enquiry altogether. However, the Justice Party leaders approached the secretary of state and the viceroy and presented a memorandum of their grievances, thereupon their request was reconsidered.²²

Meston Award

In 1919, all parties of India sent representatives to London for a joint Parliamentary Committee, a body appointed to submit recommendations to parliament on the course of constitutional reforms in India. T.M. Nair led the Justice Party

¹⁹ Varadarajulu Naidu, T., *The Justice Movement: 1917*, p.53.

²⁰ Hardgrave Robert, L., op.cit., P.18.

²¹ Sunday Observer. 7 July, 1957.

²² Hardgrave, Robert, L., op.cit., p.19.

delegation for submitting the memoranda and oral testimony before the Joint Committee. Further the Justice pushed hard for its cause communal representation. But Nair died soon after his arrival from London. After deliberation and consideration of all evidence the Joint Committee decided that in Madras Presidency in addition to the all India award of communal electorates for Muslims, Europeans Anglo- Indians and Indian Christians, the non-Brahmin Hindus were also to be provided with separate representation by means of reseravation. Sir John Meston, a committee member, made the final award, out of a total of 98 elected seats 28 would be reserved for the non- Brahmins. Though the Meston judgment did not satisfy the Justicites, they considered this as a victory for their effort.²³

²³ Vardarajulu Naidu, *op.cit.*, p.54.

MINISTRIES OF JUSTICE PARTY

In the political and administrative history of the Madras state, the Justice party played a notable part during 1920 -1935 as the 'ruling party' for most, of the period in charge of the transferred departments under Dyarchy. It was a political party with moderate political ambitions with realistic views on socio-political questions and a party with a definite practical programme to carry on the government of the province in co-operation with the then British rulers. Its rule contributed to caste based reservation and socio-religious reforms.

The first General Election and Justice Party

The first legislative council election to Madras Presidency after the establishment of dyarchical system of government by the Government of India Act, 1919, was held in November 1920. Indian National Congress boycotted the election due to its participation in the Non-cooperation movement. The election occurred during the early stages of non-Brahmin movement and the major issue of the election was anti-Brahminism. Justice party won the election with no significant opposition

Electorate and Polling

The first general election was held during November 1920.¹ At the time of the election, Madras presidency had a population of 40 million people. The franchise was limited based on property qualifications.² 1,248,156 persons were eligible to vote, among whom 303,558 actually cast their votes. The Indian National Congress boycotted the election due to its participation in the Non-cooperation

¹ Rajaraman, P., *The Justice Party: a historical Perspective 1916-37*, Poompozhi Publishers, 1988, pp. 212-220

² Mithra, H.N., *The Govt of India Act 1919 Rules Thereunder and Govt Reports 1920*, BiblioBazaar, 2009. pp.186-199

movement. *The Hindu* reported that polling was as low as 12% in some constituencies and no constituencies reported polling higher than 25%.³ The city of Madras reported the highest turnout with 52% polling and Mylapore, a traditionally a Brahmin area had an even higher turnout. The turnout was varied in rural areas, impacted by rain and flooding. The average turnout was 24.9% all over the Presidency. The *Madras Mail* reported that the turnout was low compared to elections for British parliament, but nonetheless, an impressive demonstration of growth of political consciousness.⁴

Result

In the absence of significant opposition, the Justice party was able to win 63 seats.⁵ The following table shows the party wise distribution of elected and non elected members:⁶

Party	Elected	Nominated and <i>ex officio</i>	Total
Justice Party	63	0	63
Indian National Congress	Did not contest	Did not contest	Did not contest
Independent (politician)	18	0	18
Anti-ministerial	17	0	17
Officials	0	11	11
Non-Officials	0	18	18
Total	98	29	127

³Irschick, Eugene, F., *Political and Social Conflict in South India: The non- Brahman movement and Tamil Separatism 1916-1929*, University Of California Press, 1969, pp.178-180.

⁴ Saroja, Sundararajan, *March to Freedom in Madras Presidency 1916-1947*, Madras Lalitha Publication, 1989, pp.329-332.

⁵Ralhan, O.P., *Encyclopaedia of Political Parties*, Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd., 2002, pp. 179-180

⁶Myron Weiner, *Ergun Ozbudun, Competitive elections in developing countries*, 1987, p. 61.

The Justice party claimed the support of 18 non elected members bringing up its strength to 81 in the council.⁷ The victory of the Justice party can be attributed to three factors - the election boycott of the Congress, which left the Justice party without any serious opponent, the vigorous campaign of Justice leaders and reservation of seats to non-Brahman members.⁸

Formation of First Ministry

At first, Governor Willington invited the wealthy P. Theagaroya Chetty, the leader of the justice party to form the government. He refused the offer as he did not like to be paid a salary from people's taxes. He recommended that A. SubbarayaluReddiar, Ramarayaningar (Raja of Panagal) and Kurma Venkata Reddy Naidu, all Telugu members, be made ministers. Reddiar was appointed as the Chief Minister and as the minister in charge of Education, Public works, Excise & Registration. Ramarayaningar became the minister of local self-government & Public health, while Venkata Reddy Naidu was given the Development portfolio. The ministers assumed office on 17 December 1920. Perungavur Rajagopalachari was appointed as the President of the legislative council and Edwin Periyanaayakam, Arcot Ramasamy Mudaliar & P. Subbarayan were made council secretaries. C. P. RamaswamiIyer was appointed as the Advocate General.⁹ The Governor's Executive Council consisted of Sir Lionel Davidson (member for Home), Sir Charles Todhunter (Finance), Muhammad Habibullah (Revenue) and S. Srinivasa Iyengar (Law).¹⁰ On 11 July 1921, Raja of Panagal took over as Chief Minister when Subbarayalu Reddiar resigned on health grounds and A. P. Patro, an Orissa lawyer

⁷ Hodges, Sarah, *Contraception colonialism and commerce: birth control in South India 1920-1940*, Ashgate Publishing, 2008, pp.28-29.

⁸ Manikumar, K.A., *A colonial economy in the Great Depression*, Orient Blackswan, Madras, 2003, pp. 185-198.

⁹ Mithra, H.N., *op.cit.*, pp. 186-199.

¹⁰ Rajaraman, P., *op.cit.*, pp. 212-220.

was appointed as the minister of Education.¹¹ The council was dissolved at the end of its term on 11 September 1923.

The Second General Election and Justice Party 1923

The second legislative council election to Madras Presidency after the establishment of diarchical system of government by the Government of India Act, 1919 was held in 1923. Voter turnout was higher than the previous election. Swarajists, a breakaway group from Indian National Congress participated in the election. The ruling Justice Party had suffered a split, when a splinter group calling themselves anti-Ministerialists left the party. It won the highest number of seats but fell short of a majority. Nevertheless, Madras Governor Willington invited it to form the government. Incumbent Justice chief minister Panagal Raja was nominated by party leader Theagaraya Chetty to continue as chief minister for a second term. The government survived a no-confidence motion (with the support of non-elected members), brought against it on the first day of its tenure by the opposition headed by C. R. Reddy.

Split in Justice Party

Constant infighting within the Justice Party led to the creation of a group calling themselves anti-ministerialists. This group included notable members like C. NatesaMudaliar, T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar, C. R. Reddy and P. Subbarayan. They challenged Theagaroya Chetty's leadership alleging that he was exercising autocratic control over the party. Chetty's support for British oppression of the Non-cooperation movement was disapproved by members of his party including Subbaroyan and R. K. Shanmugam Chettiar. Inclusion of no Tamil members by Theagaroya Chetty in the ministry caused resentment among Tamil members. Members of the previous

¹¹Saroja, Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, pp. 347-350.

ministry Raja of Panagal and Kurma Venkata Reddy Naidu were Telugu members and A. P. Patro was from Orissa. Theagaroya Chetty also had Telugu ancestry.¹²

Polling

The term of the first council expired on 11 September 1923. Elections for the second council were held on 31 October. Heavy rains and the resulting flooding in some areas delayed the completion of polling till 10 November. Elections for held for only 44 constituencies. From the remaining 17 constituencies, 20 members were elected unopposed.¹³ The franchise was limited based on property qualifications.^[4] More people cast their votes in this election than the first one. 28% polling was recorded in North Arcot rural constituency, 58.8% in Madras city and 77% in Tirunelveli-Palayamcotai urban constituency. Over all the presidency witnessed a 36.2% turnout.¹⁴

Result

The Justice Party emerged as the single largest party but was not able to obtain a simple majority. The Swarajists contested 11 seats and they won all of them.

The following table shows the party wise distribution of elected and non elected members.¹⁵

Party	Elected	Nominated and <i>ex officio</i>	Total
Justice Party	44	0	44
Swaraj Party	11	0	11

¹² Krishnaswamy, S., *op.cit.*, pp. 222-230.

¹³ Hodges, Sarah, *op.cit.*, pp.35-40.

¹⁴ Rajaraman, P., *op.cit.*, p.222.

¹⁵ Menon, Visalakshi, *From movement to government : the congress in the United Provinces 1937-42*, Sage, 2003, p.75.

Independents	6	1	7
Anti-ministerial	37	0	37
Officials	0	11	11
Non-Officials	0	17	17
Total	98	29	127

The poor performance of Justice Party has been attributed to the following reasons. Internal dissent in the party weakened it. Members like Natesa Mudaliar, M. C. Rajah and O. Kandasamy Chettiar were openly critical of the party's functioning during the first council. The exclusion of Tamils from the first ministry weakened it in the Southern Tamil speaking districts of the presidency. The Swarajists emerged as a small yet significant opposition to the Justice party. Lack of an effective campaign hobbled the party's performance in the polls.¹⁶

Formation of Second Ministry

After the elections, Madras Governor Willington called upon the Justice Party to form the Government. Theagaraya Chetty recommended two former ministers Raja of Panagal (as Chief Minister) and A. P. Patro to be included in the cabinet. Kurma Venkata Reddy Naidu, the minister for Development was dropped and instead T. N. Sivagnanam Pillai, a Tamil member was inducted in the ministry. The ministers assumed office on 19 November 1923. Abdullah GhatalaSabib Bahadur, S. ArpudasamiUdayar and T. C. Thangavelu Pillai were appointed as Council secretaries. The new executive council of the Governor consisted of C. G. Todhunter, A. R. Knapp, C. P. RamaswamiIyer and Vasudeva Ravi Varma Valiya

¹⁶ Krishnaswamy, S., *op.cit.*, pp.126-131.

Raja . L. D. Swamikannu Pillai was appointed by the Governor as the President of the legislative council for one year and his successor was to be chosen by the council itself after the end of his term. The council lasted from 26 November 1923, till 7 November 1926.¹⁷

No-confidence motion

Though Justice Party won the highest number of seats, it was still of short of a majority. Therefore, a no-confidence motion was moved on the first day (27 November 1923) of the council questioning the legitimacy of its Government. It was the first such motion in Indian legislative history.¹⁸ C. R. Reddy, who moved the motion, said in his statement that he did not question the authority of the Governor, but the legitimacy of the Justice Party government. He had two main arguments –

- 1)The election results showed that the electorate was against the government and
- 2)The Raja of Panagal showed nepotism in choosing the Presidents of various local governmental bodies. The government was defended in the legislature by the Raja of Panagal and A. P. Patro. S. Satyamurti made his maiden speech in the assembly in support of the motion.¹⁹ The motion was discussed for two days and put to vote on 28 November. The government survived with the support of nominated members. 65 members including 21 non elected members opposed the motion, while 43 supported it and 10 including Venkata Reddy Naidu remained neutral. Members who supported the motion and voted against the government included members of the UNP, Swarajists, all independents and non official Muslim members. Members who opposed the motion and voted for the government included 44 members of the Justice

¹⁷ Tamil Nadu swims against the tide , the Stateman, Archived from the original on 14 January 2009, Retried 22 December 2009.

¹⁸ Ramanathan, K.V., *op.cit.*, pp.301-305.

¹⁹ Madras Legislative Council, *Debates*, National Archives, New Delhi, 1926.

party, 13 nominated and 8 ex officio members.²⁰ If the official and nominated members are excluded, the figures reduce themselves to 44 votes cast for the ministers and 43 votes against it. Looked at from the angle of electorate at large, the 44 votes represented elected of 192,855 as against the 43 representing 257,144. So, it is exceedingly clear that the electorate at large has given its verdict against the Ministers.²¹

Third General Election and Justice Party, 1923

The third legislative council election to Madras Presidency after the establishment of dyarchical system of government by the Government of India Act, 1919, was held in November 1926. Justice party lost the election to Swaraj Party. However, as the Swaraja Party refused to form the Government, the Governor of Madras set up an independent government under the leadership of P. Subbarayan and with the support of nominated members.

Background

The election was held at a time of heightened economic hardship in Madras Presidency. The failure of South West and North East monsoon resulted in a severe drought affecting farming activities. This aggravated the livelihood of landless labourers whose fortunes had already been crippled by tax collectors and money lenders. Migration of farmers from rural areas to cities in search of jobs and livelihood increased during this time.²² Justice party was beset with internal distension and factionalism. Its leader Theagaraya Chetty had died on 28 April 1925 and the Raja of Panagal, who was the incumbent Chief Minister of Madras Presidency

²⁰ Rudner, David West, *Caste and Capitalism in Colonial India: The Nattukottai Chettiars*, University of California Press, 1994, p. 7.

²¹ Rajaraman, P., *op.cit.*, pp.312-322.

²² Manikumar, K.A, *op.cit.*, pp. 210-215.

succeeded him as the leader. Panagal's efforts to unite the Justice party by bringing back dissidents like C. NatesaMudaliar were not successful. The Justice government was not in good terms with Viscount Goschen who had succeeded Marquess Willington as Governor of Madras in 1924. The Justice ministers were often at odds with the members of the Governor's Executive Council over issues of power and patronage.

The Indian National Congress was also weakened by the exit of Periyar E. V. Ramasamy in November 1925 due to the Congress' refusal to pass resolutions in support of communal representation. He openly supported the Justice candidates in the election.

Result

The incumbent Justice party lost the elections and was able to win only 21 seats. The Swarajists emerged as the single largest party with 41 seats, but were not able to obtain a majority. They even captured all the four seats in the city of Madras, which had been considered a Justice stronghold. Notable Justice leaders like NatesaMudaliar, O. ThanikachalamChettiar, Kurma Venkata Reddy Naidu and Arcot Ramasamy Mudaliar were defeated.²³

The table shows the party wise distribution of elected and non elected members.²⁴

Party	Elected	Nominated and <i>ex officio</i>	Total
Justice Party	21	1	22
Swaraj Party	41	0	41

²³Nagarajan, Krishnaswamy, *Dr. Rajah Sir MuthiahChettiar : a Biography*, Annamalai University, 1989, pp. 63-70

²⁴Irschick, Eugene, F., *op.cit.*, pp. 325- 234.

Independents	36	22	58
Anti-ministerial	0	0	0
Officials	0	11	11
Total	98	34	132

The victory of the Swarajists has been attributed to declining Justice party and superior campaign tactics of Swarajists most notably S. Srinivasa Iyengar and S. Satyamurti. They used public demonstrations, meetings, door to door canvassing, *bhajanai* processions to woo public support. In contrast, the Justice party stuck to its traditional method of electioneering - canvassing support from persons of influence and strong men of the villages and cities. The mass outreach campaign of the Swarajists proved successful. They worked together with the Tamil Nadu Congress to defeat the Justice party. V. Kalyanasundaramudaliar and M. P. Sivagnanam were among the Congress leaders who worked hard for the Swarajist victory.²⁵

Though the Swaraj Party emerged as the single largest party it did not have a simple majority in the council. Governor Goschen invited its leader in the council C. V. S. Narasimha Raju to form the government. But he declined the offer.²⁶ The Justice party too refused to accept power as it did not have enough strength in the council and due to its previous antagonism with the governor. Goschen then turned to the Nationalist Independents for ministry formation. On 14 December 1926, B. P. Subbarayan, then an unaffiliated member was appointed as the Chief. Subbarayan

²⁵Ralhan, O.P., *op.cit.*, p. 198.

²⁶ Hodges, Sarah, *op.cit.*, pp.45-53.

chose A. Ranganatha Mudaliar and Arogyaswami Mudaliar as his colleagues in the ministry.²⁷

Fourth General Election and Justice Party, 1930

The fourth legislative council election to Madras Presidency after the establishment of dyarchical system of government by the Government of India Act, 1919 in September 1930. Justice party won the election and P. Munuswamy Naidu became the first Chief Minister. Swaraj Party, the main opposition party, did not contest the elections due to its participation in the Civil Disobedience Movement.

Background

The election was held amid the severe world economic depression. Justice party decided to open its doors for Brahmans after a resolution made in the Executive Committee meeting held on 15 June 1930. Congress decided to boycott the election again in a meeting held in Lahore in 1929. 17 of its council members including Sathyamurthy, resigned their membership. Though the Congress did not participate in the election, it allowed its individual members like Swami Venkatachalam Chettiar and R. K. Shanmugam Chettiar to contest as Independents. Therefore the contest was solely between the Justice Party and what was called Independent Nationalist party (former ministerialists) headed by P. Subbarayan. Justice party's leader, Raja of Panagal had died on 16 December 1928 and it was led by P. Munuswamy Naidu. It had a tumultuous relationship with Subbarayan's Independent Nationalists - cooperating in some issues and openly quarreling on some other.²⁸

²⁷ Rudner, David West, *op.cit.*, p. 42.

²⁸ *The Times Of India directory and year book including who's who*, Bennett and Coleman Ltd, 1922, p.55.

Result

About 43% of the electorate comprising about 4% of the Presidency's population voted in the election. (The franchise was limited based on property qualifications.²⁹ Justice party won 35 seats out of the 45 it contested in the election. Independent Nationalist party and Liberals together won less 10 seats. Most of the other seats were won by independents. 35 of the 98 elective seats were won without any contest.³⁰

Formation of Ministry

The Governor of Madras, George Frederick Stanley, nominated 32 non-elected members including officials immediately after the election and invited the Justice Party form the Government. B. Ramachandra Reddy was elected as the President of the Council. On 27 October 1930, B. Munuswami Naidu took charge as Chief Minister. P. T. Rajan and S. KumaraswamiReddiar became the other two members of the Justice ministry.³¹ P. Subbarayan, former Chief Minister became opposition leader.³² Soon after Munuswamy Naidu formed the government, the Justice Party was torn apart by factionalism. The Zamindars who had supported the Justice Party were disgruntled at the fact that two of the foremost landlords of the Presidency, the Raja of Bobbili and the Kumara Raja of Venkatagiri had not been included in the Cabinet.³³ In November 1930, the disgruntled Zamindars formed a faction "ginger group" under the leadership of M. A. MuthiahChettiar. This faction succeeded in

²⁹Ramanathan, K.V., *op.cit.*, p.61.

³⁰*Ibid.*,p.68.

³¹ Chandra, J.R., and Thomas, M.M., *Political Outlook in India Today*, Bangalore, 1956,p.122.

³² Rajaraman, P, *op.cit.*,p. 304.

³³ Myron Weiner, *op.cit.*,pp.64-68.

forcing Naidu's resignation as party leader and as chief minister. On 5 November 1932, the Raja of Bobbili took over as chief minister.³⁴

Impact

This was the last election won by the Justice party. Intra party factionalism, unpopular policies, resurgence of the Congress with rising nationalism among the people all combined together to ensure that it would never win another election during its existence. The party was split between the Zamindari and the non-Zamindari factions which struggled for power. The Zamindari faction eventually won and its leader the Raja of Bobbili became the chief minister.³⁵

Fifth General Election and Justice Party, 1934

In the fifth legislative council election to Madras Presidency, the ruling Justice party lost the election and the opposition Swaraj Party emerged as the single largest party. However, it refused to form the government, due to its opposition to dyarchy. The incumbent chief minister, Raja of Bobbili retained power and formed a minority government.

Background

By 1933, constitutional reforms were imminent and dyarchy was expected to be abolished. The fourth council's term, which was to have ended on 5 November 1933, was extended by a year because it was believed a new council would not serve out its full term before dyarchy was abolished. But, after a year, the expected reforms had not materialized and fresh elections were held for a new council. The Justice party was split between the Zamindari and the non-Zamindari factions which

³⁴ David Arnold, *op.cit.*, pp.119.

³⁵ Rajaraman, P., *op.cit.*, p. 276.

struggled for power. The Zamindari faction eventually won and its leader, the Raja of Bobbili, became the chief minister in November 1932 replacing P. Munuswamy Naidu. His pro-land owner economic policies amidst the Great Depression were hugely unpopular. The Indian National Congress and its electoral arm, the Swaraj Party decided to participate in the elections despite their opposition to dyarchy. The Congress was greatly rejuvenated by its successful organisation of the Salt Satyagraha and Civil Disobedience movement of 1930-31. The Civil Disobedience movement, the Land Tax reduction agitations and Union organizations helped the Congress to mobilize popular opposition to the Bobbili Raja government. In contrast, the faction ridden Justice party had to dilute its main plank of anti-Brahminism and allow Brahmins to become members.³⁶

Result

The Justice party lost the election and the Swarajists emerged as the single largest party with 29 seats. The Swarajists refused to assume power due to their opposition to dyarchy. The Raja of Bobbili retained power by forming a minority government. Justice Party leaders R. K. Shanmukham Chetty and Arcot Ramasamy Mudaliar had lost their seats as the chief whip of the party. M. A. Muthiah Chettiar withdrew his support for their candidature. Bobbili retaliated by dismissing him as the party whip. Chettiar responded by filing a no-confidence motion against the minority government. To appease him Bobbili replaced S. Kumaraswami Reddiar with Chettiar as the minister for Education. To appease other factions, he created a new ministry of home affairs and appointed Mohammad Usman and later A. T. Pannirselvam as its ministers.³⁷

³⁶ Saroja, Sundararajan, *op.cit.*, p. 387.

³⁷ Ralhan, O.P., *op.cit.*, pp.156-164.

The Justice Party had been in power in Madras for 13 years since 1920. Its hold on power was briefly interrupted only once in 1926-28 when P. Subbarayan was a non-affiliated Chief Minister. Its rule contributed to caste based reservation and religious reforms.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF JUSTICE PARTY

The Justice Party ruled the Tamil Nadu under the Dyarchy system for a period of thirteen years and introduced many reforms. They attempted to carry on social and economic measures for the benefit of the non-Brahmins. The Party gave representation to non-Brahmin communities in the public services and improved the status of the depressed classes. The administrative measures of the Justice Party received popular appeal. In spite of severe limitations the Justice Party enacted several legislations for socio, economic reforms for the establishment of an egalitarian society.¹

Abolition of Caste System

The cultural and religious invasion of Aryans brought into India *Varnashrama Dharma*, and the hierarchical caste system which still continue to be the bane of this country. It created the exclusive right of the Brahmins to priest-hood and Vedic learning by virtue of their birth. It gave them monopoly and dominance in the field of religion and Vedic education which deprived the other castes opportunities for education and condemned them to manual labour. After the advent of the British Rule, the Brahmins used their traditional position of dominance in the caste hierarchy to gain monopoly in government services and in the new system of English education introduced by the Britishers.² Monopoly of dominance by any caste is negation of social justice. Justice party emerged to fight against the monopoly of Brahmins which like the Octopus spread its tentacles in almost all spheres of human activity and to secure social justice for non-Brahmins. It was the earliest political party in Modern

¹ Rajaraman, p, *The Justice Party, A Historical Perspective, 1916-1937*, Madras, 1988, p. 260.

² Trilok Nath, *Politics of Oppressed Class*, Delhi, 1978, p.50.

India to condemn *Varnashrama Dharma*, and its concomitant evils; it avowedly stood for the abolition of caste. It considered caste as a baneful sin of the humanity.³

Promotion of Dravidian Languages

Justice Party was very much interested in promoting the interests of the Dravidian languages and elevating them to the level of Sanskrit. The University of Madras abolished the study of vernacular languages as per the new regulations which came into force in 1911-12. Languages such as Sanskrit, Urdu, Persian and Arabic were given importance and taught both at B.A and B.A Honours level but the Dravidian languages were completely omitted from the curriculum.⁴ It created a storm and protests from the public and the political parties. The Justice Party which stood for the cause of the vernaculars from its formation did not fail to deprecate what the Senate of the Madras University had done with regard to vernaculars.⁵

Communal G.Os

One of the outstanding contributions of the Justice Ministry was the issue of communal G.Os. In 1921 and 1922 two Government orders were issued which ensured the non-Brahmins the most prominent place in the government services through an executive order for the greater distribution of government posts among the non-Brahmins.⁶ The G.Os instructed all Heads of the Departments, Collectors and District Judges to appoint Non-Brahmins and other backward communities in public services. It distributed appointments among different castes and gave representation

³ David Arnold, *Congress in Tamil Nadu: The Nationalist Politics of South India, 1919-1937*, New Delhi, p.19.

⁴ NambiAruran, K. *TamilRenaissance and Dravidian Nationalism, 1905- 1954*, Madurai, 1980, pp.46-47.

⁵ Rani, *Tamil Fornightly*, 15 December 1991, p. 3.

⁶ Anita Diehl, *Periyar E.V. Ramasami*, Madras, 1979, p.9.

to various communities in different branches of public life.⁷ The executive orders established a balance between the different caste groups. In order to distribute the appointments to different communities, it directed the heads of Government departments to classify new recruits in terms of communal groups- non – Brahmin, Brahmins, Muslim, Indian Christians and Europeans and the depressed classes in the ratio of 5;2:2:2:1 respectively.⁸ These Government Orders on communal representation was a crowning success for the Justice party in its struggle to fight against the monopoly of Brahmins in public services.⁹

Compulsory Elementary Education

It was one of the basic principles of the Justice Party ever since its inauguration that elementary education must be made free and compulsory. A demand for it had been made in the original non-Brahmin Manifesto of 1916.¹⁰ Subsequently the resolution demanding the same were passed and finally the Madras Elementary Education Amendment Act was enacted which made elementary education compulsory for boys and girls of particular age. In 1920 Mid-day meal scheme was introduced in the corporation schools in Madras. It increased the strength of students in the schools.¹¹

Madras State Aid to Industries Act

The Justice Ministry passed the Madras State Aid to Industries Act of 1922, by the efforts of Industries minister A.V.Reddi Naidu. It was intended to give financial

⁷ *The Hindu*, 20th December 1916.

⁸ *Justice Part Golden Jubilee Souvenir*, Madras, 1968, P.117.

⁹ *Madras Mail*, Madras, 18 October 1917.

¹⁰ Baliga, B.S, *Studies in Madras Administration*, Vol.I, Madras, 1960, p.14.

¹¹ Justice, Venugopal, P., *Justice Party and Social Justice*, The Periyar Self – Respect Propaganda Institution, Madras, 1992, p.27.

assistance to developing industries and increase the national wealth.¹² This brought the industrial regeneration in Tamil Nadu. It was realized that State aid particularly to small industries will provide employment for a number of persons besides encouraging developing industries. It had an important bearing on the economic development of the Tamil Nadu. So that the Presidency of Madras had a prominent place on the industrial map of India.¹³

Renaissance in Medical Education

Raja of Panagal wanted to give importance to the education of native Indian medicines like Siddha, Unani and Ayurvedic. So the Indian school of Medicine was established by him. To assist that he also started an Indian hospital and efforts were made to encourage indigenous system of medicine.¹⁴

Hindu Religious Endowment Act

The Justice Ministry passed the Hindu Religious Endowment Act to regulate the administration of temples and mutts for the welfare of the public. This measure was to curb the abuses of power by committees and individuals placed in charge of Hindu Endowment Funds and to eliminate the costly suits which resulted in maladministration.¹⁵ In 1923, a Bill was prepared to eliminate the maladministration of the trust properties of the temple and mutts. The Board of Commissioners was established to supervise the functioning of endowments to settle disputes over the use of the funds of temples and mutts. All community members were appointed as temple

¹² Ralhan, *Encyclopedia of Political Parties Series: Non- Brahmin Movements*, Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd.,

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp.175-176.

¹⁴ Eugene Irschick, *Politics and Social Conflict in South India: The Non- Brahmin Movement and Tamil Separatism, 1916-1929*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969, pp.236.

¹⁵ G.O. No. 1129 Public Dated 15th December 1928.

trustees.¹⁶ This is a remarkable step ahead of social and religious reform implemented by the Justice Party at that time. Even now it stands as a testimony to Justice Party's secularism.¹⁷

Madras University Act

It was realized that on account of the process of change and transformation which the country was undergoing, it was necessary to remodel the old Universities Act to solve the growing problems of university education.¹⁸ The constitution had to be altered to enhance its democratic set up. Therefore The Justice Party enacted the Madras University Act 1923, which changed thoroughly the Constitution of the Senate which was considered as 'Brahminical Body of the University'. It widened the membership of the Senate by giving representations to various classes and interests.¹⁹ The re-organisation of the Senate and the University gave splendid opportunities to the non-Brahmins to overthrow Brahmin domination and make phenomenal progress in the field of education. The Justice Party was succeeded in bringing social justice to non-Brahmins in the sphere of education.²⁰

Staff Selection Board

In February 1924 the Panagal ministry constituted the Staff Selection Board to supervise the public appointment on communal basis in accordance with the two communal orders. It further created an examination body to eliminate the malpractices in the selection of the students on communal basis. As a major step in this connection

¹⁶ Ralhan, O.P.(ed.,) op.cit., p.174.

¹⁷ Justice, Venugopal, P., *op.cit.*, p.35.

¹⁸ Varghese Jeyaraj, S, Socio- Economic History of Tamil Nadu Anns Publications, Uthamapalayam, 2017, pp.250-251.

¹⁹ Ralhan.p.73.

²⁰ Venugopal, P., *op.cit.*,pp.31-32.

in 1929 the Madras government constituted the Provincial Public Service Commission which conducted examination to recruit candidates in the governmental services. These measures enlightened the non-Brahmins students and easily obtained admission in public services. It made the Justice Party to enlist the support of the mass to a greater level for its survival.²¹

Abolition of Untouchability

When there was no constitution promulgated in India and the concept of Social Equality was almost unknown to this society, Justice Party raised its voice to bring social equality and deeply committed to the abolition of untouchability. In 1925, a bill was introduced in the Madras Legislative Council which had thrown open all public roads, streets or pathway giving access to any public office, well, tank or place of public resorts to all classes of people.²²

Empowerment of Women

Great impetus and encouragement was given to girl's education during the regime of the Justice party. It did not leave any stone to be unturned. The Justice Party enacted legislation on 10th May 1921, to give enfranchisement to women and confer on them the right to vote and right to seek election to the legislative council.²³ Accordingly, Dr.S. Muthlakshmi was elected as a member of the Legislative Council in 1926 and she became its Vice-President. She took the initiative to abolish Devadasi System. The Justice Party though sitting in opposition, its ministry under

²¹ Varghese Jeyaraj, S., op.cit.,pp.250-252.

²² Ralhan,O.P., .op.cit., 74.

²³ Rengaraju, G., Colonial Design and Dravidian Awakening in Tamil Nadu Pawai, Publications, Chennai, 2006, p.75-76.

Subbarayan passed an act to prevent dedication of devadasis to temple services and devadasi system was abolished in 1929.²⁴

Higher Education

The Justice Party also contributed much to the progress of higher education. In addition to the approval of the activities of the Madras University, the Justice Ministry established two universities, one for Telugus and the other for Tamils. In 1926 the Andhra University was established. Subsequently the Tamils also demanded a separate Tamil University. In 1929 the Annamalai University was founded at the temple town of Chidambaram.²⁵

Elevation of Depressed Classes

It is necessary to mention that the elevation of depressed classes was one of the pet programme of Justice Party. It initiated a vigorous policy towards improving the conditions of depressed classes by giving them liberal facilities for education such as total exemption from payment of fees, grant of scholarships and free hostels and gave them adequate representation in the legislative Council, Local Bodies and Government services.²⁶ It also assigned Government waste lands to the deprived communities. In 1931 the government assigned 22,770 acres of lands for the provision of 1973 house sites free of cost. Till July 1934, 36,530 house sites and 3,24,000 acres of lands were assigned to the depressed communities.²⁷

²⁴ Ghurye, G. S., *Caste and Race in India*, Bombay, 1990, p.276.

²⁵ Daniel, D., *"Justice Party Under Dyarchy" Spuvenir, School of Historical Studies*, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, 1991, p. 24.

²⁶ G.O.2597, Revenue,

²⁷ Eugene,F, Irshick, *op.cit.*,pp.249-251.

Education to Fishermen Community

Special attention was paid to the education of the fishermen's children and a special training institute was established at Calicut to give free instructions in fishery technique that will materially improve the welfare of the fishermen community.²⁸ Through the department of fisheries schools were opened to educate the children of fishermen. About 37 schools were started in the coastal areas, in that 3000 boys and 1500 girls were admitted every year. This attempt was made to raise the status and standard of education among the fishermen.²⁹

Madras Tenants Land (Amendment) Reform Act

A significant legislative measure which the ministry of Bobbili passed in 1934 was the Amendment to the Estates Land Act. Its main object was to protect the rights of the cultivating tenants from the landlords and to prevent the occupancy right being appropriated by middlemen, whose only interest in land was to extract as much as rent as possible from the tenants. The noteworthy thing behind this legislative measure was that the cause of the poor tenants championed by the Zamindar who happened to be the chief minister of the state.³⁰

Justice Party's social reforms and reconstruction of the social structure greatly undermined the rights of Brahmins to recite mandras and learn Vedas. So many of the non-Brahmin leaders began to study Vedas and chant mantras in order to dispense with the services of Brahmin priests in religious function. K.V.Reddy Naidu, a prominent leader of the Justice Party dispensed with the services of Brahmin priests while celebrating the marriage of his eldest son. Dr.NatesaMudaliar another eminent

²⁸ G.O. 28. Legal, 15 May, 1943.

²⁹ Justice, Venugopal, P. p 37.

³⁰ Letter No.2021, Law (General), 24 July 1934.

leader of the Justice Party conducted the marriage of his daughter without the services of Brahmin purohit.³¹ The Justice Party by adopting such social reforms initiated the process of reducing the high social status enjoyed by the Brahmins in the caste hierarchy. The measures taken by the Justice party to promote inter-caste marriages among the non-Brahmins was the clear indications of its strong orientation towards social reforms.

³¹ Varghese Jeyaraj, S., p.254, .

TRANSFORMATION INTO DRAVIDA KAZHAGAM

The defeat of the party in so many constituencies in 1926 showed that the Justice party was losing its ground. All Justicites realized the party should be strengthened. It was the death Raja of Panagal on Dec. 16th 1928, came as a shocking blow to the party's growth. Justice Party now suffered from lack of leadership. Though Muniasamy Naidu was efficient in his dealings, Groupism and betrayal was the order of the day during his ministry in 1930. At this time P.T.Rajan and KumarasamyReddiar resigned their post as ministers. So Muniasamy Naidu had to resign. Raja of Bobbili came victorious in power politics.¹

Unpopularity of the Justice Government

The Justice Government under the Raja of Bobbili had been steadily losing ground since the early 1930s. It was beset with factional politics and its popularity was eroding slowly due to the autocratic rule of Bobbili Raja. The Raja was inaccessible to his own party members and tried to destroy the power and influence of the District level leaders who were instrumental in the party winning power earlier.²

The Justice Party was seen as the collaborative party, agreeing with the British Government's harsh measures. Its economic policies during the Great Depression of the 1930s were also highly unpopular. Its refusal to decrease the land revenue taxation in non-Zamindari areas by 12.5% was hugely unpopular. The Bobbili Raja, himself a Zamindar, cracked down on the Congress protests demanding reduction of the

¹ Ralhan, O.P., *Encyclopedia of Political Parties Series: Non-Brahmin Movements*, Anmol Publications Pvt.Ltd., New Delhi, 1998, p.197.

² Manikumar, K. A., *A colonial economy in the Great Depression, Madras (1929-1937)*, Orient Blackswan. 2003pp. 185–198.

revenue. This further reduced the popularity of the Justice Party. The Governor of Madras, Lord Erskine reported to the then Secretary of State Zetland in February 1937, that the peasants in South India had become fed up with the Justice Party and every sin of omission or commission of the past fifteen years is put down to them.

The affluent lifestyle led by the Justice ministers at the height of the Great Depression were sharply criticized by the Madras Press. They drew a monthly salary of Rs. 4,333.60 when compared to Rs. 2,250 per month the ministers in the Central Provinces received. This invoked the ire of the Madras press. The newspaper *India* wrote: Is not Rs. 2,000 enough for Madras ministers, who were only second-rate vakils (lawyers) in the mufassal (rural areas)? When the poor are suffering for want of money, they are drawing fat salaries? What an injustice?... When the country is on fire, when the axe of retrenchment has fallen on the poor and when the people are experiencing intense suffering under the heavy burden of taxation, the Madras Ministers have started on their tours immediately after passing the budget.³

Even the European owned newspaper *The Madras Mail* which had been the champion of the earlier Justice Governments was sickened by the ineptitude and patronage policies of the Bobbili Raja administration. On 1 July 1935, it wrote in its editorial: if the Justice Party is really determined upon reorganisation... the spoils system must go. The extent of the discontent against the Justice Government is reflected in an article of *Zamin Ryot*: The Justice Party has disgusted the people of this presidency like plague and engendered permanent hatred in their hearts. Everyboy, therefore, is anxiously awaiting the fall of the Justice regime which they consider tyrannical and inauguration of the Congress administration.... Even old women in villages ask as to how long the ministry of the Raja of Bobbili would

³ *Ibid.*

continue. The Justice Party's collaboration with the British Government internal dissension, ineffective organisation, inertia and lack of proper leadership led the Justice Party along the path of decline.

Resurgence of the Congress

The Swaraj Party which had been the Justice party's main opposition merged with the Indian National Congress in 1935 when the Congress decided to participate in the electoral process. The Madras Province Congress party was led by S. Satyamurti and was greatly rejuvenated by its successful organisation of the Salt Satyagraha and Civil Disobedience movement of 1930-31. The Civil Disobedience movement, the Land Tax reduction agitations and Union organizations helped the Congress to mobilize popular opposition to the Bobbili Raja government. The revenue agitations brought the peasants into the Congress fold and the Gandhian hand spinning programme assured the support of weavers. Preferential treatment given to European traders brought the support of the indigenous industrialists and commercial interests. The Congress had effective campaigners like Satyamurti and Rajaji while the Justice party had only Arcot Ramasamy Mudaliar to counter them. The Congress election manifesto was populist in nature and promised to reduce land revenue taxes, to ensure decent working conditions and wages for the laborers, low rents and all around prosperity. It even appealed to the Europeans who had reserved seats in the Assembly. It also appealed to the nationalist sentiment of the populace.

The Congress campaign was effective and targeted all sections of the population like peasants, workers, weavers and businessmen. Against it the Justice party had no definite program or policies. It could only harp on the Brahmin

domination in Congress. Amidst the backdrop of the Great Depression and economic distress their charge was not effective.⁴ This led to the unpopularity of Justice Party.

Parliamentary Act of 1935 and Election of 1937

According to this Act, provincial autonomy was given. The executive council was abolished and all departments were to be administered by the ministers. Also all those people who knew to write and read with 21 years of age were given voting right. On the basis of this Act election was conducted in February 1937.⁵ The congress party got over whelming majority and the Justice party met utter failure. Of the 215 seats of the Assembly of Madras Presidency, the Congress party, Justice A Party and the Independent candidates secured 157,17and 46 seats respectively. In the election for upper house, of the 46 seats, congress got 30, Justice 4 and others got 12. In this election the great Justicites like P.T.Rajan, Venkatagiri Kumara Raja and A.P.Bathrow were all defeated. So it was well known that the Justice party lost its influence and strength.

Rajaji was elected as the leader of Congress Legislature Party in March 1937. Despite being the majority party in the Assembly and the Council, the Congress was hesitant to form a Government. Their objections stemmed from the special powers given to the Governor by the Government of India Act of 1935. According to the act, the Governor was given 1) special responsibilities in the area of Finance and (2) control and absolute discretionary powers over the cabinet in certain other issues. The Governor had the power to overrule the Cabinet. The Congress refused to accept power with such caveats. The Governor of Madras, Lord Erskine, decided to form an

⁴ Ramanathan, K. V., *The Satyamurti letters: the Indian freedom struggle through the eyes of a parliamentarian*, Volume 1., Pearson Education India. 2008, pp. 301–5.

⁵ Ralhan, O.P., *Encyclopedia of Political Parties Series: Non-Brahmin Movements*, Anmol Publications Pvt.Ltd., New Delhi, 1998, P.198

interim provisional Government with non-members and opposition members of the Legislative Assembly. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri was first offered the Chief Ministership of the interim government but he refused to accept it. Eventually an interim Government was formed with Kurma Venkata Reddy Naidu of the Justice Party as Chief Minister on 1 April 1937. Congress leaders like S. Satyamurti were apprehensive about the decision to not accept power. They carried out a campaign to convince Congress High Command (Mohandas K. Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru) to accept power within the limitations set by the Government of India Act. They also appealed to the British Government to give assurances that the Governor's special powers will not be misused. On 22 June, Viceroy Linlithgow issued a statement expressing the British Government's desire to work with the Congress in implementing the 1935 Act. On 1 July, the Congress Working Committee agreed to form Governments in the provinces they had won. On 14 July, Rajaji was sworn in as the Chief Minister.⁶ The Justice Party was demoralized by its defeat and the Raja of Bobbili temporarily retired from active politics.

Hindi Agitation

When Rajaji assumed the Chief Minister post of Madras Presidency, he passed an order making Hindi as compulsory language in 15 selected schools. But it was strongly opposed by E.V.R, Annadurai, Sivananda Adigal. So many Tamil leaders opposed the imposition of Hindi by picketing, public meetings, conferences, agitations and many other forms of opposition were also followed by them. Many Tamil scholars like Maraimalai Adigal, Somasundara Barathi, Viswanatham, and Sanmugananda Adigal were all against it. The Justices like P.T.Rajan,

⁶ Menon, Visalakshi ., *From movement to government: the Congress in the United Provinces, 1937-42*, Sage Publications, 2003, p.75.

MuthaiahChettiar, PanneerSelvam, W.PA.SoundarPandyam and many other leaders gave their full support. Many indulged in picketing and went to prison.

E.V.R as President of Justice Party

This anti-Hindi agitation gave a new inspiration to regionalism and Dravidian culture. Here E.V.R's Self Respect Movement and Justice Party came close to each other. Kudiarasu and Vidudalai added fuel to kindled fire. E.V.R was arrested and kept in jail for two years. Now the Justices realized that only E.V.R could run in party towards its decreed goal of upliftment of non-Brahmin. In 1938 when the conference of Justice party was convened at Madras in Dec.1938, E.V.R was elected as the president of the party.⁷ He was not released to assume his leadership. His presidential address was read by A.T.PanneerSelvam. Due to sickness, E.V.R was released on 22nd May 1939 and from that time onwards E.V.R took direct interest in the Justice party. In 1940 Dec. the conference of the party was held at *Thiruvavur* under the presidentship of *E.V.R.* It was in this conference only the slogan '*Dravida Nadu for Dravidians*' was raised and demand for Dravidian State came to be made.⁸

Emergence of Dravida Kazhagam

On 27 August, 1944 the Justice Party conference was held at *Salem*. The great historical change of name South Indian Liberation Federation into *Dravida Kazhagam* came here only. C.N. Annadurai moved the resolution to change the nomenclature of the Justice Party into Dravida Kazhagam⁹ and transform into a social organisation to work for the social awakening and uplift non-Brahmin masses. The resolution was

⁷Irschick, Eugene F. , *Political and Social Conflict in South India; The non-Brahmin movement and Tamil Separatism, 1916–1929*. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1969,,p. 190.

⁸ Kannan, R., *Anna: The Life and Times of C. N. Annadurai*, Penguin Books. 2010, p. 56.

⁹ Swaminathan,A., *History of Tamil Nadu Upto 1987*,Deepa Pathippagam,Madras,1993,P.393.

passed in this meeting and Justice Party came to be called Dravida Kazhagam. Periyar was elected to the chair to preside over the conference and as per the party conventions Periyar elected to the Chair became the leader of the Justice party called Dravida Kazhagam to give a new image vitality and strength to the party.¹⁰

From that day onwards, the name Justice Party disappeared but all its ideals and principles were incorporated in the Dravida Kazhagam. The change of name and leadership thus became the necessity of the time.

¹⁰ Venugopal,P.,*Justice Party and Social Justice*, The Periyar Self-Respect Propagate Institution, Madras,1992, p.47.

CONCLUSION

The Justice Party had a strong social reform orientation. It was the first political party in India to condemn Varnashrama Dharma. The Justice party even with its limited power powers under the diarchal system of Government fought against Brahmin domination and succeeded in ushering communal justice to non-Brahmins in the legislature, Government Service, Education and religious sphere. The foundation thus laid by the Justice Party gave rise to social justice under the Indian Constitution ultimately culminating in the Mandal Commission's report providing for reservation to backward classes in All India Services and Public Sector undertakings. But for the solid foundation laid by the Justice Party, the non-Brahmins would not have progressed to the extent that we now witness in Tamilnadu.

The unique formula devised by the party to secure social equality for non-Brahmins was the principle of communal representation by which all communities got representation in government administration and public services. The three communal G.O.s passed by the Justice Party are forerunners to social legislation and social justice. Moreover, the underlying philosophy of communal representation or communal justice came to be recognized in the Indian Constitution under the label of Social Justice and Reservation for Backward Classes in Government services and Government owned educational institutions under Article 15(4) and 16(4) of the Constitution. It stands as a testimony for the political vision and foresight of the Justice party in promoting the welfare of the weaker sections of the Society.

The Slogan of the Justice Party that 'Justice for all and injustice to none' caught the imagination of many who had been trampled down for centuries by the oppressive system of Varnashrama Dharma.

The Justice party achieved a lot when they were in power by passing a number of Acts and also by initiating some social reforms as customs. They could have done even more but due to the administrative machinery 'the Dyarchy' they do not have control over finance. But with available powers they worked well. Their socio-economic reforms for the benefit of the Non-Brahmin communities contributed significantly to the overall progress of the non-Brahmins. It also served as a stepping stone to enhance and protect the poor of the poorest, weak of the weakest which revolutionized many age old evils of the society. Thus Justice Party became the voice of the voiceless of many downtrodden communities in Tamil Nadu.

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CHOLA TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE – A GRANDEUR MARVEL IN STONES

PROJECT SUBMITTED TO

St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi

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Inpartial fulfilment of the requirements

for the award of the degree of

Master of Arts in History

Submitted by

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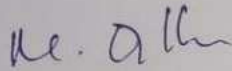
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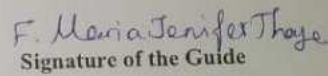
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CERTIFICATE

This is to be certify that the project entitled "**Chola Temple Architecture – A Grandeur Marvel in Stones** " submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli in partial fulfilment of the requirement of the St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi for the award of the Master of Arts in History and is a work done during the year 2021 by **M. Mari Gowsalya**, a bonafide student of the Department of History, St. Mary's College (Autonomous).

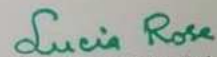


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DECLARATION

I hereby declares that the Project entitled “**Chola Temple Architecture—
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Thoothukudi affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli for the degree of
Master of Arts in History, is my Original Work and that it has not previously formed the basis
for the award of the degree diploma or similar title.

Place: Thoothukudi

Date:

Signature of the Candidate

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I acknowledge the abundant blessings and grace of the **GOD ALMIGHTY** in walk of my project work and complete in successfully

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INTRODUCTION

Architecture plays a significant role in the socio economic, and cultural life of any society. It helps to trace the historical changes and the reciprocal influence between different socio cultural units. In this context, the temples of medieval Tamil Nadu deserve special consideration because the inter-relationship of the styles of their constructing and the changes introduced by the various ruling dynasties of the Tamil country in the growth and development of the temple art and architecture in the region. Temple architecture in Tamil Nadu is largely indebted to the patronage of the Tamil kings. Generally, those who want to see the different types and their locations should necessarily have acknowledge of the political history and the chronology of temple art in Tamil Nadu. Generally, the characteristic features of the Chola architecture show that it was continued from the past. The early Chola architecture was enriched in general by the inherited tradition of the Pallavas. The early Chola temple architectural forms and designs are modest in scale and very elegant in plan. Fergusson makes a sweeping remark that in nine cases out of ten, Dravidian temples are the fortress aggregation of parts, arranged without plan an accident dictated at the time of their erection. According to Douglas Barrett, the general plan was uniform throughout the early Chola period. The temple architectural design and main shrine comprised a rectangular flat-roofed mandapa (ardhamandapa) leading into a square flat-roofed sanctuary which supports a vimana. But at the same time, the early Cholas adopted certain forms of the Pallavas who designed the original forms. Among the early Chola kings, Aditya I (871-907 A.D) was the real founder of the Chola architectural tradition. The history of the temple reveals that many of its structures which were built in different epochs.

The period of the Imperial Cholas (c. 850 CE-1250 CE) in South Indian was an age of continuous improvement and refinement of Dravidian art and architecture. They utilised the wealth earned through their extensive conquests in building long lasting stone temple and

exquisite bronze sculpture, in an almost exclusively Hindu cultural setting the Cholas built their temples in the traditional way of the Pallava dynasty, who were themselves influenced by the Amaravathi School of architecture. The Chola artists and artisans further drew their influence from other contemporary art and architectural schools and elevated the Dravidian temple design to greater heights. The Chola kings built numerous temples throughout their kingdom, which normally comprised the plains, central and northern Tamil Nadu and at times the entire state of Tamil Nadu as also adjoining parts of modern Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. In the evolution of the Chola temple architecture the major phases, beginning with Vijayalaya Chola and continuing till Sundara Chola, the middle phase of Rajendra Chola when the achievement scaled heights never reached before or since and the final phase during the Chalukya Chola period of Kulottunga Chola I till the demise of the Chola empire.

In addition to the temple, they also built many buildings such as hospitals, public utility buildings and palaces. Many such building find mention in their inscription and in contemporary accounts. The golden palace that Aditya Karikala supposedly built for his father Sundara Chola is an example of such a buildings were of perishable materials such as timer and fired bricks and have not survived the ravages of time and also.

Aims and Purpose of study

The aim and purpose of the project is to highlight the Chola's Temple Architecture. It and the importance of Temple architecture and its antiquity.

Objectives of the Study

- The main objectives of the study are as follows; to bring out the Temples built by the Chola Kings.
- To trace out the marvels of Temple architecture.
- To explore the contemporary life of the people through temple Architecture.

Sources of the project

The project is based on both primary and secondary source it has been classified into primary source and secondary source are inscription, while the secondary sources are books and web sources.

Methodology

The methodology adopted in this study is analytical and descriptive the source material have been critically analysed and investigate. The description method is used in the presentation of make the readers.

Outline of the Chapters

The first chapter deals with the Historical background of the Cholas.

The second chapter bring out the history and the structure of Brihadesswara temple at Thanjavur.

The third chapter speaks about the heritage of temple at Gangai konda Chilapuram.

The fourth chapter deals with the antiquity of Airvatesvara Temple - Darasuram.

The fifth chapter reveal the wonders of Sri Ranganathaswamy temple , Srirangam,

CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF THE CHOLAS

The Cholas of Thanjavur (ninth to thirteenth centuries) were great conquerors, not only paramount in South India but for some time, extending their sway as far as the river Ganga in the north, and exerting influence over Sri Lanka, a part of Burma, the Malayan Peninsula and some islands in south-east Asia. They were also mighty builders who erected a large number of temples across their empire. Inheritors of the Pallava tradition, these edifices reflect the power and genius of their authors, and some of the moments constitute the finest specimens of south Indian architecture.¹

The early Cholas are referred to in the literature of the Sangam Age, and rulers from that time, such as the Emperor Karikala, are lost in legendary grandeur. It was several centuries later, that Vijayalaya (850-71), the first of the imperial line of Cholas, established a small kingdom around Thanjavur, which developed into a gigantic empire under his successors. Indeed, the Chola Empire from the time of Vijayalaya witnessed a very significant period of religious and literary revival in south India.²

Under Vijayalaya's son and grandson, Aditya and Parantaka respectively, there was a great temple-building activity. Parantaka (907-54) ruled for forty-eight years. Bearing such heroic titles as *virasolan* and *samara-kesari*, he extended his dominions by conquests. Shortly after his accession, Parantaka defeated the combined forces of the Pandyas, who ruled further south at Madurai, and of Sri Lanka, and thus acquired the title ***Maduraiyum-Ilamum-konda***, i.e., one who captured Madurai and Sri Lanka.³ He was a great devotee of Siva, and covered

¹ Chopra , P. N., Ravindran, T. K., Subrahmanian, N, *History of South India: Ancient, Medieval and Modern*. New Delhi: S. Chand Company Ltd, 2003, p.35.

² Rajayyan,K, *Tamil Nadu A Real History*, Ratna publications,Trivandrum,2005, pp.31-40.

³ Harle, J. C., *The art and architecture of the Indian subcontinent*, Yale University Press, 1994, p.45.

the Chidambaram temple with gold. He must also have been a great scholar and patron of literature, as suggested by his title *panditavatsala*.

Parantaka's sons inherited his qualities, but unfortunately both died early. The eldest, Rajaditya (947-49) came close to defining the Rashtrakuta King, Krishna III but died during the battle while seated on his elephant, at the very moment of victory.⁴ Rajaditya's younger brother, Gandaraditya (949-57), also died young, leaving his queen with a little child in her arms. However, the queen was in pious and remarkable for her generosity in building and endowing temples.

Thus, followed a weak period in Chola history.⁵ The Rashtrakuta ruler, Krishna III, asserted his power in Tondai mandalam. Since Gandaraditya's son was child, Arinjaya (956-57), Gandaraditya's younger brother ascended to the throne, and fought a battle to try and regain the lost territory. But he too lost his life on the battlefield, and was succeeded by his son, Sundara Chola.

Sundara Chola (956-73) was a great warrior. Like his grandfather, Parantaka, he was also great patron of literature. Sundara Chola's last days were clouded by the tragic assassination of Aditya, his valiant eldest son. Aditya's younger brother, Rajaraja, was then a youth but already greatly accomplished and powerful. However, Rajaraja's nobility was such that he refused to ascend to the Chola throne, even though he was greatly desired by the people. The reason was that Rajaraja's uncle, Uttama Chola, Gandaraditya's infant son, now quite grown up-longed for the throne. In 985, however, Rajaraja finally succeeded.

Known as Rajakesari Arumolivarman, Rajaraja I (985-1014) was probably the greatest Chola emperor, and the thirty years of his rule constitute the formative period of Chola imperialism. His military triumphs, organization of the empire, patronage of art and literature,

⁵ Rajayan, K, *op.cit.*, pp.140-143.

and religious tolerance are only partially matched by future Chola emperors, among them his own son Rajendra, who was a great military genius.

At the time of Rajaraja's ascension, the Chola kingdom had just recovered from the onslaught of the Rashtrakutas. Thus, Rajaraja inaugurated his reign with military campaigns to strengthen the kingdom. He subdued the Kerala's, Pandyas and Simhalas, and prevailed over the western hilly tracks of Mysore and Gangavadi. He also triumphed over the Chalukya king, Satyasraya and used the great treasures gained from this victory to enrich the magnificent temple known as Brihadisvara he had built at Thanjavur.

Being both a valorous and sagacious conqueror, Rajaraja gave his daughter, Kundavai to Vimaladitya, younger brother of Saktivarman, the Eastern Chalukya king under Rajaraja's protection.

A force to reckon with on both land and sea, Rajaraja used his mighty navy to conquer the Maldives, as well as a number of other islands; and crippled the Cheras, known for their naval strength. He also sent his son Rajendra to Kalinga and established a pillar of victory on Mahendra hill.

It was Rajaraja who first recorded all the transactions relating to the maintenance of temples in a graphic manner including official accounts of the leading events of his reign, in set form. The practice was maintained by his successors, thereby providing a formal record of the transactions, internal chronology and general history of each reign.⁶

Rajaraja was followed by his equally brilliant son Rajendra I (1012-44). On the foundations established by his father, Rajendra raised the Chola Empire to the position of being the most extensive and respected Hindu state of his time, and was undoubtedly the most influential ruler of his line. He asserted his power in Sri Lanka, the Chera and the Pandya countries and Chalukya Jayasimha. He then turned his gaze north-wards, in his desire to bring

⁶Chopra , P. N., Ravindran, T. K., Subrahmanian, N, *op.cit.*, p.176.

the waters of the sacred Ganga to his kingdom, by the might of his arm. In less than two years, Rajendra conquered the Eastern Chalukya territory, Kalinga and Dakshina-Kosala, as well as the king Mahipala of East India.

To celebrate these triumphs, Rajendra created the *jalamaya-stembha*, 'a liquid pillar of victory' in his new capital at Gangaikondacholapuram, or 'the city of the Chola, the bringer of the Ganga'. Rajendra demanded only one tribute from his vassal-kings that they should bring pots of water was poured into the great tank. The emperor assumed the title of Gangaikondachola, 'the Chola king who brought the Ganga'. As thanksgiving, he erected a large temple in honour of Siva, also known as Brihadisvara, at his capital.⁷

Rajendra then utilized the powerful Chola navy to attack and subdue the Sailendra king Sangramavijayottungavarman of Srivijaya (Sumatra-Java). His inscriptions include mention of a number of places included in the empire of Srivijaya, which are understood to be located mainly in Malaya. His further conquests of Burma, the islands in the Eastern Archipelago, Sri Lanka, Lakshadweep and Maldives clearly demonstrate his unparalleled naval strength. In other field, Rajendra's tremendous scholarship and literary attainments earned him the title Pandita-Chola. The marriage of his daughter *Ammanga devi* to his nephew, the Eastern Chalukya king Rajaraja, was a stroke of diplomatic genius and the child born of this marriage was the great Rajendra-Chola Kulottunga.

Kulottunga (1070-1120) succeeded his maternal uncles Rajadhiraja and Virarajendra in 1070 and ruled over an extensive empire, combining the Chola and Chalukya dominions. He was dominant on both land and sea. His power was felt even in distant Kalinga. He was succeeded by Vikrama Chola (1118-35).⁸

⁷ Rajayyan, K, *op.cit.*, p.31.

⁸"Great Living Chola Temple" UNESCO World Heartage Centre, 2004. Retrieved 28 November 2015.

Vikrama Chola's son, Kulottunga II (1133-50), made elaborate renovations to the temple at Chidambaram. This building activity was sustained in the reign of his son, Rajaraja II (1150-73), whose title Raja gambhira is recorded in the mandapa of the Airavatesvara temple at Darasuram. It is at Darasuram too that numerous stories of Saiva saints reveal the rulers growing zeal for Saivism.

Rajaraja II's nephew, Rajadhiraja (1166-1180), was succeeded by Kulottunga III (1178-1218), the last great Chola emperor. By sheer strength of will and personality, Kulottunga III checked the disruption that had begun eating into the vitals of the empire. He was also a great builder, and his reign is marked by several additions to the glorious Chola architecture. His influence is evident not only in the Kampaharesvara temple at Tridhuvanam, the most important monument of his time, but also at Kanchi, Madurai, Chidambaram, Tiruvarur, Tiruvidaimarudur and Darasuram.

Temples and their fundamental elements:

The Hindu temples primarily had four important features the Garbhagriha, Shikhar or Vimana, Mandapa, and the Vahana. In all these elements a sense of proportion and geometry in form of shapes such as circles, squares or curves was visible. Depending upon the shape and structure of the basic elements, the temples in India can be divided into three distinct categories:

- i. The Nagara style or the North Indian temple Architecture.
- ii. The Dravidian style or the south Indian temple Architecture.
- iii. The Vesara style containing a mix of both the Architecture.⁹

Dravidian Temple Architecture

The Dravidian style of temple architecture was popular in south India and certain distinct features as discussed below.

⁹ Nilakanda Sastri, K.A., *A History South Indian Oxford University press*, New Delhi, 1955 p.104.

- The entire temple of complex was enclosed in a compound wall, which is not seen in the Nagara style.
- At the entrance of the temple are located gateways or gopurams which are often large and highly decorated. In the Srirangam temple at Tiruchirapalli there are seven concentric walls rectangular in shape, each having a gopuram.
- The Vimana located above the garbhagriha is often like a stepped pyramid or geometrical in shape. It is not curving like the Nagara temples nor is the concept of multiple Shikharas seen in the Dravidian temple.¹⁰
- Above the Vimana is the topmost portion which is shaped like a stupika. In some temples in place of the stupika an octagonal cupola like structure may be present. This is analogue to amalaka and kalash of the North Indian temple.
- A distinct of Dravidian temples was the presence of a water tank in the temple compound. These reservoirs, apart from serving ceremonial purpose would also be of practical utility as the Dravidian temple with large complexes would also be centres of socio-cultural and religious activity.
- At the entrance of the temple, images or sculptures of fierce looking dwarapals (gaurds) would be present. This is in contrast to the images of Ganga and Yamuna, or Mithunar found at the entrance of North Indian temple.
- In some temple complexes in South India where multiple Garbhagriha are found the tower pertaining to the main deity may not be the largest one and rather it may even be the smallest one. The important temples at Thanjavur, Madurai, Tiruchirapalli, Kanchipuram, Kumbakonam, and Mahabalipuram.¹¹

Sub-Division of Dravidian Temple Architecture

¹⁰Madhukar Kumar Bhagat, *Indian Heritage, Art & Culture*, G.K. Publication, New Delhi, 2019, pp.7.7-7.10.

¹¹ Macherla Diwakar, *Temples of South India.*, Techno book house., pp.131-132.

The Dravidian temples can be further subdivided into different categories based on the shape of the temples. Further they are also classified depending on the dynasty or this group of temples of which it is a part as they carried a distinct of the art and architecture of the dynasty which built or patronized it.

Classification of Dravidian temple based on shape:

- Cuta or Katusara: These were temples with square shape.
- Shala or Ayatsara: These were rectangular in shape.
- Gaja-Prishta or Vrittayata: Gaja-Prishta means elephant back and is referred to temples shaped like a sphere (Vrittayata). These were similar to vaulted shapes of chaityar which have a horseshoe shaped entrance.
- Vritta: or circular shaped temples.
- Ashtasara: or octagonal shaped temple.¹²

The Tanjore Temple Chola architecture too is an important style of Dravidian temple construction. The more important temple of this group is the Brihadishvara temple at Thanjavur built by Raja Raja Chola in around 1009 CE (also called The Rajarajeshwara temple). This is the largest and also tallest temple in India. The Vimana of the temple is 70m high and has a monolithic Shikhara a top which is a massive 80 tanne stone making the construction an engineering marvel. The temple of the chola period were much grander than those of its predecessors, viz. the Pallavar, Chalukyar, and Pandyas.¹³

¹²Macherla Diwakar, *op.cit.*, p.38

¹³Madhukar Kumar Bhagat, *op.cit.*, p.7.10.

CHAPTER II

BRIHADISVARA TEMPLE - THANJAVUR

Introduction

The district of Thanjavur boasts of hundreds of ancient temples. The town of Thanjavur was the seat of the glorious Chola Empire of Tamil Nadu and was later on the seat of the Nayaks and the Marathas. Thanjavur is also known as the Rice Bowl of South India as it lies in the fertile Cauvery delta region and rice is the main cultivation crop here. The Chola Kings loved art and architecture and spend a major income of the state for the development of and architecture art.

Thanjavur attained prominence under the Cholas in the ninth century when Vijayalaya, the dynasty's first great ruler, established his capital here. The Brihadisvara temple here symbolizes the greatness of the Chola Empire, and reflects the splendour of its author, emperor Rajaraja I. This ambitious architectural undertaking began in 1003 and was designed to represent cosmic structures, in keeping with the Chola ideology of equating temple, cosmos and territory. The Brihadisvara temple is a monument dedicated to Siva, represented by a Linga that Rajaraja established here and named Rajarajesvaramudayar, after himself.

The inscriptions incised in elegant letters along the plinth of the temple's gigantic edifice extol the personality of this great emperor.¹⁴ The inscriptions also tell how the emperor, on the two hundred and seventy-fifth day of the twenty-fifth year of his reign (1010), presented a gold-covered final to be placed on top of the temple's vimana.

¹⁴ Subramanian, N., *History of Tamil Nadu*, 1972, Madurai. p.121.

Raja Raja Chola I, the son of Sundara Chola and Vanavanmahadevi was clearly the greatest of the Chola monarchs. He was a great builder, and the Sri Brihadisvara temple or the Big Temple at Thanjavur was his creation.¹⁵

Sri Brihadisvara temple it is said was the dream project of the great Chola emperor, Raja Raja (984-1014). And literally so for the temple was the result of a command he had received from the Lord in a dream. Also known as Rajarajaswaram, after the emperor the temple is built entirely of granite which must have been transported from long distances as the stone is not known to be available in the Thanjavur area construction of the temple now a World Heritage site.¹⁶

Structure of the Temple

In 1000A.D. at Thanjavur the greatest of the early Chola temples was built a stupendous pyramidal shrine, sacred to Siva, its tower nearly 200 feet high and crowned by an eight-ton ornate dome capstone.¹⁷ On the inner walls of the ambulatory which runs around the cell under the main tower are the remains of an original series of wall – paintings illustrating Siva mythology and celestial female dancers another hint at how lavishes the use of color originally was on Indian architecture. But the Chola are perhaps more artistically remarkable for the extraordinary school of bronze scripture which they patronized and which was continued and evolved down the present day. It produced icons, ranging from almost life *size* to a few inches high Hindu deities. The largest and most important of them were sometimes dedicated as “portraits” of members of the royal family in the guise of Gods.¹⁸

¹⁵ Bharath, *op.cit.*, p.16.

¹⁶ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>

¹⁷ Noboru Karashima, *Ancient to Medieval South Indian Society in Transition*, Oxford university press, New Delhi, 2009, pp.4-23.

¹⁸ Basham.A.L, “A Cultural History of India”, Oxford University Press, New Delhi. p.208.

The Brihadisvara temple was dedicated to the main Chola God Shiva although other Hindu deities were also worshipped. It was completed in just seven or eight years and is considered to be the peak of the Dravidian Temple style of Architecture.

Prakaram

The long prakaram surrounds the great temple (500 feet/250 feet) and the walls surrounding the prakaram again go back to Raja Raja Chola's period. The walls house long pillared corridors, which abound in murals, Siva lingams and Nandis.

Periya Nayaki Temple

The Periya Nayaki temple within the temple is a later addition from the Pandya period, and so is the Subramanyar Temple sung later by the saint poet Arunagirinathar.

The sanctum, Artha mandapam, the Mukha mandapam and the Maha mandapam although distinct, form a composite unit with an imposing appearance that awes visitors, forcing one to wonder how such timeless architectural feat was executed about a 1000 years ago.

Entrances to the mandapams and the towered entrances to the prakarams are majestic. The grandeur of the architecture and the sculptural finesse speaks volumes of the skills of the imperial Cholas. Inscriptions refer to Shiva as Dakshine Meruvitankar and Aadavallan.

Keralanathagan Gopuram (first gate)

Raja Raja Chola assumed the title of Keralanathan meaning destroyer of Kerala, after his history over Kerala King Baskarvarma his gopuram is named after this title form of Shiva – Rudhrathandeva pose (a fierce Shiva in dancing form), Shiva with Parvathi, Bichadanar (Shiva as beggar), and Sadasiva.¹⁹

¹⁹ Nilakanta Sastri K.A, *Cholas, New Century book house Pvt.Ltd.*, Nov 1989, Chennai, pp.27-34.

Raja Rajan Gopuram (second gate)

The second gate is called Rajarajan Gopuram. This gopura names after the King Rajaraja I is contiguous with the prakara wall of the temple. The most impressive in this thiruvasal are the colossal Dwarakapalas. The two huge 15 feet monolithic Dwarakapalas on their side of this entrance is seen.

Maha Nandi

The nandi, which dates back to the Nayakas period, is housed in its own mandapam and it matches up to the grandeur and size of the temple. It is a monolithic Nandi weighting about 25 tonnes, and is about 12 feet high and 20 feet long. The ceiling of the mantapa was painted during Maratha period.²⁰

Sri Vimana

The magnificent view of Srivimana appears as one enters the huge open courtyard from the Raja Rajan Gopuram. The towering vimanam is about 200 feet in height and is referred to as Dakshinameru. The entire vimana is of stone and the sikhara of eight pieces weight 80 tones. Above the vimana is the shining kalasam (bowl) made up of gold is seen whose height is 12 feet and was orginally presented by Rajaraja – I. At the top of the pyramid above the 13th stage 8 nandis are seen on corners.²¹

From side of the vimana that is facing the east direction one can see the sculptures of abode of Shiva called as Mahameru. The whole of srivimana is built using granite rocks and the sculpture in temples were covered by a layer of mortar to preserve the gramnote sculpture inside. Rajaraja Chola was a great devote of Lord Shiva called the srivimana as Dakshinameru.

²⁰ Nilakanta Sastri K.A, op.cit., p.10.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.11.

The shivalingam- peruvudaiyar, Brihadeeswarar, Rajarajeswara madaiyar, is a huge one, set in a two storeyed sanctum and the walls surrounding the sanctum delight visitors as a storehouse of murals and sculptures.

History's Mystery

After declare of study and research historians remain puzzled about logistics of the Thanjavur temple. How was it all done? The master designers built the hollow tower by interlocking stones without using any binding material. The temple was made from gigantic blocks of hard, durable granite 1,30,000 tonnes to be precise. But there isn't a granite quarry to be found within a 100km radius So where was it from and how was all of it brought to kumbham, was carved out of one single stone and weighed 80 tonnes Keep in mind that around the world from India to the U.S and U.K. the maximum weight limit for trucks on modern tarmac roads is no more than 45 tonnes.

So how on earth was this 80 tonnes stone raised to a height of 200 feet without cranes and electricity, one thousand years ago? Was it carved and then raised, or sculpted in place?

Nature's Truck

The answer is Indian's ancient power house the elephant, imagine vast slabs of granite being pushed and pulled over rolling tree trunks for miles end by armies of elephant. Local royal legend has it that some distance from the site a long winding ramp with a gentle incline of 6° was built. Elephants and their mahouts wrestled the stone slabs up to 1.6 kilometers ramp. Until they reached the story under tried to recreate modern documentaries have been tried to recreate the scenario it seems that for the massive key sets six to seven elephants would have been required.

Granite endures but as one of the hardest stones found in nature it is also extremely difficult to cut and shape. And a thousand years ago there were no power of drills and stainless-steel blades. To cut and rocks, stone masons ingeniously drilled small holes in a line in the

granite and then would become wet the water expanded the plugs causing the rock to break away.²²

Cluster mandapa

The long prakaram 500 feet/250 feet and the walls surrounding the prakaram again go back to Rajaraja Cholan's period. In this structure are 36 sub-shrines for the subsidiary deities like the Ashtadikpalas, the Parivara devatas ect. The mandapa is pierced by three minor doorways in the south north and west. The Maratha ruler Sarabhoji installed 108 Lingas in this mandapa, mural paintings are seen on the western and northern walls of this mandapa.

Ganapathy Shrine

This Ganapathy shrine is a small temple is situated in the south west corner of the cloister mantapa. It was built in the 18th century by the Maratha ruler Serfoji II.

Karuvur Devar Shrine

This small shrine is western side of the cloister mandapa. It is dedicated to Karuvur Devar the preceptor of Rajaraja I. It is vaulted roof supported by stones pillars. This shrine belongs to the Maratha of the 19th century.²³

Subramanya Shrine

This beautiful temple is situated in northwest corner of the cloister mandapa. It is dedicated to Lord Subramanya was constructed by the Nayaks in the 16th century by Sevappa Nayaks.

It is a gem of Nayaks architecture. Though based on a simple design the quality of workmanship can be seen through its exquisite minute carvings.

²² Rajayyan K., *op.cit.*, pp.35-40.

²³ Subbarayalu Y., *South India Under the Cholas*, Oxford University Press 2012, Delhi, pp.77-78.

Chandikesvara shrine

This Chandikesvara shrine is located to the north of the sanctum is contemporary to the main temple. This is the smallest modal of a Chola temple.

Amman shrine

Amman Shrine is located on the northern side of nandhimandapam. The deity enshrined is called as UlagammulududaiyaNachiyar in the inscriptions and now it is referred to as PeriyaNayagamman in Tamil and Brihannayaki in Sanskrit. It was originally installed by Rajaraja – I and later moved to this shrine.²⁴

This shrine is built by the Pandya King Jatavarman Sundra Pandian in 13th century. Later the huge entrances with numerous stone pillars were built during the regime of the Nayaks 15th century. The entrance hall ceiling consisted of huge stone slabs that were supported by long beams and tall pillars. The ceiling slabs are used as canvas to narrate the divine plays of Lord Shiva painted during the Maratha ruler Serfoji (1799 – 1835 AD).

Sivaganga tank and park

This water Tank and park lies beyond the northwest compound of Sri Brihadisvaratemple. Its battlemented stone walls which enclose an area of 35 acres are surrounded by a part rock cut moat. The square Sivaganga Tank in the fort was excavated to provide drinking water for the city.

A toy train, motor boating facilities and a miniature Zoological garden are located within the park. A nominal fee is collected for entrance.²⁵

Services at the temple

Fine arts, made in the service of the temple, were encouraged; and the sculptures, the paintings in the sanctum's dark passages, and even the inscriptions in elegant Chola Grantha

²⁴ Rajayyan K., *op.cit.*, pp.35-40.

²⁵ Subrahmanian N., *History of Tamil Nadu to A.D- 1336*, Koodal Publishers, Madurai, pp.174-216.

and Tamil letters give some idea of the refined art patronized by Rajaraja. Proficiency in dance and music was greatly prized and these arts, too, were employed to serve the temple: the evening ritual was also a form of entertainment, and the townspeople would gather in the mandapa to witness and enjoy ceremonies such as the waving of lights and the chanting of Vedic and Devaram hymns.

In this manner, the temple acquired a vast staff, including cooks, gardeners, flower-gatherers, garland-makers, musicians, drummers, dancers and dance-masters, wood-carvers, sculptors, painters, choir-groups for singing hymns in Sanskrit and Tamil, accountants, watchmen and a host of other officials and servants. The inscriptions record that all these ‘employees’ were given adequate grants of land.

Just from the one fact that Rajaraja constructed two long streets (talichcheri), for the accommodation of four hundred dancing women attached to the temple, we can well imagine the lavish scale on which he endowed the temple and its management. The annual income from the land set aside for the temple is estimated as one hundred and sixteen thousand kalams of paddy. Besides this, the emperor is known to have presented gold weighing 489 lbs. troy and silverware weighing 600 lbs. troy, as well as jewels, cash and many other gifts, which form a staggering account of munificence.

In the words of K. A. NilkantaSastri, ‘When we recall the nature and extent of the efforts and sacrifices that must have gone into the construction of this magnificent temple... and the manner in which numerous villages all over the empire were linked with the daily routine of the temple... when we consider further, how all the learning and the arts that flourished in the county were impressed into the service of the temple, we cannot fail to observe how the Great Temple had come to hold, from its very inception, a prominent place in the

polity of the land. The temple was meant to dominate Thanjavur as Thanjavur dominated the rest of South India at the time: it was indeed the masterpiece of Rajaraja's rule²⁶.

Thanjavur, Brihadisvara Temple is known for its architectural style. It stands as pride of Tamil Nadu. To celebrate the 1000th years of the grand structure, the state Government and the town held many cultural events. To mark the occasion the state government organized a Bharathnatyamyajna, classical dance show under noted Padma Subramanian.

It was jointly organised by the Association of Bharathanatyam Artistes of India the Bharathanatya Trust Thanjavur. To mark the 1000th anniversary of the building, 1000 dancers from various states of our country participated the concert record 11 verses of divine music. Thiruvisaippa composed by Karvur Deva, the guru of Raja Raja Chola.²⁷

On 26th September 2010, as a recognition of Big Temple's contribution to the country's cultural, architecture epigraphical history a special 5 postage stamps featuring the 216 feet tall giant Raja Gopuram was released by Indian post.

On 1st April 1954, the Reserve Bank of India released a 1000 currency note featuring a panoramic view of the Brihadisvara Temple marking in cultural heritage. The Reserve Bank of India commended the event by releasing a 5 coin with the mode of temple embossed on it. A Raja cabinet minister of communication and Information Technology released the esteemed Brihadisvara temple special stamp, the first of which was received by G. K. Vasan Minister of shipping.²⁸

²⁶ Nilakanda Sastri. K.A, *A History of South India*, Oxford University Press, London, 1966, p.457.

²⁷ Bashan.A.L., *op.cit.*,p.16.

²⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brihadisvara_Temple,_Thanjavur.

CHAPTER III

GANGAIKONDA CHOLAPURAM

Gangaikonda Cholapuram is situated in Udayarpalayam taluk of Ariyalur district. The nearest railway station is at Kumbakonam and Ariyalur. By Road; Gangaikondacholapuram is 61 kilo meters north of Tanjavur and 35 kilo meters north of Kumbakonam. It is well connected by road Trichy (102 kilo meters) and Chidambaram (41 kilo meters).²⁹

History

Rajendra Chola I, Son of Rajaraja I and his queen Vanavan Madevi also called as Tribhuvanamadevi established this temple after his victorious march to river Ganges. He was originally called as Madurantakan. He assumed the title of Rajendra during his coronation and continued to rule along with his father Rajendra for a while. His empire extended the whole of Southern India up to river Thungabatra in the north. For the administrative and strategic purpose, he built another capital apart from Tanjavur and named it as Gangaikondacholapuram. He also dug the huge lake known as Cholagangam that spreads 22 km mainly used for drinking and irrigation.³⁰ It is also locally known as Ponneri in Tamil language which means Golden Lake. The temple consists of three storeys and surrounded by a huge fort, the stones from the ruined outer wall was used by the British officials for construction of the lower Anicut (Dam across river kollidam) nearby.

The establishment of the city and the construction of the temple were completed between 1023 and 1029 AD. After the fall of Chola dynasty the city came in to the hands of Pandyas and later on under the control of Vijayanagara dynasty.³¹ In the eighteenth century the French and English army occupied this region and used the temple complex as a fort. The bastions outside the enclosure walls on the west were erected during this period.

²⁹ Vedavali Kanna & Thambiah.N., “*Kangaikondacholesweram Gangaikondacholapuram*” ,Ehrich Edu CDs,

³⁰ Rajayyan,K, *Tamil Nadu A Real History* , Ratna publications, Trivandrum, 2005,pp.31-40

³¹ Pillai Somanasundaram, J, M., *The great temple at Tanjore*. Tamil University, (1994) Thanjavur.pp.109-111.

The Temple

The basement of Srivimana is 100 feet by 100 feet and the foundation is square in structure and raises 20 feet above the ground level. The three lower tiers house many masterpiece sculptures of Chola period including the Lakshmi, Ganga, Saraswathi, Ardhanarisvararar (Shiva Parvathi in equal but in one form), and Shiva along with Parvathi blessing Chandilesvara. There are many shrines inside this temple found on the second praharam, Mahisasuramardhini shrine, Amman shrine, Chandigesvarar shrine Ganapathy shrine etc. There was Nataraja mandapam now totally destroyed and only the remains are found. The temple was completed and consecrated by Rajendra in his twenty third regal year i.e 1035AD.

The great monument at Gangaikondacholapuram, the Brihadisvara Gangaikonda Cholesvara temple, rears its heads nobly and proclaims the imperial dignity of the capital that Rajendra I, son of Rajaraja, established after his victorious march up to the river Ganga in Eastern India. The capital itself has disappeared today, and even the emperor's palace exists only in ruins marked by brick debris at a place called Ulkottai about 1.5km away from the temple, where even today a mound called Maligaimedu, 'palace-mound', supplies bricks to villages. Both the capital and the palace were completed between 1023 and 1029, while the temple was completed and consecrated by Rajendra in his twenty-third regnal year, 1035. Gangaikondacholapuram remained a major administrative centre of the Cholas till the middle of the thirteenth century.

After the fall of the Cholas in the middle of the thirteenth century, Gangaikondacholapuram came under the Pandyas and, later, under the Vijayanagara empire. Much later, in the eighteenth century, French and English forces invaded this region and used the temple as a fort, as a result of which the monument suffered considerable damage. The bastions outside the enclosure walls on the west were erected during these wars.

Nearby, another village has a large tank called Tottikulam, excavated by the king and about 1.5 km to the south of the temple is third village, Vanadipattam, ‘place of fireworks’, believed to be where fireworks for temple-festivals were made. Meikavalputtur, 1.5 km to the temple’s east, is so named because it was the place for the watchman of the temple. A fifth village, 1.5 km beyond Meikavalputtur, is called Tirthakulam and had the teppakulam, a tank used for floating the barge during temple-festivals.

About 3 km to the west is a large water-reservoir called Ponneri, now in ruins. The sacred waters of the Ganga brought here by Rajendra must have been poured into either this tank, or the reservoir outside the temple’s gopura, which is also dilapidated.

Structure of the Temple

A majestic gopura conserved up to the prastana level greets the visitor. Entering through the gopura, one sees a huge Nandi, beyond the bali-pitha. Unlike its counterpart at Thanjavur, this sculpture is not monolithic.

The temple itself forms a rectangle approximately 106 meter long and 30 meter wide, composed primarily of a maha-mandapa and garbhagriha, square in plan. Inside, the garbhagriha measures 8.25 square meter, while the maha-mandapa at the interior of the eastern end measures about 75 meter from the interior face of the garbhagriha.

As at Thanjavur two flights of steps, on the northern and southern sides, lead up to two dvarapalas – huge monoliths guarding the first entrance – and to a long, closed mandapa. The plinth of the entire mandapa, up to the ardha-mandapa and mukha-mandapa of the main temple, is a part of the original construction, though its wall appears to have been renovated. The pillars and platform are later additions³².

Two flights of steps lead to the ardha-mandapa from the north and south. Here, the mukha-mandapa is guarded on either side by two pairs of dvarapalas, and a third pair may be

³² Subbarayalu, Y., *South Indian under Chola*, Oxford University press 2012, Delhi, pp.77-78.

seen at the eastern entrance, leading from the main mandapa to the mukha-mandapa. Yet another pair of colossal dvarapalas guard the entrance to the sanctum.

The eastern walls of the mukha-mandapa, on either side, are decorated with carvings of Siva in different aspects of anugraha (favour), including: Vishnvanugraha- murti (bestowing grace on Vishnu, who worships him with his lotus-eye), Ravananugraha-murti (blessing Ravana, who is penitent after having raise mount Kailasa), Devyanugraha-murti (bestowing grace on Devi, who worships the linga), Kalyanasundara-murti (going to his marriage, attended by bhuta-ganas and goblins; and the ceremony with all its rejoicing), Markandeyanugraha-murti (blessing his devotee Markandeya by rescuing him from Yama, the god of death) and Chandesanugraha-murti (blessing Chandesa, who cut off his own father's legs for interfering with his worship of Siva, and bathed the linga with milk from the cows in his care).³³

To the north-east is a beautiful, large panel, a masterpiece of Chola art, which shows Siva bestowing his grace on Chandikesvara.

The temple vimana is 54.86 meter high with nine receding tiers, topped with a sikhara with a design of lotus petals and a gold-coated Stupa with a lotus bud; and follows its predecessor at Thanjavur in arrangement. However, while the latter is tall and stately, with a straight and severe contour suggestive of strength, this temple is shorter and its contour is more graceful and delicate, and somewhat feminine in its lack of angularity. In the words of Percy Brown: "Without doubt the tall pyramidal vimana which towers over the western end is a superb achievement.... There is a voluptuousness in the...structure, the beauty of ripe femininity...Stately and formal as an epic may epitomize the Tanjore vimana, while [Gangaikondacholapuram]... has all the sensuous passion of an eastern lyric...Each is the final and absolute vision of its creator made manifest through the medium of structural form, the

³³ Subbarayalu, Y., *op.cit.*, p.78.

one symbolizing conscious might, the other sub-conscious grace, but both dictated by that “divinity which has seized the soul”.³⁴

There are fewer sculptures here than in Thanjavur, but they are of the same nature. Here, too, there are representations of princely warriors with swords and shields. Lakshmi and Saraswari are shown seated in niches as at Thanjavur. In the northern and southern niches of the central shrine are Bhikshatana-murti and Chandesanugraha-murti, the former disfigured with a plaster-coat.

In the southern niches, a figure, presumably of Dakshina-murti, is missing. The rest represent dancing Ganesa. Ardhanarisvara beside his bull, Hari-Hara and Nataraja dancing with Kali and Bhringi, attended by ganas while Karaikkalammaiyyar plays the cymbals. On the sides of the niche Vishnu plays the drum, Ganesa and Karttikeya approach on their vehicles, and Devi, her arm resting on the bull beside her, watches the dance.³⁵

To the west is Siva as Gangadhara, appeasing Devi who is forlorn and sullen because her lord received Ganga on his matted locks. Carvings on the sides of these niches narrate the story of Bhagiratha’s penance to bring Ganga down to earth. The figures include: Lingobhava, Vishnu with his consorts, and Karttikeya, or Indra, as well as Siva as Uma-sahita. On the walls of the niche that shows Uma-sahita, Vishnu is seen adoring Siva by offering his eye as a flower.³⁶

The northern niches contain figures of Kalantaka, with the story of Markandeya on the sides of the niche, eight-armed Mahishamardini standing with her lion, Brahma with a beard accompanied by his consorts Savitri and Sarasvati, eight-armed Bhairava, Siva as Madanantaka burning Manmatha, one hand in the tarjani (threatening) attitude and Manmatha and his consort Rati, the former first shooting a bow, then helpless, while other gods intervene on his behalf.

³⁴ Venkata Kamanappa, M.A., *South Indian History*, Vikas publishing, New Delhi, 1975.p.65.

³⁵ Subrahmanian N., *History of Tamil Nadu to A.D.1336*, Koodel publishers, Madurai, pp.136-137.

³⁶ Rajayyan, k, *op.cit.*, pp.31-40.

At the base of the temple, the lowest series of panels shows seated lions, each with one paw raised and rearing itself in an attitude usually found in Pallava temples of the time of Rajasimha (690-715), and with analogues at Prambanan in Indonesia.³⁷

The niches are arranged in the same fashion as at Thanjavur: a large central niche flanked on each side by two smaller niches, all projecting out of the main wall, and a kumbha-panjara pattern between each pair. The roof-forms on separate tiers, in the shape of sala, koshta and kudu, are particularly noteworthy. The eaves of the lowest niches contain bracket-figures of the ganas of Siva and rearing lions. The principal niche on each side is devoted to the gods of the Trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva: Siva Dakshinamurti on the south, and Vishnu and Brahma with consorts on the west and north respectively. The bays of the niches are decorated at every stage with rows of Yalis, and there are makara-heads at the extreme ends, from which warriors come forth. The niche-tops are decorated in a circular fashion, as at Thanjavur³⁸.

The temple-base below the tali-friezes is covered with inscriptions, though not as completely as at Thanjavur. The niches contain various repeated iconographic forms in different orders, as well as other figures such as Varaha rescuing the Earth. The space for these representations was created by using the space reserved for kumbha-panjaras in other niches in addition to the five main niches.

Of the twelve complete and deciphered inscriptions from the temple, none relate to emperor Rajendra. The earliest and longest inscription is of Virarajendra Chola, the third son of Rajendra, and records gifts of land in a number of villages in the empire, the proceeds of which were used for worship and maintenance of temple. Two other orders concern Rajadhiraja I, son and successor of Rajendra, and reveal that most of the lands and proceed recorded here

³⁷Nobour Karashima , *Ancient to Medieval South Indian Society in Transition*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi,

2009, pp.4-23

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.23-27.

are also recorded in the Thanjavur inscription of Rajaraja as gifts to the temple of Thanjavur. The inscription is of considerable value as it mentions the name of various divisions of the Chola empire, and a long list of officers who were in charge of administration, as well as names of various temples, tanks, colonies, irrigation channels, cremation grounds and more, thus furnishing details for a study of the contemporary history of these regions. Rajendra is referred to here as Purvadesamam Gangaiyam, Kadaramam Kondarulina Ayyar – the father, the victor of Purvadesa, Gangai and Kadaram³⁹.

³⁹ Subramanian ,N., *op.cit.*,p.174.

CHAPTER IV

AIRAVATESVARA TEMPLE - DARASURAM

Location

Darasuram is located in Palaiyarai region, which remained an important centre of Chola administration even when new capitals such as Thanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram were established. Darasuram became a temple settlement of great importance, centred around a Siva shrine built by Rajaraja II in the twelfth century. This is the third in line of the grand stone vimanas built by the imperial Cholas, and its compound wall measures 105meter East-West and 67meter North-South. The vimana is about 24 meter high, with five diminishing tiers. Above the fifth tier rests the circular griva with niches at the cardinal points flanked by outfacing Nandis at the corners, and surmounted by a dome, the sikhara and metal stupi.⁴⁰

As one enters the Airavatesvara temple, one finds a large gopura. Its upper portion is completely lost, but its original form may can be gauged from the fully preserved gopura inside. The larger prakara-wall all around the temple, decorated at intervals with couchant bulls, is a continuation of this second gopura. Pillars in a row support the gopura, and these are decorated with some fine carvings of lovely apsaras, Siva-gana and other motifs. Beyond the gopura is a large bali-pitha with beautiful lotus-petal decorations.⁴¹ To one side of it, just behind the large Nandi, is a quaint, standing dwarf Siva-gana blowing on a conch. Both the Nandi and Siva-gana are fine artistic creations. Long narrow strips of frieze adorned with a series of miniature figures dancing in lovely poses to musical accompaniment, provide the key-note of this temple's decoration: nitya-vinoda, perpetual entertainment.

⁴⁰ Sivaramamurthi, C., *The Great Chola Temple Thanjavur Gangaikonda Cholapuram Darasuram*, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, 2007, p.62

On either side of the entrance are small balustrades, intended to flank steps (now missing), with beautiful makara-decorations on their exteriors. Each makara has a floriated tail, short legs and curled-up snout, with a pair of dwarf gana-riders, and the series forms a lovely motif.

At the entrance there is a beautiful mandapa with a number of pillars approached through an extension towards the south, and equipped with flights of steps to the east and west. The exteriors of the balustrades for these steps are exquisitely decorated with a long curling trunk coming out of a lion-head; and a similar design running parallel to the trunk of an elephant, lost in the open jaws of a makara whose floriated tail is curled up, to balance the complete design.⁴² The elephant is beautifully decorated and mounted by dwarf ganas, viz. the sankha - and padma – nidhis.

The mandapa's eight outer pillars are supported by squatting Yalis with their trunks curled up and pronounced abaci; while the lotus-petal decorations below have prominent petal-tips. The pillar capitals, like other pillars in the mandapa, show the beginnings of the bodhika-decoration, which, in later Chola and Vijayanagara periods, develops into the lotus-decoration.⁴³ Each of the four inner pillars is divided into sections, three oblong and two polygonal. The decoration, which later develops into the naga-bandha, is just discernible and, as in other early Chola structures, consists of a pattern of double-geese. The rectangular portions of the pillars are decorated with small panels illustrating mythological stories such as the attack of Manmatha, the penance of Parvati, the prayer of the gods for a son of Siva, the birth of Kumara, Siva's marriage, that lead to the extension of the mandapa there are short, repeated inscriptions describing it as savasti sri-Raja-gambhiram tiru-mandapam.

⁴²Sivaramamurthi, C., *op.cit.*, p.64.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp.64-66

If the elephants on the sides of the balustrades of the steps mentioned above are lovely carvings, there are equally impressive galloping horses, one on either side, of the mandapa-extension, immediately beside the flight of steps. Also known as the Raja-gambhiran tiru-mandapam after Rajaraja II, this agra-mandapa is conceived as the chariot of Tripurantaka – with wheels, hubs and spokes carved in relief, drawn by caparisoned horses.⁴⁴

The form has precedence in a temple near Gangaikondacholapuram as well as two shrines in Chidambaram and Tukkachchi. It is also interesting that over a hundred years after the completion of Darasuram, it was a distant descendent of the Chola emperor Kulottunga I who built the Konark temple with its giant chariot mandapa in Orissa. A chariot shaped mandapa also exists in Hampi, Vijayanagara.

The base of the mandapa-extension is decorated in front with panels of: Siva fighting the Tripuras from his chariot, and Siva as Kalanataka fighting Yama to protect the son of Mrikandu, whom he had blessed with a long life; Siva burning Kama, who dared attack Siva with his flowery bow and arrow, as Kama's lovely queens, including Rati, and other gods pray for his life; and the destruction of Daksha's sacrifice by Virabhadra.⁴⁵ Above this, at intervals in five niches, are Agni, Indra, Brahma, Vishnu and Vayu, all standing with hands in the attitude of reference towards Siva. It should be noted that the original plan of the steps east of the mandapa has been spoilt by later renovations, and their original symmetry is now lost.

The main mandapa is a continuation of the mukha-mandapa of the main shrine. The outer faces of its walls on the northern side and on the extreme ends of the eastern and southern sides, as in other parts of the temple, are covered with the usual pattern of niches and pilasters. The outer walls of the second mandapa are entirely closed and all its pillars are inside. Here too the outer walls are decorated with a patterns of alternating niches and pilasters, with a main

⁴⁴ Sivaramamurthi, C., *op.cit.*, p.67.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, P.68.

niche for every pair of subsidiary niches. The main mandapa is decorated to the east with a pair of dwarf yakshas guarding padma – and sankhs – nidhis in niches on either side. These figures, like all the other special forms of deities in the niches, are made of fine-grained black basalt, thus distinguished from the lighter coloured granite used in the rest of the structure⁴⁶.

The pillars of the first (main) mandapa have beautiful patterns of decorative creepers so arranged that the circular medallions created contain figures dancing in diverse poses, musicians and sometimes even forms of deities such as Gangadhara and Tripurantaka. These figures also adorn panels arranged in tiers of niches and salas on the sides of other pillars. Even where the pillars have purely decorative patterns, such figures, mostly in dance-poses or playing musical instruments, are deftly introduced into them⁴⁷.

The ceiling has square and rectangular patterns, bands of which are all filled with decorative designs. Almost all the central medallions contain similar dancing and musical groups. The pillar-capitals here bear the precursors of the bodhika-type, and the ornamental precursors of the naga-bandha are also visible.

In the next mandapa, which leads to the arhqa-mandapa and the main shrine, there are niches containing Devi with lotus, ratna-kalasa (pot filled with gems) and Nandikesvara standing with hands in adoration on one side, and saint Kannappa and seated Sarasvati on the other. The centre of the northern side has been improvised into a cell for Devi. The chauri-holding dvapa-palikas, fixed on either side of the improvised doorway, are lovely and belong to the same period as the other fine sculptures arranged in the niches of the main temple. The pillars in the mandapa adjoining the main one are somewhat simpler, notwithstanding their

⁴⁶ *Balasubrahmanyam. S.R*, 197, pp.225-245

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.350.

polygonal shape, the flower-petal decorations at intervals and the corbels, which recall the Chalukya type.⁴⁸

The mukha-mandapa is approached by long flights of steps from the north and south, and marks the end of the mandapas and the beginning of the main shrine. Here there is a couchant Nandi, smaller than the one at the start of the main mandapa. The dvarapalas of the main shrine are depicted as furious and armed with huge clubs. Their four hands are in the threatening attitude (tarjani), they have tusks and carry trisulas on their bound-up hair, which is decorated of their yajnopavita also recalls Chalukya influence. The six-headed Kumara standing to the left of the main cell's entrance is a fine sculpture.

The walls of the mandapa and main shrine contain niches, some of which still have exquisite specimens of early Chola sculpture; the others either have no images or poor modern substitutes in brick-and-plaster. Noteworthy Chola specimens include: a fine Ardhanisvara, unique among its kind with three faces and eight arms; a four-armed Nagaraja with snake-hoods over his head and hands joined in adoration; Agastya, the dwarf sage, seated with one of his hands in the teaching attitude and the other carrying a water-vessel; another seated sage carrying a rosary and manuscript; dancing Martanda Bhairava or Aghora-Virabhadra with four hands, three heads and a terrible countenance; standing Ganesa; Dakshinamurti attended by sages seated under a banyan-tree and expounding the highest truth; Lingobhava Siva, issuing from a flaming pillar, while Brahma and Vishnu, unable to reach the top and bottom, adore the linga; Brahma eight-armed Durga on the severed head of the buffalo-demon; seated Devi as Bhuvanesvari carrying pasa and ankusa in two hands, the other two being in abhaya and varada; Siva as Tripurantaka, carrying the axe, deer, bow, and arrow; multi-armed Gjantaka destroying a demon in the guise of an elephant and dancing against the spread-out hide of the animal in

⁴⁸ Venkataramaiah ,k.M, *A Handbook of Tamil Nadu*. International School of Dravidian Linguistics, 1996,p.283.

the bhujanga-trasita pose while Devi shrinks away from him in fear; Bhairava with six arms standing with his dog behind him; a sage carrying a water-vessel and teaching two disciples; and Mahesara-murti seated with three heads and four arms carrying the spear, axe, rosary and water-vessel⁴⁹. All these sculptures, made of polished black basalt, display exquisite workmanship.

Of particular interest among these, in a shrine attached to the southern wall of the mandapa, is a stone image of Siva as Sarabha-murti. The Sarabha cult represents a phase in which Saivism dominated Vaishnavism, symbolized by Sarabhesvara subduing the ferocious Narasimha, an incarnation of Vishnu⁵⁰.

Of the sides of the main shrine it should be said that the lower half of the base is of the same type all over, including the mandapas. The lowest series of panels above the lotus-petal decoration is divided by decorative bands which contain yalis, couchant or rearing, in pairs or single; women dancing to music; dwarf ganas in varied poses, dancing, playing drums, blowing conchs, carrying the chauri or holding their hands in wonder, often in the company of a bull. Above this is a long uali-frieze, which is repeated a little below the niches. There are miniature decorative carvings a little below the second row of yalis, above it, and immediately below the niches. In the main shrine the carvings below the niches depict stories of Saivite saints, some of which are labelled in Tamil. Separating these scenes are miniature carvings of dancing figures, and Siva or Devi in different attitudes.

On the outer walls, on either side of the niches, there are fine carved figures corresponding to those enshrined in the niches, simulating the tradition of the earlier temples at Thanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram. Thus, Ganesa's niche is flanked by bhuta-ganas, dwarf attendants, carrying offerings with the deity's vehicle, the mouse; the niche of Dakshina-

⁴⁹ James C. Harle *Art and Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent*. Yale University Press 1994, p.318.

murti is flanked by exquisitely-carved figures of rishis which are, unfortunately, hidden by a later brick structure.

There are three niches in the main temple. The central one is the largest and has a double-pillar decoration on either side. Its top is fashioned as a sala, while the tops of the niches flanking it have the koshta-pattern. The double-pillar decorations between these have lion-headed kudus on top. Between the niches and the double-pillar decorations, all of which project forward, there are kumbha-panjara decorations against the main wall itself. Above the niches, near the eaves, there is a whole row of dwarf ganas, dancing, playing musical instruments or otherwise merry. Against the roof, there are kudus, while gaping bhuta-heads serve as gargoyles, discharging water from the roof. The kudu-pavillion and sala-patterns are repeated on the tiers of the vimana.

All around the main shrine is a broad strip, 3.66 m wide, paved with granite slabs, and a low wall, 25.40 cm high, of the same material. The latter is beautifully carved with lotus-patterns and Nandis seated in between; but, unfortunately, this beautiful row of Nandis is badly mutilated. The outlets for water placed at intervals reveals that this was intended to be a sort of a pleasant water-receptacle, which would give the idea of a pool surrounding the temple in spring and keep the atmosphere cool in summer. A number of circulate rings with low rims, carved out of stone, appear to have been lamps.⁵¹

The gargoyle that discharges water from the main cell is on the north. It is long, has a dip and double course, is decorated with two lion-head motifs, one at the source and the other where it starts the lower course at the point of the dip, and discharges water into a large well-carved water-reservoir with figures of dancing ganas on the sides. The gomukha is supported

⁵¹ Pillai. J. M., Somanasundaram, *The great temple at Tanjore*. Tamil University, Thanjavur, 1994, pp.109-111.

at the base by a caryatid dwarf gana, as in the gargoyle in the temple at Thanjavur (though the figure here is standing), by a rearing yali and triple ganas at the end.

Close to the main temple, near this gargoule, is the shrine of Chandikesvara, similar to the one at Thanjavur.

The prakara-wall surrounding the large paved courtyard is carved on the inside with a beautiful series of mandapa-decorations, which consist mainly of a long row of pillar-cloisters, with cells at intervals for deities, some of which have disappeared. At the four corners the cloisters are enlarged and embellished into mandapas. These mandapas are approached by steps decorated with blastrades, with interesting motifs. For instance, there is a ferocious lion pouncing on an elephant with a curled-up trunk, lost in the mouth of a makara, its sides hidden at those points where a niche or trellis-window has been added for decoration. The base, as usual, has fine panels showing scenes of dance, jugglery, and so on. All these elements are best seen in the north-west mandapa. Towards the north-west there is a similar mandapa, with intricately decorated pillars; and the ceiling is covered with a profusion of beautiful panels and medallions of dancers and musicians.

The top of this mandapa is decorated with a sala-roof suggesting Nataraja's sabha. This is the temple's natya-mandapa – a fact clearly borne out not only by the sculptures on the pillars and ceiling but also by a carving on the base of Vishnu playing the drum before the mandapa. Now conserved, this must have been where the Nataraja bronze was originally housed. Beyond this, to the east, is the yaga-sala, and further on is a representation of a king and queen, in addition to figures of deities. The two portrait-statues are probably intended to represent either Virarajendra or Rajaraja II, and his queen.

In the cloistered hall to the west of the natya-mandapa there is a remarkable group of large carvings, representing Siva as Kankala-murti, and a number of rishi-paints – the wives of

the sages of Daruka-vana, who attended on Siva and were astonished by his beauty.⁵² The garments of one of the women in a pair are slipping off and the other has a finger on her lips, indicative of wonder while gana-dwarfs are playing drums or sounding gongs in quaint and picturesque attitudes. Kankala-murti himself is calm and serene, as he fondles a deer with one of his hands, while a dwarf-attendant carries his begging bowl. Some of the women carry ladles for offering food to the divine beggar. The composition is one of the great masterpieces of Chola art. There are also carvings of Manmatha and Rati on a chariot, and of Kannappanayanar, the saintly hunter.

⁵² Taramani.D, *Heritage of the Tamils Art & Architecture* ,Chennai,pp.354-355.

CHAPTER V

SRI RANGANATHAY TEMPLE, SRIRANGAM

Srirangam (formerly Vellithirumutha Gramam) (Thiruvaramam in Tamil) is a part of the city of Trichirappalli in South India is the foremost of the eight self-manifested shrines (SwayamVyaktaKshetras) of Lord Vishnu. ⁵³Srirangam is famous for its Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple, a major pilgrimage destination for Hindus (especially for Sri Vaishnavites) and the largest complex in India. Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple is a Hindu Temple dedicated to Lord Ranganatha, a reclining form of Hindu deity. Temple represents a masterpiece of human creative genius and is the world's largest functioning Temple replete with astounding architecture and ornamentation.

The Temple complex maintains high aspects of both authenticity and integrity. While the religious ceremonies and other intangible aspects of the Temple remain vested with the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department (HR & CE) of the Government of Tamil Nadu, which ensures proper functioning of the Temple and keeps the complex well maintained.

The Temple complex is 156 acres in extent. It has seven prakaras or enclosures. There are 21 magnificent towers in all prakaras providing a unique sight to any visitor. Srirangam Temple is having 21 very sculpted Gopurams, the tallest being the Rajagopuram of 236 (72m) high with 13 tiers is the tallest temple tower in Asia, 50 sub-shrines, sacred pools, gilded Vimana (dome) over the sanctum sanctorum of the presiding deity, and other interesting features such as fresco paintings. According to the Limca Book of Records, it was the tallest temple tower in the world until 1999. The presiding deity Ranganathais praised in many names by his devotees, including is Namperumal, Azhagiya Manavalan (beautiful groom in

⁵³, Roma Bradnack, *The travel Guide*, 2000, p.125.

Tamil), Sri Devi and Bhoo Devi. There are 8 holy springs including Chandrapushkarani and Suryapushkarani. The Temple is opened from 6.15 am – 1.00 pm and from 2.00 pm – 9.00 pm.

Religious Significance

The Temple is considered in the Alwar traditions as one of the eight Sywayambu Kshetras of Vishnu where presiding deity is believed to have manifested on its own. Except Madhura Kavi Azhwar, all Vaishnavite saints had sung the glory of this Temple. Vaishnava Acharya Sri Ramanuja stayed in Srirangam and rendered his services to the Lord. There is a separate shrine for Sri Ramanuja.⁵⁴ He was a theologian, philosopher, and scriptural exegete. Ramanuja renounced his family life and went to Srirangam to occupy the pontificate. Srirangam became the stronghold of him and his disciples. The doctrine of Vishishtadvaita philosophy, Sri Bhashyam was written and later compiled by him over a period of time.

During his stay in Srirangam, he has written “Gadhya Thrayam”, which is recited in the Temple during the ninth day (Panguni Uttaram) of the festival of Adi Brahmotsavam. He attained divinity in Srirangam. His Thaan-anaThirumeni (the symbolic body) is preserved and offered prayers even today after eight centuries.

History

This Temple history was mentioned in Tamil works of literature of the Sangam era, including the epic Silapadikaram (book II, lines 35-40): On a magnificent cot having a thousand headspreadout, worshipped and praised by many, in an islet surrounded by Kaveri with bellowing waves, is the lying posture of the one who has Lakshmi sitting in his chest Silapadikaram (book II, lines 35-40).⁵⁵ However, archaeological inscriptions are available only from the 10th century AD. The inscriptions in the Temple belong to the Cholas, Pandyas,

⁵⁴ Ayer, P.V., Jagadisa, *op.cit.*, p.317.

⁵⁵ *Trichy City Guide*. Trichirappalli, Madras, 2000, p.17.

Hoysalas and Vijayanagar dynasties who successively swayed the destinies of Tiruchirappalli district. They range in date between the 9th and 16th centuries and are registered by the epigraphical society.

The location where the Ranganatha idol was placed covered by an overgrowth of deep forests, due to disuse. After a very long time, a Chola King, chasing a parrot accidentally found the idol. He then established the Ranganathaswamy Temple as one of the largest temple complexes in the world. During the period of invasion by Malik Kafur and his forces in 1310-1311, the idol of the deity was stolen and taken to Delhi. Srirangam's history got important during the invasion of some jealous Muslim emperors (1310-1311). Srirangam was captured and its riches were looted. The invaders didn't want to accept the rituals of Hinduism. They took off the statue of AlagiyamanavalarPerumal and plundered the treasures, jewels and ornaments which belonged to Srirangam Temple. The statue of AlagiyamanavalarPerumal was sent to Delhi. In Delhi, AlagiyamanavalarPerumal got a devotee, who cared him like a mother. She was the daughter of the Sultan⁵⁶. At the moment she saw the statue of Alagiyamanavalar Perumal. She fell in love with Perumal. She never left Perumal even a bit. The Sultan didn't expect this. He surrendered the statue of Alagiyamanavalar Perumal back to Guru Ramanujar.⁵⁷

The daughter of Sultan could not bear this. At last in a divine scene she disappeared in air mysteriously. She possesses a separate Temple near Sri Ranganathar Temple and people worship her and called as "Thulukka Nachiyar". The moral is, Perumal never wants to miss even a single devotee. Even after this incident Srirangam was often attacked and ransacked by various Mughal emperors. After the rise of Vijayanagar Kingdom the atrocities of the Mughal Sultans came to an end. Vijayanagara ruler Krishna Deva Rayar realized the importance of

⁵⁶ *Tamil Nadu Tourist Guide*, Madras, 2000, p. 410.

⁵⁷ Dr. Surendra Sahal, *Text and Photographs*, Prakash Books, p. 227.

this sacred city and prioritized Srirangam as equal as Thirupathi and bequeathed a plenty of treasures, jewels and lands to Srirangam Temple. During his period the Srirangam Temple was well reformed and many plans were executed for the growth and people welfare and so Srirangam got developed rapidly.⁵⁸

In a daring exploit, devotees of Srirangam ventured to Delhi and enthralled the emperor with their histrionics. Moved by their talent, the emperor was pleased to gift them the presiding deity of Srirangam, which was requested by the performers. Surathani, his daughter, had fallen in love with the deity and followed him to Srirangam. She prostrated herself to the God in front of the sanctum sanctorum and is believed to have attained the heavenly abode immediately. Even today, a painting of “Surathani” (known as Thulukha Nachiyar in Tamil) can be seen in her shrine near the Arjuna Mandapama adjacent to the sanctum sanctorum for whom, chappathis (wheat bread) are made daily. The Kalyana Utsavam or wedding of Lord Ranganathar with Surathani is performed with great pomp every year⁵⁹.

Having assumed that the magical power of the deity had killed his daughter, there was a more severe second invasion to Srirangam in 1323 A.D. The presiding deity was taken away before the Malik Kafur’s troops reached Srirangam by a group led by the Vaishnavite Acharya (Guru)l Pillai Lokacharyar, who died on route to Tirunelveli in Tamil Nady. The Goddess Ranganayaki was taken in another separate procession. 13,000 Sri Vaishnavas, the people of Srirangam, laid down their lives in the fierce battle to ensure that the institution was protected. In the end, Devadasis, the danseuse of Srirangam, induced the army chief, to save the Temple.⁶⁰

After nearly six decades, the presiding deity returned to Srirangam and the same Swami Vedanta Desika, who had built a brick wall in front of the sanctum sanctorum, broke it open. The deity and the priestly wardens wandered southwards towards Madurai, then north-east

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*,p.412

⁵⁹ *Sri Ranganatha Swami Temples, Srirangam*,”Srirangam.03.09.2013

⁶⁰ Rajendran,N.,*Epigraphical evidences in the reconstruction of the early history of tiruchirapalli*.journal of the Epigraphical society of india.pp152-155

towards Kerala, Mysore, Tirunarayanapuram, and finally in the hills of Tirumala Tirulpati, where they remained ,until their reinstatement in 1371.

The Orlov diamond of 189.62 carats (37.924 g), is a large diamond that is part of the collection of the Diamond Fund of the Mascow Kremlin. The origin of the resplendent relic – described as having the shape and plproportions of half a hen’s egg. This diamond and a similar gem served as the eyes of the deity in the Temple. Legends hold that a French soldier who had deserted during the second Carnatic wars that was fought in Srirangam disguised himself as a Hindu convert and stole it in 1747 erected in the 17th century⁶¹.

Deities

Sannathis of srirangam Temple

Apart from the presiding deity Lord Ranganathar, the Temple complex comprises of many other sannathis and about 53 Upa-Sannathis. The other sannathis in the Temple are: Thayar Sannathi, Chakkarathazwar Sannthi, Udayavar (Ramanujar) Sannathi, Garudalwar Sannathi, Thanvanthiri Sannathi, Hygrevar Sannathi.

There is a shrine for Sri Garudazhwar (eagle vehicle of Lord Vishnu). Devotees offer dal, jaggery and seweet pudding balls as nivedhana too Sri Garuda. Special pujas are performed to him on Garuda Panchami day⁶². A separate shrine is dedicated to Mother Dhanyalakshmi in the prakara of Anna Perumal Temple. Mother Dhanyalakshmi graces with Lord Krishna on the right and Lord Narasimha on the left. Those afflicted with adverse aspects of planet Venus, (Shukra) worship Mother Dhanyalakwith while silk sari, garland of white flowers and offer white pulse as nivedhana. During the Brahmotsava, Lord Ranganatha visits this shrine and enjoys the paddy measuring event. Lord Anna Perumal (Lord of Food) has His

⁶¹ *Imperial Gazetteer of india*, New Delhi, 1881, p.47.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p.56.

shrine in the second prakara, holding a staff, pot and a hall of rice. It is believed the worshipping Perumal in the shrine would keep the devotees free from hunger.

The Temple also has a shrine for Danvathiri, Lord of Medicines, with Mother Mahalakshmi on his chest. Those suffering from prolonged diseases light lamps with castor oil and offer curd rice as Nivedhana. On Fridays, a perfume paste called Punugu is applied on Lord Ranganatha. Along with Nivedhanas, a medicine made of dry ginger and jaggery is also offered to the Lord for digestion. It is believed that Lord Devanthiri himself offers this medicinal preparation.

Structure

The Srirangam Temple is situated at 10° 52'N and 78° 42'E towards the southern tip of India on an Island formed by two arms of the River Kaveri. The Temple covers a vast area of about 6,31,000 sq.m. (156 acres). The Temple consists of seven concentric rectangular enclosures round the sanctum sanctorum. The Temple of Srirangam is the only one in India with seven enclosures, a sacred symbolic number which for present day Vaishnava believers represents either the seven centers of Yoga, or a reference to the seven elements making up the human body, in the center of which dwells the soul.

First Enclosure

The visitor reaches the first enclosure to which, like the second, there is only one entry, by a gate in its southern part; the Nazhikettan Gopura and on either side has images called Sahkhanidhi and Padmanidhi, the conch and the lotus respectively, which are the attributes of Vishnu. To the south-east store rooms have been fitted up. Large mirrors have been placed in the corners to reflect the statue of the God when it issues from the sanctum. In the northwest corner are the Yagasala and the Tondaiman Mandapa of which ceiling is decorated with

paintings of figures. The eastern part contains two Mandapas-Arjuna Mandapa and Kili Mandapa⁶³.

Special Entry for physically Challenged people

Persons who are physically/mentally challenged, aged or terminally ill and who cannot walk will be allowed for Darshan through special entrance at sanctum. One dependent will be allowed along with them. Battery car is in service for physically challenged and aged persons inside the temple premises at free of cost.

Second Enclosure

To reach the second enclosure one must go through the southern Aryabhatal. The whole of this second enclosure, which is comparatively narrow, strikes the visitor by its pervading full light, since there is an almost broken series of mandapas. Towards the south-east corner are the kitchen premises of the God, here in the past were kept the milk and gifts of food, which were distributed, to pilgrims⁶⁴.

Third Encluser

The third enclosure has the Karthigai Gopura where leading to the Garuda Mandapa, which consists of 14 rows and it is the most beautiful mandapa in the Temple. In the western wing, kitchens and rice store houses are found. In the eastern part of this wing is the scared tank (Chandrapushkarani), which has been hollowed out in the form of a circle with flights of steps in the east and west. The eastern wing contains several isolated sanctuaries and mandapas.

Fourth Enclosure

In the fourth enclosure, non-Hindus may admire in its southern wing. The Temple of Venu Gopala krishna, whose outside walls are decorated with very beautiful sculptures in high

⁶³ *Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple Administration*, "Srirangam, 10.10.2013, p.5

⁶⁴ *SundarRaj, T., op.cit., p.200.*

relief like young women playing the Zither (Veena) or with a parrot or putting the finishing touches (Tilaka) to their appearance before a looking glass. A climb to the terrace overhanging this Temple affords a general view of the Temple of Srirangam. The court also has a museum with highly interesting objects. Non-Hindus are also admitted to the eastern courtyard of this enclosure, which is dominated by the Vellai Gopura. In the South, there exists the famous Sesharayar Mandapa⁶⁵. Opposite to this Mandapa we can see the Hall of Thousand Pillars, where in the statues of God and Goddesses, Alwars and Acharyas are set out for the great annual festival of Ekadasi in December and January.

Fifth Enclosure

The fifth enclosure contains the shrine of Manavala Mamunigal in the Chola style.

Sixth Enclosure

The sixth enclosure has four Gopuras. The Eastern Gopura is the most impressive of all. The processional cars are kept in this enclosure.

Seventh Enclosure

The Gopura of the seventh enclosure are unfinished. They are called Raya Gopuram. The impressive dimensions of their bases prove that when finished, they would have risen to a height of at least 50.m.

Shrines

The vimanam (shrine over the sanctum sanctorum), the Ranga vimana is shaped like Omkara (OM symbol) and is plated with gold. Sri Ranganathar⁶⁶ reclines on Adishesha, the coiled serpent. Images of Vibhishana, Brahma, Hanuman, Garuda, the symbol of Vishnu conch are seen inside the sanctum. Ranganayaki Shrine is in the second precinct of the Temple. The common reference to the Goddess is padi thanda pathni, meaning lady who doesn't cross the

⁶⁵ Ayyer, P.V., *jagadisa, op.cit.*, pp. 314-315

⁶⁶ Sajini, Manohar, *Encyclopedia of Tourism resources in india*, (Vol.II), Delhi, 2001

boundaries of ethics. Literally, the festival deity of Ranganayaki also does not come out of the shrine and it is Ranganathar who visits Ranganayaki. There are three images of Ranganayaki within the sanctum⁶⁷.

The complex houses shrines of dozens of forms of Vishnu including Chakkarathazhwar, Narasimha, Rama, Hayagreeva and Gopala Krishna. There are separate shrine for Ranganayaki, Venu Gopal, Dhanvantri, a great physician of ancient India is considered to be an Avatar of Vishnu.

Since of the significant components are as follows: There are many mandapas at Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple. One of the finest is the Hall of 1000 pillars made of granite, it was constructed during the Vijayanagar period (1336-1565)⁶⁸. The Ranga Vilasa Mandapa is a huge one, carries the sculptures of Bala Ramayana and exquisite murals.

The Kottarams (Granaries) houses the huge Granaries which stand testimony to a systematic food security planning not only to the temple but probably to the entire population of the temple town.

There are 21 huge Gopurams. The Raja gopuram is the second tallest Temple tower in the world rising to a height of 72mts.

Inscriptions

Sri Ranganatha Swamy Temple is a veritable treasure trove for epigraphists. Over 640 inscriptions have been copied and published from the Temple. The inscriptions throw up interesting and valuable light on the history, culture and economy during a period of over a thousand years. The Temple abounds in inscriptions during between the early Chola and late Nayak periods. The documents, while mentioning the boundaries of the lands provide useful

⁶⁷ Baliga, B.S., "*Madras District Gazetteers*," Tiruchirappalli,"1997,p.28.

⁶⁸ SulochanaGandhi,J., Soundarajan,R., "*Lord Sri Ranganatha temple-A Study* ","09.09.2013,p.3.

information on irrigation facilities, land measures, tax structure and the names provide for the lands in the particular village.

Inscriptions also throw light that the Srirangam Temple was one among the handful of temples which have had an Arokyasala (Health Centre) that had rendered medical service to the people. There are about 800-old inscriptions dating back to the rule of different dynasties, available at various shrine of the Temple proclaim the past civilization, culture, land donation and even flood relief measures in the form of land reclamation. These inscriptions relate to the period of the Adhiathyan-I; who was popularly known as Rajasekari Varman, Paranthagan-I and II also known as Sundara Chola; Rajathirajan-I; Kulothungan-III; Rajathirajan-III and Rajendran-III⁶⁹.

Fresco and Mural paintings

The walls of the Temple complex are painted with exquisite paintings using herbal and vegetables dyes. The high technologies used in these paintings ensured a long life for these paintings and poses a tough challenge to reproduce them in these modern days. The idol of the main deity is unique that it is not made of granite as in many temples, but Stucco (a unique combination of lime, mortar and stones bound together by a special paste (Thailam), made of musk, camphor, honey, jaggery and sandal).

The Vahanas (Vehicles on which the Lord is mounted and carried on the shoulders by devotees) are by themselves excellent pieces of architecture on wood. Wood is carved into the shapes of animals, exotic birds, sun, moon, trees, etc. and elegant gold or silver plating is done on them. The Garuda Vahana, Simha Vahana, Yanai Vahana, Kudirai Vahana, Hanumantha Vahana, Yazhi Vahana, Sesha Vahana, Annapakshi Vahana, Otrai and Ettai Prabhai Vahana are all examples of unmatched beauty. To see Lord Ranganatha mounted on

⁶⁹ Sastri, K.K., *The pandiyan kingdom*, 1972, p.213

them is a treat is a watch especially as he moves along the streets of Srirangam inch by inch amongst a sea of devotees⁷⁰.

Water Heavesting Syatems (Temple Thaks)

The Temple complex has 2 large Temple tanks inside it, i.e., Chandra Pushkarini and Surya Pushkarini. The complex has been built in a way that all the water collected flows into the tanks. The capacity of each Pushkarini is around 2 million litres and the water is cleansed by action of fishes in it. Apart from these there are 10 more Temple tanks around Srirangam that come under the control and management of the Temple Open sand beds and Nandavanams (Flower Gardens) help in absorbing the rain water⁷¹.

Composers

Ranganathaswamy Temple is the only one out of the 108 temples that was sung in praise by all the Azhwars (Divine saints of Tamil Bhakthi movements), having a total of 247 pasurams (divine hymns). Nalayira Divya Prabhandam is a collection of 4000 hymns sung by twelve azhwar saints spread over 300 years (from the late 6th to 9th century AD) and collected by Nathamuni (910-990 AD). Divya Desams refer to 108 Vishnu temples that are mentioned in Nalayira Divya Prabandam. 105 of these are located in India, one in Nepal, Nepal, another one is located outside of the earthly realms. Divya in Tamil language indicates premium and Desam indicates place or temple. Periyalvar begins the decade on Srirangam with two puranic stories according to which Krishna restored to life of the son of his Guru Santipini and the children of a Brahmin. Thondaradippodi Alvar and Thiruppana Alvar have sung exclusively on Ranganatha. Andal attained Sri. Ranganatha on completion of her Thiruppavai (a composition of 30 verses) in Srirangam. In total there are 247 hymns of the 4000 Pasurams dedicated to Ranganathar deity of this temple. Except Madhurakavi Alvar, all the other eleven

⁷⁰ Beschi, Fr. *His Times and His Writings*, Trichinopoly, 1918, p.117

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.136.

azhwars have created Mangalasanam⁷² (praise) about Ranganathar in Srirangam. Out of 247, 35 are by Periyalwar, 10 by Andal, 32 by Kulasekara Alvar, 14 by Thirumazhisai Azhvar, 55 by Thondaradippodi Alvar, 10 by Thiruppan Alvar, 73 by Thirumangai Alvar, one by Poigai Alvar, 4 by Bhoothathalvar, 2 by Peyalvar and 12 by Nammalvar⁷³⁷⁴.

Some of the religious works like Sri Bhashyam by Ramanuja, Gunartnakosha by Parasar Bhattar, Rengaraja Sthothram by Kurathazhwar, Bhagavaddhyana Sopanam by Swamy Vedanta Desika etc., are works that were exclusively composed in praise Srirangam Temple.

ARCHITECTURE

The Temple is enclosed by 7 concentric walls (termed prakaram souter court or marthilsuvar) with a total length of 32,592 feet or over six miles. This temple Gouprams (towers), 39 pavilions, fifty shrines, Ayiram Kaal Mandapam (a hall of pillars) and several small water tanks inside. The space within the outer two prakaram (outer courtyard) is occupied by several shops, restaurants and flower stalls. Non-Hindus are allowed up to the second prakaram (outer courtyard) but not inside the gold topped sanctum sanctorum⁷⁵

The Temple is maintained and administered by the Hindu Religious and Endowment Board of the Government of Tamil Nadu. An Executive officer appointed by the Board manages the Temple along with Sri Azhagiya Manavala Perumal Temple, Pundarikakshan Perumal Temple at Thiruvellarai, Sri Vadivazhagiya Nambi Perumal Temple and Mariamman Temple at Anbil. There are three turstees. Annadhanam scheme, which provides free food to devotees, is implemented in the Temple by the Board. Under the scheme, free food is offered

⁷² Marry Wicks and Murry Hammick, *Historical Sketches of the South Indian History,(VoI-II)*,NewDelhi,p.226.

⁷³ *Rajayan,K.,op.cit,p.42.*

⁷⁵ *The Hindu*,Trichy,09.03.2013,p.4.

to two hundred devotees every day in the Temple and the expenditure is fully funded by the contributions from devotees.

Offerings

Offerings can be directly deposited into the Temple Hundial, still if that is not possible due to the nature of your offerings, they can be handed over to the temple staff at the Thulabharam, and the receipt for the same can be obtained immediately.

Thulabharam

One of the most important vows taken to propitiate Lord Ranganathaswamy is to perform “Thulabharam” i.e. donating various items such as turmeric, rice, dhal, sugar, rice, jaggery, sugar candy, etc. to the equivalent weight of the devotee. Pilgrims reach the Thulabharam counter near Thirukkottaram (Granary), there he/she can perform the Thulabharam as per his wish⁷⁶.

Thanks Giving

Devotees apply butter, kumkum powder, sandal on the chest and feet of the Lord. They offer vastras with Tulsi and flower garlands with incense sticks. They also arrange nivedhanas and distribute it to devotees.

Economy

Srirangam has a thriving economy based on tourism. Devotees come from all parts of India and abroad. The number of devotees to the town increases greatly during the festivals like Vaikunta Ekadashi which falls on the Tamil month of Marghazi (Margashirsha). Thiruvarangam is one of the few temples which is always being crowded by devotees⁷⁷.

⁷⁶ Rangachar vasantha(2001). *Ahobilam: Sri Narasimha Swamy Temple*. Tirupati Devasthanams.pp. 52-53

⁷⁷ Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple. *Archaeological Survey of India, Bengaluru Circle*. ASI Bengaluru Circle.Retrieved 21 december2013.

Conclusion

To understand the architecture of the of the Chola temples, it is essential to know something of the kind of architecture that both preceded and followed the Chola period. The Earliest temples in south India were built by the seventh and ninth centuries, and these have certain features that differentiate them from the building styles. As G. Jouveau-Dubreuil (in *Archeologie du sud de l'Inde*, Pt. i (Paris, 1914, pp.71-145) has illustrated very clearly, the niches, pavilions, pillars and pilaster-corbels and horseshoe-shaped windows (kudu), among others, show distinctive developments, which help to date different monuments.

A typical niche in earlier Pallava rock-cut monuments, such as at Mahabalipuram and the Kailasanatha temple of Kanchipuram, is rather wide, while the makara-torana decoration on the niche-top is flat, with the floriated tail of the makara flowing over the sides. Chola niches, however, as well as later Pallava ones, are more narrow, and the decoration on the niche-top is more round. Similarly, the simulated railings for pavilions on monuments at Mahabalipuram are quite different from their Chola counterparts; while the kudu has a shovel-headed finial at Chola monuments – a style that was to continue thereafter. Pillar capitals and pilasters in Chola monuments are rectangular, with sides carved in slant of 45° and projecting central portion. It is evident that minus this projecting, central block Chola corbels are not essentially different from early Pallava corbels, in which too the same angle occurs, along with rounded corbels. Later Vijayanagara lotus-corbels developed from this style.

The central shrine in Pallava structural temples, like the Kailasanatha at Kanchipuram, is prominent while the gopura is somewhat squat. In early Chola temples, the shrine is gradually magnified until, by the time of Rajaraja and his successors, it becomes colossal – as evident in the temples of Thanjavur, Gangaikondacholapuram, Darasuram and Tribhuvanam. The early Chola gopuras, though larger than those of the Pallavas, remain relatively short, and it is only in the late Chola period that gigantic gopuras develop, and even dwarf the central shrine.

Earlier Pallava dvarapalas (door-keepers) appear very natural, and usually have a single pair of arms. These are replaced in Chola structures with dvarapalas of fierce mien, with four arms. The sculptures at Thanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram are typical examples: they carry a trisula (trident) on their crowns, have tusks protruding from their mouths and evoke terror with their knit eye-brows, rolling eyes and hands in the tarjani (threatening) and vismaya (wonder) attitudes.

The large Chola temples are required with long flights of steps leading from the sides to the platform, which precedes the sanctum's entrance. Their balustrades are massive, curled up at the end and decorated on the exterior. Alternating koshtha-panjaras form regular features of the decoration, while the niches are flanked by pilasters crowned with curved roof-mouldings adorned by two kudus with lion-head crowns. The base of the series of niches has yali decorations and makara-heads with battling warriors coming out of their mouths decorate the corners and intervals.

The temples pavilions usually consist of two panjaras flanking a Sala (wagon-roof-pavilion) – the former with a single finial and the latter with three. The kumbha-panjara went through many stages of development: those in early Chola temples are fairly simple, but these become far elaborate in later monuments.

Separate mandapas form a regular feature of late Chola and Vijayanagara temples with many pillars adorning them, but are less prominent in early Chola structures, though in these too the temple's front is a long mandapa, used for different kinds of bhoga-worship. Early Chola temples also feature large courtyards with small shrines set at the cardinal and inter-cardinal points, against the enclosure-wall, for enshrining dikpalas (guardians of the directions).

The temple played an important role in the social and cultural life of people in ancient and medieval India. Many of these structures which were made in stones or bricks. Survive to

this day and are a reflection of the architectural magnificence and the crucial role these temples had in the socio-cultural space of the society. Though the temples and structures were largely of Hindu faith many Buddhist and Jain temples were also constructed in this period that are an important source of information about their art and architecture.

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SOCIO-RELIGIOUS REFORM MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

Project submitted to

St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi

affiliated to

Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

By

A. MARIA BEULA

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This is to certify that the project entitle "Socio-Religious Reform Movements in India", submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History and is a work done during the year 2020-2021 by A. Maria Beula, a bonafide student of the Department of History, St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project entitled “**Socio – Religious Reforms Movements in India**”, “submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History, is my original work and it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

Place: Thoothukudi

Date:

Signature of the Candidate

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INTRODUCTION

The Socio-Religious awakening movement which took place in India during the British rule were the expression of the rising national consciousness and spread of the liberal ideas of the west among the Indians. The Socio-Religious Reform Movement aimed at a revision of the medieval social structure and religious outlook on the principle of individual liberty and human equality. In the social sphere there were movement of caste reform, a campaign against child marriage and a ban on widow remarriage, equal rights for women, a crusade against social inequalities. In the religious sphere, there sprang up a movement which combated religious superstitious and attacked idolatry, Polytheism, bloody sacrifice, rituals etc. The new wave of western rationalism brought about the destruction of old customs that were prevalent in the society and religion, while the age of illumination was inaugurated in Europe with a temporary negation of religion, In case of India, such an epoch was started by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, following the traditional method of revitalizing decaying society through a new religion, by founding Brahmo dharma, based on the age old principle of Unity underlying the Vedantic monism. According to Sri Aurobindo, “The renaissance in India is as inevitable as the rising of tomorrow’s Sun and the renaissance of a great nation of three hundred million with so peculiar a temperament, such unique traditions and ideas of life, so powerful an intelligence and so great a mass of potential energies cannot but be one of the most formidable phenomena of modern world”.¹The central figure of this cultural awakening was Raja Rammohan Roy, known as the “father of the Indian Renaissby deep love for the country and worked throughout his life for the social, religious, intellectual and political regeneration of the Indians.

¹Nanda S.P,*History of modern India*,Dominant publishers and Distributors,1993,pp 241-242.

Indian Society in the 19th century was caught in a vicious web created by religious superstitions and dogmas. All religions in general and Hinduism in particular had become a compound of magic, animism, and superstitions. The abominable rites like animal sacrifice and physical torture had replaced the worship of God. The priests exercised an overwhelming and unhealthy influence on the mind of people. The faithful lived in submission, not only to God, the powerful and unseen, but even to the whims, fancies, and wishes of the priests. Social Conditions were equally depressing. The most distressing was the position of women. The birth of a girl was unwelcome, her marriage a burden and her widowhood inauspicious. Another debilitating factor was caste. It sought to maintain a system of segregation, hierarchically ordained on the basis of ritual status, hampering social mobility and fostered social divisions. There were innumerable other practices marked by constraint, status, authority, bigotry and blind fatalism. Rejecting them as features of a decadent society, the reform movements sought to create a social climate for modernization. The conquest of India by the British during the 18th and 19th century exposed some serious weaknesses and drawbacks of Indian social institutions. The response, indeed, was varied but the need to reform social and religious life was a commonly shared conviction. It also brought in completely new sets of ideas and social world. The exposure to post-Enlightenment rationalism that came to signify modernity brought a change in the outlook of a selected group of Indians. The introduction of western education and ideas had the far reaching impact on the Indian society. Through the glasses of utility, reason, justice, and progress, a selected group of individuals began to explore the nature of their own society. There was a gradual emergence of public opinion. The debates between the Orientalists, scholars of Eastern societies like India on one side, and the Utilitarians, Liberals and Missionaries on the other also enabled

the penetration of ideas, atleast amongst the upper section of society. The resultant cultural change led to introspection about Indian traditions, institution, and culture. The socio intellectual revolution that took place in the nineteenth century in the fields of philosophy, literature, science, politics and social reforms is often known as Indian Renaissance. An important part of this Renaissance was reforming Hinduism from within on the basis of Post Enlightenment rationalism. The Renaissance was especially focused in Bengal and is popularly known as the Bengal Renaissance. However, the use of ‘renaissance’ is slightly problematic as in European history it is used to refer to the “rebirth” or revival of Greco-Roman learning in the fifteen and sixteenth centuries after the long winter of the dark medieval period. But in Indian context, it implied rediscovering rationalism from within India’s past.

Aim and Purpose of the Study

The aim and Purpose of the project is to highlight the role of socio-religious reform movements for the democratization of the society, removal of superstitions and decadent customs, spread of enlightenment and development of a rational and modern outlook. This led to the national awakening in India.

Objectives of the Study

- To know about the evolution, and activities of socio-religious reform movements in India.
- To bring out the importance and significance of the impact of socio-religious movements in Indian society.

Sources of Study

The project is based on both primary and secondary sources. It has been classified into primary sources and secondary sources. The primary sources are Imperial Gazetteers and News papers, Secondary sources consist of books and fortnightlies.

Methodology

The methodology adopted in this study is analytical and descriptive method. The source materials have been critically analysed and investigated. The descriptive method is used in the presentation of the study in order to make the project understandable to the readers.

Outline of the chapters

- The first chapter deals with origin of Brahmo Samaj and its contribution for the abolition of social evils.
- The second chapter speaks about the life of Derozio and Young Bengal Movement.
- The third chapter brings out the history and objectives of Prathana Samaj and its social impact.
- The fourth chapter narrates the history of Swami Dayanand Saraswathi and Arya Samaj mission with the societal upliftment.
- The fifth chapter deals with the work of Theosophical Society.
- The sixth chapter speaks about the work of Rama Krishna Mission.

Besides this, the project begins with an Introduction and ends with a conclusion.

CHAPTER I

BRAHMO SAMAJ

Ram Mohan Roy, the father of Indian Renaissance was versatile genius, who opposed the idolatry, denounced Sati, polygamy and abuses of the caste system, favoured remarriage of Hindu widows. He started the 'Atmiya Sabha' in 1815 and carried a consistent struggle against the religious and social malpractices. In first philosophical work "Tuhfat-ul-Muwahiddin" he analysed major religions of the world in light of reason and social comfort. The first chapter speaks about the works of Raja ram Mohan Roy and his Brahmo Samaj.

Early Life of Raja Ram Mohan Roy

Ram Mohan Roy was born on the 22nd of May 1772, in a village in the district of Murshidabad, Bengal. His family background displayed an interesting religious diversity. His father, Ramakanto Roy was a Vaishnavite, while his mother Tarinidevi was from a Shivaite family. Ram Mohan's parents were devoted to god and strictly performed the duties set by their religion. Right from his childhood, Ram Mohan was devoted to Lord Vishnu. It is believed that he wanted to become a monk, but his mother opposed to his desire.

Following the custom of the day, Ram Mohan married three wives at the age of nine. His first wife died early in her childhood. She conceived two sons, Radhaprasad in 1800 and Ramaprasad in 1812 with his second wife, who later died in 1824. Roy's third wife outlived him.²

Education

Young Ram Mohan had a photographic memory and a sharp intellect. He received his early education in his own village. Later he was sent to Patna for higher

² Jyotsna Bharti, *Raja Ram Mohun Roy-A Biography*, Spider books, Channai, 2016, pp. 5-6.

studies. By the age of 15, Ram Mohan Roy had learnt Bangla, Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit. He was also sent to Benares for learning the intricacies of Sanskrit and Hindu scripture, including the Vedas and Upanishads. It was in Patna, where he came across the translations of Aristotle and Euclid. By studying their books, he developed the ability to think for himself.

The period in which Ram Mohan was born and grew up was, perhaps, the darkest age in modern Indian history. An old society and polity had crumbled down and a new one had not yet been built in its place. Devastation reigned the land. All vital limbs of society were paralysed; religious institutions and schools, village and home, agriculture, industry and trade, law and administration, all were in a chaotic condition. An all-round reconstitution and renovation were the need of the hour to keep the social life and order alive.

Ram Mohan Roy was against idol worship and orthodox Hindu rituals. He stood firmly against all sort of social bigotry, conservatism and superstitions. But his father was an orthodox Hindu Brahmin. This led to differences between Ram Mohan Roy and his father. Following differences, Roy left the house. He wandered around Himalayas and went to Tibet. During this time, he is said to have extensively studied Buddhism. He eventually returned to his family around 1794 when a search party sent by his father tracked him down to Benares in the company of some Buddhist monks with similar notions.

In 1793, the British Baptist, William Carey landed in India to settle down. His objective was to translate, publish and distribute the Bible in Indian Languages and propagate Christianity to the Indian people. He realized that the Brahmins and Pundits would be able to help him in this endeavor and began gathering them. In 1795, Carey established contact with a Sanskrit scholar the Tantric Hariharananda Vidyavagish,

who later introduced him to Ram Mohan Roy who wished to learn English. Thus at the age of 23, he started to learn English between 1794 and 1795, Ram Mohan stayed with his family attending the family zamindari holdings. There was considerable friction in the family between Ram Mohan and his father who died in about 1796, leaving some property to be divided amongst his sons.³

Early Service of Raja Ram Mohan Roy

In 1797, Ram Mohan Roy went to Calcutta and became a money lender mainly to impoverished Englishmen of the East India Company living beyond their means. He also continued his vocation as Pundit in the English courts and started to make a living for himself. He began learning the rudiments of Greek and Latin. At the same time, he admired the spirit of freedom as advocated in Vedas and the Upanishads. He proclaimed that simple living and high thinking should be a man's motto in life and he lived accordingly.

From 1803 till 1815 Ram Mohan Roy served the East India Company's "Writing Service", commencing as private clerk to Thomas Woodford, Registrar of the Appellate Court at Murshidabad. Later, he resigned from Wood Forde's service due to allegations of corruption. After that he secured employment with John Digby, a company collector, and spent many years at Rangpur and elsewhere, where he was introduced to western culture and literature. He composed a tract denouncing religious segregation and superstitions. He advocated "natural religion" which guides to the "Absolute Originator" who is the principle of all religions. By 1815, he composed *Vadantagrantha*, which is a brief summary of Vedanta Sutras in Hindi and Bengali. The central theme of these texts was the worship of supreme god beyond knowledge. His "Gaudiya Vyakaran" in Bengali was the best of his prose works. By translating the

³ Jyotsna Bharti, *op.cit*, pp. 6-11.

scriptures of Hindus into Bengali, he gave Bengali a face lift. He also translated the New Testament into Bengali with the help of Baptist missionaries.⁴

Establishment of Hindu College

In 1817, in collaboration with David Hare, Ram Mohan Roy set up the Hindu college at Calcutta. In 1820, he published the ethical teachings of Christ, entitled “Precepts of Jesus, the guide to peace and happiness”. These publications not only established Ram Mohan Roy as modern exponent of the Vedanta school of Hindu Philosophy, but also as a spiritual nonconformist. In 1822, he founded the Anglo-Hindu school, and four years later, the Vedanta College, where he insisted that his teachings of monotheistic doctrines be incorporated with “modern, western curriculum”.

Reforms of Ram Mohan Roy

Being a humanist and a religious reformer Ram Mohan Roy left the company to dedicate his time for the service of his people. Being impressed and influenced by the European Liberalism, he believed that radical reform was necessary in Hinduism and also in the social practices of the Hindus. He is best known for his agitation against sati, the practice of burning a widow alive on her husband's pyre. Way back in 1812, he had seen his brother's widow cruelly forced to commit sati, and was unable to stop it then. The misery and degradation of womanhood strongly appealed to the sympathetic heart of Ram Mohan Roy and he made up his mind to abolish the practice of sati. He defended the legal rights of females, advocated their rights to education and enlightenment and above all devoted all the energies of his noble soul to save them from a cruel death.

⁴ Jyotsna Bharti, *op.cit*, pp 11-17

Influenced by the stance, Roy took on the advocacy of women's rights. Lord Bentick banned the practice of sati in 1829.⁵ The women of India found no greater defender of their rights than the founder of Brahmoism.⁶

Foundation of Brahmo Samaj

In 1814 he founded the Atmiya sabha and fourteen years later in 1828 he founded the Brahmo Samaj on 20th August 1828.⁷ While founding Brahmo Samaj, Raja Ram Mohan Roy made it clear that his idea was to establish mono religious worship of the Supreme Being worship of the heart and not of the hand a sacrifice of the self and not of the possessions of the self. The new society preached the principles of one Supreme Being and brotherhood of man. It believed in respect to all religious and scriptures and encouraged the believes of different religions to come together.⁸

The study of different religions left a deep impact on the Raja and he developed a very liberal outlook. He was convinced that the decline of the Hindu religion was due to neglect of Shastras and the then existing religion was much inferior to the ancient religion practiced by the Rishis. He argued that the society could not advance unless the religious evils were removed.⁹

Services of Brahmo Samaj to the Society

It was mainly due to these efforts that social evils like sati, polygamy, child-marriage and widow-remarriages could be curbed. It may be noted that Raja Ram Mohan Ray was great admirer of the western humanism and united to give a position of pride to it in his scheme.

⁵ *The Imperial Gazetteer of India, The Indian Empire, Vol. IV, Administrative*, Oxford Press, 1909, p. 128.

⁶ Jyotsna Bharti, *op.cit.*, pp.19-22.

⁷ *The Imperial Gazetteer of India, The Indian Empire, Vol. I, Descriptive*, Oxford Press, 1909, p. 473.

⁸ Raychoudhary, S.C., *History of Modern India*, Surjeet Publications, New Delhi, 2010, pp.94-95.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.95.

He was the arch which spanned the gulf between ancient caste and modern humanity, between superstition and science, between despotism and democracy, between immobile custom and conservative progress, between a bewildering polytheism and a pure it vague theism.¹⁰

At the beginning weekly services were organized on every Saturday later it was transferred to Wednesday, a practice which has been retained to this day at the Brahma Mandir of Rabindranath Tagore's Shantiniketan in the Birbhum district of West Bengal.

Earlier Ram Mohan Roy and his admirers and followers used to attend prayers in the church of Christian sect disciple of Ram Mohan Roy wondered why they should not have a prayer hall of their own building, so he opened a prayer hall and called "Brahmo Samaj".

The members of the organization used to meet every Saturday. Religious discussions were held where Ram Mohan Roy recited religious poems composed by him, Muslim and Christian boys sang song in Persian and English languages.

There is only god none equals him he was no end. He is present in all living beings this was the faith of the Brahma's this was the message of Mohan Roy. The Brahmo Samaj did not recognize differences of caste, creed, race and nationality.

Contribution of Raja Ram Mohan Roy to Brahmo Samaj

The contributions of Raja Ram Mohan Roy have been greatly lauded. According one scholar "He was the first Indian who could understand where the weakness lay he located it and discovered the means of removing it and then started a gigantic process of reforming the whole structure of India.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.96.

Through Brahmo Samaj he highly emphasized that all men are equal and had full faith in the brotherhood of men. The Brahmo Samaj opposed many evils which were prevalent in the Indian society set such as casteism, polygamy, child marriage, sati and untouchability.¹¹

Ram Mohan Roy argued for the reform of Hindu law led the protest against restrictions on the press and mobilized the government against the oppressive landlords. By introducing western ideas of liberal democracy and reaffirming his faith in Advaita Vedanata, he gave a sense of direction to the course of India's future development. His status as a member of the new class of English-educated landholders gave him a connection to British interests. But this new class of elites could not completely disregard British interests because it profited from the presence of the British.

Indigo Riots

Due to this Roy's efforts to modernization conflicted with his interest in aiding the Indian populace. In 1829, he advocated for the unrestricted immigration of British indigo planters. "As to the indigo planters, I beg to observe that I have travelled through several districts in Bengal and Bihar and I have found the natives residing in the neighborhood of indigo plantations evidently better-clothed and better conditioned than those who live at a distance from such stations, he observed. However the Indian opponents of British indigo planters made the claim that the plantations had an opposite effect. They saw the British plantation owners literally exploiting the Indian workers, forcibly taking their land and keeping them in a condition akin to slavery

Ram Mohan Roy favoured the English system of education in India. In one of his works he wrote, the present system of Hindus is not well calculated to promote

¹¹ Alok Kumar Gupta, *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy*, An Imprint of Ramesh, New Delhi, p 6-7.

their political interests it is necessary that some change should take place in their religion at least for the sake of their political awareness and social comfort. He had a good experience working with the British government, which had taught him that Hindu traditions were often not credible or respected by the western standards. Certainly, these realizations made him to advocate and initiate religious reforms. He wanted to legitimize Hindu traditions to his European acquaintances by proving that “Superstitious practices which deform the Hindu religion have nothing to do with the pure spirit of its dictates.”

Besides the practice of sati, Ram Mohan Roy also objected idol worship, caste rigidity polygamy and child marriages. He believed that it was due to these superstitious practices that the British officials often claimed moral supremacy over the Indian nation. Ram Mohan Roy`s ideas of religion actively sought to create a fair and just society by implementing humanitarian practices. In 1830, he helped Alexander Duff in establishing the General Assembly`s Institution by providing him the venue vacated by Brahmo Samaj and getting the first batch of students.

Last Days of Ram Mohan Roy

In 1831, Ram Mohan Roy travelled to the United Kingdom as an ambassador of the Mughal Empire to ensure that the Lord Bentick`s regulation banning the practice of sati was not overturned. He also visited France. In 1833, he went to Bristol to stay at Beech House in Stapleton Grove. Ten days after arriving in Bristol he fell ill with meningitis and died on 27th September 1833. He was initially buried in the grounds of Beech House, but ten years later his friend, Dwarkanath Tagore, had him

reinterred at Arnos Vale Cemetery in southern Bristol. In 1997, a statue of Raja Ram Mohan Roy was unveiled at Bristol.

In September 2006, representatives from the Indian High Commission went to Bristol to mark the Anniversary of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's death. Thus multi-faceted personality was indeed a great son of India. He was an intellectual who tried to lead India to modernity. He urged the Hindus to give up meaningless and superstitious beliefs and customs that mar the actual spiritual essence of Hinduism. Raja Ram Mohan Roy shall always be remembered as the lamp that leads Hindus to the true light of the religion. He was appreciated not only in India, but all over the world for his sincere efforts to build a nation with high moral values and a respectable living place for everybody. His place is secured in the Indian history as the originator of all the important secular movements.¹²

The early death of Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1833 left the Brahmo Samaj without a guiding soul and it faced slow decline. In the absence of proper organization and leadership the Samaj suffered a setback.

This is the inscription on the tomb of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the great Indian, known as the "Maker of Modern Indian." He was the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, one of the first Indian socio-religious reform movements. A great scholar and an independent thinker, Raja Ram Mohan Roy played a major role in abolishing the practice of sati. He advocated the study of English, science, Western Medicine and Technology.¹³

¹² Jyotsna Bharti, *op.ct.*, pp. 22-31.

¹³ Jyotsna Bharti, *op.cit.*, p. 96.

CHAPTER II

YOUNG BENGAL MOVEMENT

Foundation of Young Bengal Movement

A radical trend arose among the Bengali intellectuals during the late 1820's. This trend was modern than even Ram Mohan Roy's and is known as the young movement. This movement was largely initiated by an Anglo-Indian teacher of the Hindu college, Henry Vivian Derozio (1808-31). A free thinker and a rationalist, he helped to promote a radical and critical outlook among his students who questioned all authority, loved liberty and worshipped truth. His followers known as the Derozians attacked old and decadent Customs, tradition, and began to question the whole fabric of Hindu society and religion. They were staunch rationalists and measured everything with the yard stick of reason S.N. Benerjee described them "as the pioneer of the modern civilisation". They were passionate advocates of women's right and demanded education for them. Though they did not succeed in creating a movement, yet carried forward.¹⁴

The Derozians, however, failed to have a long-term impact. Derozio was removed from the Hindu college in 1831 because of his radicalism. The main reason for their limited success was the prevailing social conditions at that time, which was no support from any other social group or classes the Derozians lacked any real link with the masses; for instance, they failed to take up the peasant's cause. But, despite their limitations, the Derozians carried forward Ram Mohan Roy's tradition of public education on social economic and political questions, For instance they demanded induction of Indians in higher grades of services. Protection of riots from

¹⁴ Nanda S.P, *History of modern India*, Dominant Publishers and Distributors, 1993, p 248.

oppressive zamindars, better treatment to Indian labour abroad in British colonies, revision of the company's charter, freedom of press and trial by jury. Later Surendranath Banerje described the Derozians as "the pioneers of the Civilisation".¹⁵

Identification of Young Bengal

Scholars who have so far studied this subject have identified the members of Young Bengal as the students of the Hindu College of Calcutta who came in personal contact with Henry Louis Vivian Derozio (1809-31) or at least who imbibed from his thoughts an uncompromising spirit of free enquiry in every sphere of life. The leading members of Young Bengal were born between 1804 and 1815 and they deceased between 1855 and 1898. So far there has been no thorough attempt at the documentation of the trends of thinking of each of these members. It is, however, generally acknowledged that their thinking agreed in certain significant ways at an early stage and at a later stage the surviving members displayed little of a community of approach to social and political subjects. Some scholars have, therefore, identified Young Bengal by reference to a particular period in Bengal's history.

Forms and variety of Young Bengal Activities

Before we go into a discussion of the nature and context of Young Bengal thinking we may note the forms and variety of its activities. Contemporary allegations raised frequently by orthodox sections against Young Bengal relate principally to their opposition to all kinds of conventional and accepted norms of

¹⁵ Rajiv Ahir I.P.S, *A Brief History of Modern India*, Spectrum Books (P) LTD, New Delhi, 2018, p 216.

Hindu Society, their taking liberty with forbidden food and drinks. Their criticisms of idolatries form of worship and caste-rules. A reference to the forms of Young Bengal activity will, however, show that they were not merely nihilistic in their approach. Even though they held strongly negative views with regard to the conventions of Hindu Society, they were not wanting in constructive and collective endeavours. In this connection, the associational and journalistic activities deserve special mention.¹⁶

Associational Activities

Among the associations established and run by Young Bengal members the following are much renowned: (a) The Academic Association, (b) Epistolary Association, (c) Society for the Acquisition of General knowledge, (d) Bengal British Indian Society and (e) The Theophilanthropic Society.

- (a) The Academic Association also called Academic Institution was the earliest of these associations, set up in 1828 and continuing to function till 1839. Derozio was its first president and after his death David Hare presided over it. At its sessions many subjects relating to ethics, politics, philosophy and religion were discussed, subjects “Which stirred to their very depths the young fearless hopeful hearts of the leading Hindu Youths of Calcutta.”
- (b) The Epistolary Association was up by Young Bengal members to supplement the work of the Academic Association.
- (c) The Society for the Acquisition of General knowledge was set up on February 20, 1838 with Tarachand Chakravarti as its president, Kalachand Seth and Ramgopal Ghosh as Vice-Presidents and Ramtanu Lahiri and Peary Chand

¹⁶ Basham A.L., *The illustrated Cultural History of India*, Oxford University press, New Delhi, 2007, pp 239-240.

Mitra as secretaries. David Hare was elected Honorary visitor. It used to arrange the reading of papers followed by free comments from listeners.

- (d) Bengal British Indian society was set up on April 20, 1843. The main inspiration behind this association was George Thompson. Its objects were to collect and disseminate information about the condition of the people, laws and institutions, and resources of the country, and to see how the just rights and interests of the people could be advanced. Professor S.C.Sarkar comments that it contained the aristocracy of intelligence as distinct from the aristocracy of wealth already organized in the Land Holders Association which was set up by zamindars in 1837 as the first political association of Bengal. The Bengal British India Society lost its identity when it was merged in the British Indian Association founded in 1851.
- (e) The Hindu Theophilanthropic Society was set up early in the forties by kishoree chand mitra at the inspiration of Alexander duff.
- (f) In the middle of the 1830's both education were thinking of ways and means of organising vocational education in medicine and engineering, Government took the first initiative in setting up Calcutta Medical College in 1835. The Young Bengal members took private initiative in setting up to Mechanical Institute in 1839 in this wake of new awareness of the necessity of vocational and practical education. The Institute was, however, short-lived.

Some members of the Young Bengal continued to exert their personal endeavours and moral encouragement for the setting up of other associations in later

periods of their life. We may leave them out as they belong to periods beyond the scope of the present discussion.¹⁷

Journalistic Activities

Journalism was another passion with Young Bengal members. Derozio himself was associated as Assistant Editor with India Gazette. He also started and edited Hesperus and East Indian, two English periodicals. He contributed his writings to Calcutta Magazine, Indian Magazine, Bengal Annual, and Kaleidoscope. His disciples showed no less eagerness in publishing, editing and contributing to periodicals, the following is a brief account of the periodicals with the publication of which members of Young Bengal were associated between 1828 and 1850.¹⁸

Social and Political Thoughts on Religion and Society of the Hindus

The radicalism of the disciples of Derozio attracted notice from all their contemporary sections of people. The first reaction came of course from their orthodox co-religionists who in an early attempt to forestall their radical tendencies secured some resolutions of the management of the Hindu College among other things for informing guardians (1) that they might withdraw their wards from the college as and when they would find their conduct to be publicly hostile to Hinduism and (2) that it was a matter for the guardians and well-wishers of the wards to consider whether the latter should be permitted to join any associations, meetings or lectures outside the college. Soon thereafter considering “Whether it was expedient in the present state of public feeling amongst the Hindu Community of Calcutta to dismiss Mr. Derozio from the College,” the managers resolved that

¹⁷ Sengupta, Nitish k. *History of the Bengali Speaking people*, UBS Pub Distributors Ltd, New Delhi, 2001, pp. 227-228.

¹⁸ Sengupta, Nitish K., *op.cit.*, p 229

the measure of Mr. Derozio's dismissal be carried into effect. This was obviously because the pupils, especially those who became known as Young Bengal, ruthlessly exposed the irrationality in and the absence of humanism from the religions and social practices of the Hindus. Lal Behari Dey in his recollections of Alexander Duff referred how week after week the young lions of the Academic Association roared: "Down with Hinduism Down with orthodoxy". The members of Young Bengal raised their protests against Hindu practices of idolatry, polytheism, shams of priesthood, and swearing by "Tulsi, Copper and Ganges, Water". Though two of these members having fallen into the wrath of their own coreligionists embraced Christianity early in 1832, it was not characteristic of the true spirit of Young Bengal to feel an attraction for Christianity. Their aim was to salvage Hinduism from its irrational bigotry. Krishnamohan Banerjee who one of the first among educated Hindus to be converted into Christianity wrote in the pages of his paper, "The Enquirer". "Persecution is high for we have deserted the shrine of Hinduism. The bigots are violent because we obey not the call of superstition. Our conscience is satisfied, we are right; we must persevere in our career. If opposition is violent and insurmountable let us rather aspire to martyrdom than desert a single inch of the ground we have possessed. A people can never be reformed without noise and confusion; the absurd prejudices of the Hindus can never be eradicated without violent persecution against the reformers." We should not miss the important fact, however, that while putting Hinduism to the bar of reason Young Bengal did not fail to raise questions about religion as such. Alexander Duff was much interested in the proselytization of educated Hindus into Christianity and was much disappointed to notice the trends of scepticism and atheism among the members of Young Bengal.

With regard to the social practices prevalent then among the Hindus, particularly, caste-hierarchy and the unsupportable dominance of the Brahmin priests, child-marriage, polygamy, subjecting women to various indignities and illiteracy were frequently mentioned by Young Bengal as important evils in need of immediate remedy. In his paper on “ The Present State of the East Indian Company’s Criminal Judicature and Police under the Bengal Presidency .Dakshinaranjan Mukherjee asserted that “God in his impartial wisdom created all men alike equal to one another, in their birth-rights” and that the Brahmin priests sowed the “seeds of division, alienation, disorder and anarchy”. These were “first introduced by an ambitious and domineering priesthood, and subsequently upheld and sanctified by ignorance and error, tending to stupidity of human reason”.

The members of Young Bengal had a profound respect for the values of education. They were so much enamoured by the enlightenment coming to them through education in the Hindu College that they took the spread of that kind of education among all sections of the people to be almost a panacea for the evils of the then society. Whether it was the superstitions in religious thought and practices or moral and intellectual degeneration into which the Hindus had fallen or even the unfair and prejudicial arrangements in social economic or political aspects- everything could be cured, they felt, only if the mind of the people could be inspired with reason and humanity which education served to stimulate.¹⁹

Death of Derozio

Derozio died of cholera at age 22 on 26 December 1831 in Calcutta. His body was buried South Park Street Cemetery. Due to backlash from conservative

¹⁹ Sartori, Andrew, *Bengal in Global Concept History*, University of Chicago press, Chicago, 2008, pp 92-93.

parents who disliked his wide-ranging and open discussion of religious issues, Derozio was dismissed from his post in April 1831, shortly before his death.

In 1838, after his death, members of the Young Bengal movement established a second society called the Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge. Its main objective was to acquire and disseminate knowledge about the condition of the country.²⁰

²⁰ Bose N.S, Firma K.L., *The Indian Awakening and Bengal*, Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta, 1969, p 342.

CHAPTER III

PRATHANA SAMAJ

Introduction

Atmaram Pandurang (1823 – 26 April 1898) was an Indian physician and social reformer who founded the Prarthana Samaj and was one of the two Indian co-founders (the other being Sakharam Arjun) of the Bombay Natural History Society. A graduate of Grant Medical College, he was a brother of Dadoba Pandurang (9 May 1814 – 17 October 1882), a scholar of Sanskrit and Marathi. Atmaram Pandurang served briefly as sheriff of Bombay in 1879. This movement was started in 1863 by Atma Ram Panduranga. Later, Justice M.G. Ranade and R.G. Bhandarkar joined the movement. Justice Ranade also started the Deccan Education Society.²¹

Early Life of Atmaram Pandurang

Atmaram was born to Pandurang Yeshwant and Yashodabai. He studied at the newly opened Grant Medical College and was in the first batch of students that included Dr Bhau Daji Lad and joined on 1st November 1845. With a diploma, he worked in Bhiwandi, running a smallpox vaccination campaign. He later helped frame Article 14 of the Contagious Diseases Act (1868). He was present in the famous Maharaj Libel Case where he deposed as a witness to present evidence that the plaintiff suffered from venereal disease. Atmaram Pandurang was a theistic reformer who opposed many Hindu traditions including child marriage. He believed and openly supported the idea that the minimum age for marriage of girls should be twenty, to the disapproval of contemporary conservative Hindu society. The Prarthana Samaj was founded at his home on 31 March 1867 and was influenced by Keshab Chunder Sen. Among the objects of the society at the time of its founding were to openly denounce

²¹ Kalpana Rajaram, *Facets of Indian culture*, Spectrum Books (p) Ltd, New Delhi, 2010, p 26.

the caste system, introduce widow-remarriage, encourage female education and abolish child-marriage. He was a Fellow of Bombay University and helped it found the Bhandarkar free library. He was selected Sheriff of Bombay in 1879. He died from a lung infection after visiting Lonavala. He was described in obituaries as a "mild Hindu" who held "very advanced views, too much so for the peace of mind of some of his colleagues." His wife Radhabai survived him.

Pandurang belonged to a highly educated and influential family and his circle of acquaintances included reformists from across the country. When Rabindranath Tagore intended to visit England in 1878, he stayed for a time in their Bombay home and sought to improve his English with the assistance of Pandurang's second daughter Annapurna or Ana. It is believed that the two were attracted to each other and Tagore wrote several poems in her memory (he referred to her as "Nalini"). Ana Turkhud, however, married Harold Littledale, professor of history and English literature at Baroda on November 11, 1880 and died in Edinburgh in 1891.

Ana's older brother Moreshwar Atmaram obtained a gold medal in Practical Chemistry and obtained honours in mathematics and geology at University College London in 1867 and was a vice-principal at Rajkumar College in Baroda. Another daughter Manek Turkhud passed the Licensiate of Medicine and Surgery from Bombay in 1892. In the same year, the daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji, Maneckbai also passed the same examination. Another son Dnyaneshwar Atmaram Turkhud (1862-1943) studied at the Grant Medical College and at the University of Edinburgh from 1890-91. He worked at the Haffkine Institute and served as a director of the King

Institute of Preventive Medicine at Guindy and worked in Kodaikanal on Anopheles mosquitoes until his death.²²

Prathana Samaj

The four point social agenda of Prathana Samaj were

- Disapproval of caste system
- Women education
- Widow remarriage
- Raising the age of marriage for both males and females

The Main difference between the Prathana Samaj and Brahma Samaj was that the members of the Prathana samaj remained Hindus and started progressive reforms within Hinduism as Hindus whereas the Brahma Samaj assailed Hinduism by forming an organization more or less outside the Hindu orbit. They were much attracted to the ideals of the modern west, and proceeded to imitate Western methods of education. Ranade founded the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha and later was one of the originators of the Indian National Congress. He has been portrayed as an early adversary of the politics of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and a mentor to Gopal Krishna Gokhale.

Prathana Samaj (Literal meaning, a prayer society), was a movement for bringing reforms within Hinduism. It advocated belief in one God. It opposed caste system and dominance of priests. Further, it promoted inter-marriage amongst different castes. It also supported widow remarriage and worked for the upliftment of women and the marginalised sections. Ranade was also the founder of the Widow Remarriage Association 1861.

²² Rajiv Ahir I.P.S, *A Brief History of modern India*, Spectrum Books, New Delhi, 2018, pp 214-216.

Being influenced by Atma Ram Panduranga founded Prarthana Samaj in Maharashtra. The Samaj, formed societies like Widow Remarriages society, Deccan Educational, Dalit Uddhar Mission.

In 1849 the year of the annexation of the Punjab, was started in Maharashtra a society called Paramhans Sabha. Its influence was restricted and it broke up very soon. Another organisation was started by Dr. Atma Ram Pandurang with the object of rational worship and social reform. The name of the society was the Prathana Samaj. This society conducted night schools for working people, and associations of women for education of girls. It also ran an orphanage and an asylum at Pandarpur. It also set up Depressed Classes Mission for improving the condition of the depressed classes. Two great members of this Samaj were Sir R.G. Bhandarkar and Justice Ranade. Ranade was responsible for the Deccan Education Society. He did a lot for the education of the people. Gokhale started the Servants of India Society and N.M. Joshi started the Social Service League to collect and study social facts and discuss social problems with a view to forming public opinion on questions of social service and secure for the masses better and reasonable conditions of life and work.

Prarthana Samaj or "Prayer Society" in Sanskrit was a movement for religious and social reform in Bombay, India, based on earlier reform movement. Prarthana Samaj was founded by the Dadoba pandurang and his brother Atmaram Pandurang in 1863 when Keshub Chandra Sen visited Maharashtra, with an aim to make people believe in one God and worship only one God. It became popular after Mahadev Govind Ranade joined. The main reformers were the intellectuals who advocated reforms of the social system of the Hindus. It was spread to southern India by noted Telugu reformer and writer, Kandukuri Veeresalingam.

The movement was started as a movement for religious and social reform in Maharashtra and can be seen much more alike Brahmo Samaj. The precursor of the Prarthana Samaj in Mumbai was the Paramahansa Sabha, a secret society for the furtherance of liberal ideas by Ram Balkrishna Jaykar and others in Mumbai. It was secret in order to avoid the wrath of the powerful and orthodox elements.

By comparison with the parallel Brahmo Samaj of Bengal, and the ideals of rational or theistic belief and social reform, the Prarthana Samaj were followers of the great religious tradition of the Marathi Sant Mat like Namdev and Tukaram. The Brahmo Samaj founders examined many world religions, including ancient Vedic texts, which subsequently were not accepted to be infallible or divine. Although the adherents of Prarthana Samaj were devoted theists, they also did not regard the Vedas as divine or infallible. They drew their nourishment from the Hindu scriptures and used the hymns of the old Marathi "poet-saints" in their prayers. Their ideas trace back to the devotional poems of the Vitthalas as part of the Vaishnava bhakti devotional movements of the thirteenth century in southern Maharashtra. The Marathi poets had inspired a movement of resistance to the Mughals. But, beyond religious concerns, the primary focus of the Prarthana Samaj was on social and cultural reform.²³

Social reforms

Prarthana Samaj critically examined the relations between contemporary social and cultural systems and religious beliefs and gave priority to social reform as compared with the political changes already initiated by the British government. Their comprehensive reform movement has led many impressive projects of cultural change

²³ Keswari K. B, *History of Modern India 1819-1964*, C.H.M. College, Ulhasnager, 2001 pp 74-76.

and social reform in Western India, such as the improvement of the lot of women and depressed classes, an end to the caste system, abolition of child marriages and infanticide, educational opportunities for women, and remarriage of widows. Its success was guided by R. G. Bhandarkar, a noted Sanskrit scholar, Atmaram Pandurang, Narayan Chandavarkar, and Mahadev Govind Ranade. Ranade emphasized that "the reformer must attempt to deal with the whole man and not to carry out reform on one side only".²⁴

The Brahmo Ideas in Maharashtra or the Prarthana Samaj

The Brahmo ideas spread in Maharashtra where the Paramahansa Sabha was founded in 1849. In 1867, under the guidance of Keshab the Prarthana Samaj (Prayer Congregation) was established. In Bombay the followers of Prarthana Samaj never "Looked upon themselves as adherents of a new religion or of a new sect, outside and alongside of the general Hindu body, but simply as a movement within it".²⁵ Apart from the worship of one God, in Western India the main emphasis has been on social reform, upon 'works' rather than 'faith'. They believed that the true love of God lay in the service of God's children. Their approach was not confrontation with Hindu orthodoxy, but they relied on education and persuasion.

In the field of social reform the focus was on four objects:

- (1) Disapproval of caste system,
- (2) Raising the age of marriage of both males and females,
- (3) Widow remarriage,
- (4) Women education.

²⁴ Suresh K. Sharma and Usha Sharma, *Cultural and Religious Heritage of India*, vol. VIII: Cultural and Religious Reform Movements, New Delhi, Mittal, 2004, p 27.

²⁵ Times of India, December 9, 2018.

The prominent leaders of the Samaj were Justice Mahadev Govinda Ranade (1842-1901), R.G. Bhandarker (1837-1925) and N.G. Chandavarkar (1855-1923). The Depressed Classes mission, the Social Service League and the Deccan Education Society have done creditable work in the field of social and education reforms.

A number of Brahmo Samaj centres were opened in the Madras state. In Punjab the Dayal Singh Trust sought to implant Brahmo ideas by the opening of Dayal Singh College at Lahore in 1910.²⁶

²⁶ Grover B.L, *A New Look at Modern Indian History*, S. Chand Company Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, p 276.

CHAPTER IV

ARYA SAMAJ

Early Life of Dayananda Saraswati

Dayananda Saraswati was born on the 10th day of waning moon in the month of Purnimanta Falguna (12 February 1824) on the tithi to a Hindu family in Jeevapar Tankara, Kathiawad region (now Morbi district of Gujarat). His original name was Mool Shankar Tiwari because he was born in Dhanu Rashi and Mul Nakshatra. His father was Karshanji Lalji Kapadi, and his mother was Yashodabai.

When he was eight years old, his Yajnopavita Sanskara ceremony was performed, marking his entry into formal education. His father was a follower of Shiva and taught him the ways to impress Shiva. He was also taught the importance of keeping fasts. On the occasion of Shivratri, Dayananda sat awake the whole night in obedience to Shiva. During one of these fasts, he saw a mouse eating the offerings and running over the idol's body. After seeing this, he questioned that if Shiva could not defend himself against a mouse, then how could he be the saviour of the world.

The deaths of his younger sister and his uncle from cholera led Dayananda to ponder the meaning of life and death. He began asking questions which worried his parents. He was engaged in his early teens, but he decided marriage was not for him and ran away from home in 1846. Dayananda Saraswati spent nearly twenty-five years, from 1845 to 1869, as a wandering ascetic, searching for religious truth. He gave up material goods and lived a life of self-denial, devoting himself to spiritual pursuits in forests, retreats in the Himalayan Mountains, and pilgrimage sites in northern India. During these years he practised various forms of yoga and became a

disciple of a religious teacher named Virajanand Dandeesha. Virajanand believed that Hinduism had strayed from its historical roots and that many of its practices had become impure. Dayananda Sarasvati promised Virajanand that he would devote his life to restoring the rightful place of the Vedas in the Hindu faith.²⁷

Foundation of Arya Samaj

The Arya Samaj was founded by Swami Dayanand in 1875. He rejected the Western ideas and sought to revive the ancient religion of the Aryans. He gave a call for ‘back to the Vedas’ and create a classless society. He argued that the evils like idol worship and superstitious beliefs in Hindu religion had crept in due to the Hindu scriptures like Puranas, which were the works of the lesser men. He decried casteism and untouchability on the ground that they were not sanctioned by the Vedas. He pleaded for a high status for women in the society and made a strong plea for widow remarriage.²⁸

Swami Dayanand expounded his ideas in Satyarth Prakash or True Exposition. According to him “God is the primary cause of all true knowledge” and “the Vedas are the book of knowledge.” He argued that “in matters of religion and in the domain of spirit the Western mind has not reached either the depths or the heights commanded by the ancient Indian sages.” Lala Lajpat Rai observed about the Arya Samaj that it was “a Vedas Church and as such a Hindu organisation” which “engages in the work of reclaiming those who have left Hindu society, and it converts everyone who is prepared to accept its religious teachings. In his work it comes into direct conflict with the proselitising work of Mussalman Mullah and the Christian missionary the Mussalman fanatic and the Chritian zealot hate it, but even the sober-

²⁷ Radhakrishnan.s, *Living with a Puropse*, Alexander street press, New Delhi, 2006, pp 347-348.

²⁸ *The Imperial Gazetteer of India, The Indian Empire, Vol. I, Descriptive*, Oxford Press, 1909, p. 446.

minded Moulvis and the broad-minded Christians do not like it. Yet it has met with considerable success in reclaiming Hindu to other faiths, and in stemming the tide of conversion of Hindu to other faiths. But its greatest success lies in raising the social status of the depressed classes among the Hindus and preventing them from leaving Hinduism and joining other religious denominations.

Probably the most important contribution of the Arya Samaj was in the field of social reforms and spread of education. It condemned idolatory, animal sacrifices, ancestor worship, pilgrimages, priestcraft, offerings in temples, the caste system, untouchability, child marriage etc. This had resulted in the degeneration of the Indian society. It started a large number of educational institutions all over the country which rendered great service in the spread of the Anglo-Vernacular education, the best of the modern and classical Indian studies. The D.A.V. institutions set up by the Arya Samajists have rendered great service to the spread of education and are still playing a leading role in this direction. The orthodox section of the Arya Samaj favoured the revival of Vedic ideal in modern life and set up the Gurkula Pathsala at Hardwar in 1902.

The Chief significance of the Arya Samaj movement lies in the fact that it created a feeling of self-confidence amongst the Hindu and undermined the prevailing notions of superiority of western races and culture. Still more important was its role in arousing the spirit of intense patriotism. The Samaj played a leading role in the political movement of the country and provided important nationalist leaders like Lala Hans Raj Pandit, Guru Dutt and Laia Lajpat Rai.²⁹

²⁹ Raychoudhary S.C, *History of Modern India*, Surjeet Publications, New Delhi, 2010, pp.97-98.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati and the Arya Samaj

The Activities of Brahmo Samaj in Bengal inspired the educated young men in other parts of India to join similar movements. The movement for Socio-Religious reforms initiated by Dayanand Saraswati through his Arya Samaj did a remarkable service for the Indian. The Arya Samaj takes its stand on the bedrock of the Vedas, which it is believed hold the key to all the socio-religious problems. Northern India produced a new Hindu Luther, whose reform work was to have the most lasting effect. Dayanand declared that the Vedas were not only true, but they contained all truth, including the ideas of modern science. On account of his valuable contribution to the religious and social field R.N. Tagore has paid him a glorious tribute as, “ The great path-maker in northern India, who through bewildering tangles of creed and practice, the dense undergrowth of the degenerate days of our country-cleared a straight path that was meant to lead the Hindus to simple life of devotion to God and service for man.” According to Dr.Radhakrishnan, “Dayanand emerged at a time when there was spiritual confusion in our country.”

According to R.C. Majumdar, “The absolutely authoritative character of the Vedas, and Vedas alone, formed the fundamental creed of Dayanand. At first he included within the Vedas both Brahmins and the highest or the early revelation. He modified his views, ultimately the Samhira portion of the Vedas, and particularly the Rig veda Samhita, was alone held to be the real Vedic revelation, at least for all practical purpose.” He propagated his philosophy not as a defender but as an offender. He believed that Hinduism was far more superior than either Islam or Christianity. According to Dayanand, “I believe in a religion based on universal and all embracing principles which has always been accepted as true by mankind and will continue to

command the allegiance the mankind in the ages to comes.” His thoughts are contained in the Satyarth-prakash, the bible of the Arya Samaj. In this he extolled the virtues of Hinduism. He had declared salvation to be an eternal state. Dayanand’s religion, while denouncing much of contemporary Hinduism, kept close to orthodoxy in several basic ways, belief in the Vedas, and in Karma and transmigration, allegiance to the six Darshans and to the various Hindu names for the one God, soul and prakriti or the material cause of the universe. He propagated the view that the long established Brahminical practices of ritualism and theory of incarnation are not essence of Hinduism.

Dayanand was opposed to both Sati system and child marriage. He also favoured the idea of female education. Therefore he started a chain of Kanya Schools where the girls were given education. He considered education as the most important instrument of religious and social reforms in the society. In Order to spread education, particularly the Vedic knowledge, he started Gurukulas. Dayanand was oppsed to giving human beings and animals as offerings in workship. He was against ritual and ceremonies. Dayananda believed in the theory of Karma. By this he meant that whatever good or bad deeds a person does for that he must be punished or rewarded. He believed that it was the duty of every human being to live a pure live. Swami Dayanand was the champion of selfrule and principle to follow. These are, God is the source of all knowledge. God is all powerful and omnipotent. Vedas are the only books containing all truth. Everyone should be ready to willingly accept truth. Every action should be done accourding to Dharma. Main aim of the Arya Samaj is welfare of the society. Everyone should be treated according to Dharma. Education should be

spread among all. Everyone is bound by the rule of the society. None should be satisfied with one's own progress.³⁰

Dayanand's mission

Aum or Om is considered by the Arya Samaj to be the highest and most proper name of God. He believed that Hinduism had been corrupted by divergence from the founding principles of the Vedas and that Hindus had been misled by the priesthood for the priests' self-aggrandizement. For this mission, he founded the Arya Samaj, enunciating the Ten Universal Principles as a code for Universalism, called Krinvanto Vishwaryam. With these principles, he intended the whole world to be an abode for Aryas (Nobles).

His next step was to reform Hinduism with a new dedication to God. He travelled the country challenging religious scholars and priests to discussions, winning repeatedly through the strength of his arguments and knowledge of Sanskrit and Vedas. Hindu priests discouraged the laity from reading Vedic scriptures, and encouraged rituals, such as bathing in the Ganges River and feeding of priests on anniversaries, which Dayananda pronounced as superstitions or self-serving practices. By exhorting the nation to reject such superstitious notions, his aim was to educate the nation to return to the teachings of the Vedas, and to follow the Vedic way of life. He also exhorted the Hindu nation to accept social reforms, including the importance of Cows for national prosperity as well as the adoption of Hindi as the national language for national integration. Through his daily life and practice of yoga and asanas,

³⁰ Nanda S.P., *History of Modern India*, Dominant Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 2003, pp. 251-253.

teachings, preaching, sermons and writings, he inspired the Hindu nation to aspire to Swarajya (self governance), nationalism, and spiritualism. He advocated the equal rights and respects to women and advocated for the education of all children, regardless of gender.

Dayanand also made critical analyses of faiths including Christianity and Islam, as well as of other Indian faiths like Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism. In addition to discouraging idolatry in Hinduism, he was also against what he considered to be the corruption of the true and pure faith in his own country. Unlike many other reform movements of his times within Hinduism, the Arya Samaj's appeal was addressed not only to the educated few in India, but to the world as a whole as evidenced in the sixth principle of the Arya Samaj. As a result, his teachings professed universalism for all the living beings and not for any particular sect, faith, community or nation.

Arya Samaj allows and encourages converts to Hinduism. Dayananda's concept of dharma is stated in the "Beliefs and Disbeliefs" section of Satyarth Prakash, he says:

I accept as Dharma whatever is in full conformity with impartial justice, truthfulness and the like; that which is not opposed to the teachings of God as embodied in the Vedas. Whatever is not free from partiality and is unjust, partaking of untruth and the like, and opposed to the teachings of God as embodied in the Vedas-that I hold as adharm."

"He, who after careful thinking, is ever ready to accept truth and reject falsehood; who counts the happiness of others as he does that of his own self, him I call just."³¹

³¹ Rajkumar, *Swami Dayananda Saraswati; Life of works*, Discovery Publishing House, New Delhi, 2003, p 62.

CHAPTER V

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The Theosophical society was founded by Madame Blavatsky and Col Olcott, in 1875 in United States. It shifted it's headquarters to India, Mrs. Annie Besant an Irish women, who had settled down in popularising it's teachings' society wanted the Indians to get rid of social evils.

The main principles of Theosophical society were as follows:-

- Attainment of the knowledge of god through spiritual ecstasy.
- Study of ancient religion, philosophy.
- Science which found in every part of the word.
- Faith in the theory karma.
- Brotherhood of humanity without distinction if race, Creed, sex, caste or colour.

Annie Besant was a free thinker and a radical political agitator. She exhorted educated Indians to renounce the hybrid and sterile ideas of Anglicised Indianism.³²

Founders Settled in India

The two Founders were utterly determined to carry on the Movement. Late in 1878 they left New York for Bombay via England, and after their arrival in India great activity took place. They established the Headquarters of the Society in Bombay and their house was crowded with visitors. The Press gave them much notice, and the Colonel lectured in Bombay and elsewhere to overflowing audiences.

³² Aggarval J.C., *Modern India History*, S.Chand and Company Ltd, New Delhi, 1999, p 247.

In 1879 Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott went on a tour in the North of India, and were warmly welcomed everywhere. In Allahabad they stayed with Mr and Mrs Sinnett, both of whom joined the Society. Mr Sinnett was editor of The Pioneer, then India's foremost paper, and he had willingly offered to publish any interesting facts about their work. Finding their correspondence becoming too heavy, they determined to found The Theosophist, the first issue appearing on 1 October 1879. In November a meeting was held to celebrate the Society's Fourth Anniversary, at which three hundred guests were present. During the year H.P. Blavatsky began to outline a book which was advertised as '*The Secret Doctrine, a new version of Isis Unveiled*'.

At Benares in December 1879, a meeting of the General Council of the Society was held under the designation 'The Theosophical Society and Universal Brotherhood'. At this meeting the Rules were revised, in the first of which appeared the words: 'The Theosophical Society was formed upon the basis of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity'. Among the plans declared in Rule 8(c) appeared the following: 'To promote a feeling of Brotherhood among nations'.

Later colonel M.S. Olcott (1832-1907) of the U.S. Army joined her. In 1882 they shifted their headquarters to India at Adyar, an outskirt of Madras. The members of this society believe that a special relationship can be established between a person's soul and God by contemplation, prayer, revelation etc. The society accepts the Hindu beliefs in reincarnation, Karma and draws inspiration from the philosophy of the Upanishands and Samkhya, Yoga and Vedanta school of thought. It aims to work for universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The society also seeks to investigate the unexplained laws

of nature and the powers latent in man. The Theosophical Movement came to be allied with Hindu Renaissance.

Annie Besant in Theosophical Society

In August 1888, the President-Founder decided to visit Europe, leaving C.W. Leadbeater in charge of The Theosophist. On the voyage he was told by one of the Masters to leave spiritual and occult matters to H.P. Blavatsky, while he should keep control over external and administrative affairs. The Esoteric Section of the TS was officially founded. H.P. Blavatsky was the sole person responsible for it and this Section had no official or corporate connection with the Society, save in the person of the President-Founder. Owing to the growth of the Society it was decided at the Convention to adopt the policy of autonomous Sections.

From January to May 1889, H.S. Olcott was in Japan to urge the twelve Buddhist sects to form a Joint Committee and combine with Burma, Siam and Ceylon to form a Convention of Southern Buddhists. After reviewing *The Secret Doctrine* for W.T. Stead's *Review of Reviews*, Annie Besant, well known as a Social Reformer and Freethinker, sought out Madame Blavatsky and consequently joined the Society. Very soon she was lecturing and writing on Theosophy, abandoning completely the materialistic philosophy she had held hitherto. From 1889 onwards H.P. Blavatsky was writing other important books, among them *The Key to Theosophy* and *The Voice of the Silence*.

On 8 May 1891 H.P. Blavatsky, the 'Light-Bringer', left her body. On news of her passing Col. Olcott, who was in Australia, left at once for England. After Madame Blavatsky's affairs were settled, he traveled on the Continent and established the European Section, went on to the United States and returned to India via Japan. In 1892 he began to write *Old Diary Leaves*, his record of the history of the Society. In

1893 The Theosophical Society held a Congress at the World Parliament of Religions at Chicago. At the end of the year Mrs Besant was enthusiastically welcomed in India. At Adyar she started the famous Convention Lectures which, with the exception of a few years, were continued until 1930.

Annie Besant made her home in Benares in 1895, and there started her renowned religious, educational and social services to India. She opened the Central Hindu College there in 1898. At her request George S. Arundale accepted the post of Professor of History at the College. He later became Headmaster of the Collegiate School, and afterwards Principal of the College itself until 1913. From 1895 to 1906 was a period of vigorous and steady growth for the Society. HSO and AB both travelled and lectured far and wide in many countries. Miss Lilian Edger was assisting the work in India. Mr C. Jinarajadasa started his career as an international lecturer in 1904, in America.

In India the movement became somewhat popular with the election of Mrs. Annie Besant (1847-1933) as its president after the death of Olcott in 1907. Early in her life Mrs. Besant lost all faith in Christianity, divorced her husband, an Anglican clergyman, and came in contact with theosophy (1882). In (1889) she formally joined the theosophical Society. After the death of Madame Blavatsky in 1891, Mrs. Besant felt lonely and decided to come to India. Mrs. Besant was well acquainted with Indian thought and culture and her approach was Vedantic as is very evident from her remarkable translation of the Bhagvat Gita. Madame Blavatsky's main emphasis had been on the occult than spiritualism. Mrs. Besant found a bridge between matter and mind. Gradually Mrs. Besant turned a Hindu, not only in her views but also in her dress, food, company and social manners. In India, under her guidance, Theosophy became a movement of Hindu Revival.

Talking of the Indian problem, Annie Besant once said: “The Indian work is, first of all, the revival, strengthening and uplifting of the ancient religions. This has brought with it a new self-respect, a pride in the past, a belief in the future, and as an inevitable result, a great wave of patriotic life, the beginning of the rebuilding of a nation.” Besant laid the foundation of the Central Hindu College in Benares in 1898 where both the Hindu religion and western scientific subjects were taught. The college became the nucleus for the formation of Benares Hindu University in 1916. Mrs. Besant also did much for the cause of female education. She also formed the Home Rule League in the pattern of the Irish Home Rule movement.

The Theosophical society provided a common denominator for the various sects and fulfilled the urge of educated Hindus. However to the average Indian the Philosophy of Theosophical Movement seemed rather vague and deficient in positive programme and as such its impact was limited to a small segment of the westernised class³³

After several iterations the Society's objectives were incorporated at Chennai (Madras) on 3 April 1905. The Three Objects of the Theosophical Society are as follows:

1. To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour.
2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy, and science.
3. To investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.

³³ Grover B.L., *A New Look at Modern Indian History*, S. Chand and Company Ltd, New Delhi, 2008, p. 279.

Sympathy with the above objects was the sole condition of admission to the society. The Society was organized as a non-sectarian entity. The following was stated in the Constitution and Rules of the Theosophical Society.³⁴

Home Rule movement

Annie launched the Home Rule league in 1916 with her past experience and talismanic presence, soon the league got a structure of local branches, which enabled it to mobilise demonstrations, public meeting and agitations. Unlike the Congress itself, the League worked all year round. It was these methodologies that were later used universally. For her incendiary activities, in June 1917, Annie was arrested and interned at a hill station. She flew a red and green flag in the garden to show her defiance. Congress threatened to launch protests if she was not set free. Annie's arrest had now unified people who otherwise would not stand together. It created a focus for protest, giving a platform for those who wanted long-term Independence for India. In the wake of intensification of the protests, the government was forced to buckle and make vague but significant concessions. To the surprise of many, it was announced that the ultimate aim of British rule was Indian self-government, and moves in that direction were promised. Annie was freed in September to a tremendous welcome from crowds all over India. In December, she took over as president of Congress for a year. It was perhaps the greatest honour she received in her lifetime. For the first time, in many decades it finally seemed something was possible, and it was all because of a woman named Annie Besant. A foreigner had married to an Indian cause and taught the Indians what could be done with a little determination and conviction.

³⁴ *The Theosophical movement 1875-1950*, Cunningham Press, New Delhi, 1951, p 27.

The path shown by Annie now found new stalwarts like Gandhi and Nehru. It was a beginning of a new era for India. Annie passed the baton of leadership to this generation because of a difference in views but remained ubiquitous presence on the podiums, vehemently professing India's right to freedom, not only in India itself but abroad too.

It was on September 20, 1933 that she breathed her last in Madras, in the country that had wholeheartedly welcomed her and was indebted to her. Her ashes were immersed in the Ganges near Varanasi as per her wishes. It was a life that had given many a reason to live for and had touched the lives of many.³⁵

³⁵ *The Theosophical movement 1875-1950*, pp 27-31.

CHAPTER VI

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

Introduction

The didactic of the Brahmo Samaj appealed more to the intellectual elite in Bengal, while the average Bengali found more emotional satisfaction in the cult of bhakti and yoga. The teaching of Ramakrishna mission is more based on ancient and traditional concepts amidst increasing westernization, and modernisation, The Ramakrishna Mission was founded by swami Vivekananda in 1897, eleven years after the death of Ramakrishna.

Ramakrishna paramahansa (1834-86) was a poor priest at the Kali temple in Dakshineswar near Calcutta. His thinking was rooted deeply in India thought and culture, although he recognised the Truth in all regions. He considered and emphasised that Krishna. He considered and emphasised that Krishna, Hari, Rama, Christ, Allah are different names for the same God. He stood for selfless devotion to God.³⁶

Swami Vivekananda:

Swami Vivekananda, the mighty man of action whose inspirational words galvanized millions of people around the globe. He was a great thinker, with a profound insight into life. With his words of wisdom, he comforted those who were suffering, and sanctified their lives. He is considered one of the most famous and influential spiritual leaders of the Vedanta philosophy. He founded the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission.

³⁶ Grover B.L, *A New Look at modern Indian History*, S. Chand Publishing, New Delhi, 2018, p 278.

Vivekananda was born in Shimla pally, Kolkata, in West Bengal on January 12, 1863. His parents belonged to a well known Begali family. They named him Narendranath Datta. Right from his childhood, Narendra was very lively and naughty. Once he was playing with his friends around a tree. The landlord threatened the children saying, `` There is demon in the tree and he swallows children. `` Hearing this , the other children took to their heels. But Narendra was not at all scared. ``Let me see the demon today!” he said and settled down on a branch of the tree. He waited there for several hours. Finally when the demon did not appear, Narendra smartly walked away, leaving the landlord embarrassed.

Narendra' s father, Bishwanath Dutta was a famous lawyer. Most of the time, he was surrounded by his clients. But whenever he found time he would sit with his son and preach, `` you need fear no one so long as you keep to the path of Truth and Dharma (virtue). One should guard one's religion should not mean hatred of others' religions. Patriotism is essential for man's welfare. Foreign enemies may invade a country, but they cannot take away people's ancient and potent culture.” Narendra would then sing devotional songs in his sweet voice.

Narendra's mother, Bhuvaneshwari Devi was a pious lady devoted to God. She inculcated good habits in him. She taught him the latent virtues of fearlessness, honesty , justice, and devotion. She would often tell him stories from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. In the night, Narendra would not go to bed unless he had listened to a story. As soon as the verses of Mother Ramayana would fall in his ears, he would forget his study and play. He was an ardent devotee of Lord Hanuman. Once he sat before the idol of Lord Shiva, with his body all startled. `` what his mother saw him, she was startled. `` what ' s all this, Naren?” she should. Narendra smiled and said,`` I'm Lord Shiva, O Mother.”

Days passed in this manner. As Narendra grew up he displayed deep religious feeling. He practiced meditation from a Very early age. `` Our Naren seems to be quite Different from the other boys of his age,” his parents would talk. And they were not wrong. Narendra was actually different from his friends. The other boys would be busy playing and having fun, while Narendra would be sitting alone in a corner, contemplating. “Come on, Naren! Let's play. Don't you feel bored?” his friends would ask. And instead of giving them a reply, Narendra would throw another question, “Have you seen God?” His friends would get agitated. ‘Ohh, you always seem to be lost, Naren. Stop asking silly questions,” they would say. “why don’t you think of finding answers to these questions?” Narendra would wonder.

Being intelligent and sincere, Narendra was always good at studies as well as games of various kinds. He was very enthusiastic and hardworking. He took lessons in fencing, wrestling and rowing. He also studied instrumental and vocal music. His teachers would praise him, “ Narendra is so energetic and spirited!” But there was one thing that disturbed even his teachers, and that was his tendency to question about everything. He questioned the validity of superstitious customs and discrimination based on caste and religion. “I can’t blindly accept anything that the books say? I need concrete evidence,” Narendra would say. And the teachers would get vexed, “Uh! We can't get you a proof every time, Narendra!.

In 1879, Narendra entered the presidency college, Calcutta for higher studies. After one year, he joined the Scottish church college, Calcutta and studied philosophy. During the course, he studied Western logic, Western philosophy and history of European nations. All this gave wind to the already existing questions about God and the presence of God in Young Narendra’s mind. Day by day, his thirst for knowledge increased. He would borrow from the library books not related to the prescribed

courses and read them, and so satisfy his thirst. As Narendra advanced in his studies, his thinking faculty developed. Doubts and uncertainties overtook him.³⁷

Many times, Narendra spoke about his doubts to eminent scholars and sought their guidance. But he could not be convinced by their logic. Though they all were excellent in their respective fields, but none of them had direct experience of God. Narendra's curiosity remained unsatisfied. Then one day, his professor called him and said, "I have noticed your curiosity about God, Naren! I also feel that you are dissatisfied with the explanations given to you. There is a holy man named Sri Ramakrishna. He is famous for his spiritualism and is said to have seen God. I am sure he can give suitable answers to all your anxieties." "You have indeed shown me a way, sir," said Naren, gratefully.

Sri Ramakrishna was a priest in the temple of Goddess Kali. He was not a scholar. But he was a great devotee. The scholars who went to see him became his disciples. So, the next morning, Narendra set off for the Dakshineswar Temple to find Sri Ramakrishna. When he reached the temple, he saw Ramakrishna sitting surrounded by his disciples. Narendra walked into the temple and sat quietly in a corner. Suddenly, Ramakrishna's glance fell at Narendra. For some time he was in a trance. Narendra's attractive figure and shining eyes filled him with wonder. "This young boy is no ordinary man! He thought.

Narendra now went close to him. "people say that you have seen God. Is it so? He asked humbly. "Yes, I have, my son! Replied the holy man. "Can I see God, too?" asked Narendra. "Of course, but you shall approach him the right way," Ramakrishna said. Narendra decided to become Ramakrishna's disciple. And he started living with

³⁷ Aggarwal J.C, *Modern Indian History*, s. Chand and Company LTD, New Delhi, 1999, pp 239-240.

the great saint. Narendra was Ramakrishna's favorite disciple. But he would not accept his preaching blindly. It had always been Narendra's nature to test something thoroughly before he could accept it.

Narendra was highly critical of people who worshipped idols. At the same time, he had no faith in mystic experiences. He tested Ramakrishna to the maximum, but the master was always patient and reasonable to the always patient and reasonable to his questions and objections. Ramakrishna would say, "There are many roads to reach a destination. No one has the right to say that the path the other man takes is not the right one. It is improper to pass judgement on anything that one does not understand." In time, Narendra accepted Ramakrishna, and his acceptance was wholehearted.

The next five years, Narendra learned the vedantic literature. He was transformed from a restless, puzzled, impatient youth to a mature man who was ready to renounce everything for the sake of God-realization. One day, Sri Ramakrishna took him to a secluded place and asked, "Son, I possess some mystic powers that can give a man whatever he wants. I have attained these powers after a long period of meditation. But I can pass them on to you just in a minute. You need not even meditate for such long hours. And you can get what you want. Tell me, shall I bestow these powers on you?" Narendra asked in a calm voice, "will these powers help me to realise the Self?" "No replied Sri Ramakrishna.

"Then they are of no use to me. I only want to realise God," said Narendra. Hearing this, Ramakrishna was overwhelmed. "You have passed the test, Naren!" he said.

Gradually, Narendra gave up all worldly pleasure and turned towards renunciation. Suddenly, Sri Ramakrishna's health broke down. He developed a tumor in the throat. He knew that his end is near. On the last day, he called Narendra to his bedside and touched him. He invested Narendra with all his spiritual powers. "Naren, now you are all- powerful. All these are my children. It is your duty to take care of them," said Sri Ramakrishna. And on 16th August 1886, the great saint attained salvation.

As per his Master's wish, Narendra decided to start a monastery. He rented an old house at Baranagore. And this was the foundation of Sri Ramakrishna Mission. All his grief- stricken brother – disciples started staying in great atmosphere of begging for food, worshipping the Master, teaching his message, and reading from the ancient Indian scriptures, the Gita and Upanishads. Narendra became a monk and headed the institution. He was now Swami Vivekananda. The Ramakrishna Math (Monastery) thus came to life. Today, the Institution is well known for it's philanthropic, educational and cultural activities all over the world.

On July 1890, Vivekananda set out for a long journey, without knowing where the journey would take him. The journey that followed took him to the length and breadth of the Indian subcontinent. At the time, science was making great advances. The critics denounced the unscientific practices of religion. But Swami Vivekananda had a different view. " people do not realize as well. The scientific practices we follow today are just a new form of what the Vedas have taught us all these years!" he would say.

Swami Vivekananda met many scholars and exchanged ideas with them. He came in close contact with the people of different regions of India. He observed the I'm

balance in society and tyranny in the name of caste. “There is a need for national rejuvenation,” he thought. Travelling day and night, he reached kanyakumari, the southernmost tip of the Indian subcontinent on 24 December 1892. There, the monk swam across the sea and sat quiet on a lone rock. He meditated for three days, in which he contemplated about the past, present and future of India. In time, this rock became famous as 'The Vivekananda Rock'. In 1970, a memorial was built there, dedicated to the great man.

Soon after this, he reached Madras (present day Chennai). He addressed a meeting. It was the first ever public meeting addressed by Swami Vivekananda. Over the years, his preaching spread far and wide. He became renowned as a religious leader. One day, he was invited to the world parliament of Religions in Chicago to represent his country, India. “This is indeed a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between the east and west,” he thought. And 11th September 1893 was the day of Swami Vivekananda's legendary address to the world parliament of Religions at Chicago.

Thousand of delegates belonging to different countries of the world had gathered at the conference. Vivekananda was the youngest them all. Besides, he did not have, like the other delegates, a prepared speech. Before his speech, he prayed to his guru Sri Ramakrishna. And then the monk from India began his address... “Sisters and brothers of America...” were his opening words. A thunderous applause followed. When it subsided, Swami Vivekananda continued, “...people born in different religions finally reach the same God, as rivers born in different places finally reach the sea... No religion is superior and none is inferior...”

This message went on to become the heart of the entire conference since it laid stress on 'unity of mankind and harmony of religions'. Newspapers carried his photographs and his speech. Quoting scientific truths from the Upanishads and the Vedas, Vivekananda silenced the critics who thought of religion as unscientific. He blended the culture and spiritualism of the east with the science and industry of the west. Later, he traveled to eastern United States and Europe and delivered several lectures. "Each soul is divine. So do not look for God in books or scriptures or temples. You should worship God in each human face. All religions are nothing but different paths to reach the same goal. Do not denounce any religion or think yours to be superior."

On returning to India, Swami Vivekananda was given a warm welcome. He delivered a series of lectures, which was later published as 'Lectures, from Colombo to Almora'. His words of wisdom uplifted the morale of the poor and the downtrodden. The number of his followers increased day by day. "Along with recognize it in others. Therefore we shall dedicated our lives to the service of man," he said to his followers.

Swami Vivekananda now came to be known as the ' patron saint of national holiday. After some time, he once again toured the west. From January 1899 to December 1900, he kept traveling, delivering lectures, writing and teaching. He returned to India and continued to teach and travel. But it was short- lived.

On July 4, 1902, this great man breathed his last at his monastery in Belur. He was only 39 years of age then. A spiritual genius of commanding intellect and power, Swami Vivekananda succeeded in influencing thousands of lives all over the world. He dedicated his life to the mankind and yearned for the progress of the poor and the

helpless. His fearless courage, his positive exhortations to the youth, his broad outlook to social problems, and countless lectures and discourses on Vedanta philosophy will always keep him alive in hearts and minds of millions of people all over the world.

Even today, his words echo: “ You rejoice that you belong to the race of the great sages. But until those who belong to the upper classes help to uplift the downtrodden, and until exploitation ends, India will only be a grave. May Mother India step forth anew from the humble dwelling of the peasant! May she appear in the hut of the fisherman! May she step forth from the cottages of the cobbler and sweeper! May she become manifest in godowns and factories! May the song of New India echo and reverberate amidst mountains and in Forests and valleys!”³⁸

Founding of Ramakrishna Math and Mission;

On 1 May, 1897 at Calcutta, Vivekananda founded the “Ramakrishna Math”- the organ for propagating religion and “Ramakrishna Mission”- organ for social service. This was the beginning of an organized socio- religious movement to help the masses through educational,

cultural, medical and relief work. The ideals of the Ramakrishna Mission are based on Karma Yoga. Two monasteries were founded by him, one at Belur, near Calcutta, which became the Headquarters of Ramakrishna Math and Mission and the other at Mayavati on the Himalayas, near Almora called the Advaita Ashrama and later a third monastery was established at Madras. Two journals were started, Prabuddha Bharata in English and Udbhodan in Bengali. The same year, the famine relief work was started by Swami Akhandananda at Murshidabad district.

³⁸ Jyotsna Bharti, *Swami Vivekananda – A Biography*, Spider Books, Chennai, 2018, pp 12-31.

Vivekananda had inspired Sir Jamshetji Tata to set up a research and educational institution when they had travelled together from Yokohama to Chicago on the swami's first visit to the West in 1893. About this time the Swami received a letter from Tata, requesting him to head the research institute of Science that Tata had set up. But Vivekananda declined the offer saying that it conflicted with his spiritual interests.

He later visited Punjab, in India with the mission establishing harmony between the Arya samaj which stood for reinterpreted Hinduism and the Sanatanaists who stood for orthodox Hinduism. At Rawalpindi, he suggested methods for rooting out antagonism between Arya samajists and Muslims. His visit to Lahore is memorable for his famous speeches and his inspiring association with Tirtha Ram Goswami, then a brilliant professor of Mathematics, who later graced monasticism as Swami Rama Tirtha and preached Vedanta in India and America. He also visited other places, including Delhi and Khetri and returned to Calcutta in January 1896. He spent the next few months consolidating the work of the Math and training the disciples. During this period he composed the famous arati song, Khandana Bhava Bandhana during the event of consecration of Ramakrishna's temple at a devotee's house.

Last Years

Vivekananda spent few of his days at Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati and later at the Belur Math. Henceforth till the end he stayed at Belur Math, guiding the work of Ramakrishna Mission and Math and the work in England and America. Thousands of visitors came to him during these years including The Maharaja of Gwalior and in December 1901, the stalwarts of Indian National Congress including Lokamanya

Tilak . In December 1901, he was invited to Japan to participate in the Congress of Religions, however his failing health made it impossible. He undertook pilgrimages to Bodhgaya and Varanasi towards his final days.

His tours, hectic lecturing engagements, private discussions and correspondence had taken their toll on his health. He was suffering from Asthma, diabetes and other physical ailments. Few days prior to his demise, he was seen intently studying the almanac. Three days before his death he pointed out the spot for this cremation-the one at which a temple in his memory stands today. He had remarked to several persons that he would not live to be forty.

One the day of his death, he taught Shukla- Yajur veda to same pupils in the morning at Belur Math. He had a walk with Swami premananda, a brother-disciple, and gave him instructions concerning the future of the Ramakrishna Math. Vivekananda expired at ten minutes past nine on July 4, 1902 while he was meditating. According to disciple, this was Mahasamadhi. Afterward, his disciple recorded that they had noticed “ a little blood” in the Swami’s nostrils, about his mouth and in his eyes. The doctors remarked that it was due to the rupture of a blood-vessel in the brain, but they could not find the real cause of the death. According to his disciples Brahmarandhra-the aperture in the crown of the head must have been pierced when he attained Mahasamadhi. Vivekananda had fulfilled his own prophecy of not living to be forty-years old.

Teachings and philosophy

Vivekananda was a renowned thinker in his own right. One of his most important contributions was to demonstrate how Advaitin thinking is not merely philosophically far-reaching, but how it also has social, even political, consequences.

According to Vivekananda, an important lesson he received from Ramakrishna was that “Jiva is Shiva” (each individual is divinity itself).

Vivekananda advised his followers to be holy, unselfish and have shraddha (faith). He encouraged the practice of Brahmacharya (Celibacy). In one of the conversations with his childhood friend priya Nath Sinha he emerging area of parapsychology, astrology (one instance can be found in his speech Man the Maker of his Destiny), saying that this form of curiosity doesn't help in spiritual progress but actually hinders it.³⁹

Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna

A popular view is that without Vivekananda Sri Ramakrishna of Bengal; to the wider World he would at most have been a mere name. One may quite reasonably dispute the point, for no spiritual force of Sri Ramakrishna's dimensions could lose its dynamism and remain confined within the narrow limits of one little province. But it goes without saying that Vivekananda would not have been his mighty self without his child-like, simple, but towering spiritual Master.

The reciprocal appreciation of the greatness of the disciple and Master found an exceedingly interesting expression in their lives. The former was firmly convinced that millions of Vivekananda could come into existence at the fiat of his Master, while the latter declared that his Naren was the incarnation of Narayan himself to uplift humanity.

³⁹ Surapathi.M, *Swamy Vivekanandar the soul of spiritualism*, Mercurysun Publications, Chennai 2009, pp 27- 32.

Without Arjuna would the victory of Kurukshetra have been possible? Sri Krishna had to preach the whole Gita to train his disciple, over and above infusing into him his divine force.

Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda appeared in an age more advanced. Hence the Master could much more easily make of Naren what he intended him to be.

In the life of Narendranath we notice two instances in which Matter submitted to Spirit. The young Narendranath, steeped in agnosticism, accepting Matter and doubting the existence of the supreme Spirit, would question people who seemed to be advanced in spirituality as to whether they had direct vision of God. Maharshi Devendranath, Father of Tagore, attempted thrice in vain to answer the query of the bold young man, and at last said, "You possess the eyes of a Yogi.

This very Narendranath fell at the hallowed feet of Sri Ramakrishna, who was a veritable embodiment of Spirit, and who saw Spirit permeating Matter. As a contrast, the supremely materialistic America practically bowed down before Vivekananda, who stood there as the spiritual representative of the East.

His was a life of numerous miracles. At the age of eight he entered into trance for the first time! He was only thirty years old when America- nay, the West- found the spiritual giant in him! In his childhood and boyhood he condemned women terribly. But in his later years he fought like a giant for the progress of Indian womanhood! We may, however, hold that in his earlier days Vivekananda was afraid not of women but of temptation. It took six long years for him to make his proud head bow to the Mother Kali. And when his surrender was complete he opened his devoted lips: All my patriotism is gone. Everything is gone. Now it's only Mother, Mother!"

I am sure my purpose will be best served if I just reproduce his own words about Kali. “How I used to hate kali!” Vivekananda said, “And all her ways. That was the ground of my six years-fight that I would not accept her. But I had to accept her at last. Ramakrishna paramahansa dedicated me to Her, and now I believe that She guides me in every little thing I do, and does with me what She wills.”

Vivekananda ruthlessly looked down upon the so called miracles that create a commotion in the minds of people. “ I look upon upon miracles as the greatest stumbling block in the way of truth. When the disciples of Buddha told him of a man who had performed a so-called miracle and showed him the bowl, he took it and crushed it under his under his to took for truth in everlasting principle.” He showed them the inner light of the Spirit, which is the only safe light to go by. Miracles only stumbling blocks. Let us brush them aside.

To show surprise at anything amounts to a tacit expression of ignorance, and hence of weakness. Never show surprise-such was the command of Viswanath Dutta to his son Naren when he was in his teens. The son acted according this father’s instructions from that very day until the end of his life. He spent years at the foot of the silence-husband and snow- capped Himalaya during his itinerancy. He met people drawn from all sections of society- from the lowest to the highest. He came in close contact with the poorest and the richest of the World. In spite of striking differences in the world, surprise could never take shelter in his all-conceiving eyes.

Perfection is the only choice for a man treading the path of spirituality. Perfection and infinite bliss run abreast. True happiness lies nowhere else except in perfection. But how to achieve this perfection? Vivekananda shows us a unique way

to achieve the impossible. He writes: “If we can distinguish well between quality and substance, we may become perfect men.”

Sweetness and happiness are rarely found in carrying out Earthly duties. No human being must be judged by which he discharges them. What is our duty and what is not our duty has been the most puzzling, the most intricate problem to solve since the dawn of civilization. But the bold statement made by Vivekananda solves it in a very easy manner: “any action that makes us go Godward is a good action, and that is our duty; any action that makes us go downward is evil, and that is not our duty.” And we may further add to it that in order to advance in life, it is our duty to have faith in ourselves first and then in the Divine. Everybody must remember the undeniable truth that without having faith in oneself one can never have faith in God. ⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Surapathi.M, *op.cit.*, pp 51-56.

Conclusion

Socio – Religious Reform Movement are linked with different ideas including presence of Colonial government, Economic and Social backwardness of society, influence of modern western ideas, rise of intellectual awakening in the middle class and poor position of women in society. British rule in India acted as a catalyst to deep seated social changes. Western culture also influenced the Indian Life and thought in several ways. The most important result of the impact of western culture was the replacement of blind faith in current traditions, beliefs, and conventions by a spirit of rationalism. The major social problems which came in the purview of the reforms movements were emancipation of women in which sati, infanticide, child marriage and widow re-marriage were taken up, casteism and untouchability, education for bringing about enlightenment in society. In the religious sphere main issues were idolatry, polytheism, religious superstitions, and exploitation by priest.

Important characteristics of Social Reform Movement included leadership by wide emerging Intellectual middle class. Reform movement started in different parts of India in different period but having considerable similarities. They were link with one region or one caste. It was clear to them that without religious reformation, there cannot be any social reformation. Two Intellectual criteria of social reform movement included-

- Rationality
- Religious Universalism

Social relevance was judged by a rationalist critique. It is difficult to match the uncompromising rationalism of the early Raja Rammohan Roy or Akshaykumar Dutt. Rejecting Supernatural explanations, Raja Rammohan Roy affirmed the principle of

causality linking the whole phenomenal universe. To him demonstrability was the sole criterion of truth. In proclaiming that 'rationalism is our only preceptor', Akshaykumar Dutt went a step further. All natural and social phenomena, he held, could be analysed and understood by purely mechanical processes. This perspective not only enabled them to adopt a rational approach to tradition but also to evaluate the contemporary socio-religious practices from the standpoint of social utility and to replace faith with rationality. In the Brahmo Samaj, it led to the repudiation of the infallibility of the Vedas, and in the Aligarh Movement, to the reconciliation of the teachings of Islam with the needs of the modern age. Holding that religious tenets were not immutable, Syed Ahmed Khan emphasized the role of religion in the progress of society: if religion did not keep pace with and meet the demands of the time it would get fossilized as in the case of Islam in India.

Similarly, while the ambits of reforms were particularistic, their religious perspective was universalistic. Raja Ram Mohan Roy considered different religion as national embodiments of Universal theism. The BrahmoSamaj was initially conceived by him as a Universalist church. He was a defender of the basic and universal principles of all religions-the monotheism of the Vedas and the Unitarianism of Christianity-and at the same time attacked polytheism of Hinduism and the trinitarianism of Christianity. Sir Syed Ahmed khan echoed the same idea: all prophets had the same din (faith) and every country and nation had different prophets. This perspective found clearer articulation in Kehsub Chandra Sen's ideas saying that our position is not that truths are to be found in all religions, but all established religions of the world are true. He also gave expression to the social implication of this Universalist perspective saying that whosoever worships the True God daily must

learn to recognize all his fellow countrymen as brethren. Caste would vanish in such a state of a society.

The Universalist perspective was not a purely philosophic concern; it strongly influenced the political and social outlook of the time, till religious particularism gained ground in the second half of the nineteenth century. For instance, despite Muslim tyranny were epithets often used to describe the pre-colonial rule, this was referred not a religious but a political institutions. The emphasis was not on the word 'Muslim' but on the word 'tyranny'. This is amply clear from Syed Ahmed Khan's description of the pre-colonial system: 'The rule of the former emperors and rajas was neither in accordance with the Hindu nor the Mohammadan religion. It was based upon nothing but tyranny and oppression; the law of might was that of right; the voice of the people was not listened to.' The yardstick obviously was not religious identity but liberal and democratic principles. This, however, does not imply that religious identity did not influence the social outlook of the people; in fact, it did very strongly. The reformers' emphasis on universalism was an attempt to contend with it. However, faced with the challenge of colonial culture and ideology, universalism, instead of providing the basis for the development of a secular ethos, retreated in to religious particularism.

The socio religious reform movement, as a whole, was against backward element of traditional culture in terms of both religious and social evils. The focus was on regeneration of traditional institutions including medicine, education, and philosophy and so on. There were differences in methods of those reform movements but all of them were concerned with the regeneration of society through social and educational reforms.

In terms of their limitations, it can be said that these movements were not able to reach vast masses of peasantry and urban poor and there were inadequate focus on composite culture and heritage of masses including music, art, architecture and literature, and science and technological achievement. Each of these reform movements was confined, by and large, to a region or other and also was confined to a particular caste and religion.

In a nutshell, it can be argued that in the evolution of modern India the reform movements have made very significant contribution. They stood for the democratization of the society, removal of superstitions and decadent customs, spread of enlightenment and development of a rational and modern outlook. This led to the national awakening in India.

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Indira Gandhi – The Iron Lady of India

Project in History Submitted to

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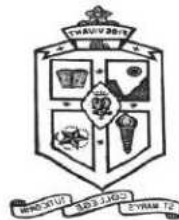
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Master of Arts in History

By

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Thoothukudi

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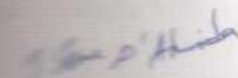
Department of History

St. Mary's College (Autonomous)

Thoothukudi

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project entitled "Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
Architect of United India" is submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous),
Thoothukudi in partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in
History and is a record of work done during the year 2021 by V.Karthika,
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project entitled "Indira Gandhi - The Iron Lady of India" submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi affiliated to the Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History is my original work and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

Place: Thoothukudi

Date: 10-04-2021

Signature of the Candidate

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Introduction

Indira Gandhi was the first and so far the only women Prime Minister of India. She was one of the greatest women of her times. Her life started with an unending quest to achieve something as is said by someone that “Great minds have purpose others have wishes”. She was indeed the most dedicated lady having commendable personality and leadership quality. There are so many examples in this book which would reflect the different aspects of her nature and her individuality. Her daring attitude reflected the vigour that made her stand and excel in the Indian society which is generally dominated by male counterparts.

Being at the forefront of Indian politics for decades, Gandhi left a powerful but controversial legacy on Indian politics. The main legacy of her rule was destroying internal party democracy in the Congress party. Her detractors accuse her of weakening State chief ministers and thereby weakening the federal structure, weakening the independence of the judiciary, and weakening her cabinet by vesting power in her secretariat and her sons. Gandhi is also associated with fostering a culture of nepotism in Indian politics and in India's institutions. She is also almost singularly associated with the period of Emergency rule and the dark period in Indian Democracy that it entailed.

Aim and Purpose

From this project, throw flood of light on the Indira Gandhi, a freedom fighter, stubborn in nature, who played a significant role in the freedom movement and after in India as a woman. It helps the present generation to know the history of this iron lady and her revolutionary activities. This study reveals the life history, the achievements and the death of Indira Gandhi.

Methodology

Different research methods have been used in this project. They are analytical method and descriptive method. The source materials have been critically analysed and investigated. The descriptive method is used in the presentation of the study in order to make the project understandable to the readers.

Review of Literature

The present study on “Indira Gandhi-” is based on historical method. Primary and secondary and published sources are utilized. Biographies of freedom fighters, biographies on Indira Gandhi written by different authors and contemporary books available in different libraries are consulted.

Chapterisation

This project divided into four chapters including introduction and conclusion. The first chapter it deals with Indira’s childhood, education, problems of her career and difficulties of early political life. In the second chapter it explains emergence of her political leadership with national movement which was well recognised and acknowledged by the entire nation. In the third and fourth chapters which elucidate vividly how she became the first women Prime Minister of India and one of the important political person in the world as per by relentless and meritorious efforts. Indira’s determination, perseverance and farsightedness are analyzed. In the concluding chapter it estimates and analysis elaborately and critically contributions and achievements of Indira Gandhi to the nation.

Chapter I

Early Life

Childhood Days

Indira Gandhi was born on 19th November 1917 at Allahabad in Ananda Bhavan. She was the only daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru and Kamala Nehru. She belonged to a very respected and highly qualified family. Her grandfather, Motilal Nehru, was a famous advocate and was a well known figure of Northern India. Swaroop Rani was Indira's grandmother and was a god-fearing lady. Her father, Jawaharlal Nehru was well-educated and was the member of Indian National Congress. Her mother also participated in the Nationalist Movement. When Indira Gandhi was born she was loved by each and every member of Ananda Bhavan, being the only child in the family. Even Sarojini Naidu, the Nightingale of India and close friend of family, was very delighted and sent a telegram which read "*new soul of India is born, congratulations!*"¹

Indira Priyadarshini better known as Indira Gandhi was nicknamed '*Indu*' by her father. She was brought up in a princely manner, dressing up expensively and playing with the most expensive toys. Her grandfather Motilal Nehru was at the peak of his legal career at that time so she was provided with the best education. But the state of India was pathetic. India was being ruled by Britishers, who came to India for trade but took hold of everything and started ruling India. The people of India were suffering.

¹ Shalini Kukreja, *Indira Gandhi*, Veer kumar Publications Ltd, New Delhi, 2005, pp.1-5.

Under the tyrannical rule of Britishers, they were forced to lead a painful life and violence was inflicted upon them by the foreign rulers who were indifferent to their sorrows.

At that time, India was politically inactive. No one was able to rebel against authority. Lack of courage and fear made people timid and without any clear aim to free their country from the clutches of British people. There was no one to motivate people and guide them properly. At that time Gandhi had just returned from South Africa where he had fought for poor people and succeeded. He suffered at the hands of Britishers who humiliated him calling him “*Bank*” and comparing him with the dogs. He decided to start freedom movement in India. Jawaharlal Nehru met Gandhi in 1916 at the Lucknow Session of the Indian National Congress and he was so much impressed by his power over mind and body, that he became his follower.²

So he joined congress which was the only mass-based organisation of India fighting for the cause of the people. Motilal Nehru wanted his son to become barrister. It so happened that Rowlett Bill was passed that strengthened the government to arrest anybody anywhere on the basis of suspicion. This made people angry and Congressmen protested everywhere in India. Public meetings in protest were being held in every nook and corner of country and the British government was furiously suppressing such demonstration with lathi charge and firings.

Jalianwala Bagh Massacre

In April 1919, a public meeting was being held in Jalianwala Bagh in Amritsar when General Dyer, a ruthless British General, blocked the entrance of the walled garden by stationing

² Menon, A.k., *Indira Gandhi*, Varun Publishing House, New Delhi, 2011, pp.6-8.

troops at the gate. He issued shooting orders. Being the only entrance, no one was allowed to escape and this created commotion.

The army fired non-stop for 10 minutes killing and injuring hundreds of people. Motilal Nehru was so horrified and stunned by this incident that he gave up all his riches and from the life of luxury and comforts, the whole family started leading life of austerity. This incident indeed changed the life of Indira Gandhi as she, for the first time, started facing hardships and developed the virtue of perseverance which had very positive effect on her later life. Indira Gandhi was very close to her mother who was a lonely yet courageous lady adapting herself to the environment in which she had to bring up her daughter alone as Nehru had become so committed to the cause of India's freedom that he had little time for his daughter.³

Indira Gandhi's fondness for her mother grew when she started suffering from poor health. She was admitted to one sanatorium after another and in the end, she died at the age of 37 years. On Kamala's death, Gandhi wrote a note to Indira praising Kamala Nehru having rare qualities and wished that all these qualities would be transferred to Indira Gandhi in equal measure. He blessed her with long life to fulfill her commitments and carve her virtues.

Education

For the next five years, Indira was a lonely soul. She could not be properly educated because of her mother's ill health and she changed schools so many times that it was very difficult for her to keep track of her studies. In 1923 she was admitted in a school in Allahabad. In 1926

³ Menon, A.k., *Op.cit.*, pp.10-12.

she went to Switzerland and studied in Geneva and Berne. After that again she came back to Allahabad and studied in St.Mary's Convent in Allahabad.⁴

Though her education was not systematic, still she was determined to live up to the expectation of her father. She took up western education to broaden her horizon. She was also taught so many things by the letters wrote to her by her father Jawaharlal Nehru from jail. He wrote thirty letters on history and other aspects of life. Through his letters he told her to be courageous and also have strong character as character was the foundation upon which all else was built.He advised her not to hide anything as hiding arouses fear and insecurity which destroys one's potential and ability.

Important Incidents Affecting Her Childhood

There are so many incidents in the life of Indira Gandhi that left a great impact on her. Once it so happened that both Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru were arrested and were fined Rs.500. Since they did not pay the fine, the police took most of the expensive articles for auctioning. Little Indira felt so bad and helpless that she started fighting with police. This incident aroused so much hatred against Britishers in little Indira that she resolved to always fight the evil in future. She converted her anger into resolutions. When she was twelve years old, as she was not allowed to work for congress because she was quite young, she started her own organisation called "*Vanar-Sena*".She was able to gather six thousand children in the very first meeting. At that age also she had pleasing personality to convince people and leadership quality to make people to follow her. The organisation used to do small duties like writing notices, serving water, cooking and carrying

⁴ Menon, A.k.,*Op.cit.*,pp.12-15.

messages etc. She knew that “*The price of greatness is responsibility*”. She was ready to accept responsibility and she was taught by her family that “*Our first responsibility is to the community.*”⁵

Indira and Swadeshi Movement

Once when Gandhi gave nation a call to boycott foreign goods, Indira Gandhi also stopped wearing foreign clothes as the elders of the family were also following the suit. As she was the only child in Ananda Bhavan, she used to play with dolls. Oneday one relative mocked at her saying that if she had discarded foreign clothes, she should also get rid of foreign doll. Although Indira Gandhi was emotionally attached to her doll, but still she was so much committed to the cause that she burnt her doll. She was depressed but at the same time she was satisfied that she had contributed though in small way to great cause of freedom. The incident clearly reflects her dedication towards her country.⁶

Indira's childhood had been unique. The emotional security of the great love of her parents juxtaposed with the insecurity of their absence. Father was always in prison or on the move; mother was increasingly bedridden. Loneliness became a part of her life. This loneliness made her draw towards Feroze Gandhi who was warm hearted and friendly. He first proposed to Indira when she was sixteen before she was sent to Shantiniketan but she turned him down. She went ahead to join Shantiniketan founded by famous Nobel Poet Rabindranath Tagore. There she was very popular among students and Rabindranath Tagore considered her as an asset to the Shantiniketan.

⁵ Devaki Jain, *Women Development*, Orient Longman Pvt, New Delhi, 2006, p.80.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.81.

Marriage Life

After Kamala's death Indira went to London to learn the classics. Feroze was there too and here the friendship deepened to love. Indira went to Oxford to study Modern History and finally she said 'yes' to Feroze Gandhi but one of the stumbling blocks to this marriage was the fact that Feroze Gandhi was not a Hindu but a Parsi. Jawaharlal Nehru was a bit reluctant in agreeing but Indira Gandhi was a confident and bold woman one who did not make up her mind in a hurry but once she did, would rarely be swerved from her intentions. In the end, there was no way Jawaharlal was going to hurt the daughter he loved with so much intensity and Indira and Feroze were married on 16th March 1942 on Ramnavmi day.⁷

Her First Arrest

On 8th August 1942 Mahatma Gandhi gave a call to the nation to "*Do or Die*" for freedom and Congress passed "*Quit India*" Resolution and almost all the national leaders were arrested. Nehru was arrested at the fort at Ahmednagar in Maharashtra. Indira Gandhi's teens were spent watching both her parents on the political trail, so she developed a sense of nationalism for her country. From that very moment, it was not for Indira to lead the life of typical Indian bashful brides sheltered by the cloister of marriage. She and her husband were arrested in connection with the Quit India Movement. Indira Gandhi was treated badly during her stay in prison and this hardened her physically and mentally. She was released after thirteen months.⁸

Birth of Children and India Attaining Independence

⁷ Sharma, H.D., *100 Great Lives*, Rupa Publication Indian Pvt, New Delhi, 2006, p.158.

⁸ Sharma, K.S., *Prime Ministers of India*, Anmol Publications Pvt, New Delhi, 2007, p.194.

Her first son, Rajiv Gandhi was born on 20th August 1944. At that time, Jawaharlal as usual was in jail and he was sent a list of about twenty options, from which he as a head of the family, might choose the name of his first grandson. Jawaharlal chose *Rajiv* meaning “*Jewel*”. The full name then was Rajiv Ratna Gandhi, popularly known as Rajiv Gandhi.⁹

The Second World War came to an end and in 1945, the Labour Party came to power in Britain. Prime Minister Clement Atlee proclaimed that a Cabinet Mission would visit India to workout proposals for complete freedom. Negotiations with the Cabinet Mission dragged and dragged and finally by 1946 the British agreed to leave India.

In March 1947 because of growing tensions between Hindu and Muslim communities, the transfer of power took place and Jawaharlal Nehru was installed as interim Prime Minister of India. Though no Congress leader was ready to accept the partitioning of the country, but on 15th August 1947 India and Pakistan came into existence, Sanjay Gandhi, Indira’s second son was born in December 1946 and when India became independent, Mahatma Gandhi told Indira to move over to areas affected by communal riots, Indira did not say ‘*No*’. She had a small baby with her and it was dangerous but being strong willed lady and very courageous, she moved to the worst hit areas and worked there from morning till evening.¹⁰

She was greatly influenced by Mahatma Gandhi’s ways of maintaining rapport with illiterate and simple people. She herself wanted to mingle with the masses of the country. From childhood, she was exposed to intellectuals, poets and powerful activists but she had an innate desire to meet people, explore the arts and investigate a life of the mind. This nature helped her in

⁹ Lalit Upadhyay, *Women in Indian Politics*, Better Book Panchrula New Delhi, 2007, p.71.

¹⁰ Lalit Upadhyay, *Op.cit.*, p.72.

later life when she became leader of the masses as the Prime Minister of India. She worked hard with Gandhi and other leaders for the restoration of peace after freedom. Speaking on freedom, Indira told in an interview with B.B.C. two decades later that,

“It was such a powerful experience that I think I was numb. You know when you go to extreme of pleasure or pain, there is numbness. Freedom was just so big a thing that it could not register, it seemed to fill all of you and all your world”.

Feroze Gandhi and Indira were residing at Lucknow as Feroze was a Member of Parliament but after Jawaharlal became Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi moved to Delhi to assist her father. She had to take care of her two children but being a strong willed lady, she managed to look after her husband and two children and also she worked hard as an assistant to the Prime Minister. In this scheme of things, she could even find for social work. She worked hard for the child welfare and was connected to many committees.¹¹

¹¹ Rajindar Sachar, *Human Rights Perspectives and Challenges*, Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi, 2009, p.183.

Chapter Two

Indira Gandhi and National Politics

Indira Gandhi and National Politics

On 30th January 1948 Gandhi was shot dead. Indira Gandhi was greatly moved as she was quite close to him and had followed him in her earlier days in politics. India became a Sovereign Democratic Republic and the constitution was adopted on 26th January 1950. Vallabhbhai Patel who used to help Jawaharlal in controlling and handling the government died in 1950. It was a great setback for Jawaharlal Nehru but Nehru controlled the government with much authority and diligence. Indira Gandhi assisted him and accompanied him on foreign tours.

She was a Member of the Executive Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and cultural Organisation (UNESCO). This was a great exposure for her as she used to meet foreign visitors on her own and used to deal with them intelligently. She was very much interested in politics, She said and her whole life was shaped amidst politics influences-Motilal, Gandhi and Jawaharlal. She had been absorbed by politics although she had been warned by her father that it was hard life and something that one would not wish for one's child. But Feroze encouraged her to participate in politics actively.¹²

Hostess to Father

¹²Ujwal Kumar Singh, *Human Rights and Peace*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2009, p.253.

Initially Indira used to spent half the days of the month in Lucknow and half in Delhi but the situation was quite demanding and she felt miserable to see her father Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India lonely and dependent on servants. Fortunately Feroze was elected a Member of the Constituent Assembly and he also moved to Delhi.

She took charge of the Prime Minister's house and she performed her duties diligently- preparing of menus for the guests, giving the wages to the servants and looking after the pets. All kinds of people used to come to Teen Murti Bhawan, it was open house to one and all and Indira used to deal with all types of people. It was physically impossible for Jawaharlal to meet and talk to each of them so Indira used to meet many of the persistent visitors and tried to sort out their problems. Every day she listened to the woes of the refugees and Indira's listening to them gave it hope and peace of mind to the helpless who felt that there was someone who cared for them.

In dealing with staff, she showed an unmistakable human touch. She provided them decent accommodation and also got a classroom built on the grounds of Teen Murti Bhawan for their children. In early 1950 when people were told to take interest in harvesting and the campaigns of "*grow more food*" and "*grow your own vegetables*" were launched, Indira also converted front and back lawns into vegetable gardens and with lot of care and love, she grew vegetables and wheat which was later distributed among the servant and staff. This reflected her love for nature and her quality of caring and concern. She also organised a group of social workers and gradually got involved in the activities of social Welfare Board.¹³

¹³ Varalakshmi Jananpathy, *Women Key to Successful Democracy*, Kalpaz Publications, New Delhi, 2009, p.79.

In September 1954 she founded the Bal Bhawan and the children's National Museum at Teen Murti Bhawan. She inherited quite a few qualities from her father-one being a quality of being a visionary. She also like her father *"had a vision that this sort of India that has to be built"* and then she tried to lay the foundation of that India. She also learnt the habit of taking down notes from her father. This made her way of working very systematic.

Indira as Mother

Indira Gandhi was very fond of her sons. Although she had little time for them but she firmly believed that quality time was much more important than quantity time. She gave her sons guidance and sense of security. She was of the opinion that, *"Much of the burden falls on the mother who must help the child develop self discipline and strengthen his character. Real love is necessary."*¹⁴

Rajiv and Sanjay were widely different in their personalities. While Rajiv was shy and introvert, Sanjay was bold, demanding and extrovert. Indira knew that each child had different personality and he had to be dealt in specific manner. As her own childhood was lonely she was determined to attend to her children and give them her affection and company. She was little free only when both her sons as they grew older, were sent to a boarding at Dehradun.

¹⁴ Gangan Jain, *Great Women's Great Speeches*, Maanu Graphics Publications, New Delhi, 2008, p.138.

Indira Entered in Politics

She always remained her father's eternal shadow and accompanied her father to various countries and was impressed by her father's crowning achievements. Going to different places gave Indira not only a good background of world affairs but an experience in dealing with varied subjects and situations. Slowly she became very much interested in politics and became member of the congress working committee in February 1955. For Indira, this was only a beginning and there was no turning back. She wholeheartedly got involved in politics.

On 2nd February 1959, she was unanimously elected the president of the Indian National Congress. As the President, she showed courage and proved her worth. She took initiative in dismissing Kerala Government because of its unpopularity among people. Although Jawaharlal was a bit reluctant in imposing President Rule in Kerala but Indira Gandhi insisted and Namboodiripad Ministry in Kerala was dismissed and fresh general elections took place in 1960. She held the post only for 11 months but during this short span her accomplishments brought her praise even from Jawaharlal who said,

*“I am proud of her good nature, proud of her energy and proud of her integrity and truthfulness.”*¹⁵

Indira suffered a great loss in 1960 when her husband, Feroze Gandhi died. Her whole being was shaken as she was very much attached to her husband who always stood by her through thick and thin. But very effectively, she overcame her grief and got more busy in politics that helped her to take her mind away from personal grief. In a letter to her friend she wrote, *“I feel*

¹⁵Gokulesh Sharma, *Human Rights and Legal Remedies*, Deep & Deep Publications, New Delhi, 2000, pp.146-548.

and empty and dead any yet life must go on". This shows her will-power and fearlessness and confidence that the good would prevail in the end.

In the following years, she travelled to various countries and in 1961, she went to Yugoslavia with Jawaharlal to attend the first Non-Aligned Conference held at Belgrade. In October 1962 the Chinese attacked India. Jawaharlal along with Defence Minister Krishna Menon worked hard to boost the armed forces and also to bring about peace. Indira showed rare courage during the month-long war and she travelled to Tezpur, Assam alone in the end of 1962 to assure Assamese that they were not left uncared for. When she reached Tezpur cease-fire was declared and she supervised cease-fire. The Chinese invasion shattered Jawaharlal's confidence and slowly his health started declining. His popularity also suffered because of China attack.

Nehru's Death and Indira's Development in Politics

On 27th May 1964 Jawaharlal Nehru passed away leaving the nation and Indira stunned and full of grief. His death created a vacuum in India and also caused a sense of deep loss in other countries of the world that supported Nehru's way of Working. Indira was now left only with her two sons and no immediate relative whom she could call her own. Her father who had been her close friend, philosopher and guide was no more but still as "*great minds don't get disheartened easily*," Indira also went ahead to serve her country and also to bring up her children with full dedication.¹⁶

Lal Bahadur Shastri became the next Prime Minister of India on 9th June. He was a sincere statesman with the right political instincts. Indira became the Minister of

¹⁶Geraldine Forbes, *Women in Modern India*, Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, 1998, pp.227-231.

Information and Broadcasting in his Cabinet. Indira continued to perform her duties with sincerity and determination.

In September 1965 Pakistan attacked India and the war lasted for 22 days. Lal Bahadur Shastri faced the enemy with courage and taking a major decision, he gave the army a free hand. Due to timely intervention by U.Thant, the Secretary General of United Nations Organisation and the Security Council a cease fire was declared on 23rd September 1965. Shastri signed the Tashkent Agreement with President Ayub Khan of Pakistan on 10th January.

Indira Gandhi during war served wounded soldiers with full devotion. While the people of India were eager to welcome Shastri from Tashkent the worst happened-the news of his sudden death came. The nation was again grief-stricken. The history of India took another turn and the congressmen realised that Indira was the only choice after Shastri and so she was elected leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party.¹⁷

¹⁷*Ibid.*,p.138.

Chapter Three

The First Women Prime Minister of India

Indira Gandhi's Tenure as Prime Minister of India

On 24th January 1966 Indira Gandhi was sworn in as the Prime Minister of India. Indira accepted her new role with dignity and optimism. She was the first women Prime Minister of India.¹⁸ Although she was accepted whole heartedly by politicians, diplomats, laymen but she faced opposition also. Still she did not falter and her will power kept her going.

Her confidence and moral strength stood by her throughout her life. Indira had a tremendous energy that seemed to flow from within her. When she became Prime Minister, she made her role very clear that, *"I don't think myself as a women I do my job. According to the Indian constitution all citizens are equal, without distinction regarding sex, language or state. I am just an Indian and first servant of the country, "desh-sevika"*.

After becoming Prime Minister she made it very clear that every individual had to work hard in building a dynamic India and peace and stability were foundations upon which the nation's progress rested. At that time, although India had completed twenty years of Independence, there was much to be done.

¹⁸ Geraldine Forbes, *Op.cit.*, pp.227-228.

India was going through a crucial phase. Power generation, irrigation, agriculture, education there was no improvement in any field. The economic crisis was the biggest issue. Indira ardently promoted the Green Revolution and helped agriculture with many inputs. Those included modern agricultural machinery, tested scientific techniques of farming, better seeds, fertilizers and more improved cropping patterns. Special agricultural innovation programmes and extra government support launched in the 1960s finally transformed India's chronic food shortages into surplus production of wheat, rice, cotton and milk.

Rather than relying on food aid from the United States of America headed by a President whom Indira disliked considerably the country became a food exporter. The achievement, along with the diversification of its commercial crop production, has become known as Green Revolution. At the same time, the White Revolution was an expansion in milk production which helped to combat malnutrition, especially amongst young children. 'Food Security', as the programme was called, was another source of support for Indira in the years leading up to 1975.

This transformation in agriculture was very important for India's economic growth. Established in the early 1960s the Green Revolution was the unofficial name given to the Intense Agricultural District Programme (IADP) which sought to insure abundant inexpensive grain for urban dwellers upon whose support Indira as indeed all Indian politicians heavily depended. The Programme was based on four premises:

1. New variety of seeds.
2. Acceptance of the necessity of the chemicalisation of Indian agriculture.
3. A commitment to national and international cooperative research to develop new and improved existing seed varieties.

4. The concept of developing a scientific, agricultural institutions in the form of land grant colleges.

Lasting about ten years, the programme was ultimately to bring about a tripling of wheat production, a lower but still impressive increase of rice, while there was little to no increase of such cereals as millet, gram and coarse grain, though these did, infact, retain a relatively stable yield.

Indira had deep concern for the minorities and deprived groups. In order to benefit the masses, she changed the basic strategies and favoured massive investment in the public sector. According to her, poverty could be removed only by making the economy self-reliant and self-generating.

On 19th July she took an important decision of nationalising the fourteen commercial banks. She explained her move as a necessity at that time as she wanted banking to reach the doorstep of the masses. By this decision, the small farmers, the cottage industries, the small entrepreneurs and self-employed persons were greatly benefitted.¹⁹

Indira Gandhi faced polls in 1967 and following the success in the general elections to the Lok Sabha in February. She became the Prime Minister on 12th March 1967. Zakir Hussain became the President of India. When it came to the manner of functioning she was firm while tackling matters related to national interests and she would not compromise at any cost. She

¹⁹Ambedkar, Nagendra and Ambekar Shilaja, *Women and Panchayat Raj*, ABD Publishers, New Delhi, 2008, p.198.

divided Punjab into two separate states-Punjab and Haryana which delighted Sikhs but Hindi speaking people revolted. Ignoring this outburst she went ahead boldly and confidently.²⁰

She also granted statehood to Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura and Mizoram was given independent power after being separated from Assam. She took many more daring decisions proving the opposition people wrong who called him “*Goongi Gudiya*”(dumb doll).

Soon after becoming the Prime Minister, she travelled widely to many countries like France, United States of America, United Kingdom and U.S.S.R, Yugoslavia, U.A.E.(United Arab Emirates). These trips were very effective in making India's position clear. India started emerging not as a poor nation unable to feed its millions, but as a proud and self-reliant nation whose people were very hard-working.

Indira always supported the cause of the poor and developing nations. In late 1967 she toured Sri Lanka and attended Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the October Revolution in Moscow. She also visited Brazil, Chile, Argentina and Venezuela. On 14th October, she addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations. She liked the working of United Nations Organisation she felt that it was a good platform for meeting of the different countries to tackle their problems.

On the death of Zakir Hussain on 3rd May 1969 Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy was nominated by Congress as its official candidate in the presidential election but Indira Gandhi supported V.V.Giri as an alternative. She wanted a person who would always give her a free hand. The

²⁰ Gagan Jain, *Op.cit.*, p.138.

presidential election took place and V.V.Giri won and emerged as the fourth President of Republic of India on August 1969.

Abolition of Privy Purses

This caused split in Congress-one old Congress and the other New or the ruling Congress. This proved a turning point for Indira Gandhi which again strengthened her position. Earlier before independence, our nation was divided into 500 and more native states, but due to the sincere efforts of Sardar Patel, whole India was integrated but the ex-rulers enjoyed the same privileges and privy purses provided by the government.

Indira Gandhi was fiercely against this as it caused great rift between rich and poor people and as our constitution had given equal status to all, she evinced a deep concern for the minorities and the down trodden people. After getting two-third support in the parliament, she introduced the Bill abolishing this practice and in August 1970, the Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha but it failed in Rajya Sabha. But determined as she was she got a presidential acceptance of this Bill and V.V.Giri issued a proclamation of de-recognition of privy purses.²¹

Indira Emerging as a Winner in 1971 Election

Indira's growing popularity and her fearless functioning caused uneasiness among opposition and they were determined to remove her. All other parties-the business community, right-wing politicians-joined hands with Congress (O). They started questioning her motives and her decisions but Indira did not falter. She possessed the qualities of bravery and fearlessness and

²¹ Gagan Jain,*Famous Women Personalities*, Three ESS Publications, New Delhi, 2007, p.84.

these qualities made her a determined person, facing wide criticism but she did what she believed to be right.

Being an observant person, she realized the crisis and understood her weakness. She belonged to minority government which was dependent on the support of left parties, so she decided to link herself directly to people. She led people to believe that national interest reigned supreme with her and her dictates and fearless actions as the Prime Minister made people sure that she was the only “*man*” in the cabinet. She clearly told the people of India that “*Congress is very dear to me....because I was born in the Congress. There was no time when my home was not the centre of all the major political movements.*”

When she was quite sure that the people were with her, she directed the President to dissolve the Lok Sabha and to announce fresh elections to be held in February 1971. The opposition fiercely campaigned against Indira and urged people to remove her. She was called ‘*dictator*’ or a ‘*rebel*’ by opposition. Yet Indira faced these charges with complete calm and “*Fear*” was a word that had no place in her scheme of things. She told people that she had an intense feeling for her country and welfare of its people always remained deep down in her mind. She made it clear that to remove poverty would be her priority after winning the elections. The masses were touched by her simplicity and humility and as a result she won the elections by a two-third of majority. Thus Indira Gandhi became more confident, gracious and dynamic after elections.

As Prime Minister after Elections

Between 1971 and 1977 two important happenings marked her term as the Prime Minister. One was the birth of Bangladesh and the other was imposition of National Emergency. In August 1971, Indira signed a 20-year Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation with

U.S.S.R. After this to clarify her stand, she toured U.S.A and a few European countries to explain the horrible condition of the refugees who had fled from East Pakistan and had flooded Eastern India. Indira made U.S.A and other countries understand the “*tragic and agonizing plight*” of the refugees. At a speech delivered in Calcutta on 3rd December she clarified, “*I do not want war. I earnestly desire peace. I will be the last person to start a war. But if a war is thrust upon us, we are prepared to fight in defence of our freedom and our ideals. Even Prime Minister Nehru, who was a passionate believer in peace, knew that a nation, has sometimes to use force to defend what it cherishes most.*”

In this way Indira defended herself in supporting East Pakistan and fighting a war against West Pakistan for a free Bangladesh. The war lasted for an entire year and in the end although being helped by U.S.A. and China, Pakistan declared cease-fire and Bangladesh emerged a free nation. Although the war was won by India, but Indira Gandhi was in favour of peace, so she tried to maintain amicable relationship with Pakistan. Thus Indira kept her priorities by upgrading India’s defence technology and this came to the fore when she dealt with the Pakistan War-she gave India a great military victory.

Indira was conferred with “*Bharat Ratna*” by the President V.V.Giri. In March 1972. Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman signed a joint treaty to safeguard peace, security and integrity of the subcontinent through joint efforts.²²

Using Nuclear Power for Peace

²²Kamal Shankar Srivastava and Sangeeta Srivastava, *101 Great Women Who Shaped the World*, APH Publishing, New Delhi, 2011, pp.5-6.

The Pakistan war proved that the strength of country depended upon advancement in science and technology. Thus Indira Gandhi gave much importance to science and technology and used it in upgrading the defence machinery. She was in favour of peaceful use of nuclear energy and was against the misuse of science-*“science is very important and it has brought a better life...But we are using it for destruction. And those countries which have more money, more science are using it for their own purposes”*. India successfully demonstrated her first peaceful nuclear explosion at Pokhran in Rajasthan on 18th May 1974. But Indira Gandhi clarified, *“We have no intention to make nuclear weapon.....We Want to make the desert bloom and to make the desert.”*

One of the most important achievements in the field of nuclear science was launching of India's first space satellite *“Aryabhata”* with the help of Soviet Carrier System and was designed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). It was launched on 19th April 1975. In August, India launched the SITE-Satellite Instructional Television Experiment Programme which helped in taking television to the villages through Satellite. In February 1977, India's second Earth Satellite Communication Station was inaugurated by Indira Gandhi at Dehradun which felicitated Overseas Communication. On 18th July 1980 the second experimental satellite launch vehicle SLV-3, put the 35-Kg. Rohini satellite into 90-minute orbit around the earth which was a very great achievement. Indira Gandhi dedicated this national satellite system to peace and service of the people. Thus she imaginatively and spiritedly improved India's Nuclear Science department and although using nuclear power for peace purposes she went on to strengthen the nation's defense declaring that *“the people of India, no doubt are peace-lovers, but will meet aggression with fortitude and determination and with discipline and utmost unity.”*

Declaration of Emergency

Indira Gandhi always gave priority to national interest and when this was involved, she never compromised. So in June 1975, Indira Gandhi was forced to declare a state of internal cause. It was all due to the opposition which was teaming up against Indira because of her growing popularity and these opponents were hurting the sentiments of people and had no thought for the country's welfare.

At this juncture, Indira had no choice but to declare Emergency. She wanted to defeat the "*forces of disintegration*".... "*communal passions*" that threatened the country. She told people in a broadcast that it was time for "*unity and discipline*" and she hoped that "people in towns and village will give us their full support so that the country will be strengthened. During this period, fundamental rights were curtailed and the press was censored as Indira felt that the country needed a "*dose of bitter medicine*" to recover its health. But she was wrong and her actions were not completely right.²³

Although she declared emergency for the welfare of nation but it was misused and at lower level, the police did so much wrong to the people that the nation retaliated. Many opposition leaders including Jai Prakash Narain were arrested during this period. People were stunned by the action but due to strictness, their shouts reduced to mere whispers. The nation was in a state of shock as people thought that their freedom was curtailed. On 1st July 1975 Indira announced the 20-point Programme which laid stress on the Government's Programme of assistance to landless, labourers, small and marginal farmers, artisans, slum-dwellers.

²³ Kamal Shankar Srivastava and Sangeeta Srivastva, *Op,cit.*,pp.3-6.

Many policies of this programme were very useful for the good of the nation and Indira Gandhi designed this comprehensive programme so as to benefit the middle class and the unemployed; tax evaders, smugglers and law offenders were subjected to punishment and bonded labour was declared illegal. The first few days of the launching of this programme proved very beneficial to people of the nation as corruption decreased, crimes against women declined, communal riots almost became negligible and prices came down. Every person became disciplined because of the fear of the police and the office-goers became punctual. All smugglers were put behind the bars and the general overall economic condition improved.

But the misuse of this programme led to her downfall. People slowly moved away from her and the ruthless treatment of the Government decreased her popularity among people and she became friendless, aloof and withdrawn.

All her friends who were supportive of her stamped her as being dictatorial. Things didn't work quite the way Indira Gandhi had intended. Done for the good of the people her actions reversed and she was blamed by the people for being ruthless. Threatened by the people belonging to fanatic factions she became fearful but she never disclosed her fears. Her confidence and moral strength stood by her throughout her life-during her Varanasi days and 1947 partition riots days and also during this period of emergency when some people were believed to have pledged to finish her off.

In this desperate time, she turned to her second son Sanjay Gandhi for advice and support as her elder son Rajiv Gandhi was not interested in politics but depending on Sanjay was a big mistake as it is believed that Sanjay was behind the excesses done during Emergency. Although from childhood Sanjay Gandhi had shown the potential of an active person but his energy got diverted into wrong direction and as he grew up he developed an aggressive passion for getting

things done. He would get restless, over enthusiastic to achieve his goal and the path which he used to take was of no consequence.

From January 1976 Sanjay launched a Five Point Programme tackling the issues of family planning, dowry and castes but the biggest mistake of Indira Gandhi was to have blind faith in his immature ways. She thought that she would take him but she was wrong and sadly she realised, too late, that his destructive energy had become uncontrollable.

Sanjay was President of the Youth Congress and taking advantage of his position he enforced family planning measures so strictly that people were afraid of his high-handedness and this eventually led to Indira Gandhi's defeat in 1977 elections.

Chapter Four

Indira Gandhi and Her Last Days

1977 Elections and Her Defeat

Suddenly on 18th January 1977, after the advice of her close associate Indira Gandhi released the opposition leaders and announced fresh polls to be held on 19th March 1977. This move increased people's anxiety and they had doubts if fair polling would be there. As emergency was still prevalent, the press being censored, the truth couldn't be found and the nation was in a state of confusion. There was visible inclination towards the opposition and the state of Indira Gandhi was quite pathetic.

Although Indira Gandhi toiled hard for the upliftment of Indian women but the same women, rural women in particular, turned against her because of forcible sterilizations of their men done during emergency. so as a result in the general elections to parliament, the ruling Congress was impressively defeated by the Janata Party Which combined many opposition parties. Janata Party Government under Morarji Desai came into office. Indira Gandhi resigned as Prime Minister on 22nd March 1977.²⁴

²⁴ Ujjawal Kumar Singh, *Op.cit.*, p.253.

In ten years of her Prime Ministership, since 1966 Indira Gandhi had proved her worth and an intense feeling for her country and its people always remained deep down in her mind but after defeat she became withdrawn and an aloof person but not for long. Politics grew within her and she couldn't live without it.

She matured with experience. *“An intense love for her country and people always urged her to go on doing something for the country. Someone analysed her.”* Her capacity to delink herself from even the most tension-fraught moments is what gave her the tremendous energy she possessed. And with this renewed energy and enthusiasm she again started visiting people as she knew that Janata party had won because the sentiments of people were hurt due to wrongs done during Emergency. In order to rectify her depts, she again started establishing contacts with the masses.

In the meantime, the constituents of the Janata Party developed internal conflicts. The Party also did a great blunder in arresting Indira on charges of the misuse of power but soon she was released abruptly as the charges couldn't be proved. This move tarnished the image of the Janata Government and people started becoming sympathetic towards Indira. As luck would have it, the Shah Commission of Enquiry against her also had bad effect on the image of the Janata Party. She was even imprisoned in 1978 and was taken to Tihar Jail but she never lost her fighting spirit and after every crisis, she emerged stronger than before.

As was evident, because of internal fights, the Janata government fell. Morarji Desai resigned and a “Caretaker” government under Chaudhary Charan Singh functioned until the country went to the polls again for elections to Parliament in January 1980 in which Indira Gandhi

won with an overwhelming majority. These elections again proved the abiding faith of people in Indira Gandhi.²⁵

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²⁵ Rajindar Sachar, *Op.cit.*, p.183.

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In the meantime, the constituents of the Janata Party developed internal conflicts. The Party also did a great blunder in arresting Indira on charges of the misuse of power but soon she was released abruptly as the charges couldn't be proved.

This move tarnished the image of the Janata Government and people started becoming sympathetic towards Indira. As luck would have it the Shah Commission of Enquiry against her also had bad effect on the image of the Janata Party. She was even imprisoned in 1978 and was taken to Tihar Jail but she never lost her fighting spirit and after every crisis, she emerged stronger than before.

As was evident, because of internal fights, the Janata Government fell. Morarji Desai resigned and a "*Care taker*" Government under Chaudhary Singh functioned until the country went to the polls again for elections to Parliament in January 1980 in which Indira Gandhi won

with an overwhelming majority.²⁶ These elections again proved the abiding faith of people in Indira Gandhi.²⁷

Indira's Last Term as Prime Minister

Back in power, Indira started working with fresh zeal. This brief interruption in her career had profound meaning for Indira as she again started shaping the politics according to style of her own. With a comfortable majority in parliament, she took the task left unfinished by Janata Party boldly and confidently. When she became prime minister for fourth time, everything in the country was topsy-turvy as there was inflation, no law and order was there and there was scarcity of commodities.

Indira promoted the Green Revolution, which was to help farmers in many ways. She helped agriculture with many inputs. These included modern agricultural machinery, tested scientific technique of farming, better seeds and better high yielding crops, improved irrigation practices etc. This helped in increasing the production of food grains which kept steadily rising and reached well over 130 million tones in 1984.

The growth of the small industries became six fold due to the efforts of the prime minister that in turn increased the exports. The industries also provided employment on a large scale.

²⁶ Agarwal, R.C., *Constitutional Development of India and National Movement*, S.Chand & Co. New Delhi, 1986, pp. 150-168.

²⁷ Rajindar Sachar, *Op. cit.*, p. 183.

But suddenly Indira faced a great blow when she lost her favourite son Sanjay in plane crash on 23rd June 1980. She was shattered but it never reflected on her face. She embraced this tragedy with incredible calm. She directed her elder son Rajiv Gandhi who was a pilot in Indian Airlines to quit the job and help her in politics. Rajiv Gandhi was married to Sonia Gandhi who was reluctant to come to India and let Rajiv enter the politics. But due to sense of duty towards his mother, Rajiv Gandhi entered politics which gave strength to Indira Gandhi and she reverted to her work.

To encourage the feeling of oneness and friendship not only amongst her countrymen but all people of the world, Indira hosted the Ninth Asian Games in New Delhi in November, 1982. Although being criticized by opposition for wasting money, organising of Asian Games was crowned with success and brought fame to India.

Indira as a World Figure

Although Indira Gandhi was wholly Indian, but like Jawaharlal her heart reached out to the world. Indira's thoughts were influenced by the teachings of her father who was one of the founders of the world peace movement. She travelled extensively attending world meetings and represented the spirit of tolerance, moderation and understanding human development.²⁸

She was in the favour of the working of United Nations Organisation and attended its meetings. In September 1970 Indira was one of the speakers at the Silver Jubilee session of the United Nations Organisation. She also visited U.S.A. who was inclined towards Pakistan and she

²⁸ Nayar, Sudha, *Women in Contemporary India*, Navyug Books International, New Delhi, 2011, pp.1-27.

made her position clear to U.S.A by confirming that she was not in favour of war but earnestly desired peace.²⁹

On 14th June 1972 Indira attended the plenary session of the UN Conference on Human Environment where she stressed that life was one and the world was one. The environmental problems were interlinked and she wanted to tackle these problems with the help other countries.

She was concerned about population growth not just for India but for the world. At the World Health Assembly on 6th May 1981 she appealed to all governments of the world to take serious measures for checking population growth and providing basic health care to the people.

She wanted to be in contact with other countries not just politically but culturally. She always sent cards on the National Days of the small countries as a friendly gesture. She became an integral part of the organisations such as FAO, WHO, NAM and she worked for the downtrodden people. She had a vision that, *“I wish that the world would regard itself as one and not be divided into one,two,three,four.”*

She knew that the major threat to human race was the global war that could destroy the entire human race so she undertook the task of bringing together all those nations which were in favour of peace.

The non-aligned countries had much faith in Indira and she, on her part struggled for a better future for people by linking herself to the drive against poverty, hunger and inequality. As

²⁹ Nayar,Sudha,*Op.cit.*,pp.1-27.

long as she lived, she considered the non-aligned movement to be history's greatest peace movement.

She was truly a world figure as she always said that, *"No country can afford to take a narrow view of its own interest as it has to live in a world that is closely interlinked."*

In March 1983 the Seventh Non-Aligned Summit was held in New Delhi and at the concluding session, she said, *"Born for the universe, we cannot narrow our loyalties. Belonging to human kind, nothing human can be alien to us."*

On 7th March she was nominated the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Meet. She succeeded President Fidel Castro of Cuba. She severely criticised the tension created by the superpowers. She told the developed countries that they should remember that they had to depend on the smaller countries for necessary products, so it was better to solve the problems by negotiations rather than by conflicts.

She clarified that India's foreign policy laid stress on the importance of unity. India's policy was not rigid but flexible and aimed at world peace and unity. Indira always fought for freedom and human dignity and she strongly condemned the South African government policy which had no regard for human rights. She was in support of the struggle of Namibian people to achieve freedom. Thus Indira was respected by all the other peace-loving nations and she was the embodiment of peace and stability.³⁰

³⁰Ganesamurthy, V.S., *Empowerment of Women in India*, New century Publications, New Delhi, 2008, p.312.

Her Last Journey

In the beginning of 1984, though she was successfully running the country and was famous among world leaders for her efforts, she had to face some internal problems at home front. Congress-I lost elections in two southern state of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh which was quite unexpected. The agitation in Assam gathered momentum and the agitators demanded that the illegal immigrants should be ousted from the state.

Along with these disturbances, Indira Gandhi also faced a wave of terrorism in Punjab in the beginning of 1984. Sikhs were demanding separate province and the Golden Temple at Amritsar gave shelter to terrorists who were responsible for the killings in Punjab. Finally to curb terrorism, Indira Gandhi ordered the troops to enter the Golden Temple. The Sikhs got upset as this move had hurt their sentiments. They were of the view that due to the entering of troops in the Temple, the sacred place had become impure. The Sikhs revolted against Indira Gandhi. This was the burning issue which could not be resolved.

Her Last Minutes

It was the morning of 31st October when Indira Gandhi stepped out of her official residence and walked riskily towards her office to give a T.V interview to film-maker Peter Ustinov, she passed a wicket gate, guarded by Satwant Singh and Beant Singh. Suddenly two of her personal guards shot at her and she breathed her last. Indira died on her way to the hospital in her official car, but she was not declared dead, until many hours later. She was taken to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, where doctors operated on her and reportedly removed 31 bullets from her body.

The glorious life that had ruled India for nearly two decades came to an end and India lost one of the greatest stateswomen of the twentieth century. The funeral took place on 3rd November near Raj Ghat (a memorial to Gandhi) and the place was called *Shati Sthal*, when several world leaders paid homage to Indira Gandhi. The whole nation was in grief. She had given up her life while serving her country. She would always be remembered for her courage, inner strength and will to overcome obstacles. Her ultimate triumph was that many observers seemed to think “India” was “Indira”. She epitomized her country India.

The journey of her life was not an easy one and she had to cross political and intellectual maze with many criticisms and obstacles. But she came out winner in the end. She feared no one and did not give any attention to critics as she felt that what she did was for her country’s good. The homage paid to her by common people throws light on her character as one cucumber-seller said on her death, “*The poor have been orphaned, she was mother for all of us. The house I have was due to her, ashirwad*”.

She was so much popular among world leaders that after her death Margaret Thatcher, then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom said that, “*I shall feel greatly the loss of a wise colleague and a personal friend.*” Ronald Reagan, President of the United States paid her homage by saying that, “*Mrs. Gandhi was a source of global leadership. Her determined efforts to promote peace, security and economic development throughout the world will serve as a constant reminder of Mrs. Gandhi’s commitment to protect the shared values of democratic nations.*”

Aftermath

Over the next four days Sikhs were killed retaliatory pogroms led by Congress activists and sympathizers. The then Congress government was widely criticized for doing very little at the time, possibly acting as conspirator, especially since voting lists were used to identify

Sikh families. The Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, son of Indira made a statement at Boat Club in New Delhi on 19th November 1984, on the birth day of Indira Gandhi “Some riots took place in the country following the murder of Indiraji. We know the people were very angry and for a few days it seemed that India had been shaken. But, when a mighty tree falls, it is only natural that the earth around it does shake a little”.

The Justice Thakkar Commission of Inquiry set up to probe Indira Gandhi’s assassination recommended a separate probe for the conspiracy angle behind the assassination. The Thakkar report stated that the “needle of suspicion” pointed at R.K.Dhawan for complicity in the conspiracy. Beant Singh was killed by gunfire at the scene of the assassination. Satwant Singh was arrested and later sentenced to death along with conspirator Kehar Singh. The sentence was carried out on 6th January 1989. Satwant Singh was the last man to be hanged in Tihar Jail in Delhi.

Indira’s Contributions to the People of India

Although reserved and aloof since childhood, Indira Gandhi always mingled with common people with ease. Her shy nature never came in the way of her rapport with the masses. She inherited from her father the confidence in the people of India. She wanted to create an atmosphere where each and every person had self-respect and could live with dignity.³¹

³¹ Dutta, Meenabhargava Kalyani, *Women, Education and Politics*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2005, pp.141-143.

Indira loved many communities of India as she believed in secularism. She was always with minorities and urged people to feel responsible for the well-being of the weaker sections.

Indira believed that India's future depended much on Indian women as women had a very important role to play and a country's progress could be measured by the progress of its women folk. She like Gandhi was of the opinion that if you educate a man, you educate an individual and if you educate a women, you educate an entire family. Indira laid emphasis on the status of women by introducing a chapter on women's development in the Sixth Five-Year Plan. She directed the Ministry concerned to chalk out programmes for the upliftment of women. Indira wanted every girl in the country to be educated. She took many measures to keep women abreast of men and ahead. She gave much importance to family welfare planning programmens, child health and improvement of female nutrition.

She encouraged women organisations and social welfare institutions to spread civic sense and teach people about cleanliness. For the younger generation, she set an example by her tireless efforts. She like her father was very fond of children and she received many letters from children from all over the world. She found time to respond to these letters and answered their simple questions. Thus she did a lot for the people of India –especially the women. An intense feeling and love for the people of India always remained deep down in her mind and heart.³²

Her Personality and Love for Nature

³² Meenu Agarwal and Shobana Nelasco, *Empowerment of Rural Women in India*, Kanishka Publishers, New Delhi, 2009,p.49.

Indira was beautiful, vivacious, energetic and a charming lady who lived with the demands of time. There was lightness in her gait and her bright eyes were very observant that missed nothing.

She possessed a tremendous courage and fearlessness which enabled her to face criticism without faltering and as a woman of dynamic personality, she did what she believed to be right. She had unlimited energy and strong will-power and there was urgency in her nature to achieve any goal. As a child, she was afraid of dark but when she grew up, she learnt not to disclose her fears and her confidence and moral strength overshadowed her fear. Failure of success never bothered her and she went on doing her work with dedication and devotion.

She lived only for her country and its people always fascinated her. Not only sophisticated classes were impressed by her personality but the masses were also touched by her simplicity and humility. Though she belonged to affluent family, she could adjust herself to any situation. She was never fussy. May be it was because of the days she spent in jail that strengthened her as a person. She was always dressed in a dignified manner. She used to dress according to situation and was even sporting enough to wear a tribal costume to please tribal people.

Indira had soft heart for the people who worked for her. She showed concern for her staff and colleagues. She deeply believed in the Indian philosophy of life and she was proud to be an Indian as she believed in secularism and “*Secularism is the foundation of Indian unity.*”

Like Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi loved nature and she was influenced by her father in her love for the environment from a young age. She was fascinated by the mountains and ever-changing beauty of nature. She told people that, “*Every citizen should consider conserving nature as a social and moral responsibility.*”

Such was the lady who ruled the country and guided the destiny of India's millions and tried to lead them to a better life.

Conclusion

The political leadership played a crucial and unique role during freedom struggle in combining all forces under one wing of Indian's. The spirit of patriotism was spread out among the people. The Indian masses are attracted towards the charismatic leader's speeches and the writings of the upper class and upper middle class intelligentsia. The political objectives of the leaders of INC in the decades prior to the World War I were of a piece with its middle-class character. The Congress at times did not challenge the overall legitimacy of British rule over India. After Gandhi's entry, it became a collective movement. Thus, the leadership of charismatic traits of a particular individual whose ultimate objective is to serve the people and the nation gives the real figure and shape to value of common cause.

It also imply as Weber brings out in his theory of society. How a spirited personality or talent granted to a person as a token of grace and favour by the power of people's support. Wins over the unwanted authority. The leaders who fought for political freedom and the leaders who participated actively for the emancipation of oppressed and minorities are all lined in a reputed world of charisma .

The main focus on Indira Gandhi's political leadership has given impetus to discover new channels in the history of political leadership. After the demise of Indira the political atmosphere in India was engulfed by the factionalism in Congress and anti-Congressism. Indira Gandhi mobilized her political force as a tough politician, seeded the fear in greedy senior colleagues within the party and those who focused 'anti-Indira ' or 'anti- Congress' approach

among their 'opposition' groups. Simply it was a real politicians that Indira Gandhi had to suit her action to the moment's need.

Undeterred by any residue of sentiment or ethics. Her strategy was quite new to Congress tradition. In many cases she had to represent something ruthless and new, because, it seemed the crisis to her vision. She had astonished people by her flair for cold assessment, shrewd timing, the telling theatrical gesture, and above all by her capacity for a fight to the finish-even to the point of bringing the hundred years old Congress under her control.

Her emergence was a complete success in her political life. As she was a firm resisting human species in the midst of wild politicians within the party and outside in the opposition group. She was fluent and forceful in extempore Hindi at public meetings. The public hoped that her single-mindedness along with fresh blood in the organisation would provide new momentum and she did what she could. This shine had rubbed off not politicians in the eyes of a nation tired of calls for sacrifice.

The evidence of new style. the highly personal 'Indira Style' came thick and fast, even before she had consolidated her position by her victory in the Lok Sabha Elections of April 1971. She showed tenderness to those who were committed to the cause of the party and the country. Wrote Frank Moraes in his book, *Witness to an Era*: "She has shown a capacity for toppling restive colleagues as deftly as she has toppled a good few State Governments. Within the framework of democracy. she was trying to utilize enough the device of Emergency with rather presented her bad name in Indian policies than good crops, because of the outgrowing opposition to her strategies and the overwhelming of military forces in some area and on some

particular leaders. This provoked the press, which lost its freedom of expression and other secular and religious bodies."

When she took Prime Ministership for the first time in 1966, Indira Gandhi was aware of the fact that the Congress has lost confidence among the masses. The restoration of party's image was linked up with her destiny. Hence she demanded decisive and correct steps should be taken to put the programme of democratic socialism. Soon after becoming Prime Minister Indira Gandhi realized that unless a socialist programme was soon adopted and implemented effectively. There would be no hope for her in making headway in power politics. Thus, she took effective measures to implement bank nationalization programmes to remove poverty. Rural development programmes, minimum needs programme and twenty-point programmes.

Indira's commitment to a non-religious, secular society's beyond doubt, she was as much as Nehru was in this respect. As Nehru's only daughter, people saw the embodiment of Nehru's qualities in her. She commanded a degree of attention and even indulgence from the Indian people not given to anybody else. She never suffered from the self-imposed restrictions of the customary rules and inhibitions. When necessary, Indira was able to make her own rules and act.

Indira Gandhi led the fight-back against the centrifugal forces. The 1969 split in the Congress, the delinking of the Lok Sabha and assembly election in 1971, the successful war with Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh combined to inaugurate the plebiscitary phase in Indian political system. Charisma became a nationwide political phenomenon. The "supreme leader" syndrome expectedly at the expense of the State level leaders made its debut. And when the underground nuclear explosion at Pokharan was conducted in 1974 the Indian State was presumed to have regained its desirable "hardness". The experiment with the internal emergency was the more acute expression of that presumed fight against the non-trifocal force in Indian politics.

Politically Indira Gandhi's point of triumph, was the liberation of Bangladesh and the presale with the entire nation including most of her critics applauded her. Soon after this new rumblings started. First in Gujarat and then in Bihar mainly over misrule and corruption led by Jayaprakash Narayan it had a potential of a powerful opposition movement and Indira Gandhi went in for the emergency on 25th June 1975.

It is true that when Indira Gandhi was made as Prime Minister, in 1966 the Congress party was hoped to exploit the Nehru legacy. Congress was under the collective leadership and no leader was able to project him as all India leader. But Indira Gandhi was able to achieve such status and she was an acceptable and charismatic leader by her populist's politics till her assassination.

As a political strategist, Indira Gandhi realized that Congress was not a position to recapture power in the Hindi regions such as U.P, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Bihar. And thus she made alliances and seat arrangements with regional political parties in the south.

She had been the finest year of her political life. Because in 1971 she was able to create Bangladesh. by doing so she not only created history, but also altered the Geography of South Asia. During the same year for the 1971 elections in 43 days she travelled over 36,000 miles and addressed over 300 meetings all over India. She attracted nearly 20 million voters which explains her electoral strategies and dynamic personality. Though critics call her as fascist, autocratic and self-interested who favoured succession of dynastic rule. Yet whatever may have been achieved by Indira Gandhi was purely through democratic and parliamentary processes. She enjoyed unfettered will of the people till her assassination. She remained truly charismatic leader and political phenomena in a class by herself.

That was her strength and firmness which was lacking in many Indian leaders. She possessed sound instinct and judging capability. As a true democrat she submitted to the so called total revolution led by J.P. and ordered for holding elections in 1978 and got defeated.

Her greatest quality as a politician is indeed her determination to face a challenge boldly. Not get unnerved when under attack. The Bangladesh war challenges of the Opposition parties and her son Sanjay Gandhi's untimely death were the instances which proved her steel-like quality in managing political affairs and survival even at times of inconsolable sorrow.

Her success in political life may be attributed to a few factors. Firstly she entered in politics with considerable experience and guidance from her father. Secondly her ability to win

the public had made her more charismatic leader of her time. Thirdly, whenever she needed. She was able to provide ideological justification for all her executive actions. Whether it was Garibi Hatao Movement or Bank nationalisation or Twenty-Point Programme. She was able to provide them as Gandhian Liberal or Marxist ideological orientation. Though her socialistic orientation does not appear to be systematic one. Yet it has brought enormous changes in both public and bureaucratic attitude towards development.

As an able Prime Minister Indira Gandhi treated Indian politician as her playthings. Whether it was Morarji Desai, Y.B. Chavan or Jagajivan Ram. She made them to dance to her tune. She accepted Morarji Desai as Deputy Prime Minister and when she thought that suitable time had come. She was able to stand on her own and she took finance portfolio from him. Similarly Chavan was shifted from his important portfolio. She completely restructured the banking system and gave a socialistic twist to the planning processes in India.

By exploding an atomic bomb, she surprised both the then U.S. President Nixon and Henry Kissinger. Indira Gandhi was not only a matchless charismatic leader of twentieth century but became an immortal institution of India to guide and inspire the generations to come.

Indira Gandhi has been and remained as pragmatist, preferring to deal with practicalities and finding feasible solutions for every problem whether it was poverty or advancement of science or party politics or international crisis. Indira Gandhi would be remembered not only for her grace and dynamic multi-personality but also for her contribution to national development. International States Woman-ship by which she tops among the nineteenth century political leadership. Though she attracted bitter criticism such as dictator, autocratic, self-serving... and so on from her opponents like Morarji and others she never failed to attract million of masses towards her.

Her critics like Morarji questioned her why the so called good things such as reduction of prices. Discipline in Government offices, efficiency and drive against corruption could not be achieved by her before emergency or without imposing emergency. Compare to the evil done to the democratic system is more than the good things achieved. In this regard. Morarji observed "It is true that no other leader would have had the gall or effrontery of clamping such an emergency on this nation, which had achieved freedom from slavery by following non-violent method of Gandhi. Let the future generation be the judge of Indira Gandhi".

To conclude, it would be apt to quote from two persons. One is Jothi Basu, and another is Henry Kissinger. While paying Homage to her Jothi Basu observed that it is not correct to hold that Indira Gandhi attained eminence in political life just because of her family advantage. She carved out her own place by dint of her own attainments and efforts. She stood head and shoulders above her colleagues and pursued her objectives with determination. Henry Kissinger had also similarly admired. In his words, I never wavered in my admiration for her strength of purpose. Extra-ordinary courage and unrelenting persistence. She was in a word formidable. Further he added... balancing the super powers against one another require

extraordinary skill and Indira Gandhi accomplished these without greater skill. She had clear view how to hold India together and she did what was necessary.

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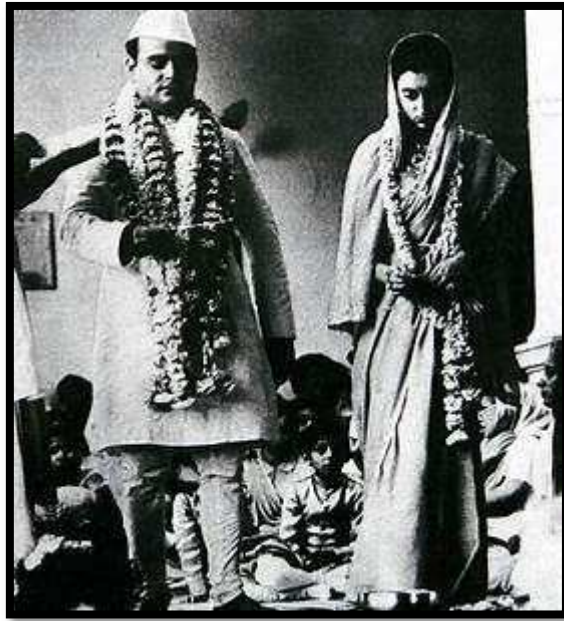
Photos



Nehru, Kamala Nehru and Indira Gandhi



Indira Gandhi in her childhood days



Indira Gandhi and Feroze Gandhi



Indira and Her Children's (Rajiv and Sanjay Gandhi)



Indira Gandhi in National and State Politics



Indira Gandhi and Nixon, The President of U.S.A



Indira Gandhi in Her Last Journey

RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY – HARBINGER OF MODERN AGE

Project submitted to

St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi

affiliated to

Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

By

Monisha. B

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Department of History

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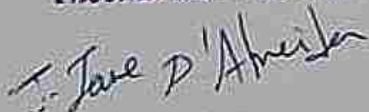
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project entitled "**Raja Ram Mohan Roy - Harbinger of Modern Age**", submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History and is a work done during the year 2020-2021 by B. Monisha, a bonafide student of the Department of History, St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi.



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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project entitled "**Raja Ram Mohan Roy – Harbinger of Modern Age**", "submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History, is my original work and it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

Place: Thoothukudi

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Signature of the Candidate

Date: 10.04.2021.

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RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY
(22nd MAY 1772 – 27th SEPTEMBER 1833)



INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was known as ‘Father of Modern India’ and ‘Father of Indian Renaissance’. Ram Mohan Roy was a prominent Indian social reformer and the founder of the Brahmo Samaj. He is considered as the Pioneer of Modern Indian Renaissance for the remarkable reforms, he brought in the 18th and 19th century India. Though Roy was modernist in his approach, he always tried to link modernity with tradition. He attempted the creative combination of secularism and spirituality of Western and Eastern philosophy. He wanted to present the concept of universal religion by combining the best features of all leading religions of the world. He was of the opinion that rationality and modernity needed to be introduced in the field of religion and that ‘irrational religion’ was at the root of many social evils. This concept of universal religion meant not merely religious tolerance, but also transcending all the sectarian barriers of separate religion. He was the founder of liberal tradition in Indian political thought¹.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the first Indian who founded a reformist movement in India. He wanted to modernize India as early as possible; therefore, he was called the ‘representative of the modern age’. Raja Ram Mohan Roy played a significant role in the progress and development of social and religious movements². He was a polyglot and well versed in many languages. like Bengali, English, Sanskrit, Arabic, French, Latin and Hebrew. He studied in depth many religions like Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and felt the need to eradicate many abuses that had crept into Hinduism to restore its pristine glory. He

¹ Nithya, N.R., *Modern Indian Social and Political Thought*, University of Calicut, Kerala, 2017, p.11.

² Madan Mohan Mandal & Santosh Kumar Behera, *Raja Ram Mohan Roy as an Educational Reformer: An Evaluation*, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, (Vol.I), Issue.IV, Scholar Publications, Assam, 2015, p.93.

believed in the unity of God, opposed idol - worship, ritualism and caste system. He sought to improve the vigorous campaign for the abolition of ‘Sati’ or self immolation of widows.³

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was not only a great social, religious reformer but was also a great educational thinker. He was a great scholar, independent thinker and a multilingual person. He believed that education was prime necessity for upliftment of Indian society.⁴ Without proper education we can’t reform our society. Education is an instrument for social change. Roy believed that modern education was an important vehicle to carry social reforms and enlighten people about their rights.⁵ He advocated the induction of Western learning into Indian education system. So he promoted study of English, Science, Western Medicine and Technology in India. In Bengal Renaissance, Raja Ram Mohan Roy is regarded as one of the most important figure. His efforts to protect Hinduism and Indian rights by participating in British Government earned him the title ‘The Father of the Bengal Renaissance.’⁶

Aims and Purpose of the Study

The aims and purpose of the study is to know about, “**Raja Ram Mohan Roy – Harbinger of Modern Age**” is an attempt of presenting Raja Ram Mohan Roy’s multifaceted life and works. As a tireless social reformer and liberal reformist, he inaugurated the Age of Enlightenment and the modernisation of India. Henceforth, he was known as ‘Father of Modern India’, who had a broad range of interests throughout his life,

³ Raghunanda Rao, P., *Indian Heritage and Culture*, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1988, pp.51-52.

⁴ Kalyani Mookherji, *Raja Ram Mohan Roy*, Prabhat Prakashan, 2017, p.91.

⁵ Aparna, P., *The Builder of Modern India Raja Ram Mohan Roy*, Aman Book Center, 2014, p.20.

⁶ Singh, M.K., *Raja Ram Mohan Roy*, Anmol Publications, Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2008, p.91.

covering a wide range of political, social, religious and educational reforms. He was the Father of the Indian Renaissance in the early 19th century and was an earnest investigator and took a robust embarkment upon a comparative study of various religions. Today, with the emergence of the concepts like individual liberty, women's emancipation, free expression of opinions, modernising, one should not forget that all those ideas have already championed many years ago through Raja Ram Mohan Roy's writings. His zeal for work is still an example for the upcoming generations. Through this project, the researcher has also tried to establish the relevance of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's philosophies and activities in the present day scenario.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are as follows; to examine Raja Ram Mohan Roy's biography, paying special attention to his religious education and his experiences in Calcutta, his religious writings, fight against social evils, to study the various factors which contributed in making Raja Ram Mohan Roy as a social reformer, to evaluate the inherent philosophy of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's life which made him a great educator, to examine the role of Raja Ram Mohan Roy as an Journalist.

Sources of Study

Different sources have been used to trace the “**Raja Ram Mohan Roy – Harbinger of Modern Age**”. Source materials have been classified into primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are mainly based on Newspapers and Article. The secondary sources are mainly books related to Raja Ram Mohan Roy.

Methodology

The methodology adopted in this study is analytical and descriptive method. The source materials have been critically analysed and investigated. The descriptive method is used in the presentation of the study in order to make the project understandable to the readers.

Outline of the Chapters

The project is divided into five chapters excluding Introduction and Conclusion.

- The first chapter, '**Pioneer of Modern Indian Renaissance**' explains a biographical sketch of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's life, education and his service which influenced his later personality.
- The second chapter, '**Socio – Religious Contributions**' traces the socio religious liberal views of Raja Ram Mohan Roy
- The third chapter enhances '**Educational Reforms**' of Westernisation and its impact.
- The fourth chapter, '**Liberal Political Thinker**' describes the wide spectrum of political thought.
- The fifth chapter, '**Maker of Modern India**' makes an overview of Modernisation in India.

All the chapters are summarized in the conclusion.

CHAPTER I

CHAPTER – I

PIONEER OF MODERN INDIAN RENAISSANCE

Raja Ram Mohan Roy¹ (1772 - 1833) was the first great modern reformer² is popularly known as the 'Maker of Modern India. He was the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, one of the first Indian socio - religious reform movements in India. He played a major role in abolishing the practice of Sati and polygamy. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was given the title 'Raja' by the then Mughal Emperor Akbar II of India in 1831. Ram Mohan Roy was against idol worship and orthodox Hindu rituals. He stood firmly against all sort of social bigotry conservatism and superstitions.³ Among his efforts, the abolition of the brutal and inhuman Sati Pratha was the most prominent. His efforts were also instrumental in eradicating the purdah system and child marriage.⁴ He tried to initiate social and religious reforms in the society. He campaigned for right for women to hold property. He also supported education in society, particularly education of women. He believed that English language education was better than the traditional India education system. Ram Mohan Roy believed education to be an integral part of social reform.

Family and Early Life

Raja Ram Mohan Roy⁵ the first modern Indian was pioneer of the social and religious reform in India⁶ was born on 22nd May 1772 in an orthodox Brahmin family at Radhanagar a village in the Hooghly district in Bengal. He was the son of Ramakanto Roy and Tarini Devi who were devoted Hindus of the Vaishnava sect and socially conservative in outlook.⁷ Moderately prosperous landowners, they had served for several generations as revenue

¹ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, Ramesh Publishing House, New Delhi, p.5.

² Basham, A. L., *The Illustrated Cultural History of India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2007. p.238.

³ *Ibid.*, pp.5-6.

⁴ Nithya, N.R., *op. cit.*, p.11.

⁵ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, *op. cit.*, p.6.

⁶ Raghunanda Rao, P, *Indian Heritage and Culture*, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1988, p.51.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.8.

officials under the Mughals.⁸ His parents were highly devotional towards God. They had immense faith in God and religion in general, and performed all the duties set down by their religion. Right from his young age, Ram Mohan Roy was devoted to lord Vishnu. He would not put down the 'Bhagavantha' without completing the reading of Valmiki Ramayana but, when he came to know that his mother also was fasting, he had his food for her sake. In his 14th year, he was about to become a monk. But his mother stops in his way. Under his father's roof he received the elements of native education, and also learnt the Persian language.

Ram Mohan Roy's Education

During the Muslim rule in India, the language used was Persian. Proper knowledge of Persian and Arabic was also very essential to get employment or to correspond with the Government. He was afterwards sent to Patna to learn Arabic and lastly to Banaras to obtain a knowledge of Sanskrit, the sacred language of the Hindus. His teacher at Patna set him to study Arabic translations of some of the writings of Aristotle and Euclid, it is probable that the training thus, given strengthened his mind in acuteness and close reasoning, while the knowledge which he acquired of the Islam religion from Muslims whom he esteemed contributed to cause that searching examination of the faith in which led him eventually to the important efforts he made to restore it to its early simplicity.⁹ Besides Bengali and Sanskrit, Roy had mastered Arabic, Persian, Hebrew, Greek, Latin and 17 other leading languages spoken in the world. Roy's familiarity with such diverse languages exposed him to a variety of cultural, philosophical and religious experiences. He studied Islam thoroughly. The Sufi poets like Sadi and Hafiz made a deep impact on Roy's mind. The Quranic concept of Tauhid or Unity of God fascinated Roy. He also, studied the

⁸ Ramachandra Guha, *Makers of Modern India*, Penguin Books Ltd., London, 2010, p.26.

⁹ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, op.cit., p.8.

teachings of the Buddha Dhamma. Roy admired the Bible as much as, he did the Vedanta and the Quran.¹⁰ His comparative study of the various scriptures led him to discover the fundamental unity of all religions in their doctrines and principles, mainly the belief in monotheistic religion and universal brotherhood of man.

Religious Conflicts with his Parents

Believers of God that lived in India during that period, worshipped idols and pictures of the same and Ram Mohan wondered over the existence of God in any such form. He did not believe in idol worship, he opposed the religious festivals at home. On the other hand, his father who was a very firm believer in idol worship felt Ram Mohan was doing wrong. He often advised him, but the son did not change his mind. Owing to differences with his father, Ram Mohan left the house. At the age of fifteen, he left his parental home and wandered for two or three years in Tibet and Himalayas. There, he studied Buddhist and Tantrik traditions. Later on, he received his education in Sanskrit language and Sanskrit literature as well. After his marriage, he went to Varanasi and studied the Vedas, the Upanishads and Hindu philosophy deeply. When his father died in 1803, Ram Mohan returned home. After returning from home, again he turned his attention in studying the ancient books of Hindus in Sanskrit and other languages. At this time, he published his first writing '*Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhiddin*' as a small pamphlet on monotheism and a protest against the idolatry of all religions. It showed that from a very early age, his rational mind did not permit him to accept the prevailing beliefs and arguments in favour of the religious customs.

Career

In 1803, he began to work for the East India Company in the revenue department. He learned English under the guidance of Digby and read the works of contemporary European

¹⁰ Nithya, N.R., *op. cit.*, p.11.

writers on politics, history, law and economics. In 1809, he was transferred to Rangpur as Dewan to the collector of the district.¹¹ After completed his studies, Ram Mohan Roy worked with the East India Company at various places in Bengal, before settling in Calcutta in the year of the Battle of Waterloo, 1815. By this time he had already published several books. His first book, written in Persian with a preface in Arabic, was an attack on idol worship.

After he moved to Calcutta, Roy became increasingly involved in literary and social work. He translated the Upanishads from Sanskrit into Bengali. He published a tract in English against Sati. He debated with orthodox scholars on the rights of Hindu Women. He also contested the claim of Chirstain missionaries that, their religion was superior to all others. In 1815, he founded an 'Atmiya Sabha' or 'Friendship Association' which, among other things, searched for elements common to different religious traditions.¹² Thereafter, he took retirement from the service in 1815 and settled down in Calcutta.¹³

Challenge of West

Ram Mohan, who was perhaps the first Indian thinker to seriously engage with the challenge of the West. Born in Bengal, the first province to come under British rule, Roy saw in the presence of the foreigner an invitation to re-examine the pre - suppositions of his own society. On the one hand, he sought to reform his native faith of its ugly and exploitative aspects. On the other, to demand of the white – dominated East India Company democratic rights that were granted at home yet denied in the colonies. In both respects, Roy set the tone for reformers and activists who were to follow. Roy became less willing to accept the claims and prejudices of orthodox Hinduism. The disenchantment was confirmed

¹¹ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, op. cit., p.9.

¹² *Ramachandra Guha*, op. cit., p.27.

¹³ Jayalakshmidēvi, C.N., *Raja Ram Mohan Roy*, Litent Books, 2012, p.10.

by what he saw around him. His elder brother died, and the wife was forced to commit Sati, to Ram Mohan's dismay.¹⁴

Eradicating Superstitious Beliefs

Raja Ram Mohan Roy lived in a period when child marriage and Sati was highly practiced among the people in the society. Wives were burnt along with the dead husband whether she was willing or not. Girls were married off when they were five or six years old. Ram Mohan was sick and tired of these practices. Though he had high regard for Hindu religion, but he felt that Hindus had yet to know about the religion correctly. He preached for equality among men and women and said people should also give up superstitious beliefs. He tried to bring about a change in society and as a result he gathered few people for the process. The members had to give up idol-worship. Then had to spread the society's views on religion among the people. He visited the houses and needy of poor people. when Roy was in Calcutta, he made immense contributions for the betterment of the poor people, in slums and talked to them and helped them out with food and money.¹⁵

Believe in One God

Roy himself had now come to believe that the 'Omnipresent God', who is the only proper object of religious veneration, is one and undivided in person. He claimed this was the message of the Vedas, and of the Bible and the Quran as well. Seeking to promote inter-religious understanding, Roy wrote a book on the Precepts of Jesus, and began work on a life of Muhammad. Roy and his circle were roundly abused by orthodox Hindus, who derided them as sinful atheists and 'moderns blinded by passion'. However, the European Christians in India did not warm to him either. They complained that he opposed conversion and that his admiration for Jesus did not extend to acknowledging his divinity.

¹⁴ Ramachandra Guha, *op. cit.*, p.26.

¹⁵ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, *op. cit.*, pp.10-11.

In 1816, Roy opened a school for boys, whose medium of instruction was English. In 1821, he started a weekly newspaper in Bengali. Then he started a paper in Persian language.

Society of God

In 1828, he founded the Brahmo Samaj (the Society of God) which preached the worship of the One God on the basis of what its founder claimed were the original teachings of the Vedas. When the practice of Sati was legally abolished in 1829, the credit for its abolition was given to the Governor General, William Bentinck. However, as a contemporary English observer – herself, a woman – pointed out the legislation could not have been brought about but for the powerful though unacknowledged aid of the great Hindu philosopher Ram Mohan Roy. Roy's great contribution towards this reform was to demonstrate that Sati was not a religious duty sanctioned or upheld by Hindu scriptural tradition.

Though the 1820s Roy's ideas were being propagated through his Bengali newspaper which was called the '*Sanmad Kaumudi*', or the "*Moon of Intelligence*". The historian A.F.Slahuddin Ahmed quotes two remarkable contemporary testimonies to this paper's influence. In December 1921, the Calcutta Journal, a periodical of the English in India, wrote of Roy's newspaper that 'she will be the means of the moral and intellectual renovation of India'. Nine years later a London magazine described the '*Sanmad Kaumudi*' as '*the Morning Chronicle of India*' advocating freedom, civil and religious, opposed to corruption and tyranny and labouring, we are happy to say effectively and extensively, to eradicate the idolatrous rites of the Brahmins and awaken the Hindus to a sense of the degradation and misery into which they have been plunged'.

Notably Ram Mohan Roy had a keen interest in politics outside India as well. He welcomed the movements that delivered the countries of South America from Spanish colonial rule. Within Spain, he supported the liberal opposition to an autocratic monarchy.

He championed the emancipation of catholics within the United Kingdom. This internationalist orientation set him apart from moralists and thinkers of the past – thus as C.A Bayly has recently pointed out, Ram Mohan Roy was the first Indian to represent the growth of freedom in India as an essential part of a wider transnational quest of humanity for self – realization’.¹⁶

Visit to England

Raja Ram Mohan Roy’s visit to England was crucial in the perspective of breaking the taboo in the Indian society. There was a time when an Indian going to the foreign lands was considered wrong, and there was religious connotation as well. Those days, it was considered as a sin and irreligious for a Hindu to cross the sea. It was Raja Ram Mohan Roy who actually rejected this idea and went to England. The British Government granted the allowances to Akbar II, the Mughal King of Delhi. But it was really a very small amount. Akbar II decided to send Ram Mohan Roy to England at his own expense on 1830 to submit a representation to the King of England to increase the same. Before Roy left for England, the king conferred him to the title of “Raja”. Thus Ram Mohan Roy was called Raja Ram Mohan Roy thereafter.¹⁷

Arriving in London in April 1831, Roy spent the next two years in the city. He met with officials of the East India Company, lobbied with members of Parliament, was granted an audience with the King and wrote and published books on Indian economics and law. He exchanged his views with British Utilitarians and English Socialists and also travelled to Paris. His biographer Sophia Dobson Collet remarks that ‘as he had interpreted England to India, so now he interpreted India to England. In London, he watched with interest from the sidelines as Parliament passed the Reform Bill of 1831, which extended the franchise to a greater number of British men. After many months of patient lobbying, Roy was able to

¹⁶ Ramachandra Guha, *op. cit.*, p.29.

¹⁷ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy(Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, *op. cit.*, p.19.

persuade the British Government to increase the stipend of the Mughal emperor by 30,000 pounds a year. However, he never saw the Emperor again, nor his native Bengal.¹⁸

Another crucial reason for Raja Ram Mohan Roy's visit to England was to plead before the British Parliament for the complete abolition of 'Sati' in India. There were many people, during that time who objected vehemently to the visit of Ram Mohan Roy to England. There were people from the British Government who also strongly opposed him visiting England. But by that time, he was very popular and his fame had already reached England. On 15th November 1830, Raja Ram Mohan Roy sailed for England by the steamer Albion, arriving there on 8th April, 1831. However, his fame had preceded him. In 1816, when his first English work on the Vedanta, *An Abridgment of the Vedant*, came out, it was reviewed at length by the Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature of England.

Arrival in Liverpool

When his arrival in Liverpool was made known, almost all the celebrities of the town called on him. William Roscoe, the famous historian of the Medcys who was seriously ill at that time, sent his son requesting Raja Ram Mohan Roy to visit him. Roy visited Roscoe in his sick – room and both of them held a most intimate and warm conversation. Roscoe's son, who was present during this interview, has left a memorable account of it: "The interview will never be forgotten.....after" his usual gesture of Eastern salutation, Raja Ram Mohan Roy said, "Happy and proud am I, proud and happy to behold a man whose fame has extended not only over Europe but over every part of the world." "I bless God", replied Roscoe, "that I have been permitted to live to see this day." Roscoe, who was in a state of paralysis for years, died soon after.

¹⁸ Ramachandra Guha, *op. cit.*, p.29.

The object of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's visit to England was tripartite. First, he wanted to submit a memorandum to the king of Great Britain on behalf of Akbar II, the then Emperor of Delhi. Secondly, to present a memorial to the House of Commons for the abolition of Sati, and thirdly, to be present in England during the approaching discussion in the House of Commons on the Renewal of the East India Company's Charter. From Liverpool, Raja Ram Mohan Roy went to London, without any delay so that he might be present in the House of Commons at the second reading of the Reform Bill. When he was in London, Jeremy Bentham the great British philosopher, called on him at a Hotel. Finding that Raja Ram Mohan Roy had already retired, Bentham left a note for him: 'Jeremy Bentham to his friend, Raja Ram Mohan Roy Bentham admired Raja Ram Mohan Roy so deeply, that on another occasion he left a note addressing Raja Ram Mohan Roy Bentham admired Roy as his "intensely – admired and dearly – beloved collaborator in the service of mankind"'. In London, Raja Ram Mohan Roy was busily engaged in meeting with the distinguished men of England and holding political discussions with them. The Duke of Cumberland, the brother of the king of England, introduced him to the House of Lords. And as per James Sutherland, 'it was the Raja's urgent solicitations which prevented the Tory Peers voting against the Indian Jury Bill.'

Friendship with Lord Brougham

Raja Ram Mohan Rom developed an intimate friendship with Lord Brougham, the champion of the abolition of slavery and the great upholder of popular education. The Directors of the East India Company entertained Raja Ram Mohan Roy on 6th July, 1831, at a dinner at the city of London tavern. The Chairman of the East India Company presided and proposed the health of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, complimenting him for the vast services he had rendered to the Indian community. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was assigned a seat at the coronation of William IV among the ambassadors of the crowned heads of Europe. The

Royal Asiatic society of London invited him to take part in its annual meeting where Roy proposed a vote of thanks to Henry Thomas Colebrooke, the great Orientalists. Raja Ram Mohan Roy also met Robert Owen, the humanitarian socialist, who tried his best to win over him to his point of view.

Success at England

The time when Raja Ram Mohan Roy reached England the political life of the country was in a state of convulsion due to the Reform Bill agitation. The first Bill was introduced in 1831 but was defeated. The second bill introduced on the same year was also defeated in the House of Lords. But finally, the third Reform Bill was again placed before the House of Commons and passed by on March, 1832 and was then sent to the House of Lords. The people of England were greatly agitated and awaited for the decision of the Lords in a wild fever of excitement. This time the Lord's yielded to the popular pressure and the Reform Bill was passed in June 1832. Similar measures were enacted for Ireland and Scotland also. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was greatly delighted with the passing of the Reform Bill in England. Raja Ram Mohan Roy had a great admiration for France, the land which had given the inspiring call for liberty, fraternity and equality, and which in his own words was 'so richly adorned by the cultivation of the arts and sciences, and above all, blessed by the possession of a free constitution. His name was well known in the cultured circles of France, as some of his writings had already reached the shores of France as early as 1818.

Writings of Bishop of Blois

In 1818, when Raja Ram Mohan Roy was in France, he became famous through the writings of Bishop of Blois. Bishop wrote: "The moderation with which he repels the attacks on his writings, the force of his arguments, and his profound knowledge of the sacred books of the Hindus, are proofs of his fitness for the work he has undertaken; and the

pecuniary sacrifices he has made show disinterestedness which cannot be encouraged or admired too warmly”.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy had an audience with the King of France on 14th October 1832. In 1832, an article by Monsieur Pauthier in Paris elaborated various aspects of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's works. In course of time, the British Government recognized the right of Raja Ram Mohan Roy to represent the emperor of Delhi as his special emissary and also recognized the title of ‘Raja’ conferred on him by the latter. At a levee held at the St. James Palace, Raja Ram Mohan Roy was granted an audience by King William IV on 7th September, 1831 and was later invited by the King to a banquet on the occasion of the opening of the London Bridge. The occasion was also graced by men of eminence such as Jeremy Bentham and many others.

Felicitations Speech of Raja Ram Mohan Roy

Raja Ram Mohan Roy replied to these felicitations in a speech which ended with these memorable words: “There is a battle going on between Reason and Scriptures, common sense and wealth power and prejudice. These three have been struggling with the other three; but I am convinced that your success sooner or later is certain. Honour, that you have from time to time conferred on me, I shall never forget to the last moment of my existence”. As the allowances of the Indian emperor were ultimately not settled, it was then decided that he would be given rupees three lakhs annually. Roy’s efforts to abolish the Sati were also very successful. When the bill was finally passed in the Parliament, happiness of Raja Ram Mohan Roy knew no bounds.

Untimely Death

After a point of time he fell ill and became bedridden. There were some who respected and loved him actually took care of him. Doctors with great reputation treated him but his health did not improve. He was persuaded by his friends to leave London and

go to Bristol in September 1833; Raja Ram Mohan Roy on 19th September suddenly fell ill with meningitis. He had high fever with the severe headache. In the following days his condition worsened and Raja Ram Mohan Roy passed away on 27th September 1833. He was buried at the Arnos Vale Cemetery in Bristol¹⁹ itself, with a tombstone whose inscription notes his scholarship and mastery of language, and his belief in the unity of the godhead, before summarizing his life work as follows:

*“HIS UNWEARIED LABOURS TO PROMOTE THE SOCIAL, MORAL AND PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE OF INDIA. HIS EARNEST ENDEAVOURS TO SUPPRESS IDOLATRY AND THE RITE OF SATI AND HIS CONSTANT ZEALOUS ADVOCACY OF WHATEVER TENDED TO ADVANCE THE GLORY OF GOD AND THE WELFARE OF MAN, LIVE IN THE GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF HIS COUNTRYMEN”.*²⁰

Arnos Vale Cemetery at Bristol

‘His utterance of the sacred “AUM” one of the last words he was heard to utter suggested that, the solitary gate of death as well as in the crowded thoroughfare of life, the contemplation of deity was the chief pre-occupation of his soul’. Many years after in 1842, when Dwarkanath Tagore, the friend and disciple of Raja Ram Mohan Roy was in England, he had the coffin removed from Stapleton Grove to Arnos Vale, the cemetery on the outskirts of Bristol where on 29th May 1843, Raja Ram Mohan Roy’s mortal remains were interred and in 1844 beautiful structure in Indian style was erected over it. There is also a blue plaque commemorating him on his house in Bedford Square, London.

¹⁹ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, op. cit., pp.19-26.

²⁰ *Ramachandra Guha*, op.cit.,p.29.

Anniversary of Raja Ram Mohan Roy

In September 2006, representatives from the Indian high commission visited Bristol to mark the anniversary of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's death. During the ceremony Hindu, Muslims and Sikh women sank Sanskrit prayers of thanks. Following on from this visit, the Mayor of Kolkata, Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharya, who was amongst the representatives from the India High Commission, decided to raise funds to restore the tomb which was in need of restoration and repair. In June 2007, businessman Aditya Poddar donated 50,000 towards the restoration of his grave after being approached by the Mayor of Kolkata for funding.

Epitaph of Raja Ram Mohan Roy

The Epitaph on the late 19th century stone at the tomb reads: "*Beneath this stone rest the remains of Raja Ram Mohan Roy Bahadoo, A conscientious and steadfast believer in the unity of Godhead, He consecrated his life with entire devotion to the worship of the divine spirit alone*".²¹ His death was deeply and widely mourned and rich tributes were paid in his memory. He was truly and deeply religious and firmly believed in oneness of life and divinity of all men. He was also truly modern with a scientific bent of mind.²²

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a major shaper of modern India. Consciously influenced by Christianity and by the social agenda of many missionaries as much if not more than by their religious ideas, he was convinced that India's culture and religious tradition was rational and of profound spiritual value. While he remained rooted in Hinduism, Raja Ram Mohan Roy admired much of what he saw in Islam, Christianity and in other religion which he studied, and believed that the same fundamental, truths. He held that the first principle of all religions is the "Absolute Originator". Against the criticism that it contained very little

²¹ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, op. cit., pp.27-28.

²² Kishore, B.R., *World Personalities*, Vee Kumar Publications, Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, p.183.

of lasting worth, he set out to retrieve from India's heritage what could withstand the scrutiny of a rational mind. He went further than others in what he was prepared to abandon which for him included the Vedas.

The organization he founded the Brahmo Samaj, was a pioneer of social reform, an important promoter of education and of India's autonomy and eventual Independence. Its basic ideas including gender - equality and its rejection of class - based privilege have become part of the social framework of Indian society at least in theory. It is around 200 years since Raja Ram Mohan Roy died. But his memory is still green in the minds of Indians. He was an intellectual who tried to lead India to modernity. He taught the Hindus to give up meaningless beliefs and customs. He was the lamp that led Hindus to the essence of origin of Hinduism. His memory itself guides us to a noble life.²³

²³ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India), op. cit., pp.29-30.*

CHAPTER II

CHAPTER – II

SOCIO – RELIGIOUS CONTRIBUTIONS

In nineteenth century, the socio – religious awakening was a remarkable feature of modern Indian history. It was a slow process in the beginning. Later it developed into a powerful force and deeply stirred the masses, helping them to become politically conscious. The socio religious awakenings have indeed left behind a rich legacy. They bequeathed us with the spirit of rational inquiry and taught us to change with the time. The socio - religious awakening movement which took place in India during the British rule were the expression of the rising national consciousness and spread of the liberal ideas of the West among the Indian people.

The Renaissance

The socio - religious awakening or reform movements were the expression of the national awakening in India and aimed at a revision of the medieval social structure and religious outlook on a more or less democratic basis, i.e., on the principle of individual liberty and human equality. The dominant features of socio - political thought in colonial India were liberalism and nationalism. The liberal phase was characterised by attempts to rationalise and democratise the social and religious institution. In the social sphere, there were movements of caste reform, a campaign against child marriage and a ban on widow remarriage, equal rights for women, and a crusade against social and legal inequalities. In the religious sphere, there sprang up movements which combated religious superstitions, and attacked idolatry, polytheism and hereditary priesthood. The European missionaries and intelligentsia began to ridicule the idol worship and polytheism practised by the Hindus, for they believed these to be obstacles in the path of attaining enlightenment.

The new wave of western rationalism brought about the destruction of old customs that were prevalent in the society and religion. In the sudden invasion of the “modern” India was supposed to have surrendered at discretion, and prostrating her before the innumerable challenges of the present. While the age of illumination was inaugurated in Europe with a temporary negation of religion, in case of India such an epoch was inaugurated by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in the last quarter of the 18th century, following our traditional method of revitalising decaying society through a new religion by founding Brahmo dharma, based on the age old principle of unity underlying the Vedantic monism.¹

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a visionary who lived during one of the India’s darkest social phases but strived hard to make India a better place for the future generation to come.² Roy was unquestionably the first person on the subcontinent to seriously engage with the challenges posed by modernity to traditional social structures and ways of being. He was also one of the first Indians whose thought and practice were not circumscribed by the constraints of kin, caste and religion.³

As a Social Reformer

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a great social reformer. He modernized Indian society in many ways. Ram Mohan Roy as the ‘First Modern Man’ of India realized early that, social reform was the precondition for the regeneration of the people of our country.⁴ Social reforms by Raja Ram Mohan Roy have helped India to come out of the jinx of social taboo and malpractices. He was brought up in a wealthy family, and was witness to all the aspects of Brahmin culture that was prevalent in Bengal during that time. Moderately prosperous

¹ Suguna, B., *Women’s Movement*, Discovery Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2009, pp.23-24.

² *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, op. cit., p.31.

³ Ramachandra Guha, op. cit., p.7.

⁴ Sen, S. P., *Social and Religious Reform Movements in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Institute of Historical Studies, Calcutta, 1979, p.12.

land owners, Ram Mohan's ancestors had served for several generations as revenue officials under the Mughals. Ram Mohan Roy was married twice before he entered his teens, this being customary among high caste families, among whom child marriage and polygamy were both very common. When the practice of Sati was legally abolished in 1829, the credit for its abolition was given to the Governor General Lord William Bentinck.

Roy's great contribution towards this reform was to demonstrate that Sati was not a religious duty sanctioned or upheld Hindu scriptural tradition. Through the 1820s, Roy's ideas were being propagated through his Bengali newspaper, which was called the '*Sambad Kaumudi*', or the '*Moon of Intelligence*'. Nine years later, London magazine described the *Sambad Kaumudi* as '*the Morning Chronicle of India*', advocating freedom, civil and religious, opposed to corruption and tyranny, and labouring we are happy to say effectively and extensively, to eradicate the idolatrous rites of the Brahmins, and awaken the Hindus to a sense of the degradation and misery into which they have been plunged.⁵

Roy believed in the progressive role of the British rule in India and sought Government help in the matter of social reforms, especially in the form of socially progressive legislations. Roy's aim was the creation of a new society based on the principles of tolerance, sympathy and reason, where the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity would be accepted by all, and where man would be free from the traditional shackles which had enslaved him for ages. He yearned for a new society which would be cosmopolitan and modern. Roy's methods of social reform were multifaceted. He

⁵ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, op. cit., pp.38-39.

combined all possible means, including even those which were commonly believed to be incompatible. His reforms have been discussed below.⁶

Abolition of Sati

Till 1885, in last half of nineteenth century, an awakening in India was seen in the time of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who bridge the gap between Ancient and Modern India.⁷ In the wake of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's movement against women's subjugation to men and British influence on Indian culture and civilisation the position of women had once again undergone a change.⁸ During the British Raj many reformers such as Ram Mohan Roy's led to the abolition of Sati practice in 1829. The leaders and the social reformers who were in the forefront of the struggle for women emancipation were Raja Ram Mohan Roy.⁹

One shocking practise rampant in certain parts of India was Sati.¹⁰ Sati is described as a Hindu custom in India in which the widow was burnt to ashes on her dead husband's pyre. Basically the custom of Sati was believed to be a voluntary Hindu act in which the women voluntary decides to end her life with her husband after his death. But there were many incidences in which the women were forced to commit sati, sometimes even dragged against her wish to the lighted pyre. The Brahmins and other higher castes in the society encouraged it. A few ruler of India tried to ban this custom.¹¹

⁶ Revathy Girish, *Cultural Heritage of India*, Wisdom Press, New Delhi, 2010, p.12.

⁷ Gokhale, B.K., *Political Science (Theory and Government Machinery)* Himalaya Publishing House, Bombay, 1964, p.32.

⁸ Ashok Narang, *Indian Society and Culture*, Murari Lal & Sons, New Delhi, 2006, p.54.

⁹ Meenu Agarwal & Shobana Nelasco, *Empowerment of Rural Women in India*, Kanishka Publishers, New Delhi, 2009, p.8.

¹⁰ Sumit Sarkar, *Women and Social Reformer in Modern India*, Paul's Press, New Delhi, 2007, p.32.

¹¹ Meena Bhargava, *Women, Education and Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p.12.

Efforts to Abolish Sati

The efforts of some of the Mughal rulers to abolish it proved to be fruitless. During the 18th century it was more widely prevalent. After the establishment of the British rule, the first important step for the repression of Sati was taken by Lord Wellesley. Compulsion may have been used in some cases by priests and relations to force women to offer themselves as Sati. But it often was the result of conjugal fidelity. During the 19th century amongst the Hindus themselves, Western ideas had already begun to spread. Ram Mohan Roy opposed Sati with all his vigour and ability. In 1823, Lord Amherest made illegal the burning of a widow with the body of her deceased husband. Finally, Lord William Bentinck formed the determination of passing an act for the suppression of sati throughout the British territories. With the concurrence of his council, Bentinck promulgated regulation XVII of 1829 by which the practice of burning Hindu widows alive was declared penal.¹²

Relations between Men and Women

In 1818, Ram Mohan wrote a pamphlet in his native Bengal, opposing the practice of asking Hindu widows to immolate themselves on their husbands, funeral pyre. In the same year he published an English version entitled 'A conference between an Advocate for and an opponent of, the practice of Burning Widows alive'.

....Women are in general inferior to men on bodily strength and energy; consequently the male part of the community, taking advantage of their corporeal weakness, have denied to, them those excellent merits that they are entitled to by nature and afterwards they are apt to say that women are naturally incapable of acquiring those merits. But if we give the subject consideration, we may easily ascertain whether or not your accusation against them

¹² Pruthi Raj Kumar, *Social and Cultural History of Modern India*, Pointer Publishers, Jaipur, 1999, p.36.

is consistent with justice.¹³ In 1818, Roy wrote his first essay on Sati in which he argued that the women had an existence independent of her husband and hence, she had no reason to end her life on the demise of her husband. The society had no right over her life. Right to life of both man and women was equally important.¹⁴

Ram Mohan Roy played a major role towards abolition of sati system. When Ram Mohan's brother – Jagmohan Roy died, his wife Alakamanjari had to observe 'Sahagamana' (that is, she was to be burnt alive with the dead body). All arrangements were made for cremation. Ram Mohan objected and begged his sister-in-law not to observe 'Sati'. All people were against Ram Mohan Roy and Alakamanjari was forced to the funeral pyre with the corpse. The pyre was set on fire. This inhuman evil practice instigated Roy to fight against the system. Many people opposed Roy but he did not flinch. Even the people of the west, who saw all this wondered, when even the Government was afraid to interfere in this matter, Ram Mohan Roy risked his life and fought against this evil practice. In the end, he won and the Government made Sati ritual a crime.

Ram Mohan Roy submitted a petition to the Governor General in 1818 to stop this inhuman practice. And he appealed to the British Government to treat Sati as murders and urged the punishment for compelling widows to burn themselves. He requested the Government to stop it.¹⁵

He argued: "Those who have no reliance on the Shastras and those who take delight in the self-destruction of women, may well wonder that we should oppose that suicide which is forbidden by all Shastras and by every race of man" He also organized vigilance

¹³ Nevendre Singh Sarila, K., *The Shadow of the Great Game the Untold Story of India's Partition*, Harper Willins Publisher's, India, 2005, p.30.

¹⁴ Sanjay Goyal, *Raja Ram Mohan Roy*, Ocean Books (Pvt) Ltd, New York, 2015, p.12.

¹⁵ Neera Desai, *Women in Modern India*, Vora and Co., Publishers, Bombay, 1957, pp.16-17.

committees to keep a check on people who encouraged widows to commit Sati and himself tried to persuade the relatives of widows to give up their plan of self immolation. In this way, he created an atmosphere and aroused enlightened public opinion for the abolition of the barbarous practice.

Ultimately Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General, declared Sati as illegal and punishable by court on 4th December 1829. The law provided that persons who were even associated in any way with the commission of Sati to be regarded as criminals. When the orthodox Hindus protested and sent a petition to the British authorities, in England against abolition, Raja Ram Mohan Roy submitted a counter petition approving of measure and appealing for its approval and new regulation was approved. He was also present in England when case was taken up by the Privy Council in 1832. Raja Ram Mohan Roy gave before the people a correct interpretation of the Hindu scriptures. He was also the best admirer of community development. He always tried to do the best for the upliftment of this community.¹⁶

Roy found that ignorance of the women about their legitimate rights, their illiteracy, customary denial of the property rights to the widow and the consequent helplessness, dependence, misery and humiliation were some of the causes behind this practice. According to Roy, Sati was nothing short of murder and was therefore a punishable offence under the law. It was Raja Ram Mohan Roy's efforts, bore fruits and this practice was stopped by an Act passed in 1829 during Lord William Bentinck. Thus, a long prevailing ugly practice of the Hindus was uprooted.¹⁷ Raja Ram Mohan Roy emphasized more on women's Education and worked for their progress. He also took care on the right of women

¹⁶ Mulk Raj Anand, *Sati: A Write up of Raja Ram Mohan Roy About Burning of Widows Alive*, B.R. Publishing Corporation, USA, pp.17-18.

¹⁷ Sudha Nayar, *Women in Contemporary India and South Asia*, Navyug Books International, Delhi, 2011, p.67.

to the property of her father. It was the custom especially in Bengal, that if a man died, his widow if she had borne sons, was not entailed to any share. Raja Ram Mohan Roy made a humble appeal for the defence of women's right.¹⁸ Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a social thinker par excellence. By founding Brahmo Samaj, Roy sought to articulate his belief in the Islamic nation of One God. In his conceptualisation, social reform should precede political reform, for the former laid the foundation for liberty in the political sense.¹⁹ Religious reforms introduced by Raja Ram Mohan Roy helped India to attain freedom of expression in many ways. In the initial days, his differences with his father regarding the concept of idol worship took a serious turn. He was a man who thought free. In the Upanishads and Vedas there are writings on freedom of thought. Ram Mohan admired this spirit of freedom. He proclaimed that simple living and high thinking should be a man's motto in life, and he lived accordingly. Raja Ram Mohan Roy always believed that God does not reside in any idol and he vehemently opposed idol worship.

After finishing his studies Ram Mohan Roy worked for British East India Company at many places in Bengal, before finally settling, in Calcutta in 1815. He had already published several books by then. First among his books were written in Persian language with the preface written in Arabic. It was a direct attack on idol worship. After he removed to Calcutta, Ram Mohan Roy became much involved in social and literary works. He even translated the Upanishads written in Sanskrit language into Bengali language. He also published several works in English condemning the sati, and also indulged in debates with the traditional scholars on the rights of Hindu women. He also contested the assertions of Christian missionaries that their religion was better to all others. In 1815, he founded the

¹⁸ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, op. cit., p.18.

¹⁹ Bidyut Chakarbarty & Rajendra Kumar pandey, *Modern India Political Thought*, Sage Publications, London, 2009, p.10.

‘*Atmiy Sabha*’ or ‘*Friendship Association*’, as, it is also known as, among other things, he went in search for elements common to various religious traditions.

Belief in Universal God

By this time Ram Mohan Roy himself came to believe in the concept of Omnipresence of God, who is the only proper object of religious veneration, is one and undivided in person. He also stated that this was the message of Vedic literature and of the Bible and Holy Quran as well. He started to promote messages about inter - religious understandings and in the process wrote a book on Precepts of Jesus Christ and began to work on life of Prophet Mohammed.²⁰ He admired the Bible as much as he did the Vedanta and the Quran. He pleaded for an Advaita philosophy which rejected caste, idolatry and superstitious rites and rituals. Two fundamental principles have been discovered by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the basic unity of mankind as the goal of human research on the intellectual plants and the welfare of society as the dominant consideration of our moral endeavour.²¹

While he was involved in the process of revolution, he was soundly abused by traditional Hindus, who derided them as sinful atheists and moderns blinded by passions. Roy in the year 1816, opened a school for boys, whose medium of instruction was English. In 1821, she started a weekly newspaper in Bengali language. Thereafter he started a paper in Persian. He founded the Brahmo Samaj (the Society of God), on 1828 which sermonized the love and worship of the one God on the basis of what its creator claimed were the innovative wisdom of Vedas. Some spoke lightly of the Vedas and the Upanishads. Ram Mohan Roy gave them a very clear answer: “There is only one God in the universe. He has no form and qualities which men can describe. Every living being has an element of God.

²⁰ Kolar Krishna Iyer, *Great Indians Raja Ram Mohan Roy*, Swathi Book House, New Delhi, pp.31-32.

²¹ Syed, *M.H., op, cit.*, pp.44-45.

These noble ideas sparkle in the Upanishads. Moreover, these books support people to reflect for themselves, they struck out original paths. They do not chain man's intelligence". Just as he damned the dreadful customs of the Hindu's he condemned the superstitions of the followers of other religions also.

Ancient Classical Literatures

Ram Mohan Roy's career as an active religious reformer began only after he had settled permanently in Calcutta in his mid-thirties, though the '*Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhiddin*' was written in 1804. The year 1815 is the most remarkable period in his life. He attacked against the prevailing practices was launched at this period as by this time, he had studied the ancient classical literature of Sanskrit and Arabic and became acquainted with new forces that were emerging in the West. Roy established the '*Atmiya Sabha*' in which verses from the Upanishads were discussed and hymns composed by him and his friends were sung. They held debate on subjects like Sati idol worship and polygamy related to kulinism. He had to use his powerful pen to make the people realize about the faults and weak points of old customs and prevailing practices. He wanted to take the knowledge of scriptures to the masses so that they could come to know that the teachings of the sacred books were very different from what were practiced by the people.

Literary Works

Between 1815 and 1819, Roy translated the original works of the Vedanta and the Upanishads in Bengali. A Bengali translation of the Vedantasara of Badarayana according to Sankara's commentary was published in 1815. The Vedantasara in Bengali, '*the Abridgment of Vedanta*' in English and Bengali and the English translation of '*Kena Upanishad*' were published in 1817. He wrote against idolatry and priesthood and in favour of monotheism. At that same time, he started publishing a Bengali weekly '*Sambad*

Kaumudi’ which was followed in 1822 by a Persian weekly – the ‘*Mirat– ul –Akbar*’. It covered topics like freedom of press, induction off Indians into high ranks of services, and separation of the executive and judiciary. When the English company muzzled the press, Ram Mohan Roy composed two memorials against this in 1829 and 1830 respectively. In ‘*Sambad Kaumudi*’, Ram Mohan Roy wrote tracts in Bengali and also translate them in English in order to make the people understand that the practice of Sati was not sanctioned by the Shastras. Lord William Bentinck, with the help of Raja Ram Mohan Roy declared the rite of Sati as ‘illegal and punishable by the Criminal courts, in India by Regulation XVII on 4th December, 1829.’²²

Religious Reforms

Ram Mohan raised his voice against idolatry. In his book ‘*Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*’ he championed the cause of Monotheism. He criticized idol – worship by the Hindus. He rejected polytheism, idol – worship and rituals of different religions.²³ He defended the Hindu tradition against criticism of Christian and challenged the theological adequacy of Trinitarian Christianity.²⁴ He advocated monotheism or unity among Gods. He also advised people to be guided by the conscience. He inspired men to cultivate rationality. To all, he appealed to observe the principle of unity of God. Further, he formed ‘*Atmiya Sabha*’ in 1815 to carry on discussions among scholars on religion and philosophy²⁵ and began translating the Upanishads into English and Bengali in order to expose the evils and abuses which had crept into the original Hindu faith. He began his reforming activity by preaching the unity of God. In 1820 Raja Ram Mohan Roy published the ‘*Brahmo Pauttalika*

²² *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, op. cit., pp.32-35.

²³ Majumdar, R.C., *The History and Culture of the Indian Peoples Struggle for Freedom*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mumbai, p.13.

²⁴ Ramakrishnan, S., *Junior Vikatan, (My India)*, Vasan Publications Pvt. Ltd., Chennai, dated: 12.08.2012.

²⁵ Manoj Kumar, Monika Khanna, *Raja Ram Mohan Roy (A Man of the Renaissance)*, Farsight Publishers & Distributors, 2011, p.13.

Sambad'. This book was written against the Hindu system of idolatry. By 1828, Raja Ram Mohan Roy felt that a reform within Hinduism was necessary and established the Brahmo Sabha. He sought to unite the various communities on the basis of the fundamental unity and harmony of all religions. In 1829, the new religious society was known as Brahmo Samaj, a common place of meeting and worship of the different communities of the country. It was mentioned in the deed that the Samaj building was to be used as a place of public meeting for all persons, without any distinction of caste or creed for the worship of the eternal being, who is the author and preserver of this universe, and that no image, statue, painting or the likeness shall be admitted, nor any sacrifices or rituals even permitted there in. Only that form of worship would be allowed which would tend to promote the contemplation of God and the practise of morality...

Raja Ram Mohan Roy's religion was the crowning glory of his career as a scholar, a statesman and a patriot. His religious liberalism was meant to pave the way for social and political movement in India.²⁶ Through this, he raised his voice against religious and social malpractices.²⁷ Raja Ram Mohan Roy cannot be called a religious reformer in the sense Nanak, Chaitanya and Kabir were in the medieval period. He approached public as a religious reformer not because he was essentially religious minded, but because he was conscious of the evils of the society.²⁸

Brahmo Samaj

The Brahmo Samaj (1828 - *The Society of God*) was the first attempt by Indians in the nineteenth century to reform Hindu society. It is a cosmopolitan religious organization based on the positive sides of all the prevailing religion. Initially, the reform was named as

²⁶ Ravi Rajan, Singh, M.K., *Raja Ram Mohan Roy*, K.K Publications, New Delhi, 2012, pp.42-43.

²⁷ *The Hindu*, dated: 22.05.2017, p.13.

²⁸ Syed, M.H., *op.cit.*, p.41.

‘Brahmo Sabha’ in 1820 but later in 19th century, it was renamed as ‘*Adi Brahmo Samaj*’ meaning the society of men believing in the worship of supreme power in spirit form but opposing the idol worship of the Almighty.²⁹ As a Brahmin himself Raja Ram Mohan Roy peeped into the inner substance of Brahmanical Hinduism to discover the existence of one omnipotent being. According him the refined ideals of Vedanta were the eternal source of Hindu, spiritualism, “To turn the mind India to the truths of Vedanta became the prime – motive of Ram Mohan Roy”.³⁰

Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Brahmo Samaj

Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Brahmo Samaj which literally denotes communities of men who worship Brahman are interlinked. Ram Mohan Roy has played a crucial role towards the foundation of Brahmo Samaj. The Brahmo Samaj was set up on 20th August 1828 at Calcutta, and formed a strong platform for Ram Mohan’s expression of universal worship.³¹ It was a theistic organisation open to all who believed in the unity of God and discarded the worship of images. It drew inspiration from the Upanishads and the early Vedic religion.³² At the beginning weekly services were organized, every Saturday, And Later it was transferred to Wednesday, a practice which has been retained to this day at the Brahma Mandir of Rabindranath Tagore’s Shantiniketan in the Birbhum district of West Bengal. Ram Mohan Roy and his admirers and followers used to attend prayers in the church of Christian sect. Disciple of Ram Mohan Roy wondered why they should not have a prayer hall of their own. Ram Mohan approved this idea.

²⁹ Syed, M.H., *op.cit.*, p.12.

³⁰ Kalpana Rajaram, *Facets of Indian Culture*, Spectrum Books (P) Ltd, New Delhi, 1992, p.23.

³¹ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, *op. cit.*, p.12.

³² Raghunanda Rao, P., *Indian Heritage and Culture*, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1988, p.51.

Message of Raja Ram Mohan Roy

As a result they hired a building opened a prayer hall called 'Brahmo Samaj'. The members of the organization, used to meet every Saturday. Vedic hymns and music of Upanishads were chanted by scholars. Religious discourses were held where Ram Mohan Roy recited religious poems composed by him. Muslim and Christian boys sang songs in Persian and English. Many Hindus and people from foreign lands also attended these meetings. 'There is only one God. None equals him. He has no end. He is present in all living beings'. This was the faith of the Brahma's and the message of Roy. The Brahmo Samaj did not recognize differences of caste, creed, race or nationality. It emphasized the idea of universal brotherhood. In 1828, Ram Mohan Roy through 'Brahmo Samaj' he wanted to expose the religious hypocrisies. Raja Ram Mohan Roy through Brahmo Samaj highly emphasized that all men are equal and had full faith in the brotherhood of man.³³

The Brahmo Samaj was essentially a monotheistic reform movement in the Hindu religion. The Brahmo Samaj was a reflection of the Bengal Renaissance and took active participation in social emancipation, which included the abolition of Sati, the caste system, child marriage, dowry and the betterment of the status of women in society. The core of the Brahmo Samaj was to understand that all human beings were related at a human level and hence no discrimination should be practiced, at the level of caste, religion or gender. The Brahmo Samaj propagated the oneness of God, brotherhood, morality and charity and was against idol worship, polygamy, caste system, sati, child marriage and other meaningless rituals.³⁴

³³ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, op. cit., pp.12-13.

³⁴ *Nithya, N.R.*, op.cit., p.12.

Success full Campaign of Abolition of Sati

Roy was famous for his long and successful campaign for the abolition of Sati, self immolation of widows on the funeral pyre of their husbands. He wrote articles to show that the sacred books of Hindus did not sanction Sati and appealed to the reason, humanity and compassion of the people. The rite of Sati was the most furious social evil in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The Sati practice was prevalent in the Hindu society from a long time past. From ancient time it is known to have been in vogue.

After visiting Vijayanagar, an Italian traveller in 1420-21 on his account describes a large number of women had to die on the funeral pyre of their husbands. “Akbar tried to suppress this practice among the Hindus and it is also said that earlier Jahangir too made a law of death penalty for this offence but could not carry it out in action”. Some rulers of ancient time tried to abolish this evil practice. Peshwa Baji Rao abolished it in his dominions. In the tenure of Lord Cornwallis, some officers were permitted to remove this evil practice by force but they did not stop it earnestly. Raja Ram Mohan Roy opposed this heinous practice. A case had occurred in his own family when the widow of his elder brother Jagmohan Roy committed Sati in 1811. Raja Ram Mohan Roy published many books in Bengali and also reinsulated into English for defence of practice of Sati. In 1818, his first tract was published and in 1819 the second one in Bengali and also translated it in 1820. Raja Ram Mohan Roy said in his works that Hindu authorities of religion, Manu were the greatest; the most famous and trustworthy law giver might alone would be equal to any doze others put together.

He cited: “Let her emaciate her body by living voluntarily on pure flowers, roots and fruits, but let her not when her Lord is deceased, even pronounce the name of another man, let her countinue till death forgiving all injuries, performing harsh duties, avoiding every

seasonal pleasure and cheerful practicing them in comparable rules of virtue which have been followed by such woman as were devoted to only one husband”. He quoted the views contained in Kathopanishad, Bhagavad Geeta and Mundakopanishad had in favour of his arguments and ideas. He emphasized that the science by which knowledge of God is attained is superior to all other knowledge. Raja Ram Mohan Roy published his second tract in 1819 and also pronounced Sati as against the Shastra. He said, “The practice, therefore, of forcibly tying down women to the pyre and burning them to death is inconsistent with the shastras, and highly sinful. His efforts bore fruit when in 1829, the Sati system was abolished in India.³⁵

Pioneer of Modernism

A pioneer of modernism, Ram Mohan realized the value of western education and established two English schools.³⁶ His demand for making English the medium of instruction in schools was accepted by Bentinck in 1835, that is two years after the death of Ram Mohan at Bristol (England)

Division in Brahmo Samaj

After the death of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Brahmo Samaj divided into many sects Maharishi Devendranath Tagore (Father of Rabindranath Tagore) established the “*Adi Brahmo samaj*”.³⁷ Devendranath Tagore took over the leadership of the Samaj in 1843. He took up a bold front on two aspects inside Hinduism, his was the reformist movement on the ancient moorings of religion as embodied in the Vedas, outside his was the ruthless opposition to the Christian missionaries for their criticism of Hinduism and attempts at

³⁵ Saumyendranath Tagore, *Makers of Indian Literature Raja Ram Mohan Roy*, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1966.

³⁶ *Kalpana Rajaram, op.cit.*, p.25.

³⁷ *Raghunanda Rao, op, cit.*, p.52.

conversion. Gradually there came about a philosophical transformation of the Brahmo Samaj movement, regarding the question of “Infallibility of the Vedas”. The younger members of the Sabha led by Keshab Chandra Sen began to advocate more radical social changes, child marriage, polygamy and kulinism were denounced, Emancipation of women and widow marriage was strongly advocated. Finally in 1866, Keshab Chandra Sen and his follower left the parent body and formed the “*Brahmo Samaj* of India”. There after the parent organisation came to be known as “*Adi Brahmo Samaj*”. But a second schism took place in 1878 as Keshab Chandra Sen gave his daughter in marriage, when his daughter was only 14 years. This generated a controversy and a new organisation named “*Sadharan Brahmo Samaj*” was formed. After this schism, the Brahmo movement lost much of its earlier purpose.³⁸

Finally Ram Mohan Roy came to believe that the welfare of the society lay in removing the shortcomings of old grids and jaded philosophies. The Brahmo Samaj, he founded South to liberate society from the shockless of practices like Sati child marriage and infanticide. Through the Samaj, Roy sought to shake off the passivity and lethargy of the contemporary society and build a new progressive society.³⁹

The prominent leaders of the Brahmo Samaj were Keshab Chandra Sen, Jagdish Chandra Bose, Prasanata Chandra Mahalanobis, Satyajit Ray, Rabindranath Tagore, Debendranath Tagore. The Brahmo Samaj is credited with being one of the most important reform movements in India which led to the foundation of Modern India. Its educational and social reform activities instilled a new confidence which in turn contributed to the

³⁸ Kalpana Rajaram, *op. cit.*, pp.24-25.

³⁹ Reena Kapoor, *Great Personalities of India*, Varun Publishing House, India, 2017, pp.148-149.

growth of national movement. A number of Brahmo Samajists were later prominent in the struggle of Independence.⁴⁰

Champion of Women Liberty

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a champion of women's rights in India. He laid the foundations of the women's liberation movement in this country. He revolted against the subjection of women and pleaded for the restoration of their rights. Raja Ram Mohan Roy advocated the liberty of women. He was determined to give women her proper place in the society. Besides abolishing Sati, he advocated in favour of widow remarriage. In 1822, Roy wrote a book entitled brief remarks regarding '*Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Right of Female*'. He argued that like the sons, daughters have also their right over parental property. He also influenced the British Government to bring necessary modification in the existing law. He raised voice against child – marriage and polygamy. He was the advocate of women's education. Thus, he advocated women's liberty and awakened them.⁴¹

Caste System

The reformers like Ram Mohan Roy and others fought for the caste system, caste privilege enjoyed by the Brahman. The socio – religious re - awakening broadened in subsequent period. Like the reformation, they reverted to the earliest traditions and attacked the degeneration and superstition of later days. The reformers attacked polytheism, religious rites, dogmas, which undermined the critical intellectual power of the people. On the other hand, the reformers used rational arguments to show that caste was doing more harm than good. The division into numerous castes had destroyed all feelings of oneness and patriotism.

⁴⁰ Nithya, ,op, cit., p.12.

⁴¹ Chopra, J.K., *History of Modern India and Indian Culture*, Unique Publishers, New Delhi, 2010, p.15.

The role of modern education in weakening the regard for caste should not be underestimated. The British Government secularised education. It made it accessible to anyone, irrespective of caste. The educated Indians, who studied the liberal philosophy of Western countries, became the standard bearer of anti caste revolt. The spread of democratic ideas such as individual liberty kindled to revolt against caste distinctions and inequalities. Ram Mohan Roy considered the myth of the sacred origins of caste. The social reformers attacked inequality and separatism and stood for equality and cooperation. They attacked heredity as the basis of distinctions, and the law of karma which supplied the religio - philosophic defence of the undemocratic authoritarian caste institution.

Ram Mohan Roy the founder of the Brahmo Samaj , invoked the authority of Mahanirvana Tantra an age old religio-sociological work of Hinduism to support his view, that caste should no longer continue. The Brahmo Samaj opposed the rigid social divisions which caste implied thus. “ When will those pernicious distinctions which are sapping the very life blood of our nation be at an end and India rise as a strong, united nation fit to fulfil the high destiny which providence has ordained for her?... That high destiny cannot be fulfilled without the utter destruction of the supreme root of all our social evils, the caste system”.

Socio - religious reawakening movement served as a powerful ferment creating urges among India and against the caste system. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the first fearless champion of women’s rights in modern India made a strong protest against polygamy. With the spread of education, the public opinion against polygamy is becoming stronger.⁴²

⁴² *M.H.Syed, op.cit.*, pp.32-34.

Opposition to Caste System

The caste system was a very ugly practice prevailing in Indian society right from the later Vedic age. Raja Ram Mohan Roy's strongest objection to the caste system was on the grounds that it fragmented society into many divisions and sub – divisions. The higher castes like Brahmins and Kshatriyas looked down upon the Sudras, Chandalas and other aboriginals. Ram Mohan opposed this ugly system of the Indian society. To him, caste divisions destroyed social homogeneity and the integrated texture of society and weakened it politically. To him everybody was a son or daughter of the God. So, there is no difference among men. He was in favour of inter-caste and inter-racial marriages, which he thought, could effectively break the barriers of the caste divisions. There should not exist hatred and animosity among them. Everybody is equal before God. Thus, ignoring differences among themselves they should embrace each other ignoring differences. Then, the true purpose of God will be materialized. By advocating the equality among men, Ram Mohan became the eyesore of many higher caste Indians.⁴³

Synthesizer of Religion and Morality

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a noble soul. He brought a perfect blending between religion and morality. According to him, a man must possess virtues like merry, morality, catholicity, forgiveness and so on. These qualities will purify his soul. Further, man will be regulated by these qualities. By cultivating these noble qualities, a man can acquire divine knowledge and devote for the welfare of the society at large. Further his religious catholicity will further bloom by the cultivation of these qualities. Thus, Raja Ram Mohan

⁴³ Nithya, N.H. *op. cit.*, p.13.

Roy was undoubtedly a synthesizer of religion and morality which aimed at the welfare of the society at large.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ *The Economic Times*, Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd., dated: 22.05.2018.

CHAPTER III

CHAPTER – III

EDUCATIONAL REFORMS

Raja Ram Mohan Roy laid stress on education as an instrument for the liberation of man from all kinds of evils and degenerating influence in life. He was a pioneer of Modern Education in India.¹ Roy was educated in traditional languages like Sanskrit and Persian. He came across English much later in life and learned the language to get better employment with the British. But a voracious reader, he devoured English literature and journals, extracting as much knowledge as he could. He realized that while traditional texts like Vedas, Upanishads and Quran provided him with much reverence for philosophy, his knowledge was lacking in scientific and rational education. He advocated the introduction of an English Education system in the country teaching scientific subjects like Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and even Botany. He paved the way to revolutionizing education system in India by establishing Hindu College in 1817 along with David Hare which later went on to become one of the best educational institutions in the country producing some of the best minds in India. His efforts to combine true to the roots theological doctrines along with modern rational lessons saw him establish the Anglo-Vedic School in 1822 followed by the Vedanta College in 1826

Advocate of Western Education

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a great scholar having sharp intellect in the Vedas, Upanishads, Quran, Bible and several other holy scriptures. He very well realized the importance of English language. He could visualize the need of a scientific, rational and progressive education for the Indians. During his time, when controversy was going on between the orientalist and occident lists, he sided with the latter and advocated in favour of the introduction of the English system of education. He liked Physics, Chemistry,

¹ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India), op. cit., p.35.*

Methematics, Botany, and Philosophy. At, the same time he also desired that the Indian Vedic studies and philosophical systems were to be studied and analyzed properly. He supported the move of Lord Macaulay and championed the cause of the English system of education in India. His motto was to take Indians the path of progress. He established English school in 1816 and Vedanta College in 1826.²

He established the Vedanta College for inculcating the principle of monotheism of Vedanta along with Western science and philosophy. Educational reforms of Raja Ram Mohan Roy improve the learning system in the country. The learning of English and western education became indispensable. However, the historians have opined that primarily the economic factor was responsible for the introduction of the English language and the western literature. In British India, a system of education was necessary which could help to earn livelihood. Due to these circumstances the aspects of education became wider in India.

Modernizing Education System

The western education in India spread mainly due to the efforts of the progressive Indian elements that promoted the social reforms. Social reforms of Ram Mohan Roy not only liberated India from the shackles of superstitions, but, also introduced a new system of education in India. Ram Mohan Roy was the chief advocate of the modern process of education and the scientific learning. The improvement of native people was their chief motive of Ram Mohan Roy. Therefore, he helped the British Government to promote a more liberal and enlightened system in learning.³ His ambition was to change the educational system completely. In modernising Indian antiquated system of education, he

² Nithya, N.R., *op. cit.*, p.14.

³ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India)*, *op. cit.*, pp.35-37.

shines as one of the founders of Hindu college. His letter on English education to Lord Amherst is a veritable landmark in the educational history of Modern India.⁴

Ram Mohan Roy also promoted the growth and prosperity of the modern education. He strongly believed that unless the women folk were educated, the society would not be liberated from the evils. Thus Raja Ram Mohan Roy promoted the western education and India during that time witnessed a great progress in the field of education.⁵ He wanted to introduce modern system of education. Of course, he could not live to see the introduction of English system of education in India in 1835. However, his efforts and dreams were materialized into reality even after his death.⁶

Impact of Western Education

The impact of Western Education and intellectual interchange was a critical long - term force in the making of the new modern Indian cultural as it emerged in the 19th century. The new mentality was conspicuously different from that of the Mughal twilight. The notions of justice and reason received wider currency as contemporary intellectuals and ideologies advocated a more just, rational and critical and reordering of the universe. The gamut of experiences which is after collectively described as the awakening started in Bengal at the beginning of the 19th century. A degraded Indian society was modernised by the civilizing mission of the west. Western impact on the Indian mind was propelling force that drove dominant currents within Indian society to the surface, starting a critical spirit of self - enquiry. Western impact was largely channelled through agencies such as the educational system, law courts, missionary enterprise and the press.

⁴ Syed, M.H., *op. cit.*, p.143.

⁵ *Biography of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, (Social Reformer & Maker of Modern India), op.cit.*, p.37.

⁶ *Deccan Herald*, dated: 22.05.2018.

In Bengal, the rationalising effect of English education at first manifested itself more in religious and social ideas, but it was not long before it profoundly affected also the political consciousness of the people. The Brahma Samaj was the outcome of the first and it has often been claimed that it had contributed to the ideals of political freedom. This is however not to suggest that it was Western impact alone that changed Indian society. It was only an element that accelerated changes that were affecting both Hindus and Muslims of India. The introduction of Western education cultural and scientific technique gave traditional Indian life a jolt shocking Indians into a new awareness and vitality in thought and action. Long dormant intellectual impulses emerged and a new Indian spirit was born.

Western Influences

Western influences became effective in India mainly through the British, who were the pioneers of a new technological and industrial civilization. On the other hand, the earliest stirrings of the Indian cultural renaissance appeared under the leadership of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who made the first organised efforts to adopt Hinduism to the new situation. A devout Hindu, Ram Mohan Roy inspired by the Vedantic philosophy, he was also deeply influenced by Sufism and was an admirer of Christianity and Western thought, especially the writing of Montesquieu, Blackstone, and Bentham.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy challenged the current religious beliefs and social practices of the Hindus as not being in consonance with their own scriptures. The standard of revolt, he thus, raised against the medieval tyranny of dogmas unleashed forces which created what may be called Modern Indian and makes him worthy to rank by the side of Bacon and Luther. According to Buch: "The first assumption of Raja Ram Mohan Roy is that there is a universal reason at work in nature and in society, and that religions in their pure and pristine form are the expression of that reason in man. The task of reason today is to disentangle the elements of permanent and universal truth in each faith from the mass of

accretions which has gathered round them and to return to them as the basis of our religious life.”⁷ However, Raja Ram Mohan Roy believed that not only religious modernity, but also an educational outlook was necessary to bring social reform. So, he mentioned that man must educate themselves. Education, in that respect should have twofold objectives of spiritual and moral upliftment of people. As a great educator and enlightener, Raja Ram Mohan Roy had a profound faith in education by means of which he believed that man could be enlightened and could be made free from numerous insignificant superstitions and ignorance. Social injustice, social oppressions, age old decaying superstitions and narrow mindedness – all, he believed could be eradicated with the light of education.

In the field of education, Raja Ram Mohan Roy tackled so many divergent educational problems and programmes with his intellect, sensitivity, farsightedness, perception and compassion. Because of that rare equality, Raja Ram Mohan Roy replaced ignorance and darkness by truth and reason. He was indeed the master mind who saw that India’s progress was to be conditioned not by contemplation alone, but by action; not pessimism, but by self – realisation; not by isolation from the life of the West, but by healthy competition or co-operation with.....

Raja Ram Mohan Roy worked as a pioneer who tirelessly worked for raising his countrymen to a standard from which they could secure honour and prestige for them. He knew that the official policy was indifferent and consequently the then prevalent system of education was inadequate and irrelevant for meeting the demand of the age. He personally made tireless exertions in the field of enlightenment and ultimately mobilised the opinions of the Government and directed their attention towards a new and enlighten system of education. Though he was not alive, but ultimately his views regarding liberal education were taken up by Lord Macaulay and supported by Lord William Bentinck. So, his

⁷.Syed, M.H., *op, cit.*,pp.287-289.

educational philosophy, which was the foundations of his educational exertions, is still significant today.⁸

⁸ *Saumyendranath Tagore, op.cit.*, p.45.

CHAPTER IV

CHAPTER – IV

LIBERAL POLITICAL THINKER

Raja Ram Mohan Roy is hailed as the ‘Father of Modern India’. He attempted to combine the Western and Eastern philosophy. His writings and ideas are an example of a synthesis of ancient ideas with modern Western political principle. His contributions to Indian culture are so substantial that many of his contemporaries, whose contributions are significant but much more limited, have been largely neglected in the study of 19th century India. He set precedents in many of his activities. He was one of the first Indians to establish his own press and publish books as well as regular newspaper. He was the most prominent Indian, to become involved in the campaign for the abolition of Sati.

Father of Reformation

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a reformer, not a revolutionary. He wanted to combine tradition with modernity. He was a leader in the translation and distribution of traditional religious texts, and a spokesman for the defence of Indian religious thought against the criticism of Christian missionaries. He may be called as the ‘*Father of Hindu reformation*’. Religion overshadows everything in India, and he rightly attacked the Indian problems at their root when he started with religious reform. He emerged at a time when the light of the great encyclopaedists had not died down and when the influence of the utilitarian’s, was just beginning to be felt. Though he was proud of Indian culture and heritage, he yet, brought Indian into direct contact with the liberal humanism of modern Europe.¹

¹Syed, M.H, *op.cit.*, p.288.

Freedom of Press

The other area for which the role of Ram Mohan Roy was decisive was the articulation of the demand for the freedom of press.² *“In 1824, the Government of Bengal which was in the hands of the East India Company issued an ordinance placing strict restrictions on the press. Newspapers and journals had to obtain a licence that could be granted or withdrawn at the Government’s discretion. Memorials protesting this move was drafted by Ram Mohan Roy and with the signatures of several other prominent Bengal, send to the Government”*³. Along with his colleague, Dwarkanath Tagore, Roy submitted a petition to the Privy Council for the freedom of press which he justified as essential for democratic functioning of the Government. Not only would the freedom of press would provide a device for ventilation of grievances, it would also adopt steps for their redressal before they caused damage to the administration. This was a remarkable steps in that context for two reasons. The demand for freedom of press was a significant development in the growing through limited democratisation among the indigenous elites in India, and the idea of press freedom, it sanctioned would act as a safety valve for the colonial ruler because of the exposition of grievances in the public domain.

Ram Mohan Roy had played a progressive role in a particular historical role Roy appeared to have privileged his experience of British colonialism over its immediate feudal rule on Indian society, politics and economy, he also clearly supported one system of administration over the other rather consciously, simply because of his uncritical faith in British Enlightenment in significantly transforming the prevalent Indian mindsets. One may find it difficult to digest his invitation to the British planters in Indian peasants if discussed in isolation. But this was perfectly rationalised if one is drawn to his argument justifying the continuity of the empire on the basis of its economic strength. The more the planters

² *India Today*, New Delhi, dated: 27.09.2016.

³ *Ramachandra Guha, op. cit.*, p.34.

acquire 'wealth' argued Roy the better would be their defence for continuity in India. Given his historical role, it would not be wrong to argue that Ram Mohan Roy discharged his responsibility in tune with the historical requirements of his role in the particular context of India's growth as a distinct socio – political unit. It would, therefore, be historically inaccurate to identify him as a pro-imperial thinker simply because nationalism did not acquire the characteristics of the later period.

Since his ideas – whether supporting the British or criticising the past rulers – were both historically conditioned and textured, he authored his historical role in the best possible way reflecting the dilemma of the period and the aspiration of those groping for an alternative in the social and political doldrums of incipient colonialism. Not only that, he submitted a petition against this place of legislation signed by both Hindus and Muslims in the two houses of the British Parliament arguing for the abandonment of such a discriminatory legislation. In a nutshell it may be argued in India appears to have found its genesis in the thoughts and actions of Ram Mohan Roy. His passion for the protection and promotion of civil rights of various sections of the society in particular women, probably inadvertently began a wave upon which the subsequent movements for civil rights may have been built up in India.

As argued earlier the genesis and growth of civil rights movement in India seem to be enmeshed in the various social reformers from time to time. Therefore in order to have an unbroken sequence of growth of civil rights movement in India, it is important to critically grasp the civil rights elements in the socio – religious reform movements waged in the country during the late second half of the nineteenth and the early first half of the twentieth century. In the realm of socio – religious reform movements, Bengal happens to be the pioneering state. Drawing upon the lead given by the torchbearers of European Renaissance in India, like William Carey and Joshua Marshman, social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan

Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar waged relentless struggle for the uplift of the social status of certain sections like women. They not only tried to protect the civil rights of these people by calling for the abolition of inhuman social and religious practices that unleashed untold miseries on them. They also tried to persevere for the protection of their civil rights by of education and generating awareness amongst them for their rights and responsibilities in society the social reformers.⁴ Ram Mohan Roy in advocating a free press and greater rights for women, he was articulating ideas which challenged both the dominant mores of Indian (or specifically Hindu) society as well as the policies promoted by British in India.⁵ He believed firmly in democracy and the free press and engaged himself in spreading the message of political freedom.⁶

Father of Indian Journalism

The press is aptly referred to as the fourth pillar of democracy, other three pillars are Legislature, Executive and Judiciary. We consider press as free from bias and prejudice. Press reflects the realities of this world as wished by social and political world. Ram Mohan Roy was a great champion of the freedom of the press. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was described by Jawaharlal Nehru as a '*Founder of the Indian Press*'. His efforts to liberate the press were made with the aim to educate Indians about the affairs of the nation in their true perspective. He himself published newspapers in English, Bengali and Persian for the purpose of creating mass consciousness as a veritable check against the British authoritarianism.

Besides being a great social reformer, Ram Mohan also made a valuable contribution to Bengali literature and he is regarded as the '*Father of Bengali Prose*'. Roy believed in the freedom of expression and ushered in a new era of journalism by starting the

⁴ Bidyut Chakarabarty, *op, cit.*, p.337.

⁵ *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, dated: 05.11.2019.

⁶ Kishore, B.R., *op, cit.*, p.185.

publication of a number of weekly magazines in Bengali and English and so he was rightly been designated as the '*Father of Indian Journalism*'. He was the first to realize the value of the newspaper as an instrument for diffusing intellectual light. He founded the '*Sambhad Kaumudi (Moon of Intelligence)*' in 1821 in Calcutta. Due to the success of another rival newspaper named '*Samachar Chandrika*' Roy was forced to close it down in 1822. However it was revived the following year. Roy also started a newspaper in Persian '*Mirut ul Akhbar*' (*Mirror of News*) on 1822.

The purpose of Raja Ram Mohan Roy had in mind could not be served properly if there was no freedom of press. He championed the cause of press freedom. In 1823, Press Ordinance was promulgated. It prohibited the publication of newspaper or periodicals without previous license from the Governor General in Council. Raja Ram Mohan Roy protested against it and submitted a memorandum to the Supreme Court arguing in favour of freedom of press in India. The British East India Company was against Freedom of press in India. But, Raja Ram Mohan Roy strongly argued against this view. The Company had the fear of public criticism under a free press. Ram Mohan Roy was successful in convincing the authority with his strong logic, arguing that in India Freedom of press would not be harmful for the Government, as people had been loyal to it.

Roy pointed out that a free press acted as a safety valve and did not give any scope for sudden outburst. Freedom of press was helpful to both the Government and the people. A free press acts like a channel of communication between the two and solves many problems. People come to know about the plans, programmes, policies and intentions of the Government through it. People also express their reactions and grievances through it, thus making the governance more effective. A free press helps disseminate knowledge and boosts intellectual improvement. It allows creativity, gives literary, cultural and artistic knowledge and pleasure. The Government comes to know about the defects of its policies

and administration and gets a scope to remedy those before any crisis arises. Raja Ram Mohan Roy argued that a free press fails revolution and does not nourish it. Raja Ram Mohan Roy however, was not in favour of absolute freedom of press. Instead he wanted reasonable restrictions on it. He believed that those who try to incite hatred in the minds of the Indians against the British nation should be punished. Similarly an attempt provokes hostilities with neighbours and friendly states must be duly penalized.⁷

Champion of Nationalism

Raja Ram Mohan Roy believed in the political freedom of man. In 1821, he had written to J.S. Buckingham, the editor of the '*Calcutta Journal*' that, he believed in the freedom of European and Asiatic countries. He advised Indians to have self-freedom in thought and action. He showed a bright example by condemning the Jury Act of 1826 which had introduced discrimination in the law courts. According to this Act, a Hindu or a Mohammedan could be tried either by a European or a native Christian but not vice versa. Ram Mohan protested against it. Thus, his nationalism was blatant. He definitely fought for the legitimate rights of the Indians and championed the cause of Indian nationalism. Further, Ram Mohan Roy himself proceeded to London to plead a case on behalf of Akbar II, the Mughal Emperor. This reflected his nationalism.

Love for Liberty and Constitutionalism

Liberty and Constitutionalism were the two important aspects upon which Raja Ram Mohan emphasized. He preferred a constitutional form of Government for every nation. Despotism or autocracy, he hated from the core of his heart. He told that a constitutional Government could only give guarantee of Individual freedom. Thus, he advocated individual liberty and constitutionalism. This clearly project that Ram Mohan was a champion of human liberty.

⁷ Nithya, N.R., *op, cit.*, pp.8-10.

Champion of Internationalism

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the champion of internationalism. He wanted universal religion, synthesis of human culture and ideas end of imperialism and peaceful co-existence of nations. Thus, he became the '*Harbinger of a Modern Age*'. No Indian by that time had seriously thought about it what Ram Mohan advocated. He really advocated the principle of collaboration of mankind. Rabindranath Tagore commented that, "Ram Mohan was the only person in his time to realize completely the significance of the modern age. He knew that the ideal of human civilization does not lie in isolation of independence but in the brotherhood of interdependence of individuals and nations".⁸ For him, humanity was one family and the happiness or sorrow of one nation constituted the happiness or sorrow of the rest of the world. It is that Ram Mohan Roy's dream of 'profound peace and friendly feedings preserved from generation to generation remains' unfulfilled, but it is the one and only hope of mankind against the threat of impending doom.⁹

Roy's Political Liberalism

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the first Indian to speak of Indian liberty in the context of international development. Liberalism stands for the value and dignity of individual personality, it insists on human equality and inviolability of certain rights of the individual. His intense love of liberty was said to be the source of all his political opinions. He has a passionate attachment to the concept of liberty. He urged the necessity of personal freedom.¹⁰

Liberalism is a political doctrine that takes protecting and enhancing the freedom of the individual to be the central problem of politics. Liberalism had emerged as the most valuable product of renaissance and reformation in Europe. Liberalism in politics is

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.14-15.

⁹ Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India, (Vol.II)*, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1967, p.394.

¹⁰ Syed, M.H, *op, cit.*, p.287.

associated with non - authoritarianism, the rule of law, constitutional Government with limited powers, and the guarantee of civil and political liberties. A liberal society is tolerant of different religious, philosophical and ethical doctrines and allows individuals to freely form and express their conscientious convictions and opinions on all matters and live according to their chosen purposes and life paths. In economic terms, liberalism is associated with an unplanned economy with free and competitive markets, as well as private ownership and control of productive resources.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was one of the most outstanding personalities of the 19th century, as a pioneer of modernity and a visionary of Liberal Democracy. It became the dominant ideology of the first phase of religious and social reform in India. Liberalism in brief, stands for the value and dignity of the individual personality the central position of Man in the historical development; and the faith that people are the ultimate source of all power. Roy advocated liberal principles in all walks of life. In the religious field, Roy stood for tolerance, a non - communal approach to all problems and secularism. He valued the freedom of the individual to follow the dictates of his conscience and even to defy the commands of the priestly class.

Roy's Views on Liberty and Rights

Liberty was a pivot around which the entire religio-socio-political thought of Roy revolved. His protest against idolatry, his agitation against Sati, his demand for modern western education and his insistence on freedom of press, right of women, and his demands for 'separation for powers' and for the codification of laws were all expressions of his intense love for liberty. For him liberty was a 'priceless possession of mankind'. He was the first to deliver the message of political freedom of India. Although Roy recognized the positive gains, India would get from British rule; he was never in favour of an unending foreign rule in India. He considered the British connection necessary for India's social

emancipation. Political freedom was bound to fellow. His love for liberty however, was not limited to one nation or community. It was universal. He supported all struggles which aimed at human freedom. Freedom for him was indivisible. Freedom was the strongest passion of Roy's mind. He believed equally in the freedom of body and mind, so also the freedom of action and thought. He shunned all restrictions imposed by consideration of race, religion and customs on human freedoms.

Roy was the first to create awareness for civil rights amongst the Indians. He was grateful to the Bruiser's because, they made available to Indians all those civil rights which were enjoyed to the Queen's subject in England. Though Roy did not specifically enlist the civil rights, he seems to include in it the following rights. Rights to life and liberty, right to have opinions and freedom of expression, Right to property, Right to religion, etc. Roy gave the greatest importance to the right to freedom of opinion and expression. To him, it included the freedom of creativity of mind and intellect, as well as the freedom of expressing one's opinions and thoughts through different media.

According to Roy freedom of expression was equally useful to the rulers and the ruled. Ignorant people were more likely to revolt against all that the rulers did, they could turn against authority itself. In contrast an enlightened public would be opposed only to the abuse of power by authority and not to the existence of authority itself. The free press, the Raja Ram Mohan Roy, argued, had never caused a revolution in any part of the world. But many examples could be cited where, in the absence of a free press since the grievances of the people remained unrepresented and unrepressed, the situation had become ripe for a violent 'revolutionary' change. A free and independent press alone could - bring forth the best in the Government as well as the people. Roy, however, was not against the reasonable restrictions on the freedom of press. He even accepted some additional restrictions on the Indian press, which were not imposed on the press in England. Such restrictions, he

believed, might be necessary here as some Indians were likely to encourage hatred in the minds of the native, towards the British rulers. Roy also justified the restrictions imposed with a view to check the seditious attempts of creating hostilities with neighbouring friendly states. He, however, strongly objected to the restrictions imposed by the bureaucracy in India. These restrictions, in his opinion, were arbitrary and uncalled for the circumstances in this country.

In the political field, Roy was a supporter of the impersonal authority of law and opposed all kinds of arbitrary and despotic power. He was convinced that the existence of constitutional Government is the best guarantee of human freedom. He insisted on the use of constitutional means as when required to safeguard the rights. He preferred the gradual improvements of the condition of this country because, to him, such improvements were more lasting and profound.

In the economic sphere, Roy believed in the sanctity of right to property. Similarly, he believed that a strong middle class had an important role to play in socio - political dynamics. For the emancipation of poor peasants who were exposed to the exploitation of zamindars, he wanted the Government to reduce its demands of landlords. He wanted to preserve the Ryotwari system and rural basis of Indian civilization and also establish modern scientific industry. He, however, differed from the western liberal thinkers in one important respect, viz., role of State and sphere of state activities. In his scheme of things, the state is expected to bring about social reform in protecting the rights of the tenants against the landlords, etc.

Roy's Liberal Perception on Law, Administration and International Co-existence

According to Roy, Law is the 'creation of passionless reason'. It was the command of the sovereign. Hence, even the highest officer in the East India Company did not possess

the competence for enacting the laws for India. The king-in-Parliament alone could have that authority. What is more important is before finalizing every piece of legislation relating to India should take into account the views of the economic and intellectual elites in this country. Important contribution of Roy was in the context of law relates to the codification of law. He argues that the codification of law was in the interest of both the rulers and ruled and it should be done on the basis of the principles common and agreeable to all groups and factions in the society.

In course of codification, the long standing customs of this country should not be overlooked. Of course, only those customs which are reasonable and conducive to general welfare of the people should be picked up. Codified law should be simple, clear and exact. Codification would make the interpretations of laws more impersonal and its application more uniform. Roy had a clear perception of the distinction between law, custom and morality. He accepted that evolving customs were an important source of law, but the two could not be identified. He also made a distinction between law and morality. Some laws, according to Roy, might be legally valid, but morally indefensible. Conversely, some practices might be morally sound but could not be given legal force. Principles of morality are relative to the social realities and any law to be effective must taken into account these ethical principles prevalent in a given society.

In his book '*An Exposition of Revenue and Judicial system in India*' Roy presented a profound discussion on urgent reforms in administrative and judicial matters. He stressed the point that, the administration could not be efficient and effective unless there was official speaking in the language of the masses. There should also be several channels of communication between the administration and the people. Roy's suggestions of reform in the judicial field are more numerous because for him an efficient, impartial and an independent judiciary was the supreme guarantee of liberty. Roy believed that the

association of the natives in the judicial process had to be an essential feature of judicial administration. Other measures advocated by Roy included: constant supervision of the judicial proceedings by a vigilant public opinion, substitution of English for Persian as the official language to be used in the courts of law, appointment of Indian assessors in civil suits, trial by jury, separation of judicial from executive functions and the constant consultation of the native interests before the enactment of any law that concerned them. He also suggested the revival of the age - old Panchayat system of adjudication. Roy thus urged several reforms and corrections in the Indian Judicial system in keeping with political liberalism.

Though Roy was a liberal thinker, he did not believe in the policy of laissez - faire. He could never accept that the sphere of state activity was limited only to the political field. He had appealed repeatedly in his writings to the state authorities, to undertake many social, moral and cultural responsibilities which did not strictly come under the category of 'political'. He wanted the State to protect the tenants against the landlords, to make arrangements for the useful and liberal education, to eradicate the ugly practices like Sati and to give equal protection to the lives of both males and females and to make efforts to create a new social order based on the principles of liberty, equality, fraternity and social justice.¹¹

Roy demanded the abolition of the company's trading rights and the removal of heavy export duties on Indian goods. For him, liberty was a priceless possession of mankind. Separation for powers, codification of law was all expression of his intense love for liberty. He made a distinction between law and morality. He was perhaps the first thinker of the 18th century who had a clear vision of internationalism. He knew that the ideal of human civilization does not lie in the isolation of independence but, in the

¹¹ Nithya, N.R., *op. cit.*, pp.5-8.

brotherhood of interdependence of individuals as well as nations in all spheres of thought and action. Everywhere, he championed the cause of nationalism, democracy and liberty. He held that, there must be frequent exchange of views in all matters among at the enlightened nations of the world. He has been rightly called the '*Herald of New Age*.'¹²

Raja Ram Mohan Roy ambition was to change the educational system completely. He was convinced that only a modern, science education could instill new awareness and new capabilities in the minds of Indian people. Without this kind of education, social reform in India would be very weak and the country would always remain backward. Though Roy himself was a great scholar of Sanskrit he always felt that the Sanskrit, learning was irrelevant to modern India and hence he strongly opposed it. He appealed to the rulers that instead of perpetuating irrelevant Sanskrit learning, they should help to equip the new generations of Indians with useful modern scientific knowledge. Roy wanted instruction in useful modern science like Chemistry, Mathematics, Anatomy, and Natural Philosophy and with grammatical complexities, and speculative or imaginary knowledge. Roy's views and activities were really pioneering in giving a new turn to the educational system in India. He was the first eminent advocate of women's education.

Roy was an ardent supporter of international co - existence. He was perhaps the first thinker of the 18th century who had a clear vision of internationalism. This vision might have occurred to him in the course of his search for universal religion. Roy, the prophet of universalism argued that all nations of the world must be placed on an equal footing in order to achieve global unity and a sense of broad fraternity. It is only then that the contradiction between nationalism and internationalism can be ended. Roy held that the different tribes and nations were merely the branches of the same family and hence, there must be frequent exchange of views and frequent give and take in all matters among the

¹² Shobha Saxena, *Crimes Against Women and Protective Laws*, Deep & Deep Publications Pvt, Ltd., New Delhi, 1995, p.288.

enlightened nations of the world. According to Roy, this was the only way to make the human race happy and contented. Historian K.M. Panikar rightly remarked, for whom ‘Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the real founder of liberal tradition in India with his commitment to the principle of equality, religious freedom, women’s right to freedom and establishment of a casteless society’.¹³

¹³ Nithya, N.R., *op. cit.*, pp.18-19.

CHAPTER V

CHAPTER – V

MAKER OF MODERN INDIA

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a great social reformer. His basic approach was to social enhancing reforms as far religion and culture. He opposed the barrier of caste system which was most prevalent in the society. He felt piety on this heinous social evil. He took more care on the divisive nature of the caste system and its harmful effect on the social and political life in India. According to Raja Ram Mohan Roy social and political problem were inter - linked. He believed that caste barrier was responsible for many social evils. It divided community and also stagnated the country's development. He felt that India has been the foot stool of foreign invaders on account of the existence of the caste system. He wrote in his Brahmanical Magazine, "We have been subjected to such insults for about nine centuries and causes of such degradation has been over excess in civilization and abstinence from the slaughter even of animals, as well our division in to caste, which has been the source of unity among us".

Raja Ram Mohan Roy always opposed caste system and never feared to argue against it. He wrote a tract in 1827, it contained the basic principles and arguments to the institution of caste system. He said that" a Brahmin was he who had the experience of God or had felt God at any moment of his life. A non - Brahmin could also be a Brahmin if experience is God". According to him, the quality of man was resolved by his character and attainments. He felt it very much that Indian progress was so slow because of the rigid caste system which kept a man separate from man, sect from sect, province from province. He clearly saw that with a rigid caste system national unity could not be achieved and political emancipation would always remain distant. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was fully against this vital evil and was the first man to destroy the roots of caste system. He wanted to form

Caste and greed and those ills of recent growth which he wanted to counter by means of synthesis of the Eastern and Western idealism.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy touched and influenced every aspects of human life. He worked hard and dedicated his whole life for betterment of the society and country also. Bengal was one of the provinces groaning under the course of Sati, Child marriage and polygamy. The system of polygamy, was spread specially in the higher classes of the society. Due to system of polygamy position of women in the society was poor. Raja Ram Mohan Roy also fought incessantly against child marriages and for female education, attacked polygamy and advocated re - marriage of widows. At marriage, the wife is recognized as hall of her husband, but then after - conduct they are treated worse than inferior animals. Woman is employed to do the work of a slave in the house, such as, to prepare and serve food for her husband, father, mother - in -law, sister - in - law, brother – in - law friends and relatives. Where Brahmins and Kayasthas are not wealthy their women are obliged to attend their in – laws and to prepare cowdung cakes to burn. In case of any fault omission or in performing of those jobs, they receive bad treatment.¹

Raja Ram Mohan Roy criticized bitterly the practice of evils of polygamy. He also encouraged inter - caste marriages. Caste system was prevalent in the entire Society of Bengal. And also casteism was its worst position. Roy had much more regard of women. He worked hard for the upliftment of women in the society, criticised caste based marriage. He suggested that “Inter - caste marriage would remove the system of polygamy and other social evils. It could also stop selling of daughters and sisters by the Brahmins. He felt that by the introduction of inter - caste marriage there crusade of Sati would also besotted”.

In the economic sphere, Raja Ram Mohan Roy espoused the cause of the cultivators who, he felt, had been placed at the mercy of the zamindars under the permanent settlement.

¹ Sharat Dwivedi, *Status of Women in Independent India*, Cyber Tech Publications, New Delhi, 2008, pp.92–93.

He was the first to draw attention to the economic drain of India carried on systematically by the British rulers. He supported the setting up of industries by the English in Bengal, so that peasants groaning under the constant tyranny of the zamindars could get employment. Roy felt that socio - religious reforms would lead to the political advancement of India. The path he showed was the constitutional method that was initially followed half a century later, by the Indian National Congress. He was the first in India to take note of world officers and took keen interest in international events. He championed the struggle for freedom and democratic rights like Liberty, nationalism and free expression and was vehemently opposed to tyranny and injustice. Moreover, he was the only person in his time in the whole world of man to realize the significance of modern age.

Jawaharlal Nehru describes Roy's as a 'New type' thinker "combining in him, the old learning and the new." Deeply versed written by Nehru "In Indian thought and philosophy, a scholar of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic, he was a product of the mixed Hindu - Muslim culture". To Frederick Max Muller, "he was an unselfish an honest and a bold man - a great man in the highest - sense of the world" Rabindranath Tagore described Roy's as "the great path - maker of this century". It is undoubted that he was a great and noble son of India. In several respect, his work was that of a pioneer, reformer. Some of his ideas and activities might have been sponsored or suggested by individual predecessors. In this sense, he was not only a '*Herald of New Age*' but one of the '*Architects of Modern India*'.²

Humanism and Universal Religion

Being a champion of freedom and rights, Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a great humanist and believed in co-operation tolerance and fellowship. Roy established the ethical concept of universal love on the basis of the doctrine of ethical personality of God. He was also the exponent of cosmopolitanism and stood for brotherhood and independence. He had begun

² Ravi Rajan, Singh, M.K., *Raja Ram Mohan Roy*, K.K Publications, New Delhi, 2012, pp.40-41.

with the study of comparative religion but, later came to visualize the necessity of a universal religion. Finally, he formulated the scheme of a fundamental spiritual synthesis, stressing the unity of religious experience, based on the worship of a monotheistic God. Thus, he carried forward the traditions of social and spiritual synthesis stressed by Guru Nanak Kabir and other saints.

Roy, believed in universalism and regarded humanity as one family with the different nations and tribes as its branches. In his famous letter written to the French foreign Minister in 1832, He suggested the establishment of a ‘Congress’ for the settlement of commercial and political disputes. He was a humanitarian and Universalist, and like David Hume he also subscribed to the doctrine of universal sympathy.

Ram Mohan Roy advocated liberal humanitarian nationalism. Emancipation of man from the bondage for ignorance and social tyranny, his freedom of thought and conscience and his equality with other fellow men were considered as the fundamentals of liberalism. Such a free and emancipated individuals, with feeling towards their mother land, could create national unity. It was through, a spiritual and mental revival that, Ram Mohan Roy wanted to regenerate the Indian people and unite them into a national fraternity.³

Tribute to Raja Ram Mohan Roy

Raja Ram Mohan Roy is still remembered through various educational institutions, roads, museums which were established as a tribute to the legend. Those can be witnessed as:

Libraries Named after Raja Ram Mohan Roy

- **Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation:** It is a central autonomous organization established and fully financed by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. This organization functions as a promotional agency, an advisory and consultancy

³ Das, H.H., *Indian Political Traditions*, Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi, 1988, pp.48-50.

organization, a funding body for public library development in India. The Foundation works in close association and active co-operation with different State Governments. And Union Territory Administrations through a machinery called State Library Planning Committee (SLPC/SLC) set up in each State at the instance of the Foundation. It is situated in Salt Lake City, in a five storied building.

- **Ram Mohan Library:** It is a Public Services Library and having a rare collection of books on the legend.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy Memorial Museum: The memorabilia in the museum consists of photographs, sketches, paintings and excerpts from the writings of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and others reproduced, wherever possible, in facsimile. Also it has period furniture and diorama representations designed to recreate the times. Together they not only give us the glimpses of the various facets of one of the greatest personalities of the modern age, but at the same time take us back into a period in history when India was at crossroads, and Raja Ram Mohan Roy heralded the coming of the modern age. It was opened in 2009.

Following Schools and Colleges were named after Raja Ram Mohan Roy

- **Ram Mohan College:** It offers undergraduate and post graduate courses. It is affiliated to Calcutta University. Its origin was City College, Kolkata, one of the oldest first grade colleges in West Bengal. It has also a Science building.
- **Raja Ram Mohan Roy Mahavidyalaya:** This College is situated at his birth place. From the very beginning, the college aimed at spreading both curricular and co-curricular education to the common lot of locality.
- **Raja Ram Mohan Roy College of Education:** This College is situated at Bangalore. It is affiliated to Bangalore University. The college offers courses in Education.
- On 16th May, 1890, at the decision of the Executive Committee of the *Sadharan Brahmo Samaj*, *Brahmo Balika Shikshalaya* was founded. From 1910-1936 the wife of

Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose, Lady Abala Bose was the secretary of the school. This school can boast as one of the premier educational institutions for girls in Calcutta still now.

Following Roads are Dedicated to the Name of Raja Rammohan Roy

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy Road, Bengaluru, Raja Ram Mohan Roy Road (Charni Road) Mumbai.
- Raja Ram Mohan Roy Sarani was earlier named as Amherst Street after Lord William Amherst. But it was renamed as Ram Mohan Sarani after Raja Ram Mohan Roy.

Stamp Issued by Government of India

- Government of India has issued stamp in the name of the great reformer, Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 27th September 1964.

Statues of Raja Ram Mohan Roy were constructed and situated in various places of the world

- The statue of Raja Ram Mohan Roy is situated in College Green, Bristol, UK. The tomb was built in 1843, located in the Arnos Vale Cemetery on the outskirts of Bristol. It was built by Dwarkanath Tagore in 1843, 10 years after Raja Ram Mohan Roy's death due to meningitis in Bristol on 27th September 1833. In September 2006, representatives from the Indian High Commission came to Bristol to mark the anniversary of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's death. During the ceremony Hindu, Muslim and Sikh women sang Sanskrit prayers of thanks.
- At the 175th death anniversary of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, to mark the completion of the restoration work on the tomb of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, this is located prominently in the Arnos Vale Cemetery in the South western English city.

- The Honorable Mayor of West Bengal unveiled a bust of Raja Ram Mohan Roy on 24th January 2008 at the '*Brahmo Samilan Samaj*'.
- A previously unknown ivory portrait bust of Indian social reformer Raja Ram Mohan Roy was unveiled by an art historian at the Arnos Vale Cemetery here at a commemoration event to mark his 180th death anniversary.
- The statue of Raja Ram Mohan Roy still adores Bangalore city and Raja Ram Mohan Library of Kolkata also has a statue.⁴

⁴ *The English Works of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (with an English Translation of "Tuhfatul Muwahhiddin"*, Government of India, Allahabad, 1906.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Raja Ram Mohan Roy a social, political, economic, religious, educational reformer came with his scientific temper, broad outlook, championship of freedom, liberal and fundamental reforms and equality and humanism. He is hailed as “the Father of Modern India”. He attempted to combine the Western and Eastern philosophy. His writings and ideas are an example of a synthesis of ancient Indian ideas with modern western political principles. According to Raja Ram Mohan Roy, another factor responsible for the deteriorating political and social milieu was the social decadence of the Indian society. He wanted to build a new Indian society where principles of tolerance, sympathy, reason, liberty, equality and fraternity would be honoured.

Hence, Raja Ram Mohan Roy is regarded as the ‘Innovator of Modern India’. Really, both Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Brahmo Samaj played a significant role in the making of the modern India. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was called as ‘Bharat Pathik’ by Rabindranath Tagore because; he was a great social reformer and the first person to realize that Western or English Education as the pre-requisite for the progress and development of Indians.”

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the inspiring force behind the emergence of modern concepts of universal humanism and international co – operation. The advent of British rule in India and progress of western education led to the emergence of the middle classes in the Indian social setup, and Roy became the true representative of urban elites, which played a vital role in the Indian struggle for freedom. His efforts through his works were reflective of taking the traditional bound society of this country towards an advanced stage of modern society which he envisaged in the readings of western thoughts. Roy believed that India could become a nation only by overcoming the division of the caste and thus, he laid the seeds of nationalism into Indians. His views on scientific education, social reform, rationalism and freedom of expression are all relevant today.

As well as Bipin Chandra Pal commented a century later, that, the priceless value of the Raja's efforts was his struggle against medievalism, for which he is recognized and honoured as 'the Father of the Renaissance'. He was the synthesizer between the Eastern and Western culture.

A multi – faceted personality, Roy carried on a relentless crusade against all kinds of injustices, exploitative practices and superstitions. In the context of present day, to the society and to the education, contributions, thinking and activities of Raja Ram Mohan Roy are still significant. The institutions, roads, library and museum which were established after his death in keeping alive his memory are highly appreciable. The activities and contributions of Roy still find an important place in the lives of people and also in the society at large. Raja Ram Mohan Roy will still be adorned and honoured and long cherished for many years to come.

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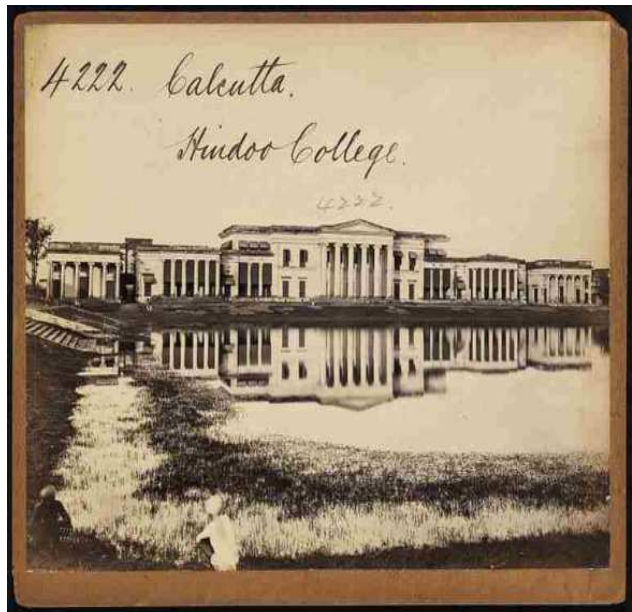
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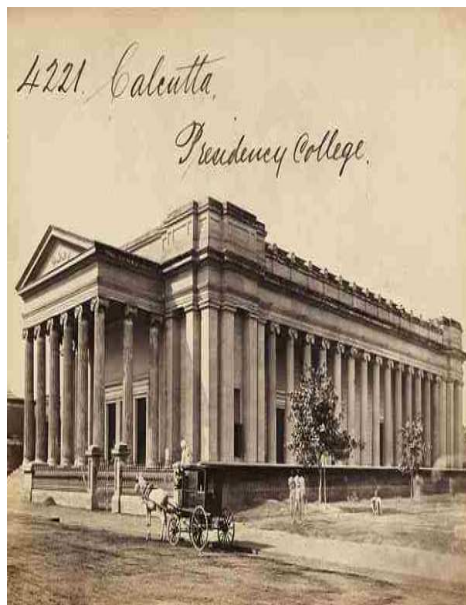
Stamp of Raja Ram Mohan Roy



Hindu College, Calcutta



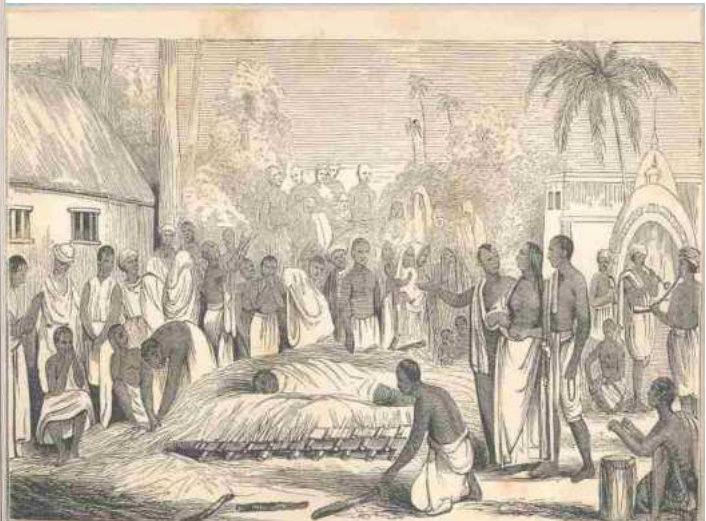
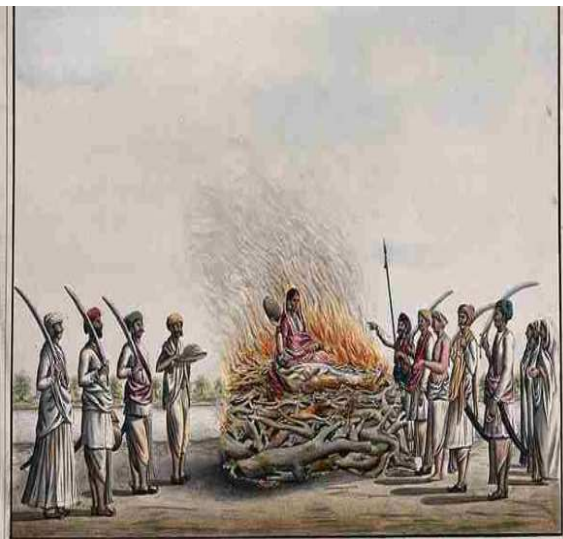
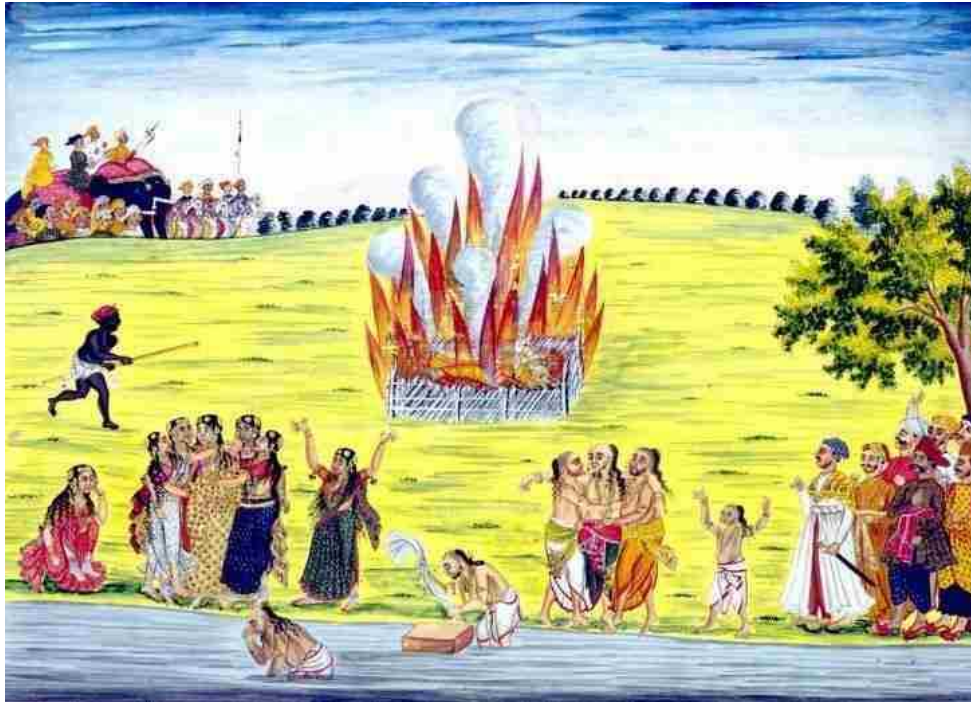
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Sadharan Brahmo Samaj



Abolition of Sati

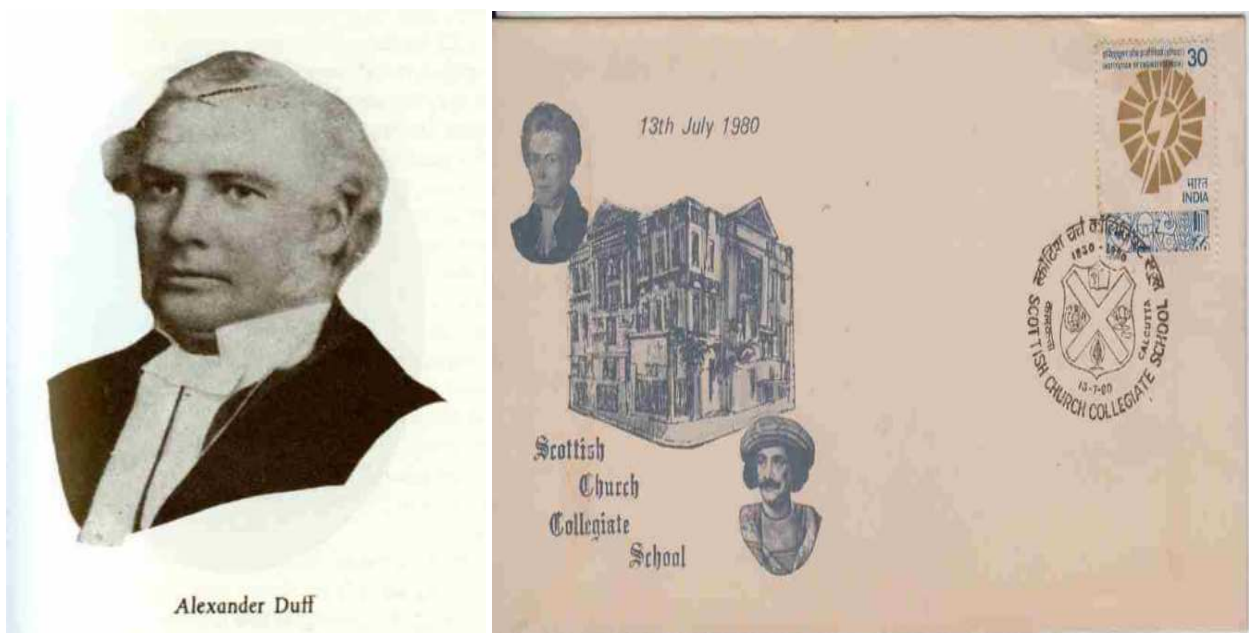


CEREMONY OF BURNING A HINDU WIDOW WITH THE BODY OF HER LATE HUSBAND.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy and William Bentinck



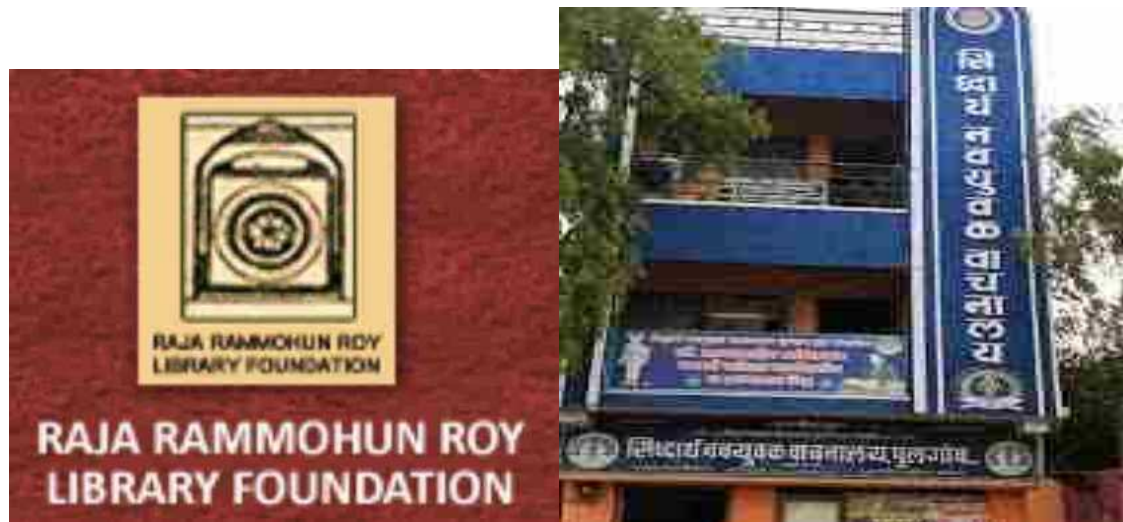
Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Alexander Duff



Statue of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Bristol, England



Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation



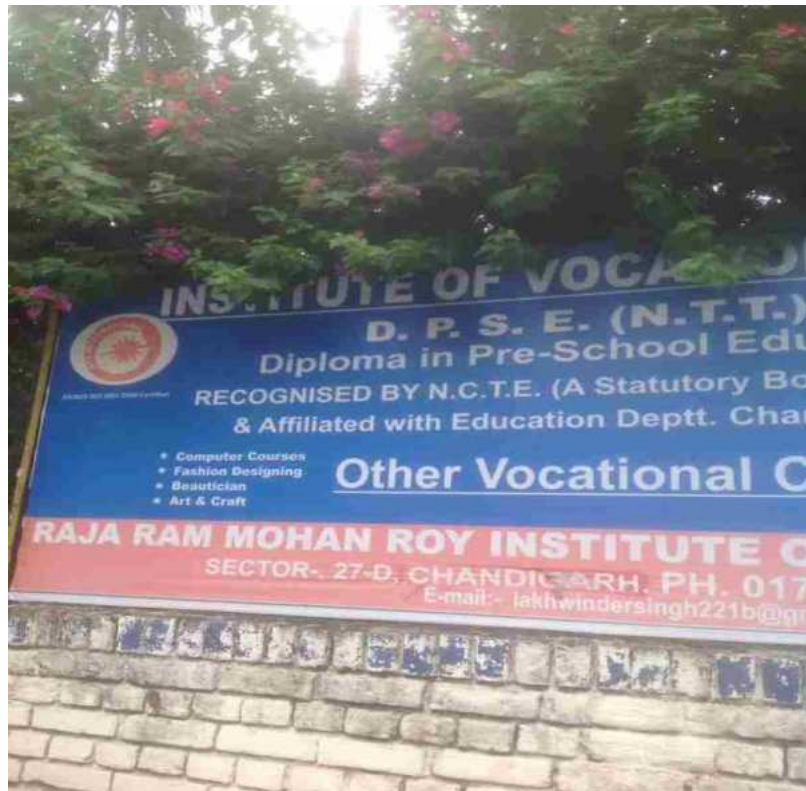
Raja Ram Mohan Roy College & Mahavidyalaya



Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Memorial Museum



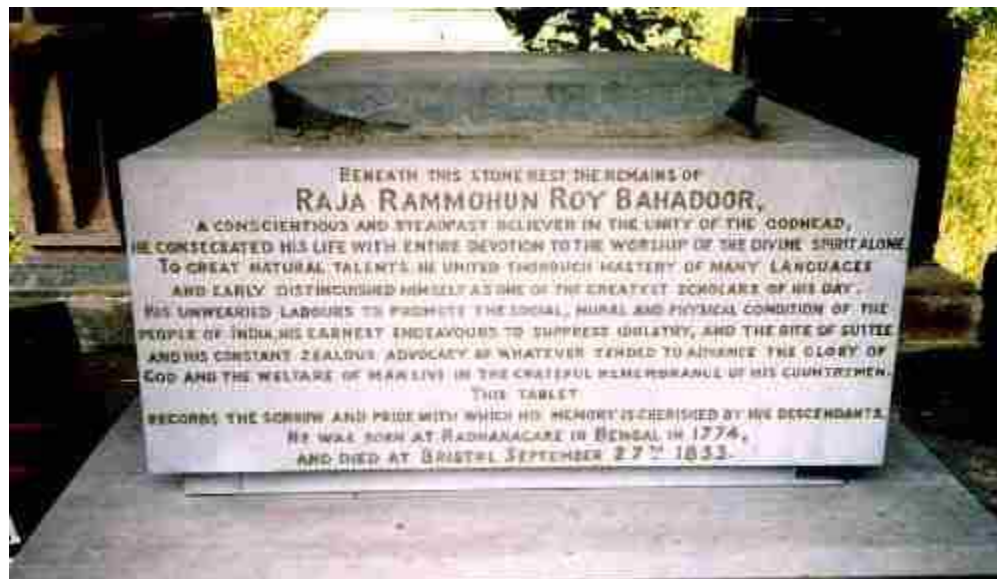
Raja Ram Mohan Roy Institute of Vocational Studies, Chandigarh



Cenotaph of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Arnos Vale Cemetery, Bristol, England



Epitaph of Raja Ram Mohan Roy



MILITARY SYSTEM OF THE EARLY TAMILS

A Project work submitted to

St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi

Affiliated to

Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

Submitted by

Muthulakshmi .B

(Reg. No. 19APHI13)

Under the guidance of

Dr. S. Theresammal



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I hereby declare that the project entitled "**MILITARY SYSTEM OF THE EARLY TAMILS**", submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli for the degree of Master of Arts is my original work and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

Place: Thoothukudi

Date: 10.4.2021

B. Muthu Lakshmi

Signature of the Candidate

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MILITARY SYSTEM OF THE EARLY TAMILS

INTRODUCTION

Tamilzham, as the Tamil country is traditionally known, is situated in the southern most part of India. In early times it extended from Kanyakumari in the South to Triuvenkadam Hills in the North and from the Bay of Bengal in the East to the Arabian Sea in the West. The Western Ghats and the Eastern Ghats form the important mountain ranges. The Kaveri flowing through the Chola country, Vaigai through the Pandya country and the Periyar through the Chera country are the major river systems. The capitals of the Chola, Pandya and Chera countries were situated on the banks of these rivers. In the early period the Tamil country was divided into three kingdoms, viz, Chola, Pandya and Chera.¹ Besides the three well known dynasties, there were numerous independent or semi-independent powers in the Tamil country. Among them Ori of Kollimalai, Pari of Parambumalai, Nalli of Tottimalai, Kari of Mullurmalai, Pittan Korran of Kutiraimalai, Pehan of Potinimalai Ay of Potiyilmalai, Tiraiyan of Kanchi and Malaiyaman of Kaval were important.

The early Tamils maintained relations with the nearby powers, sometimes cordial and sometimes hostile. At the command of their armies, the Cholas, the Pandyas and the Cheras extended their authority beyond the traditional frontiers. Several factors prevailed upon the Tamil powers to equip and maintain strong armed forces. In those days there was no defined boundary to the kingdoms. As there existed no defined boundaries to their kingdoms, they sought to enlarge the extent of their territories with

¹ Alasiar, J., *Military System of the Early Tamils*, Nagercoil, 1999, pp.1-2

the help of armed forces. For defending the boundary of the kingdom from aggression and for protecting the people, the war machines had to be kept in order.

The rulers employed the army for the protection of the cattle from the hands of the enemies and robbers. To resist the social evils the Tamils utilised the army. The existence of petty principalities and their political autonomies made them to equip their forces. There had been little political unity except for a short interval. Thus political, economic and social factors contributed to the establishment and maintenance of armed forces.² Several causes were responsible for the outbreak of wars. Among them the major factors were lust for territory, fame, wealth and women. Kings like Palyanai Selkelu Kuttuvan, Selvakkadunko Valiyatan, Udiyan Cheral Irumporai and Yanaikkan Sey Mantarancheral Irumporai fought battles to extend their territories.

The sneering words of one king against other also led to war. Further wars became a necessity to protect the country from the attack of the outsiders. In early Tamilaham battles like Vallam and Mullur were fought to defend the country against foreign aggression. The martial spirit of the people promoted the kings to undertake wars. The tribes like Maravar, Mallar, Eyinar, Malavar, Paradavar, etc., were noted for their martial spirit. According to the literature they were the ancient tribes in Tamilaham. They believed that it was their duty to obtain *virasvarga* by dying in the battlefield. Besides the kings once thought of war never withdrew from their conviction. Above all some of the court poets inspired their kings to wage wars. In short the Tamil kings followed the dictum that war was a natural one.

The inscription also states that king Kharavela imported pearls, horses, elephants and jewels to Kanlinga from the Pandya country. Coins are of considerable

² Alasiar, J., *op.cit.*, pp.2-3.

value for the reconstruction of the history of the early Tamils. A few coins of the Sangam period are recently found out in different parts of the Tamil country. Square in shape, they shed much light on trade. The elephant images depicted on the coins reveal the fact that it could carry two people on its back. However, it gives not much information about the military system. The literature of the early Tamils forms a valuable source for the present study.³ *Tolkappiyam*, is considered as the earliest of the Tamil grammatical work, throws much light on social and cultural life of the people. In *Porulatikaram* there is a chapter entitled *Puratinai Iyal* which contains thirty six *sutras* dealing with military activities.

The eighteen minor works generally called *Patinenkilkanakku* is another group of early Tamil didactics composed after the Sangam period. They are Naladiyar, Nanmanikkadigai, Inna Narpatu, Iniyavai Narpatu, Kar Narpatu, Kalavli Narpatu, Aintinai Aimpatu, Aintinai Elupatu, Tinaimoli Aimpatu, Tirikadukam, Acharakovai, Palamoli Nanuru, Sirupanchamulam, Elati, Tinaimalai Nurraimpatu, Kainnilai and Tirukkural. These works furnish a variety of information on the military exploits of the Tamil rulers. *Kalavali Narpatu* and *Tirukkural* are the most valuable for the present study.⁴

Silappadikarm and *Manimekalai* are the two Tamil epics. They contain information about the three crowned monarchs and also about religion, society and military affairs of the early Tamils. A study of this work reveals that its author had a sound knowledge about the political, social and religious developments of the age. His work contains a gorgeous description of the three cities of Puhar, Madurai and Vanchi. To know the defensive system in forts, the military exploits of the Cheras and the

³ Subrahmanian, N., *Sangam Polity*, Madras, 1996, p.21.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.22.

northern expedition of Chera Senguttuvan this text is highly valuable. *Manimekalai* written by Kulavanikan Sittalai Sattanar, a Buddhist poet, contains references to the prisons, fortifications and administration of the early Tamils.

The Ceylonese chronicle *Mahavamsa* furnishes some information about the political and cultural intercourse between South India and Ceylon. But it does not give much information about the military system of the early Tamils. As far as the early history of Tamilaham is concerned, the accounts left by the foreign travellers are of considerable importance. Perhaps Megasthenes was the first non-Indian to give information about the Tamils.⁵

Some information about the Tamil state, its rulers, their culture and maritime activities could be gleaned from the Periplus of the Erythrean Sea and Pliny's Natural History. Strabo, a Roman traveller records the exchange of Pandyan embassies with Augustus the Roman emperor. Klaudios Ptolemaios, commonly called Ptolemy the Greek geographer of Alexandria, in his Geography furnishes interesting information regarding the Tamil cities, ports and people. He refers to the change of the Pandya capital from Korkai to Madurai which indicates that Korkai too enjoyed the status of a capital. However, their observations about the military aspects are scanty. The sources which are cited above are of the pre Pallavan period. In the light of the information furnished by these sources the present study of the military system of the early Tamils is attempted.

Methodology

⁵ Alasiar, J., *op.cit.*, p.4.

Different research methods have been used in this project. They are analytical method and descriptive method. The source materials have been critically analyzed and investigated. The descriptive method is used in the presentation of the study in order to make the project understandable to the readers.

Aims and Purpose

The aims and purpose of this study is to know much about the history and Military System of the Early Tamils. This study throws light on the various contributions in different fields. The wars of the Tamil powers, the traditional fourfold division of their army, their fortifications, offensive and defensive weapons, warfare, post-war activities, their policy towards the vanquished are analysed in detail. So that it could provide more ideas upon the present generation what will stimuli the future generation to be fruitful to the society.

Sources of Information

By and large the sources of information for the early history of the Tamils are scanty. However to obtain a succinct and clear account about the military system of the early Tamils a variety of sources which are largely archaeological, numismatic, epigraphically and literary are consulted. Apart from local sources, foreign accounts to throw light on the military system of the Tamils.

An Outline of the Chapters

This topic is divided into five chapters apart from an Introduction and Conclusion.

The first chapter deals with Wars of the Tamil Powers.

The second chapter explains the Organisation of the Army.

The third chapter focuses on Fortification.

The fourth chapter deals with the Weapons of War.

The fifth chapter explains the Warfare.

The Conclusion, the last part of the study sums up a patient scrutiny and corroboratory evidences are needed to reach at the real situation.

CHAPTER I

WARS OF THE TAMIL POWERS

Chola, Chera and Pandya, the three major powers of Tamilaham of the early times and the several minor powers Pari, Kari, Ori, Adiyaman, etc., engaged in frequent wars against one other. They waged wars for a variety of causes such as for the annexation of territories, capture of wealth, women and for renown. Some of the kings like Karikala and Cheran Senguttuvan led expeditions to North India. But the minor chieftains mostly confined their activities inside Tamilaham.

Major Wars of the Cholas

The early Chola Empire reached the pinnacle of its glory during the reign of Karikala. The Pandyas and Cheras led by Perum Pheralatan organised a coalition against Karikala. Subsequently eleven Velir chieftains joined the alliance. The coalitionary army of the thirteen rulers marched into the chola country and met Karikala at Venni, fifteen miles east of Thanjavur.¹ However, Karikala Chola defeated the coalition in a great war. It was essentially a war by elephant force. The battle of Venni brought for Karikala's popularity in the country. The Chola hegemony was established in the Tamil country through his successful wars.² Karikala Chola after the consolidation of his power in Tamilaham turned his attention for a northern campaign. However, the kings of Magadha, Avanti and Vachchiranadu submitted and paid tribute. He engraved the tiger standard on the slopes of the Himalayas and returned.

¹ N. Subrahmanian, *op.cit.*, p.12.

² *Ibid.*, p.13.

Akananuru refers to the battle of Kudal. It was a battle fought between the Cholas and the Pandyaas.

In *Purananuru* the poet Kalattalaiyar, describes the battle at Porpuram fought between the Chera king Kudakko Nedun Cherlatan and Cholan Verpakradakkai Peruvirkilli. The colophon of *Purananuru* states that it was a gruesome battle in which none of them claimed victory and finally both of them fell on the battlefield.

Major wars of the Cheras

From the literature it is known that the Cheras waged a series of wars against the rival powers. Of the Tamil sovereigns, the Cheras were considered as the most powerful aggressors of the time. Perhaps this was due to their territorial insufficiency and eagerness to extend their territories.³ By extending their empire, the Cheras very often earned titles of honours. Though Palyanai Selkelu Kuttuvan, the brother of Nedum Cheralatan was the first king who undertook wars for extending his territories.

The most powerful king of the Chera line was Senguttuvan whose military exploits have been described by Ilango Adigal, his younger brother, in the *Silappadikaram*. He conducted the first battle against Viyalur. This mountainous country was noted for its prosperity and it supplied plenty of pepper and elephants. Attracted by the wealth of that region Senguttuvan marched into the land and occupied Viyalur.⁴

³ J. Alasiar, *op.cit.*, p.15.

⁴ K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *Sangam Literature: Its Cults and cultures*, Madras, 1972, p.19.

After this campaign he undertook the Nerivayil expedition. *Silappadikaram* gives a few references about this battle. The war lasted only for a day but the Chera king captured the nine umbrellas of the princess. After the victory, Senguttuvan performed the coronation of Valavan Killi as the king of the Chola country and returned to his capital.

Senguttuvan fought another battle against Palaiyan Maran. According to *Maduraikkanchi* Palaiyan Maran was the chieftain of Mohur. In the battle Aurkai was defeated and insulted by Palaiyan and was forced to quit his kingdom. Not satisfied with this victory, Senguttuvan's man shaved the hair on the heads of the women of Mohur and braided it into a rope for tying elephants to the cart loaded with vembu wood.⁵

It is known from *Silappadikaram* that the Kongar waged a war against the Chera Senguttuvan. The Cholas and Pandyas supported the Kongar, yet in a battle fought in the Kongu country the Cheras defeated the rival powers and destroyed Kondukur. In *Silappadikaram* Ilango Adigal states that Senguttuvan took the statue of his mother for a sacred bath in the river Ganges. When he started his pilgrimage, the Aryans in North India organised a powerful army and resisted him. In this encounter Senguttuvan defeated the powers in the North and returned to his capital with success. The forces of Senguttuvan advanced to the midst of the allied forces and inflicted a thorough defeat upon the enemies. It is not known the place where they fought the battle.⁶

⁵ K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op.cit.* p.21.

⁶ *Ibid.*,p.23.

Silappadikaram gives a detailed description of the second expedition of Senguttuvan to the North. He decided to bring a stone from the Himalayas to carve an image for Kannaki, wife of Kovalan. Accompanied by a large army consisting of infantry, cavalry, elephants and chariots, he started the expedition.

Perum Cheral Irumporai the son of Selvakkadunko Valiyatan was famous for his military exploits. Perum Cheral Irumporai's contemporary ruler of Tagadur was Adiyaman Neduman Anchi. Avvaiyar, the celebrated poetess, was closely associated with Neduman Anchi. In the end he was forced to accept the suzerainty of the Chera king. The Tagadur fort was dismantled with the help of the elephants. This marked a significant victory for the Cheras.

Pandyas and their Battles

Nedun Cheliyan the Pandya king ascended the throne when he was young. He had an adventurous career right from the boyhood, and his military exploits have been narrated in *Maduraikkanchi*. *Akananuru* gives the names of the chieftains: Elini, Erumaiyuran, Irungo Venman and Porunan. Threatened by a formidable combination of seven powers, Pandyan king took an oath to defend his country and proclaimed that he would be an unworthy ruler if he would not vanquish his foes.⁷

One of the verses of *Akananuru* states that a war was fought at Kudal. The Chera and the Chola kings formed an alliance against the Pandya ruler Cheliyan. The Pandyan king Pasumpun Pandyan fought a battle against the Kongar at Kuhaikkoli Vahaipparantalai. In retaliation Pasumpun Pandyan, as described by the Nakkira in

⁷ J. Alasiar, *op.cit.*, p.25.

Akananuru, undertook a campaign and drove the Kongar forces and captured most of their territories. As he returned to his capital Kudal, the people with great acclamation celebration his victory.

The major powers fought wars against each other, against external powers described as Aryans and against the tributaries. The auxiliary powers fought against their overlords or even among themselves. At times they entered into coalitions against each other. During this age entered into coalitions against each other. During this age marked by fear suspicion, wars depredations the survival depended upon the strength of their armed establishment. In consequence the powers maintained and supported their own military systems.

CHAPTER II

ORGANISATION OF THE ARMY

The Political structure of the Tamil country in the Sangam age made it inevitable for the Chera, Chola and Pandya rulers to fight with one another for establishing their superiority over others. It was necessary for them to have military forces trained both in offensive and defensive battles. The army was known as *tanai*, *senai* and *padai*. The early Tamils had the traditional fourfold divisions of army- infantry, elephants, cavalry and chariots. In order of importance came the infantry, the elephants corps, cavalry and the chariot wing. While infantry was given the greatest importance, the chariots were given the last place as they could not move without horses. In *Purananuru* Paranar placed the four divisions in the order of infantry, cavalry, elephants and chariots.¹ The epic, *Manimekalai* describes the army in the order, elephants, chariots cavalry and infantry. There are different views among historians about the order of importance of different divisions. Most of the contemporary works indicate that either the elephants or infantry took the front position in the battlefield, as the rulers had the needed supply of elephants and men.

Infantry

In ancient Tamilaham the foot soldiers formed the major fighting force and functioned as the largest wing of the military organisation. It was called *kalal* or *kalor*. The literary evidences prove that in the early years the Greeks mentioned as Yavanas, too were taken in. *Padirruppattu* mentions, perhaps with a little exaggeration that their

¹ Alasiar, J., *op.cit.*, p.31.

enthusiasm for war deterred them from sleeping in the camp. They were noted for their proficiency in archery and swiftness in movement. As they were always seen with bows and arrows they were called *Silai Udai Maravar*.

The *Akananuru* refers that as the Vetchi Maravar abducted the cattle, the Malavar armed with long lances pursued and defeated them in a battle and recovered the cattle. Thus the Maravar and Malavar were treated as different communities. *Padirrupattu* refers to the Mallar as adroit in bringing booty from the vanquished territories and the kings gave them elephants as rewards.² They were noted for wrestling and fighting with swords. After defeating the enemies they used to make thunderous sounds as a mark of victory and celebrated it with a festival of swords known as *vvaludaivila*.

Elephants

The elephants played a conspicuous role in warfare and formed a formidable section of the army. Tolkappiyar regarded elephant as one the regliss of the king. It seems that more importance was given to elephant corps during the post-Sangam period. *Inna Narpatu*, a post-Sangam work, avers that it was a vexation for the people to see a king, who did not possess elephants. In the traditional system elephant wing was considered as a vital part of the army. *Purananuru* says that Vel Ay Andiran's Potiyil hill contained numerous elephants. Umbarkkadu was also noted as the habitate of elephants.³ The people in the south of Pulinadu were skilled in the taming of the elephants. They captured and supplied a good number of elephants to Selvakkadunko

² C. Manoranjithamoni, *History of Tamilnadu upto* , Tirunelveli, 2012, p.85.

³ *Ibid.*

Valiyatan, the Chera king. As he possessed a large corps of elephants he was called Palyanai Selkelu Kuttuvan. His victory over the enemies was attributed to his elephants. The elephant was used in two ways as a fighting machine and as a transport agent.

Cavalry

Cavalry functioned as a separate wing of the army. Both the kings and the chieftains owned numerous horses. As the climate of the Tamil country appeared unfavourable to the breeding of horses the Tamil powers imported them. *Perumpanarruppadi* mentions about the importation of horses. *Pattinappalai* infers horses brought from lands beyond the seas in ships reached the port of Puhar. The horses were decorated with hair plume called *ulai* and bristled their manes to improve their appearance.⁴ *Padirrupppattu* tells that Kutko Ilam Cheral Irumporai beautified his war horse with the hair plume made of the hair of yaks.

Mullaippattu refers to *tol* the leather armour for the horses to protect them against the arms of the enemies. The cavalrymen used a prod called *mul* to facilitate the horses to gallop. Moreover they wore a metal sandal called *parivatimpu* on their foot and when it pressed the foot on the two sides of the nap of the horses, they galloped with extreme speed. The cavalrymen were called *puraviyar* or *kutiraiyar*. In the later days the cavalry was commanded by a chief called *ivulitalivar*.

⁴ K.K. Pillay, *A Social History of the Tamils Vol.I*, University of Madras, 1975, p.123.

Chariots

In Tamilaham the use of chariots in the warfield dates from the age of Tolkappiyar. A vehicle of great prestige, it was known in Tamil as *ter*. A monopoly of the state it formed part of the royal insignias too. Contemporary literature mentions several kinds of chariots *nedunter*, *kodinchi* and *nedunter kodinchi*. Chariots were drawn by horses. *Perumpanarruppadai* says that the chariots were drawn by elephants.⁵

Akananuru says that the *nedunter* or long chariot was drawn by four swift horses. In fact depending upon circumstances oxen, elephants and horses would have been employed to draw the chariots. The chariot driver, called *pahan* or *valuvan* used a stick called *kol* to drive the horse swiftly. The chariot warriors were known by the names like *teralar terar*, *terror*, *terurunar* and *terinar*. In the post Sangam period the chariot corps was commanded by a general called *terttanittalaivar*. The kings too rode on the chariots, for *Purananuru* tells that Ilanchet Senni did so. Further this Chola king according to *Purananuru* possessed a fleet of beautiful chariots and hence he was called Uruvappal ter Ilan Chet Senni.⁶

Navy

Imayavaramban Neduncheralathan won many naval battles. Kadal Pirakkottia Senguttuvan defeated the Kadamba pirates of the of the Mysore area in a sea battle.

⁵ C. Manoranjithamoni, *op.cit.*, p.86.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.87.

The Ceylonese Chronicle, the Mahavamsa, gives a detailed account of how Karikal Chola invaded Ceylon and took 12000 prisoners of war to his Chola kingdom.

Commanders

Tiruvalluvar speaks of the necessity of able generals in the chapter *Padaimatchi* for he says: “the army would not flourish without great generals”. It seems that in the post-Sangam period, special names were given to the military generals, for they were called *tanaittalaivar* or *padittalaivar*. In *Tirukkural* they were mentioned as *tanaittalaimakkal*. In *Nanmanikkadigai*, the commander is mentioned as *senapati*. During the time of Tolkappiyar, the commander who was in charge of cattle lifting was called as *munaigar*. The commentator Nachchinarkkiniyar called him as *tandattanaittalaivar*. During the post-Sangam period, the generals were assisted by other officials called *tantira vinaigar*.⁷

Notable among the generals were Adikan who served as the commander of the army of Pasumpun Pandyan and Pittan who served in the Chera army. According to *Akananuru* Ay Eyinan served as the head of the army of Kankaikkanni Narmudi Cheral. *Silappadikaram* mentions that the war materials of Cheran Senguttuvan were carried to the North by 20000 military luggage wagons.

Of the three dynasties of Tamilaham it seems that the Cholas were in possession of the largest number of horses and chariots on the other hand chariots appeared to be rare in the Chera country because the geographical location of the country was not favourable for the movement of the wheeled vehicles.⁸ Since the Chera

⁷ Alasiar, J., *op.cit.*, p.35.

⁸ N. Subrahmanian, *op.cit.*, p.54.

country abounded with elephants, the elephant corps formed the major division of the army. The intelligent department of the Sangam period was not properly organised. In the post-Sangam period it appeared that it was organised on a large scale. No women were appointed during this period.

Chapter III

FORTIFICATIONS

The Early Tamil kings attached great importance to forts for they served as the base for offensive and defensive operations. In *Tirukkural* Tiruvalluvar describes the necessity and organisation of and requirements for an ideal fort in the chapter entitled *Aran* (Fortification). T.V. Mahalingam remarks that no part of South India was without some kind of fortification. Fort formed one of the six auxiliaries of royal paraphernalia. Again it was considered as one of the fivefold jewels of a kingdom. *Kottai, aran, inchi, ahappa* and *aruppan* are the words found in the ancient literature of the Tamils to denote a fort. The component parts of a fort were its wall, gate, moat and defensive forests.¹

The Wall

The Wall of a fort was called *evil, matil* or *purisai*. It was constructed to its greatest possible height. *Purananuru* records, no doubt in exaggeration, that the walls of the fort appeared to touch the sky. *Tirukkural* mentions that height, breadth, strength and inaccessibility were the four main requirements of a good fort. There is a reference in *Purananuru* about the *tungeyil* (hanging fort) which actually means that the walls of such sorts were very high and they appeared like hanging from the sky. The literature of the period does not mention about the use of rocks for the construction of forts. The

¹ K. Rajayan, *History in Theory and Method*, Madurai, 1976, p.214.

exterior parts of the walls were overcoated and polished with red clay which appeared like copper plates fixed on them.

Forts were of three categories. They were forts with a single row of wall and such were known as *oreyil*, forts with two rows of walls, the inner wall (*akamatil*) and the outer wall (*puramatil*) and forts with more than two rows of walls. The open place between the two walls called *senduveli* was guarded by the *mulappadai*, a section of the standing army. Again *Purananuru* tells of the existence of forts with seven lines of walls, such were called *eleyil*. Small battlements called *nayil* were provided on the walls of the forts. To note the movements of the hostile troops they constructed elevated observatory tower called *parval*. Equipped with bows and arrows the soldiers guarded the walls of the fort. Such guarded walls were known as *kappudai matil*.

The Gate

The gate called *katavu* or *katavam* provided with strong bolts and long cross bars, commonly known as *kanaiyam*, *tunchumaram*, *elu* and *aivavi* was guarded by the garrisons. The protected and guarded cross bars were called *kappudai elu*. *Silappadikaram* mentions that Yavanas with drawn out swords were left in charge of the gates. The guards lit lights burning on the top of the fort at night.² The Tamil rulers displayed the images of women wearing garlands and anklets, at the entrance of the forts. Besides the dolls, they hung well knit balls on the forts. These had some symbolic references to the enemies. In fact the enemies were compared with feeble women who were unfit for war and with play balls in the hands of the king. Moreover the invader

² K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op.cit.*, p.43.

was expected to snatch the doll and ball as a prelude to his attacks. Thus it posed a challenge to the enemy.³

Moat

The moat, another constituent element of fortification, was known by the names *akali*, and *kidangu*, Deep and wide ditches surrounded every fort. The space between the moat and the wall was known as *idai nilai varaippu*. The moats were generally excavated and usually filled with water drawn from the neighbouring rivers. Filling the moats with water was possible when the forts were constructed on the river side. *Maduraikkanchi* tells that a small watercourse drawn from river Vaigai supplied water for the moat of Madurai fort.⁴ The Kaveri supplied water for the Uraiyur fort, situated on the southern bank of the river. Crocodiles of large size were nurtured in the moats. *Purananuru* points out that the crocodiles were even capable of killing elephants. If anyone happened to fall into the moat he naturally would become a prey to these ferocious creatures. The extraordinary breadth of the moat around a large fort made it difficult for the human beings to cross it easily. With the assistance of boats and vessels the enemies however managed to cross it in times of war.

Defensive forests

Forests encompassing the fort served as a protective barrier to the forts. This jungle was commonly called *milai*. Nachchinarkkiniyar calls this kind of forest as *kavarkkadu*. Since it existed on the outer part of the fort, it was also known as

³ K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op.cit.*, p.44.

⁴ J. Alasiar, *op.cit.*, p.50.

purankadu. Strewn with nails covered by thorny bushes and filled with rough stones, the forest offered a natural impediment to the enemies. *Akananuru* mentions that a fence of *nochchi* trees called *nochchi veli*, surrounded the fort of Tittan the ruler of Urantai. During the post-Sangam period the forest around the fort was protected by another line of forest called *ilai* which was comparatively of smaller in extent.

In their bid to check the advance of enemies, they offered resistance from their jungle barriers. These natural barriers contained narrow entrances called *pulai* which were closed by *kavai* thorns so that the horses of the enemies could not enter. It is pointed out that mechanical devices were fixed at the entrances for preventing the enemies from entering the fort. No doubt the early Tamils sought to render their forts invulnerable to the extent of their ability.⁵

Defensive System of the Gates

As the gate was the main entrance to the fort, the garrison made it as defensible as possible. The Sangam and post-Sangam works contain references to the use of mechanical devices, but no description is given. Though *Silappadikaram* and *Manimekalai* mention the forts of ancient Tamilaham, but furnish no details about mechanical devices used by the Cholas. Perhaps the Pandyas had a better method of fortification. The *Tirukkural* tells of the principles of fortification but not reference about mechanical devices. Therefore, it is to be assumed that the mechanical contrivances were known to the Tamils only in the later period.⁶

⁵ K. Rajayan, *op.cit.*, p.225.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.226.

Similarly *Silappadikaram* gives an account of certain mechanical instruments that were mounted on the fort of Madurai. There were mechanical bows for propelling arrows on the enemies. The literature of the period did not yield adequate material to indicate changes in the construction of the forts. The earlier forts would have been one walled, while in subsequent periods they would have been made two walled and three walled. While the pattern would have remained the same, improvements would have been effected with the equipment of devices and the addition of towers.

Chapter IV

WEAPONS OF WAR

The powers of early Tamilaham used forts for offensive as well as defensive operations. Yet much depended upon the nature of weapons that their armed men employed in wars. Accordingly, they manufactured different kinds of weapons made of wood as well as metal. According to the available sources, their arms and have been classified under two heads viz., offensive and defensive. *Kalam*, *padai* and *padikkalam* are the terms found in the literature to denote the weapons in general. This suggests that the early Tamils manufactured their weapons of war in such factories. Perhaps they would have obtained supplies from foreign countries too.

Offensive Weapons

Spear was one of the weapons in common use. It was considered as the most important offensive weapon. Certain reasons were attributed to the importance given to by the soldiers in warfare. Since spear was the weapon of Lord Muruga on mythological grounds, it was believed that it would bring miraculous victory to the army. The soldiers found this weapon easy to handle. Tolkappiyar while describing the stages of battle says, spears were effective that they checked even a great army. Tiruvalluvar asserts that it was the most deadly weapon used by the warriors. This weapon was called by different names in Tamil *veilekham* and *ekham*.¹

¹ K. Subramaniya Pillai, *Tamil Ilakkiya Varalaru*, Tirunelveli, 1930, p.309.

Sharp and long preserved in leather sheaths, the spear had two parts namely the handle and the blade. The spear-head was in the form of a leaf. The handle was connected to the spear-head with a belt and a bell was attached to its side. Further the warriors in times of war hurled the spears on the forehead of the elephants. Some of the early Tamil sovereigns, it is known from the literature, were experts in the art of spear throwing and they assumed new titles. The Chola king Perunkilli thus received the title Ver Pakhradakkaipperuvirar Killi. A chieftain named Sattan possessed a spear section in his army. The sword, otherwise known as *val*, was not only considered as an effective weapon but also as an emblem of royalty.² Generally they selected an auspicious day for taking the royal sword to the battlefield. In close combats the troops used to thrust their swords on the chests of their enemies. Further according to *Kalavali Narpatu* the swords were used for cutting the tusks of the elephants in the battlefield. It is learnt from the literature some of the Sangam kings possessed special talents in the wielding of swords. Pandyan Karungai Ol Val Perumpeyar Valuti, was considered as a skilful swordsman.

The Tamil armies were well-equipped with the necessary weapons of war. They had a very large variety of offensive and defensive weapons of destruction. There were heroes who were experts in the use of particular weapons. Verpahradakkai Perunarkilli was skilled in the use of the spear. Karungai Olval Perumper Valudi was a great swordsman and Valvil Ori was a famous archer. Among the defensive weapons, the much used one was the shield generally called *kedaham* provided with a handle. It was an ideal protection against arrows. The full armour for the defence of the infantry

² A. Chithambarnar, *Chera Varalaru, Kalaham*, Madras, 1972, p.142.

was called *meimmarai*.³ It was also called *kavacham*. They wore a kind of gloves called *Kaikkavacham* which protected the forehands of the soldier. The conch was used in battlefield to rouse the martial spirit of the soldiers. The weapons were kept in an armoury known as *padaikkalakkottil*. The war drum, which played a conspicuous part in the battle, was a coveted object carefully protected. The royal umbrella and the drum were not to be yielded till the last. The capture of the drum signified victory.

Defensive Arms

Based upon the available sources the defensive arms are classified under two heads shield and armour. The usual terms for the shield in Tamil are *tol kiduku* and *kedaham*. The shield was the most important defensive instrument, which protected the body from the offensive arms.⁴ As it was made of strong leather, it was called *tol*. Different coloured shields white, black and blue were prepared from the leather. It was firm, light and tough so that the arrows and other weapons that the constant striking of the arrows on the shield made it look like a target. The shields were elaborately decorated with mirrors on the inner side. The mirrors might have been useful for them to note the arrival and attack of the enemies on the rear. The soldier who wore the leather shield was called *tolan*. Shields made of wood, called *palakai* and wrapped with strips of iron was stronger. Often they constructed the shields by interspersing wooden pegs. There is a reference in *Purananuru* to the using of iron shields too.⁵

³ *Ibid.*, p.144.

⁴ T.V. Mahalingam, *South Indian Polity*, Madras, 1967, pp.256-278.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.279.

Another protective, device the armour, was called in Tamil as *meymarai kavacham*, *meypukukavacham*, *kavyam* and *meypulai aranam*. Besides the shield and the armour, there were in use other kinds of protective instruments like gloves called *vambu* which was worn by the warriors to protect the fingers. Further the soldiers used leather sandals which are mentioned in the literature as *totutol sodu* and *adipulai aranam*. *Akananuru* indicates that the leather sandals had worn out because of the long marches involved. It does not appear that helmet was in used.

Armoury

Armoury was a vital institution as all the weapons were to be kept in safe places. After a campaign, the weapons and other allied materials were returned to the arsenal. In the fort the kings maintained an armoury called *padaikkalakkottil*. They gave much importance to armoury and were guarded by soldiers.⁶ They post-Sangam period witnessed that though swords were used along with the other weapons, the purpose of them was to cut the head and trunks of the soldiers and elephants respectively. Perhaps the size and strength of the swords have undergone considerable change in the later days.

Preparation for War

The powers of early Tamilaham kept their armies in battle order because of constant war and aggression. They gave due importance to the organisation of the military forces and equipment of the soldiers.⁷ The combatants looked for the

⁶ K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op.cit.*, p.65.

⁷ M.S. Puranalingam Pillai, *Tamil India, Kalaham*, Madras, 1963, p.79.

astrological predictions, tried to please supernatural powers through offerings and prayed for the brilliant victory before they entered the fray.

Astrological Predictions

Undertaking the campaign at the auspicious time was considered a major factor for victory in the war. Before an expedition was decided on the rulers sought the advice of the court astrologers and guidance of ministers. The rulers held discussions with their ministers about the details of war but left the fixation of the auspicious time to the decision of the astrologers. The chief astrologer called *perunkani* was assisted by the deputies called *kani*.⁸ The astrologer was well versed in the *aintukelvis* and was expected to know the twelve signs of the zodiac. Cheran Senguttuvan's northern expedition started at the time fixed by the astrologers.

Feasts were arranged for the soldiers both in the forts and camps. It seems that there were two kinds of banquets, pre-battle and post battle. Pre-battle banquet was conducted on a grand scale, hence it was known as the great banquet. Cholan Nalankilli organised a magnificent banquet in his camp while he went to war against *Eleyil*. The kings offered cooked rice called *perunchoru* to warriors. The supply of *periunchoru* was announced to the warriors by beating the drum. Toddy was also supplied to them in large quantity, for it is stated that it flowed like river water. The king who was considered as the chief host took food along with his soldiers. The occasion was known as *perunchorru nilai*. In *Silappadikaram*, this feast was described by Ilango Adigal as *Perunchorru vanchi*.⁹ The warriors were resolved to gain victory or perish in the

⁸ C. Manoranjithamoni, *op.cit.*, p.88.

⁹ K. Subramaniya Pillai, *op.cit.*, p.401.

battlefield. Prior to their march to the battlefield the kings and soldiers expressed their heroic words in the form of vows.

In *Kuruntogai* Paranar says that the Kosar declared solemnly that they would cut down the guardian trees of their enemies. Even in the midst of war a devoted soldier declared with zeal: “tomorrow I am going to fight and destroy the man and his father who caused death to my father in yesterday’s battle”. May the poets honoured by the whole world, chief among whom is the learned and wise Maruthan of Mankudy, quit me and my kingdom as unworthy of their song. *Akananur* refers to a solemn decision taken by distressed woman named Anni Minili. Her father’s death caused by the Kosar, forced her to take an oath of vengeance upon merciless Kosars. Cholan Nalankilli said, “If do not trample and crush Nedunkilli to death, let me suffer the ignoring of having had union with harlots”.¹⁰

Equipment of the Army

After the vows were administered the warriors were equipped with the necessary arms. The archer division with their bows and arrows, the sword section with their swords, the spear section with their spears assembled in order before the king. They wore the appropriate war emblems. *Panaippol* (Palmyra flowers), *ar* (laburnum) and *vembu* (margosa) were the garlands of the Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas respectively. It is difficult to come to a definite conclusion why they selected these totemic garlands. It is assumed that they might have used them as the particular trees grew in abundance in their respective countries. It is true that even today, the margosa

¹⁰ K.K. Pillay, *op.cit.* p.156.

tree is largely grown in the Pandya country. The Chola region is noted for the availability of *ar* or *atti* tree and Chola dominion is similarly noted for Palmyra trees.

Tolkappiyar mentions that separate war emblems were worn by the kings and soldiers who engaged in wars. Occasionally with their totemic garlands, other flowers were also intermixed and worn by them. Wearing of the floral symbol for war was called *pukkol* or *pukkolnilai*. Tolkappiyar considers it as one of the visible insignias of the ruler of the early times, for it represented the sovereignty. Like a full moon it was round in shape and was made of spotless white cloth and hence called *venkudai*. Before going for war, the monarchs used to bath it and this ceremony was known as *kudaimangalam*. In *Silappadikaram* Ilango Adigal mentions this ceremony as *kudai nilai vanchi*. Like the umbrella, the flag called *kodi* was also considered as one of the symbols of the king. The royal flag was hoisted on the ramparts of the fort on an auspicious day of the expedition. In addition to the royal flag, there were military flags called *porkkodi* for different wings of the army. On the top of the chariots the flag, with royal emblems inscribed on them were hoisted. The elephant carried the flags in front of the army.

March to the Battlefield

After the preliminary arrangements were made, the king purified his body and performed propitiatory rites and ceremonies. In *Silappadikaram* Ilango Adigal mentions that the Eyinar soldiers invoked the aid of *korravai* their war deity, for the success of their expedition, for they believed that their goddess marched in front of their army leading them stage by stage to ultimate victory. Before marching to the battlefield they too were sumptuously fed. They recalled to the memory, the prowess of the

forefathers of the warriors and urged them to emulate. Their patriotic songs kindled the spirit of adventure which induced them for action. They entertained and praised the glories and martial prowess but never hesitated to speak derogatorily of the cowards. After preparations for the march to the battlefield, looked for favourable omens. The soldiers who went for cattle lifting used to seek good omen from birds.

Musical instruments were used in war as an incentive to encourage and excite the troops in action and also to dismay the enemies. The Tamil classics mention a variety of musical instruments of war. Among them the important was the drum, frequently mentioned in the literature as *murasu* or *panai*. They are interpreted and named by the commentators as *tiyagamurasu* (drum of charity), *vira murasu* (drum of valour) and *niyaya murasu* (drum justice).¹¹ Literature mentions a variety of other drums. *Tanumai* a kind of drum, was used to announce the declaration of war to the people. The movement of the army from the capital was announced to the people by beating the drum, placed on the elephant's back. Short stick called *kadippu* was used for rattling the drum. The drum was hung on the left shoulder and beaten with the stick which was held on the right hand.

The propitiated drum was taken to the battlefield in an auspicious day. The sound of the drum *ilum* was compared to that of thunder. It was intended to strike terror in the minds of the opponents. Other musical instruments like conch (*valai*) and horn (*vayir*) were also taken to the battlefield while the army was on the march. The marching army moved in three columns; the army in front was called *talaiyor* that in the middle *idaiyor* and that in the rear *kadaiyor*. In the course of the march a section

¹¹ K.G. Sessa Aiyer, *Chera Kings of the Sangam Age*, London, 1937, p.14.

of the soldiers called *kuliyar* plundered the land of the enemy and cleared ground by removing the stones and cleaning the forests for the advancing columns. The marching army in disregard to obstacles on the way moved through the mountainous and stone passages to reach their destinations. A sound called *iyangupadai aravam* was produced to drive off the wild beasts in the course of their march. These indicate that in early times the force of the Tamil powers explored and tried all possible means to ensure victory. They invoked the blessings of deities looked for omens, equipped the troops with deadly arms, instilled martial spirit and sought to excite awe in the enemy. As a result the astrologers and priests came to occupy an honoured place with the generals and the troops in the army.

Chapter V

WARFARE

After proper organisation and equipment of the army, the rulers led their forces to the battlefield. As victory was the paramount motive, the warring forces committed havoc. Yet in the course of military operations they tried to be guided by their own code of war. As a result humane considerations were not totally neglected even in dark hours. The rulers gave ultimatum to the foes before the proclamation of war, for surprise attack upon the enemy was considered as a violation of *dharma*. Before war began, the troops allowed the people and the cows to go to places of safety. The announcement of war enabled the people to move to the place of safety. The warring kings followed the dictum that women were not to be disturbed. But this code was rarely followed. In fact women were put to harsh treatments and even subjected to molestation.¹

War in the night was forbidden. Though the cattle's lifting was made in the nights, battles were fought only in day time. As night was considered as the interval for rest, the soldiers were not permitted to fight. Generally the kings prepared plans and programmes in the night. Weapons were not aimed against the warriors who withdrew from the battlefield. In *Maduraikkanchi* it is mentioned that the large forces of Nedum Cheliyan never attacked the retreating foes. Certain poets were genuinely interested in establishing peace in the country and tried to avoid war, when they found it harmful to their masters. But it appears that the kings when they undertook major

¹ J. Alasiyar, *op.cit.*, p.70.

campaigns did not always pay heed to the voice of the poets. Whenever a siege of a fort became protracted they used to inform the king about the suffering of the people and asked them to come out and fight gallantly whether they won or lost. The poets usually did not support methods which appeared unfair. Alattur Kilar, a poet went along with the Chola army of Kulamurrattu Tunchiya Killivalavan to besiege Karur, a Chera fort. When the Chera king closed the fort and went into hiding, the poet advised the attacking Chola king not to undertake a war against the cowardly king.

Military Camp

The army erected camp for the conduct of war. The troops selected sites beyond the reach of the enemy as far as possible. It was primarily meant as a base of operation. The army carried the necessary materials while marching. The tents were stocked not only with food and drinks, but also with arms and weapons of all kinds. To protect the camp against surprise attacks, patrols with proper instructions were posted. Besides the fighting men, the camp contained non-combatants such as bards, panegyrists and women.² The king posted his troops in the camp for their protection. As a supply centre, the camp was mainly entrusted with the work of supplying food and other materials to the fighting men. The surgeons of the camp were always vigilant in their duties to nurse the wounded. The audience hall in the camp was reserved for performing entertainments in the night. However life in the camp was marked by much activity, for the troops were kept in a state of readiness for any actions.³

² Jadunath Sarkar, *Military History of India*, New Delhi, 1963, p.163.

³ *Ibid.*, p.165.

Perumpanarruppadai states that the outer walls of the camps were made of burnt bricks. For thatching the roofs, the leaves of the sugarcane and *ulaval* foliage of trees were used. Adequate space was providing within the camp for the free movement of the soldiers. In *Silappadikaram* the king's abode in the camp was mentioned as *urimaippalli*. The *palli* or *urimaippalli* was considered as the heard of the camp. In one verse Tolkkappiyar mentions that soldiers never took their wives to the battlefield. In another verse he records that women lived outside the camp.

The ancient Tamils were conscious of the time factor. Even in the camp they set up a water clock called *kurunirkkannal* to ascertain time. Specially appointed time-keepers called *poyyamakkal* announced the timings. The time-keepers were mentioned in *Silappadikaram* as *nalikai kanakkar*.⁴ The *kannals* were imported from the Greek country. The hearth was kept in the camp to get warmth for the soldiers during the cold sessions. Drums were beaten at the dawn of the day to reveille the soldiers and to remind them to wear flowers and garlands, prescribed for the appropriate occasion. The camps were temporary but self-sufficient. They required reinforcement of ammunitions and stores of all kinds. And from the camp every day the troops marched to the battlefield.

Mode of War

Before entering the fray care was taken to put the different sections of the army in order. Separate divisions were entrusted with moat, plains and walls. To the early Tamils only pitched battles were known.⁵ It seems that they never followed guerrilla

⁴ K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op.cit.*, p.86.

⁵ T.V. Mahalingam, *op.cit.*, p.268.

warfare. This was because the Tamil kings and warriors believed that only just and direct wars bring success and fame to the army. The battle was known by different terms like *poru*, *por*, *muni*, *natpu* and *cheru* while a battlefield was called *kalam*, *porkkalam* or *parantalai*. The spacious battlefield was called *viyankalam*. *Neydal* or littoral regions were possible for waging wars.

Usually fighting took place between soldiers and soldiers, elephants and elephant, horses and horses and chariots and chariots of rival camps. The infantry was divided into regiments of a hundred each in the battlefront. Further in the battlefield it was divided into several divisions such as swordsmen, archers and lancers. Though the soldiers fought the battle with valour and energy from *Purananuru* it is learned that they faced reverses in the battlefield. At the same time, the soldiers like a cobra which recoiled when it received blows, overcame reverses in battles. In the battlefield elephants were first deployed to create adequate space near the hostile force.⁶ The elephants that stood in the midst of the army appeared like a navy in the sea. The failure of elephant crops in the battlefield was considered as failure of the whole army. It was indeed a prestigious act for a warrior to slay an elephant.⁷

The cavalrymen carried light arms and short buckles besides lances. As the horses were noted for their swift movement, they usually broke the battle array of the enemies. Avvaiyar in *Purananuru* alludes that the cavalry of Adiyaman Neduman Anchi charged the enemies and trampled down the attacking forces. The cavalry

⁶ R. Nagaswamy, *Pantaiya Tamilahattu Nanayangal, Hand Book*, Madras, 1968, p.163.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.165.

charges were so swift that the Maduraikkanchi tells that “The highly colours dust the horses raise conceals the sun that lights the spacious sky”.

The charioteer was entrusted with the task of protecting the warrior in the car. As the chariot moved, the warrior on board shot his arrows. He enjoyed great prestige, for victory in battle much depended on his sagacity. In the battlefield the king was specially protected by the commanders and soldiers of the army. If the king happened to fall in the battlefield, the general next in command rallied under the king’s umbrella and continued the battle. The death of the king in the field of war drove the commanders to desperate struggle. Dying of two warring kings in the same battlefield was also common. This is described in Tolkappiyam as *tokai niali*. When the defeat appeared certain the royal umbrella was lowered and the defeat was accepted. The combat between the opponent force naturally caused death to the warriors. The demise of soldiers in the war had its impact upon the society. Women went to the battlefield and lamented the demise of their husbands, in the battle. There is a graphic description in *Purananuru* about the lamenting of a women when she found her husband’s body.

There were instances when women used to pull out the weapons from the bodies of their husbands and stabbing themselves to death. From *Tolkappiyam* it is known that they died by resting their heads on their husband’s faces. This kind of tragedy is called *kondotalaiyodu mudinta nilai*.

Siege of Forts

In early Tamil literature the mode of siege is described as *murrin* or *murriya*. As a first step an advancing army cleared a path towards the defiant citadel. After reaching the fort the next task was to cross the moat. Normally the invaders employed

boats for this purpose, for the *Silappadikaram* tells of different types of boats with decorative frontages. Some of them resembled the face of horse, lion or elephant. The besieging army utilised boats for crossing the rivers while undertaking long expeditions. It is pointed out that Cheran Senguttuvan crossed the Ganges with the help of the boats supplied by his allies, Nurruvar Kannar. After crossing the moat they launched the siege. Before this was done they cut off all the communications of the besieged and water supply, paralysing the life inside the fort. While the siege was in progress, the garrison fought against the assailants from the hidden enclaves. In the course of the siege of the fort the defenders produced smoke by burning *aiyavi* (white mustard) to keep off the assailants. Generally the siege would start in the morning and come to an end in the evening every day. It normally continued for a long time, for that of the hill fort of Pari continued so long that the garrison was reduced to starvation.⁸

Usually elephants were employed to break open the gate of the fort. With metallic rings tied to the end of the tusks the elephants were pressed into service in row after row. Avvaiyar tells that Adiyaman Neduman employed groups of war elephants when he attacked the strongholds of his enemies. *Purananuru* mentions that as the elephants attacked the gates the bolts went out of shape. In fact all the powers appeared to have employed the elephants for breaking the gates.⁹ After breaking the gate, the troops entered the fort and engaged the enemy in combat. They undertook a series of encounters and the successful ruler lowered the flag of the vanquished and hoisted his own on the ramparts. The victorious monarch bathed and cleaned himself and wore the

⁸ P.C. Chakavarti, *The Art of war in Ancient India*, Delhi, 1972, p.36.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.38.

crown at the expense of the fallen foe. This military situation is described in Tamil literature as *kudumikonda mannumangalam*.

Care for the wounded

The disable soldiers were brought to the camp and given aid. The horrible smell of the blood oozing out of the wounds generally filled the camp and hence it was known as *pulampasarai*. To care the wounded, physicians with surgical instruments, medicinal oils and dressing cloth accompanied the troops. The early Tamils had the knowledge of medicinal herbs. *Maruntu* is the term found in the literature to denote the medicine. They prepared medicines from medicinal plants and trees called *maruntukolmaram*. The wounds were dressed for speedy recovery. Cuts were stitched with needles called *neduvel usi* and bandaged with cotton and applied ghee. The scars caused by wounds and suturing could be seen on the chests of the warriors. The physicians took a vigilant care upon the wounded soldiers during the nights also. The kings took much care in the welfare of the warriors. At midnights the king unmindful of the inclement weather and drenching rain even left his camp with a few attendants and lighted torches visited the wounded soldiers. The *Mullappattu* also mentions the same. The kings took special care for their war animals too. The wounded elephants were brought to the camp and were given treatment. It is known that veterinary science was not neglected in those days.

Generally it was a different task for the ruler to provide for the burial of all the dead bodies in the respective places of battles. Puranalingam Pillai is of the opinion that they were buried in the battlefield. Dead bodies were buried in the graveyards also. From the literature it is known that in certain cases the dead became the food for wild

animals and birds. *Purananuru* records that in the battlefield the dead were eaten by the foxes. So there are possibilities to believe that there existed natural disposition. In their wars the powers employed the different divisions of their armed establishments. The archers in battles and the elephants in the siege of forts had there decisive roles.¹⁰ The large tents that were erected by the advancing army served as the bases of operation. No doubt the weapons of war were primitive, yet the battles were marked by ferocity. The warring forces had their code of war, but it is not certain how far it was adhered to.

After the War

The war ended in the victory of one power or group of powers and the defeat of the rival power or group of rival powers. At times it proved indecisive. To win a war the forces made marches and counter marches, committed depredations, besieged the forts and fought a series of battles. The victorious army celebrated its success through victory clamours, dances and other entertainments. It offered worship and sacrifices to the gods, made rewards to generals and astrologers, distributed booty among the troops and erected hero stones in memory of the dead. The defeated power on the other hand suffered the ordeals of defeat. It was deprived of its guardian tree, flags, umbrellas and coronets. The leaders of the vanquished and inhabitants were carried away and villages were looted. When the territory was restored to the defeated ruler, he was compelled to pay war indemnity.¹¹

¹⁰ K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India (edn. IV)*, Madras, 1976, p.133.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.136.

Celebration of Victory

The victorious power celebrated the victory with dances too. The literature of the period mentions a variety of dances, which were associated with the wars. One such was the *kuravai*. It was performed under special circumstances by the chariot force. Here two kinds of chariot dances have been noted. Dance performed in front of the chariot after victory was termed as *munter kuravai*. Nachinarkkiniyar asserts that this dance was performed in the pedestal of the chariot of the victorious king, who danced with his generals. *Pinter kuravai*, another form of dance, was organised behind the victorious chariot. It is not possible to ascertain why certain dances were performed in front of chariots while others behind. It is said that Cheran Senguttuvan performed these two kinds of dances, when he won the war against the Aryan kings. *Amalai*, was another form of dance, performed by the kings and soldiers in the battlefield. They raised the shining swords in the course of this dance and hence it was known as *olval amalai*.¹² This was conducted in the battlefield after the destruction of the enemy with the elephants. Paranar tells that Nimili, the chieftain who killed Adihan in the battle of Pali performed the *amalai* dance on the battleground. One of the verses of *Padirrupattu* implies that Adukot Pat Cheralatan performed an *amalai* dance after subduing his enemies. Drum was beaten on this occasion. *Tunangai* was another form of dance. Though it was a feminine dance, the males also performed it. In this dance the dancers used to beat their sides with their bent arms. *Padirrupattu* states that the victorious army performed the *tunangai* dance in the midst of the dead, and lying in the battlefield. The *tunangai* and *kuravai* dances were associated with the spirits also.

¹² K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *op.cit.*, p.80.

Ilango Adigal says, while Cheran Senguttuvan performed the battlefield dance to celebrate his victory, the goblins presented the *pinter kuravai* dance.

Field Sacrifices

The custom of performing rituals after the announcement of victory was widely followed. Though the troops committed all kinds of havocs to the enemies while conducting the wars, they never ignored what they considered as religious. They believed that sacrifices were needed to propitiate their deity known as *velvikkadavul*. The field sacrifice called *velvi* or *marakkala velvi* was performed in the blood stained fields at the expense of the vanquished. No sacrifice was performed without the Brahmin priests, for they were entrusted with the chanting of the Vedic hymns. In the course of the sacrifice a large quantity of ghee was poured on the sacrificial fire. *Purananuru* verses record that Talaiyalankanattu Seru Venra Pandyan Nedum Cheliyan after subjugating the enemies conducted a sacrifice in the battlefield for appeasing the gods. It is interesting to note that during the reign of Mutukudumi Peru Valuti, the Pandya performed the sacrifice and set up numerous sacrificial halls. Henceforth he was called Palyagasalai Mutukudumi Peru Valuti.

Taking into account of the cruel nature of sacrifices and the atrocities committed on the vanquished. A.L. Basham says, the Tamils might have been cannibals. This statement does not appear true yet it cannot be denied that much of barbarism attended the military operations of the powers.

Cutting of Tutelary Tree

Felling the enemy's guardian tree called *kadimaram* was considered a chivalrous activity during the ancient period. For, it was believed that the opponent would be humbled. Hence the conquering army used to concentrate its attention on the tree. The victorious army used to cut down the tree of the vanquished and took it to their capital as a trophy and used it for the manufacture of drums for beating and pegs for tying the elephants. In the course of the gruesome battles the defeated kings used to flee from the battlefield leaving their umbrellas. The victorious troops took them and converted the handles into sticks for dancers of the court. Further the umbrella became a war price for the victorious. The victors followed the dictum that the materials seized from the vanquished belonged to the victorious.¹³

The invading forces made the flag from the fort one of their targets. As a mark of victory the victorious side waved white flag hoisted its flag on the ramparts and inscribed the symbol of the flag of the captured. As Cheran Senguttuvan won the battle of Kongam, the Pandyas and the Cholas who fought against him, surrendered with their royal flags to him. They were fixed on the outer walls of the ramparts of the conquerors in commemoration of victory. The victorious kings used to inscribe their royal emblems in the conquered country. It is pointed out that Nedum Cherlatan and Cheran Senguttuvan inscribed their ensigns on the Himalayas was an important event in the history of early Tamilaham. Cholan Nalankilli inscribed his tiger emblem on the fort of the Pandyas.¹⁴ These were considered as great events in the early military history of

¹³ V.P. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *War in Ancient India*, Madras, 1944, p.250.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.252.

the Tamil country. As a mark of supremacy over the vanquished the victorious king made chains out of the crowns of the subjugated and wore them. Imayavaramban Nedum Cheralatan adored his chest with a chain made of the captured coronets of the seven defeated kings. This indicated that he became the overlord of the seven chieftains. A king who wore a garland of seven crowns was called *adhiraja*. The victorious kings also wore the anklets made out of the crowns of the vanquished.

Ordeal of Defeat

Many cruelties were perpetrated against the vanquished. The chieftain Elni, fell a victim to the cruel orders of the Chola king. It is said Elni refused to join him in capturing the elephants which had fallen into pitfalls. Greatly irritated, the king sent Matti and ordered him to punish the indifferent chief. Accordingly in a pitched battle Elni was defeated and the teeth of the fallen were plucked out and displayed at the gates of the fort at Venmani. The conquered cities were razed to ground and the victorious king felt proud of it. The invader even set fire to the defiant forts. Tolkappiyar calls this situation as *eriparanteduttal*. *Padirruppattu* records that the smoke of the fire covered the whole atmosphere and the disappeared. The destruction wrought upon the country was of so great magnitude that the poets called the land, ‘motherless child’. The common meeting place for the elders called *potiyil* became the dwelling place for the demoness. The maids never performed the *tunangai* dances as they plunged into grief. People of the villages never celebrated their regular festivals. Kovur Kilar in *Purananuru* infers that women did not attend the *manram*, the place for festivals, since their husbands had not returned from battlefield.

The widows of the kings preferred to die by the process of *sati*. Perunkoppendu, the wife of Puta Pandyan escaped the horrors of widowhood and committed suicide, when her husband died in a war against Chola king. The defeated rulers as well as the soldiers were put to humiliation. Cheran Senguttuvan punished the Aryan kings by carrying a stone slab on their heads for the construction of a statue for Kannaki. Exaction of tribute from the vanquished was widely practiced in ancient Tamilaham. It was an additional income to the king besides the booty. Generally, valuable and useful materials like ornaments, paddy, chariots and animals particularly elephants and cattle were collected as tribute. *Purananuru* states that the enemies of Pandyan Kudakarattu Tunchya Maran Valuti voluntarily offered tributes to him. *Irai*, *triali kondi* are the generic terms found in the Tamil classics to denote tribute. *Padirrupattu* records that the soldiers who fought with bows and arrows helped the Chera king, Perum Cheral Irumparai for extracting tributes from the enemies at the battlefield. According to *Silappadikkaram* the king of Vachchiranadu gave him a pearl canopy the king of Magadha presented him an audience hall and the king Avanti gave him a beautiful arch.¹⁵

At the time of grave crisis the subordinate rulers offered additional tributes to the monarchs. *Silappadikkaram* contains references about this practice. While Cheran Senguttuvan stayed on the banks of the river Ganges, the spies brought ships of sandalwood and pearls which the Pandyan king sent as tribute. The king received them and directed his scribes called *kanneluttalar* to send letters of acknowledgements, sealed with clay to the southern king.¹⁶ Eth bards too called upon the defeated kings to submit

¹⁵ P.C. Chakavarti, *op.cit.*, p.56.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.58.

tributes to the victorious. It is interesting to note that the vanquished not only paid tributes but also joined the side of the victors as allies. This kind of unity was announced to the people by beating the drum in the battlefield. The collected tributes were heaped up on the courtyard of the palace. In *Akananuru*, Mamulanar and precious stones obtained from the defeated enemies as tribute, in the courtyard of Mantai.

Belief on Spirit and Philosophy of Death

The early Tamils believed in the existence of spirits. They were afraid of the devils. This was mainly due to the belief of life after death. The concept of heaven and hell was popular among them. The warriors thought that those who died in the battlefield would directly go to heaven and enjoy the company of the damsels of heaven. In the reception accorded to Senguttuvan by his allies in North India on the banks of the river Ganges, in honour of victory, he summoned his warriors and told them that those who sacrificed their lives in the war would reach heaven and the daughters of heaven would garland them in wedlock. In fact the people believed in the concept of *virasvarga*.

The inhabitants believed that ordinary death had no value in the society. If a king per chance died of disease it was ruling passion within the Tamils that his body was laid on a bed of *darba* and the chest was clift with a sword with military honours and then buried. It was equal to dying on the battlefield. The *prohitas* chanted special *mantras* while this ceremony was undertaken. By this method they believed that the dead king would reach heaven. Even the infants who met with premature death were similarly quartered by a sword and buried. *Purananuru* mentions that when Nambi Nedum Cheliyan met with an ordinary death, he was hewn with a sword and cremated.

The wounded soldiers too fell a prey to the ghosts which were hovering around. People believed that if the wounded warriors were brought home, the devils too would pursue them to their homes. If the wounds were touched by them, then they would never recover by die in agony. The household women took the necessary preventive rituals to ward off the demons who might harass them at night. This situation is typologised in Tamil as *todakkachi*.¹⁷ To avoid the nocturnal visit of devils they stuck margosa and *iravam* leaves on the eaves of the houses. White millet was scattered in the house and fumigation was raised to cast out the devils. Moreover, they raised palls of smoke by burning millet with ghee. Women of the neighbourhood song the *kanchippan* with the accompaniment of bells and other musical instruments. It was assumed that the music had the power to drive away the evil spirits.

Titles and Rewards

It may be noted that officers and commanders who had won laurels in the battlefield were rewarded with titles. One such rank of distinction was the title *enati* corresponding to *senapati*. The symbol of this title was a ring which was offered to the recipient. *Kalittogai* states that a general who received the *enati* rank set up a colony called *enatippadi*. The ministers who acted as commanders of the army too received such titles.¹⁸ Conferring of titles after the names of dynasties followed in this system. From the literature it is known that the special title of the Cholas was *Choliya enati*. Hence forth he was known as Choliya Enati Tirukkannan. Another Chola chieftain Tirukkilli rendered a valuable help to Nalankilli, who conferred upon him the title and

¹⁷ Caldwell, Robert, *A Political and General History of the District of Tirunelveli of the Presidency of Madras*, Madras, 1881, p.90.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.93.

he was called *Enati Tirukkilli Tirukkuttuvan*, a general of the Chera army, who served with a Chola king and received a military rank. Therefore he was known as Choliya Enati Tirukkuttuvan.

The standing army stayed with the king and received rewards and spoils of the war. The looted material added the wealth of the state and as well as to the forces. The practice of presenting gifts to warriors by the king was called *kodaimai*. Among the spoils of war jewels, corn cattle's and elephants were considered as items for distribution among the soldiers. Besides the gifts lands too were granted as rewards. Imayavaramban Nedum Cheralatan offered the conquered territories to the elders of his family. The triumphant rulers distributed the conquered lands among the allied chieftains and subordinate princes as rewards for services. At times this was done prior to war in anticipation of victory. Besides the distribution of lands, the looted gold from the conquered territories were offered to the warriors. According to *Silappadikaram* Cheran Senguttuvan after his northern war summoned his victorious warriors and rewarded them with golden *vahai* flowers, which was more valuable than his birthday presentations. *Purananuru* asserts that by giving away the spoils of war to the bards, the kings removed their poverty. However, it cannot be denied that this was done at the expense of the vanquished.

Prisoners of War

The victorious kings captured the defeated rulers and soldiers and threw them into prison. The prison was known by the names like *sirai*, *kottam* and *piniyaham*. It was built adjacent to the fort and protected by the guards called *kottan kavalar*. The captives were known as *siraiyor*. Keeping the prisoners in chain, called *todar* made of iron, was common. The Chera king Kanaikkal Irumporai was taken as prisoner of war by Cholan Senganan at the battle of Tirupporppuram, and thrown into a prison at Kudavayikottam. Yanaikkan Sey Mantaran Cheral Irumporai who was captured at the battle of Talaiyalankanam by Pandyan Nedum Cheliyan was put in prison. Women too fell victims for they were carried away as prisoners of war. They were called *kondi mahalir*. Karikala Chola captured the women of the defeated country and carried them to his country and employed them as temple servants.¹⁹ In fact captivity followed defeat in war. The references in literary works indicate that the prisoners in general suffered ill treatment. Kanaikkal Irumporai requested for water to quench his thirst but the prison guards refused to supply it at the proper time. He complained that he was chained like a dog and put in prison.

At the time of consecration of Kannaki statue Cheran Senguttuvan ordered the release of the prisoners of war. Accordingly Kanaka and Vijaya were released and were allowed to stay in a mansion called Velavikkomaliyai, situated near Vanchi surrounded by pools and flower gardens.²⁰ They were treated according to their status and permitted to return to the north. The Buddhist nun, Manimekalai, advised the ruler of Puhar to demolish the prison houses and requested him to convert them into houses for the ascetics. But it is not certain whether this was complied with. In fact the wars were

¹⁹ N. Jeyapalan, *Social and Cultural History of Tamil Nadu*, Madras, 1983, p.143.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.145.

marked by destruction of life and property. It does not appear that the victory gave any importance to reconciliation of the vanquished or reconstruction of the ravaged country. On the other hand they proceeded to commit plunder and retaliation on a large scale. The disorders that were caused by frequent wars left the people in turmoil. No doubt attempts were made to preserve the name of the heroes but they represented a poor consolation for the departed souls.

CONCLUSION

The different works in Tamil include that political rivalry and military conflict marked the history of the Tamil country of the period from the third century B.C. to the third century A.D. No doubt there were long intervals of peace, but there is no evidence to suggest that the powers sought to achieve lasting peace either through peaceful co-existence or through any diplomatic settlement. There came no political unification too. As a result they frittered away their man power and economic resources on frequent wars.

The major powers were the Cholas, the Cheras and the Pandyas. In addition there were minor powers within the borders of Tamilaham and other powers beyond. Though the threat of foreign invasions has been refused to it does not appear that the Tamil powers forged any unity. At times the Cholas and the Cheras fought in common alliances, yet they too formed no lasting unity. On the other hand the different powers fought against themselves, against the auxiliary powers and against the northern powers. This accounted for the high incidence of conflicts during this age.

Among the three powers the Cheras were the most aggressive. They repeatedly fought major wars not only against the other Tamil powers but also against the northern powers. Yet in the acquisition of territories they were not as successful as the Cholas were. Through a combination of war and strategy, the Cholas succeeded in the establishment of a vast empire. The Pandyas on the other hand were mostly on the defensive. The organisation of the army remained traditional, for it considered of the usual fourfold divisions as in other parts of India. However, the Cholas gave importance to the chariots, the Cheras to the elephants and the Pandyas to the infantry.

The minor powers depended mostly upon the foot soldiers for their wars for military operations, offensive as well as defensive; the forts were considered as of vital necessary.

The powers because of the threat of aggression and conflicting ambitions kept their armies in battle order. Yet, before they embarked upon military operations they waited for auspicious moments and favourable omens. In consequence the astrologers and magicians occupied an honoured place in the military system. The rulers, generals and troops made sacrifices and performed rites in their bid to gain the favour of war gods. Despite the limited range of the weapons and the attempt to seek divine mercy, the rival powers sought to excel each other in the art of destruction. They committed depredations, set fire to the villages, raided the bazaars and carried away people to salary. It does not appear that the early Tamils resorted to guerrilla warfare, for in an age of heroic warfare it did not gain acceptance. Yet the army that gained victory in battle carried it to its ruthless end, for it carried out military executions, demolished the forts, cut down guardian trees and gained possession of booty. While the triumphant troops received rewards, the vanquished invited doom. The epics *Manimekalai* called upon the rulers to demolish their prisons and erect homes for the ascetics. In their search for peace the inhabitants turned to Jainism and Buddhism in large number.

On account of confused chronology and uncertain genealogy it is not easy to determine the changes that came in the military system from age to age. It is generally believed that the *Tolkappiyam* belonged to the third century B.C., while the *Silappadikaram*, to the third century A.D. In early times the army consisted of three divisions, for the chariots being drawn by horses, formed part of the cavalry. However, in the later period the chariots gained in prominence and were formed into a separate

division. To begin with spear was the widely used weapon but as years rolled by the sword came to occupy its place. In early works the mechanical devices, prisons and women captives are not mentioned but in later works they are repeatedly found. *Tolkappiyam* very rarely refers to astronomers but the *Silappadikaram*, repeatedly refers to them. The construction of forts with bricks and mud, the employment of Yavanas in armed establishments, erection of camps for campaigns, consultation of omens and the celebration of victory were among the practices that continued from age to age almost unchanged.

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MALALA – THE HAPPIEST GIRL IN THE WORLD

Project submitted to

St.Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi

affiliated to

Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

By

SELVA SUGANTHI. A

(Reg. No. 19APHI15)



Department of History

St.Mary's College (Autonomous)

Reaccredited with 'A+' Grade by NAAC

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2020-2021

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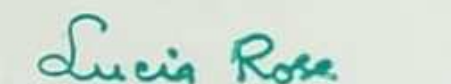
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project entitled "**Malala – The Happiest Girl In The World**", submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi, for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History and is a work done during the year 2020-2021 by A. Selva Suganthi a bonafide student of the Department of History, St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi.



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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project entitled
“**Malala – The Happiest Girl In The World**”, submitted to
St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi affiliated to Manonmaniam
Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, for the award of the degree of Master of
Arts in History, is my original work and it has not previously formed the basis
for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

Place: Thoothukudi

Date : 10.04.2021

A. Selva Suganthi

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Place: Thoothukudi

Date :

Signature of the Candidate

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATIONS

1. ANP	-	Awami National Party
2. BBC	-	British Broadcasting Corporation
3. BP	-	Blood Pressure
4. BRAC	-	Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee
5. CGE	-	Centre for Girl's Education
6. CJ	-	Cheil Jedang
7. CM	-	Chief Minister
8. CMH	-	Combined Military Hospital
9. CO ₂	-	Carbon dioxide
10. CT	-	Computed Tomography
11. FP	-	Foreign Policy
12. GG2	-	Garavi Gujarat 2
13. ICU	-	Intensive Care Unit
14. IDRC	-	International Development Research Centre
15. IED	-	Improvised Explosive Device
16. IT	-	Information Technology
17. ITV	-	Independent Television
18. NGO	-	Non-Government Organization
19. NWFP	-	North West Frontier Province
20. NYT	-	New York Times
21. TTP	-	Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan
22. TV	-	Television

23. UK	-	United Kingdom
24. UN	-	United Nations
25. UNHCR	-	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
26. UNICEF	-	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
27. UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
28. US	-	United States

MALALA - THE HAPPIEST GIRL IN THE WORLD



MALALA YOUSAFZAI



INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

“I am not telling men to step away from speaking for women’s rights rather I am focusing on women to be independent to fight for themselves”.

- Malala Yousafzai

Malala Yousafzai is among the most famous teenagers of the world. Malala is a very young, she has gone on to attain the zeniths that few are fortunate to scale at such a young age. Generally, common women are scared of the goons and loafers on the roads and suffer their uncivilized behavior thinking that they are destined to suffer. This happens only because they are women and tried to change their way of life; however, there are girls like Malala in the world who have stood before the most terrible and horrendous terrorist organization like Taliban. She is well known for her work and efforts that led to her being shot by the extremist group of Taliban in 2012. She stood for herself and other girls in the valley and for their right to education. She did not have any animosity with the extremist group, all she wanted was that she should be allowed to go to school and study. Nothing, it means literally nothing should come over between her and her studies. But unlike others, her life was never meant to be simple. She was shot and was riding between a swing that was between her life and death. But the prayers and destiny had other plans.¹

This was no courageous act to criticize and write, sitting in other parts of the world, against the Taliban and its barbaric rules; rather it requires grit, fortitude, determination, firmness all the qualities that we might have when we choose to not only speak against it, but also face it in its own backyard; it could be possible only for a girl like Malala, that too at an age when other girls of her age scarce know what the world is about and how it is run. She struggled for the right to education not only for

¹ www.malala-yousafzai.com

herself but for several other innocent lives; and she continues to struggle for it even now.

It was too early for any child in any country, have received such an honour as much as 16 – 17 years old Malala Yousafzai. She was awarded the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize. In addition to her International reputation. She had been also awarded several prestigious awards. In year 2015, California based NASA has kept a name of Asteroid 316201 as Malala.

Malala now resides in the fancy world too; in poetry and stories. There is no denying the fact that she bears her name on every golden wall of our modern civilization; she is the new offshoot for struggle against immobility.²

Aim and Purpose of the Study

Throughout history, women have not always had access to the same rights as men. More recently, women are increasingly demanding and fighting for equal rights, especially by women who witness the oppression or have lived subject to the inequalities. Malala continued fighting for education for girls around the world. As a women, she advanced equal rights for women by advocating for every girl's right to education as well as financially supporting schools for women in various countries. Surviving the attack, she continues her efforts to ensure girls around the world have access to quality education. This project could make some impressions on the present generation to know about the light of her mission and extraordinary achievements particularly for girls.

² www.biography.com

Objectives of the Study

- ❖ To emphasise Malala's vision
- ❖ To highlight Girl children's right to education
- ❖ To visualize Malala as Global citizen

Sources of the Study

Different source materials have been used to trace **Malala – The Happiest Girl In The World**. Source materials have been classified into primary and secondary sources. Primary source materials are the first hand information like Newspapers, Reports, Front Line and Magazines. Secondary sources consist of the books and websites.

Methodology

The methodology adopted in this study is analytical and descriptive method. The source materials have been critically analyzed and investigated. The descriptive method is used in the presentation of the study in order to make the project understandable to the readers.

Chapterization

The project has been divided into five chapters besides an Introduction and Conclusion.

- The first chapter, "Early Life" deals about the early career of Malala.
- The second chapter, "Attempt on Life" ensures the Taliban attempt on Malala's life and her courage.
- The third chapter, "Life of Name and Fame" establishes Malala as a Global citizen and her recognition of UNESCO.

- The fourth chapter, “Awards and Honours” explains immortality of her sacrifice.
- The fifth chapter, “Nobel Peace Prize” reveals the young activist who stood up for quality education without fear.
- All the chapters are summarized in the conclusion.

A decorative border of red roses with green leaves surrounds the entire page.

CHAPTER I

CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE

“I speak not for myself but for those without voice... those who have fought for their rights... their right to live in peace, their right to be treated with dignity, their right to equality of opportunity, their right to be educated”

- Malala Yousafzai

Malala Yousafzai was born on 12th July 1997 in Mingora at Swat district of North-Western Pakistan. Malala was born to Ziauddin Yousafzai and Tor Pekai Yousafzai. The birth of a girl was not considered good news in the village in which she was born, but even then she was the cynosure of her parent's eyes. The name 'Malala' was given by her father who fell in love with the child the moment he saw her, he even asked his family and friends to throw dry fruits in her cradle, something which was usually done at the time of birth of boys.¹

The girl was named after Malalai of Mainwad, a famous Pashtun Poetess, warrior and the greatest heroine women from Southern Afghanistan. She became the Afghan pride, so the last Afghan King built a Maiwand victory monument in her remembrance in the center of Kabul. Many Afghan girl's schools are named after her. But her grandfather was not too happy with her father calling her Malalai, as he said that the name Malala meant **“Grief – Stricken”**.²

When Malala Yousafzai was a baby, her father used to sing a song. The song was written by the famous Urdu poet, Rahmat Shah Sayel of Peshawar which were in

¹ Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., *Nobel Peace Prize Winner Malala The Crusader of Fearless Freedom*, Diamond Pocket Books Publications, New Delhi, 2015, p.13.

² *Ibid.*, p.14.

the praise of Malalai of Maiwand. She used to get inspired from the stories that her father told anyone who used to come to their home about the young female. The words were,

‘O Malalai of Mainwad, Rise once more to make the

Pashtun understand the song of Honor;

Your poetic words turn worlds around,

I beg you to rise again...’

Malala’s father loved her the most, as he lovingly called her **‘Jan-e-mun’** meaning the one who is loved more than the life. Pashtuns keep nicknames of their children and so had Malala. She was called **‘Pisho’** by her mother since she was a baby, but some of her cousins used to call her **‘Lachi’**, which meant ‘cardamom’ in Pashto. Her father, who did not have very sharp features, was called as **‘Khaista Dada’**, which meant beautiful.

Malala has two younger brothers; their names are Khushal and Atal. Malala grandfather’s name was Rahul Amin Yousafzai. He was an orator. Malala fluent in Pashto, English and Urdu. Malala was educated in large part by her father, Ziauddin Yousafzai. She played cricket and hide – seek. She had picnics in the summer and built snowmen in the winter. She shared secrets with her best friend, Moniba, and fought with her two younger brothers. Malala’ favourite television show was about a boy with a magic pencil. The boy could make anything he wanted with his pencil. Malala wished she had a magic pencil.

She was not an ordinary Pashtun girl. In Pakistan, boys and girls were not considered equal. Older girls were not supposed to leave their house unless they had a male relative with them.

They weren't even allowed to look men in the eye. Most Pashtun women followed the code of "**purdah**," which meant they covered themselves including their faces when they were in public. But Malala would never cover her face. And to everyone's surprise, her father agreed. Malala will live as free as a bird. Malala liked to sit with her father and listen to the men talk about politics and the world.³

Education was not considered important for girls in Pakistan. Many girls stopped going to school by age ten, if they were able to go at all. And many girls and women including Malala's own mother did not know how to read. But Malala's father believed that education should be for everyone including girls. With his stories and songs, Malala's father taught her the power of words. When she was just a toddler, he had bring her to school with him. She had stand in front of an empty classroom and pretend to be a teacher. Sometimes she had listen to a real teacher instruct the older children. And when she was almost five, her father enrolled her in school. Malala loved school. Every year, the children competed to get the prize for being the top student. Malala usually won. She was very proud and very competitive.

Malala's father Ziauddin running a chain of Schools known as the Khushal Public School. Politically, he is affiliated with the Awami National Party (ANP) in

³ Shana Corey, *Malala A Hero for All*, Random House Children's Publications, New York, 2016, pp.14-21.

Pakistan whose origins are linked with the Khudai Khidmatgar, which was a secular Pashtun non – violent movement against the British Raj.⁴

When his daughter, Malala, was old enough to start understanding that at a certain age girls were prohibited to attend school, he inspired her to stand up and speak up. Instead of attending school, girls of Pashtun tribes would have to stay home and learn how to cook for their brothers and fathers. When he created his schools after college with his friend Naeem Khan, they would of course be open to teaching girls would strive to keep learning and going to school. He supported every women who wanted to become successful in life and not stay illiterate like most of them in Pakistan.⁵

Malala started speaking about education rights in 2008 when she was just 11 years old. After the Taliban began attacking girl's schools in Swat, Malala gave a speech in Peshawar, Pakistan, in September 2008.⁶ The title of her talk was, “How dare the Taliban take away my basic right to education?”. In 2009, Malala Yousafzai began writing 10 part series, “**Diary of a Pakistani Schoolgirl**” at the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Urdu published pseudonymously under the pen name “**Gul Makai**”.⁷

If the pen name was meant to keep her identity secret, it certainly didn't work. By mid – February, the New York Times had already aired a short documentary featuring Malala and her father and their struggle to sustain a girls' school under the

⁴ Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb, *I AM MALALA The girl who stood up for Education and was shot by the Taliban*, Phoenix Publication, London, 2014, p.15.

⁵ Ranjani Narayanan, *Malala Ayutha Ezhuthu*, Kizhaku Pathipagam, Chennai, 2015, p.27.

⁶ *Frontline*, (Vol. XXXI), National Insurance Company Ltd., Kolkata, November 01-November 14, 2014, pp.118-119.

⁷ *Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., op.cit.*, p.43.

Taliban in Swat. The documentary had already been in production in January. It is not clear whether the New York Times (NYT) learned of Malala through the BBC or whether it was other way around, in either case, the situation calls for a serious engagement with the question of media ethics. At best, it is a delicate game between providing a platform to courageous voices and weighing the possibility enormous ramifications for those people once the cameras are gone.⁸

Maulana Fazlullah, the Pakistani Taliban began imposing strict Islamic law, destroying or shutting down girl's schools, banning women from any active role in society, and carrying out suicide bombings.⁹ Malala or her family who may have decided to move forward with these public projects fully understanding the potential for negative consequences. That form of courage deserves support, but it does not eliminate the question of the ethical obligations of a media organization towards those it publicizes for profit. Malala and her family fled the region for their safety, but they returned when tensions and violence eased.¹⁰

To blog about the Taliban was a very risky decision, but Ziauddin himself insisted that 11 year old Malala do it. Her first blog entry was posted on 3 January 2009.¹¹ The idea of a schoolgirl blogging about the Taliban's growing influence in Swat was originated by Aamer Ahmed Khan of BBC Urdu.

She wrote about how fewer girls dared to attend school because of the Taliban, and how the Taliban had forced the school shut. Her school would be attacked and the increasing military activity in Swat. Television and music were banned, women were

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.44.

⁹ Malala Yousafzai with Patricia McCormick, *MALALA The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Changed the World*, Orion Publication, London, 2014, p.40.

¹⁰ Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb, *op.cit.*, p.148.

¹¹ Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., *op.cit.*, p.70.

prevented from going shopping.¹² Malala and her father received death threats but continued to speak out for the right to education.¹³

In February 2009 Malala made her first television appearance, when she was interviewed by Pakistani Journalist Hamid Mir on the Pakistan current events show Capital Talk. In late February the Taliban, responding to an increasing backlash throughout Pakistan, agreed to a cease-fire, lifted the restriction against girls, and allowed them to attend school on the condition that they wear burkas. However, violence resurged only a few months later, in May, and the Malala family was forced to seek refuge outside of Swat until the Pakistani army was able to push the Taliban out.

She continued writing when the school later reopened and she along with her friends could again attend classes as they did before. Then she gave her school exams and ended the blog in March 2009.¹⁴

Even though she wrote the blog anonymously, her identity was later revealed and she became a popular teenage activist who was often called to give speeches. Over the next couple of years she continued to gain in popularity.

In early 2009 The New York Times reporter Adam Ellick worked with Yousafzai to make a documentary, *Class Dismissed*, a 13- minute piece about the school shutdown.

Ellick made a second film with her, titled *A School Girl's Odyssey*. The New York Times posed both films on their Website in 2009. That summer she met with

¹² *Ibid.*, pp.45-58.

¹³ Melur Thendral, *Malala Veelvenendru Ninaithaiyo?*, Classic Publications, Chennai, 2015, p.59.

¹⁴ Anita Gaur, *The Life and Times of Malala Yousafzai*, Prabhat Prakashan, New Delhi, 2016, p.99.

U.S. special envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke and asked him to help with her effort to protect the education of girls in Pakistan.

With Yousafzai's continuing television appearances and coverage in the local and international media, it had become apparent by December 2009 that she was the BBC's young blogger. Once her identity was known, she began to receive widespread recognition for her activism.¹⁵

Malala began to rise in prominence, giving interviews in print and on television and taking a position as chairperson of the District Child Assembly Swat. In 2010 Taliban's threatening notes began to appear under Malala's door ordering her to end the crusade. In October 2011 she was nominated by human rights activist nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize by Desmond Tutu. A number of prominent individuals, including the Canadian Minister of Citizenship, are supporting a petition to nominate Yousafzai for the Nobel Peace Prize. In 19th December 2011 of that year she was awarded Pakistan's first National Youth Peace Prize by the President of Pakistan (later renamed the National Malala Peace Prize).¹⁶

Under the pen name Gul Makai, she wrote frank, detailed diary entries about her life under the Taliban. Though many urged her to stop, and some have since criticized her father for allowing her to do it, Malala wasn't worried. The Taliban, she remembers, "had never come for a girl".

Malala's struggle highlights a devastating reality: Girls make up the majority of the world's 61 million out-of-school children. They are less likely than boys to enter primary school. Harmful practices such as early marriage, gender-based

¹⁵ Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., *op.cit.*, p.44.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.114.

violence, discriminatory laws, prevent them from enrolling in or completing school. Educational disparities start at the youngest ages and continue till adulthood. Women represent two thirds of the world's 775 million illiterates. Despite making breakthroughs in higher education, women still account for just 29 percent of researchers. In her famous blog about life under Taliban rule, Malala reacts to the destructions of schools, and especially girls' schools.

The girl knew very well that if anyone would come up and stand for their rights, Taliban would become fearful, and it happened. Taliban came to know about the girl who shouted about her ordeal and it knew very well about the family as well. Taliban knew the daughter was becoming the face of Mingora and was awakening people about their own rights.¹⁷

¹⁷ *The Hindu*, dated: 13.10.2012, p.13.

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CHAPTER II

CHAPTER II

ATTEMPT ON LIFE

“The terrorists thought they would change my aims and stop my ambitions, but nothing changed in my life except this: weakness, fear and hopelessness died.

Strength, power and courage were born.”

- Malala Yousafzai

The Swat Valley

Swat is a district as well as a charming valley located in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) in Pakistan. It is about 160 kilometers from Islamabad. The Capital of this provinces is Saidu Sharif; however, Mingora remains the most important town. Looking at the scenic beauty of this valley, it is also known as the Switzerland of Pakistan. Swat is not adjacent to the Afghanistan border, but a lot of people of Afghan origin live here; Malala too is a child of the Afghan clan. Swat is often compared with the Kashmir valley as far as its beauty is concerned. Spread over about 4,000 square miles, this valley is inhabited by about a 12 lakhs people. Surrounded By snowcapped Mountains and lush green plains lies the lifeline of Swat valley, the Swat river.

In the Swat valley have a lush green landscape and a beautiful valley with big mountains all over. The swat is a heavenly kingdom of Mountains, beautiful waterfalls and lakes whose water is as clear as crystal. The time someone enters the valley, there is a signboard that says, ‘Welcome to Paradise’.

The Mingora is surrounded by the Hindu Kush Mountains, where the locals go to school ibex (wild goats) and golden cockerels. Malala’s home was a one storeyed house of proper concrete. There was a flat roof upstairs where the children used to play cricket, and many a times her father and his friends used to have their tea at dusk.

After retiring for the day, the older generation loved to watch the sunset and discuss their day and lesson someday – to – day tensions. Malala used to love sitting there and watching the smoke rising from the village.¹

The Swat River is not the only tourist place, rather the entire valley has a large number of historical and natural places. The Swat Museum displays the historical remains, excavated from different parts of the valley, in a very systematic manner. Just near the museum is located the Butkara Dome, which belongs to the second century A.D. Possibly, it was built by Emperor Ashok initially, and was further expanded on five different times subsequently.²

The Taliban

The Taliban are a group of fundamentalist Sunni Muslim militants living today mostly near the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The word Taliban means “students” in Pashto, a name used because many of the original members studied in Pakistani religious schools called madrassas.

Various Taliban groups have been in existence in Pakistan since around 2002. Most of these Taliban factions have joined an umbrella organization called **Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan** (TTP). Although the Pakistani Taliban is distinct from Afghan Taliban, they have a similar outlook towards women. The Pakistani Taliban has killed women accusing them of un-Islamic behavior and has forcibly married girls after publicly flogging them for illicit relations. Pakistan women were forced to wear the burqa at all times in public, because, according to one Taliban spokesman, “**the face of a women is a source of corruption**” for men not related to them.³

¹ Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., *op.cit.*, p.26.

² Anita Gaur, *op.cit.*, p.11.

³ *The Hindu*, dated: 18.12.2014, p.1.

Women were not allowed to be educated after the age of eight, and until then were permitted only to study the Quran.

The Taliban allowed and in some cases encouraged marriage for girls under the age of 16. Amnesty International reported that 80% of Afghan marriages were forced.⁴

From the age of eight, females were not allowed to be in direct contact with males other than a close “blood relative”, husband, or in-law. Other restrictions were:

- ❖ Women should not appear in the streets without a blood relative or without wearing a burqa
- ❖ Women should not wear high-heeled shoes as no man should hear a woman’s footsteps lest it excite him
- ❖ Women must not speak loudly in public as no stranger should hear a women’s voice
- ❖ All ground and first floor residential windows should be painted over or screened to prevent women being visible from the street
- ❖ Photographing or filming of women was banned as was displaying pictures of females in newspapers, books, shops or the home
- ❖ The modification of any place names that included the word “women”. For example, “women’s garden” was renamed “spring garden”.
- ❖ Women were forbidden to appear on the balconies of their apartments or house.
- ❖ Ban on women riding bicycles or motorcycles, even with their mahrams.
- ❖ Ban on women’s presence on radio, television or at public gatherings of any kind.

⁴ Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb, *op.cit.*, pp.46-47.

- ❖ Women were forbidden to ride in a taxi without a mahram.
- ❖ Segregated bus services introduced to prevent males and females traveling on the same bus.⁵

The Three Bullets

The day when Malala was shot on 9th October, 2012, was a regular day but something was unusual about that day. It was the day of her Pakistan studies Examinations. After the examinations was over the girls came out of the examination hall.

The bus used to ply on that route twice during the school time. It would arrived and wait for the girls at the gate.⁶ The girls would cover their faces from the scarves and would run to board the first. Malala used to cover only her head from scarf, not her whole face. Technically it was not a school bus, but factually a truck that had three benches, two facing each other and one in the Middle. The space was enough for around twenty girls and three teachers who accompanied them. On that fateful day also, all the students boarded the bus and started the journey. The bus crossed the Army check point and the Cricket Ground, and then it was going ahead. They came some 200 odd meters ahead of the Army check point, when a van carrying some armed person suddenly overtook the bus and stopped its passage in front.

Seeing the road blocked so abruptly, the driver had to suddenly apply brakes to halt the bus. Although the students could not see much through the road, but all they saw was that a bearded youth came out and asked the driver whom the girls called Usman Bhai, if the school bus belonged to Khushal School. The driver nodded in affirmation. For him it was a stupid question because the bus already had the name

⁵ Melur Thendral, *op.cit.*, pp.24-25.

⁶ *The Hindu*, dated: 10.10.2012, p.13.

of the school written on the top. Still he answered – “yes, this bus belonged to Khushal School only”. The man asked that he wanted some information’s about some students of the school. The driver replied for that he should contact the school authorities. The driver was trying to stop him, but he came inside the bus from it is back and then he yelled in a rough tone, **“Who is Malala?”**

All girls had the question papers in their hands, and no girl replied to that man. Yet all of the girls involuntarily looked towards Malala. Two of Malala’s friends, Moniba and Sazia were sitting beside her. When none of the girls replied, Malala said to him- **“I am Malala, but tell me what happened?”**⁷

After getting the answer, he pulled out a loaded gun from his pocket. In Fraction of Seconds, he pulled the trigger and Shot three bullets in her direction. The first bullet came through her left eye, pierced the left side of her brain and got inside the left side of her shoulder. She fell on Moniba with blood oozing out of her left ear. The second had hit her friend Sazia and the third one a girl named Kainat Riyaz.

Malala was unconscious by now. Her friendship later told that the gunman’s hand was shaking as he fired. By the time they went to the hospital Malala’s long hair and Moniba’s lap were full of blood.⁸ She was shot by the gunman almost instantly Usman, the bus driver realized that Malala and other two girls have been shot, and the shooter had already run away after committing this heinous act. Immediately Usman himself decided not to chase the attacker. It was a wise decision, which helped save time and eventually saved Malala’s life later.

Usman rushed the school bus full of hysterically yelling, crying and praying the God almighty to save the lives of all the three mortally bleeding and injured girls. One local policeman stopped him and asked why he was driving in such a manner.

⁷ *The Hindu*, dated: 14.10.2012, p.1.

⁸ *Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., op.cit.*, pp.70-71.

The driver was about to reply, when one of the girls in the bus started praying, “Oh Police Sahib! For God’s sake, please don’t waste our time. Can’t see that one of them is still alive; help us to take her to the hospital fast. The policeman stepped aside and the bus rushed ahead and again towards the direction of the central hospital. This rush helped Usman to take the bus to the hospital in time.

He alighted from the bus and entered in the hospital yelling in an exceptionally loud pitch. Within minutes the unconscious bodies of all the girls were inside the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) ward. At that time Malala was lying in coma in the lap of Moniba, and all the other girls were crying badly. Some were silently praying for the life of Malala. They had realized somehow that two girls have already died.

Malala’s father was attending a conference at that time, and he was present at the Swat Press Club. That time Malala’s father mobile was rang. He gave the mobile to his friend Ahmed Shah, his friend noticed that the mobile screen was flashing the caller’s name as Khushal School. He immediately asked him to answer the telephone and answer the queries of the school. As soon as he reached the podium and was about to deliver his speech, Ahmed Shah came rushing and uttered, “Oh my God, how may I tell you that the Taliban have just attacked your school bus and shot three girls including your daughter”. Malala’s father’s face lost its colour and charm. He was badly shocked and almost stood there stone faced for few seconds.⁹

A good number of people were present there in the Press Club at that time. They were all there to oppose the regularization of Central Regulatory on some four hundred odd private schools in Pakistan. Malala father was profusely sweating out of tension; he still could not let down all those people who were present there. The time

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.92.

they arrived at the hospital they found the hospital was amassed with TV people, photographers, media and many locals waiting for any news about Malala from the hospital authorities. He was almost certain that Malala, his daughter was not out of danger. She had become famous because of the BBC Diary that she wrote regularly. Gradually with the passage of time he realized that something was definitely wrong, not just wrong but was very wrong! So he made his way amidst photographers and camera flashes, and rushed madly throughout the corridor. Finally, he could see her lying onto a stretcher in an unconscious state.

He believed earlier that the Taliban would come for anyone and everyone, but not for his Janimoon, his beautiful daughter. He thought Taliban wanted to kill two birds with one stone, Malala and her father. Even if he won't be killed in Reality, but they still would be able to silence his voice, they would make him stop his revolts against the Taliban. He was afraid of Malala's survival chances yet he was not crying, and the crowd was everywhere. Almost entire Pashtun clan had swarmed the hospital by then. Everyone was praying for Malala on her father's request.

The Doctors assured Malala's family that they had done a Computed Tomography (CT) scan which shows that the bullet has not damaged her brain's vital area, so she would recover soon. At that instance they had cleaned and bandaged her wound. Madame Maryam, Malala's Principal came rushing and asked her father what they have done to her. She was not there at the school, so the moment she received the news of Malala being shot.¹⁰

Maryam was worried about only Malala but also about the other two girls also who were shot. Though ideally Malala's father should have visited and checked the state of other two girls also, but he did not want to leave his daughter even for a

¹⁰ *Ibid*, pp.93-94.

second. His phone was constantly ringing, the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtun was the first one who called and assured him that the government would extend each and every help. The Chief Minister (CM) also started that Lady Reading Hospital in Peshawar was expecting Malala and her family for her further treatment.

The local commander arrived there and announced that a chopper would be arriving there anytime soon and it was going to escort Malala and her father to Peshwar.

They did not want to waste any more time and hence Malala's mother could not be called there. Principal Maryam acted like her second mother and insisted to escort them to Peshawar. Maryam was still nursing her student although her family was not way too happy with her decision, still at this time they supported her. When Malala was escorted in the helicopter too; The helipad was only a five minutes from the hospital, still he afraid of the whole way. When they reached the helipad, no helicopter yet arrived and it was like wasting precious time and waiting till eternity. Finally the army chopper landed and Malala was escorted in with Maryam, her cousin Khanjee, Ahmed Shah and her father.¹¹

Her mother was watching the helicopter going above their home, the time this news reached her she was struggling to learn new words with her teacher Ulfat who was teaching her words like apple and book.

Malala's mother started reciting versus from Quran. Just then Malala's Brothers came back from the school. Atal, the youngest one got to know about Malala being shot, from the television. He had called her other brother Khushal and both joined everyone in the weeping ceremony, the landline was constantly ringing. People were assuring her mother that though she had been shot at the head, but the bullet has

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.95.

not hit her brain. Some other stories were also cooked up in the meanwhile, stating that her foot has been injured; some said that she had been shot into the head. Her mother was confused with different statements coming and thought that Malala would be finding it strange that her mother is not with her in this hour of need.

Inside the helicopter Malala was vomiting blood and her father was horrified at the sight thinking that it meant there was some internal bleeding. He was startling and was losing with her passing second. Just then Maryam was trying to wipe blood from her mouth and then she asked her father to look at Malala as she was responding, she said it was a good sign. The moment they landed in Peshawar, they assumed that they would be taken to the Lady Reading Hospital, where Dr. Mumtaz who was very good neurosurgeon would be waiting for them. Instead they were taken to Combined Military Hospital (CMH), which was a large sprawling brick hospital with around 600 beds and dated backed to the British rule. Malala was rushed to the ICU, which was in a separate building. She was wheeled into a glass walled isolation unit and a nurse had put on drip into her. In the next room to her laid a soldier who has been horrifically burned in an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attack and got his one leg blown off.¹² A young man arrived and introduced himself as Colonel Junaid, a neurosurgeon in the army staff. Malala's father become even more distributed, he doubted him to be a doctor as he was so young to his profession. He asked Maryam if the patient was her daughter, and Maryam pretended to be her mother and asked her to come in. Colonel Junaid examined Malala; she was conscious by now, but restless and was not speaking.¹³

Her eyes were fluttering, and the Colonel stitched the wound above her left brow where the bullet had entered, but was surprised when he would not find any

¹² *Ibid.*, pp.96-99.

¹³ *The Hindu*, dated: 11.10.2012, p.12.

bullet in the scan. He said to himself that if the bullet has entered her body then there has to be an exit too. He palpated her spine and then located the bullet to be inside her body lying next to her left shoulder blade. He declared that she must have been stooping while she was shot dead and asked Malala to be taken for another CT scan. The Colonel called her father in solitude to his office to discuss something. There he had put up the scans on the screen. He told him another horrifying story that the scan done in Swat was done only from one angle, but the new one done at the moment was more grave and serious. He said the CT scan showed that the bullet had been very close to her brain. He also said that the particles of bone had damaged the brain membrane. He declined to operate Malala at this stage as that was a risk and he was in no mood to take that at that very moment. Her father was out of patience by now, as in Swat he was being told that the things were simple and now he was listening to altogether a different story.¹⁴

In Pakistan, army has seized the power many times and people were wary of the army, especially those from Swat. As in Swat, the army had taken so long to act against the Taliban. A father of Malala's friend called him at the moment and asked her to move from that hospital and they did not want Malala to be a shaheed millat, a martyr for the nation like Liaqat Ali Khan was, her father now was totally confused, unaware what has to be done.¹⁵

He shared the same with Colonel Junaid and asked him why were they here, as they were about to go to the civil hospital; and then asked him to bring Dr. Mumtaz. Colonel Junaid who was not surprisingly offended asked her father how that would help him or his daughter. Afterwards, Ziauddin was told that though he appeared to be young, but he had been a neurosurgeon since last thirteen years. In fact he was one

¹⁴ *Shana Corey*, op.cit., pp.39-41.

¹⁵ *Ranjani Narayanan*, op.cit., p.70.

among the most experience neurosurgeon in the Pakistan army and he joined the army because of their superior facilities and followed the footsteps of his uncle who was also an army neurosurgeon. Peshawar CMH had seen many cases of bullet wounds, gunshots and bombs and he said in a stern tone that he had already treated many Malala's. Malala's father was dumbstruck seeing her daughter in such a state, he later told Junaid to do whatever he thinks is right. He was getting into depression. The next few hours for them were going to be waiting and see time, as the hospital staff were monitoring Malala, her heartbeat and her vital organs. Every tit bit of Malala was being monitoring in order to treat her in a better manner. Occasionally Malala was making some low grunts and moved her hands, many a time she fluttered her eyes too. For once she opened her eyes fully and Maryam exclaimed that she never noticed how beautiful Malala's eyes were! She was restless and was trying to get off the monitor from her finger. Later in the same evening, her mother and Atal was arrived there. When Malala's mother arrived and met her child, she hugged her tightly and held back her tears, showing how protective and strong a Pashtun lady is. Her family in the state of shock and she was not able to understand at all why she was not being operated. She wanted the bullet to be out of her daughter's body as soon as possible. Her father in the meanwhile was bewildered with all the people who were gathered outside the hospital, politicians, bureaucrats, government dignitaries, provincial ministers – who had come to show their sympathy with the family. Even the Governor was also present and he offered one lakh rupees for Malala's treatment.¹⁶

Around midnight, Junaid asked the staff that he wanted to meet Malala's father outside the ICU, immediately. Ziauddin's heart was racing fast and all he wanted to hear was good news that was still far from him. Junaid told Malala's father

¹⁶ Kritika Bhardwaj, *Ashok Sharma, K., op.cit.*, pp.83-84.

that her brain was swelling. Though her father could not understand what he meant, but all he sensed was that there was something wrong. The doctor made him understand in simple words that her consciousness was fading and she had been vomiting blood. The doctor ordered another CT scan, which showed that her brain was swelling dangerously. Her father said that he thought the bullet had not entered her brain. The colonel explained that a bone was fractured and splinters had entered her brain, which had created a shock and caused her brain to swell. He said, he needed some space to be given to her brain and in order to do so he would have to remove some of her skull's part, he said if this is not done then the pressure would become unbearable. He said they need to operate her right away to give her a chance, as if this is done immediately Malala might die. He said he doesn't want to regret in the future saying he could not take a chance, and it was indeed a brave decision by a doctor. Junaid's superiors were not convinced with his brave move, and were being told by other people that anyways she has to sent abroad for further treatment. Her father asked desperately if her daughter would survive, but he was given a little assurance at the stage she was in. It was the decision that later saved her life. Junaid was given that he would bring Dr. Mumtaz, whilst the operation would take place.

Ziauddin Yousafzai, who was a hard soul and a strong man, felt his hand were trembling and shaking with the fear of the worst while signing the Consent Form at the hospital. There was a line which shock her family, especially her father to the core, and it was **"THE PATIENT MAY DIE"**. Though he was as strong as a rock, but this moment he was tore, this time he was shaken by the events that took place with his daughter. He just wanted to think positive, but the situations were not allowing doing so. The operation started at 1.30 a.m. Malala's parents and Maryam

were waiting outside the operation theatre. Her father was constantly praying to the Almighty to make his daughter well.

Colonel Junaid used a saw to remove an eight to ten centimeter square from the upper left part of her skull, so that her brain get the space to swell. He then cut short the subcutaneous tissue on the left of her stomach and placed the piece of bone inside to preserve it. Then a tracheotomy was done as he was being worried that in some cases the swelling would block her airway. He also removed the bullet from her shoulder blade and blood clots from the areas near her brain. After the operation continued for almost five hours and those five hours were the most crucial for her parents. They were ready to hear the words that she is better now, but inside they knew it very well that still had time. And they knew that this would make them restless.¹⁷ Her father was continually moving impatiently, when a nurse arrived and asked him if he was Malala's father, to which he replied in affirmation. The nurse took him into a room. He was doubtful and thought that they would come and ask for an apology stating to be sorry as they have lost Malala. He was told that they needed blood from the blood bank, though he was relieved but baffled. He was wondering if he is the only one who was left to fetch blood. One of his friends went to the blood bank fetch blood. It was about 5.30 in the morning when the surgeons came out. They told her father that they have removed the bullet and a part of her skull was removed in order to make space for her brain swell.¹⁸

The doctor told him that they would put it back in her body after three months. The next morning was something to rejoice for, as she moved her arms. There were three top doctors from the province to examine her. They stated that the team of Dr. Mumtaz and Colonel Junaid did a marvelous job. They also appreciated the efforts

¹⁷ *Dinamani*, dated: 11.10.2012, p.12.

¹⁸ *Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., op.cit.*, p.85.

and said that they have done the operation in a very good state. They also given an idea that now Malala should be put into an induced coma as if she gains consciousness and the brain takes pressure than that would again be a problem. While she was swinging between life and death, Taliban issued a statement taking the responsibility of the attacks. Taliban denied that they did it because of her campaign for education.

Else they stated that they carried out the attack and they would do the same in future to anyone who would go and speak against them said Ehasnullah Ehsan a spokesperson for Taliban in Pakistan. They stated that Malala was targeted as she was becoming a pioneer in preaching secularism. They also stated that she was young, but even then she was in-charge of promotion of western culture in the valley. They said Malala was pro-west and called President Obama her ideal. Her father was very well aware of what they were referring to. The last year when she had won National Peace Prize, she had done many Television (TV) interviews and in one of them she was asked to tell who her favourite politician was and she had chosen Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Benazir Bhutto and Barack Obama.

The day after the shooting, Pakistan's Interior Minister Rehman Malik stated that the Taliban gunman who shot Yousafzai had been identified. Police named 23-year-old Atta Ullah Khan, a graduate student in chemistry, as the gunman in the attack.

The police also arrested six men for involvement in the attack, but they were later released for lack of evidence.¹⁹ As of 7 November 2012, Mullah Fazlullah, the

¹⁹ *The Hindu*, dated: 15.10.2012, p.11.

cleric who ordered the attack on Yousafzai, was confirmed to be hiding in Eastern Afghanistan by United State (US) sources there.²⁰

Colonel Junaid gave a briefing to General Kayani about what have they done until now and what was their next course of action. General Kayani told him that the CT Scans should be sent to the experts outside for the best advice. After the General's visit no one was allowed to visit the unit where Malala was kept. The two British doctors arrived by helicopters from Rawalpindi. Dr. Javid Kayani and Dr. Fiona Reynolds were from hospitals in Birmingham, London. They were in Pakistan on advising the army on how to set up the country's first liver transplant program. The hopes of civilians in this thing failed and army stepped in and saved the country's reputation at the international front. General Kayani was more than determined to change all this, and asked the doctors to brief them about the recovery of Malala before them flying back to their country, which was scheduled for the morning after she was shot. Though Colonel Junaid and the Hospital Director were not at all pleased after seeing them. There were some heated arguments, which were cleared once they get to know who had sent them. The British doctors were really not happy with what they have found in her medical treatment. There were some others series of events which made them show their displeasure. As they turned on the tap, they realized they were without water. Then Dr. Fiona checked machines and asked the hospital staff when the last time Malala's blood pressure was checked. The hospital staff replied that for every two hours they check the BP, to which she said that it is needed to be checked every time. She also asked the nurse why there was no arterial line and why the carbon dioxed level was far below being low. Malala's father was becoming skeptical on hearing all these things. She stated that after neurosurgery it is important

²⁰ Anita Gaur, *op.cit.*, p.113.

to monitor Blood Pressure (BP), pulse and Carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels, which are supposed to be kept in the normal range. Both the doctors said that though the surgery was indeed a right decision, but they were not doing the post operative tracking properly. Then they left in the helicopter, as it was dangerous to be in Peshawar for them after dark. Then there was another visitor, the Interior Minister of Pakistan, Rehman Malik, who handed the Passport to Malala's father as she was supported to fly abroad for the post intensive care.

People were calling her like anything, so that they can take care of her and treat her. Her condition was deteriorating and her father was taking lesser number of calls now especially from the family was another teenager Arfa Karim, who was a computer genius from Pakistani Punjab.

Pakistan officials asked Dr. Reynolds to visit the hospital in Peshawar where Malala was being treated. "She was very ill. She close to death". This was the statement given by the Dr. Reynolds who played a key role in treating Malala, as she insisted that she should be brought to London for further treatment. Though the initial surgery on Malala was a success, but poor intensive care facilities meant she would probably suffer brain damage – or even die. Dr. Reynolds helped supervise as Malala was flown by the army from Peshawar to Rawalpindi, and then helped treat her in the critical hours after she arrived. The treat of the infection passed, and she was in a safe zone. The facilities for rehabilitation were not well developed. Her opinion was if they wanted the best outcome for her, then she should be sent overseas for rehabilitation. The Pakistani authorities wanted her to compare various hospitals around the world and she wasn't able to do that. But what she suggested was that everything she wanted for her (Malala) was available in Birmingham. Despite her key

role in saving Malala's life, Dr. Reynolds identity was kept secret for security reason.²¹

On 15 October 2012, Malala was shifted to the queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham for the next three months. She was kept under medical observation and care so she comes out of the come but later, during the day, they decide to bring Malala out of the come the very next day. The last piece of memory Malala had was of the ill-fated bus journey. New, when she opened her eyes, she found herself surrounded by strangers in a foreign country.²² On 16 October, when she opened her eyes, the first things that she thought was: **"Thanks heavens, I am not yet dead"**. She could perceive that she was not in her country, but she did not know where she exactly was.

She felt severe headache, even the injection could not control it. Her left ear bleed, and she could not feel that the left side of the face did not function well. Malala wished to write, so pad and pencil were brought, she tried to write, but could not grip pencil; it was due to the injury on the head. Then, an alphabet board was brought, and then she pointed to different letters to tell what she wanted to. The first word she asked in this way was 'country', Dr. Kiyani said that she was in England. The next word was 'Father', and she was informed that he was in Pakistan and would come over in a few days. This was all they talked that day. Dr. Fiona Reynolds, who brought a pink notebook for Malala, in which she could write her questions. Reynolds said that she started writing in that notebook, which immensely relaxed her, and the doctors heaved a sign of relief when they saw her questioning.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp.117-119.

²² *The Hindu*, dated: 16.10.2012, p.12.

Malala was talked to Doctors in the third language, which means that she still remembers her mother tongue Pashto second language Urdu as well as English.²³ Malala recovered wonderfully. It was not only owing to the doctor's care and treatment, but also her own willpower for life, which inspired her to overcome such a terrible shock.²⁴ It was 26th October, Malala was curiously waiting to meet her family members. Sixteen days ago she had changed four hospitals and travelled thousands of kilometers. These sixteen days were like sixteen years. The hospital staff shifted from the ICU to the general ward. Dr. Javed got her bed set so that he could welcome her family members.²⁵ Malala could look at England for the first time. Unconsciously, she started to compare England with Pakistan, and she felt there was a divide poles apart between the two places located on same earth.

Malala was getting cards from the country and abroad wishing her 'Get well soon'. It was all the result of people's prayer and good wishes that she recovered from the coma. Asif Ali Zardari, President of Pakistan, himself visited Birmingham to see her. Not only this, he also signed that appeal in which millions of people had appealed for donation for poor families for sending daughters to school. This appeal was meant to honour Malala.

She has now recorded because of the treatment at Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital. She was flown to Birmingham Queen Elizabeth hospital for specialist treatment. The teenager had a titanium plate and cochlear implant flitted and was discharged from the hospital in February to continue her rehabilitation.²⁶

²³ *Ibid.*, pp.127-130.

²⁴ *Dinamani*, dated: 19.10.2012, p.11.

²⁵ *Malala Yousafzai with Patricia McCormick, op.cit.*, p.142.

²⁶ *Dinamani*, dated: 17.10.2012, p.11.

The Taliban in Pakistan has threatened the lives of both Yousafzai and Malala since of the shooting. She has received support from around the world, with tens of thousands of people signing on online petition calling for to be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Malala father thanked in part to two visiting British doctors who were able to take her to a hospital in Birmingham, England. Around the world, women, men, and children prayed for her. Thousands of letters piled up (one addressed simply to “The Girl Shot in the Head, Birmingham”).

On 11 October 2012, a panel of Pakistani and British doctors decided to move Malala to the Armed Forces Institute of Cardiology in Rawalpindi. Mumtaz Khan, a doctor, said that she had a 70% chance of survival. Interior Minister Rehman Malik said that Malala shifted to Germany, where she could receive the best medical treatment, as soon as she was stable enough to travel. A team of doctors would travel with her, and the government would bear the expenditures of her treatment. Doctor reduced Yousafzai’s sedation on 13th October, and she moved all four limbs.

Offers to treat Yousafzai came from around the world. On 15th October, Yousafzai travelled to the United Kingdom for further treatment, approved by both her doctors and family. Her plan landed in Dubai to refuel and then continued to Birmingham, where she treated at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham, one of the specialties of this hospital being the treatment of military personnel injured conflict.

Yousafzai had come out of her coma by 17 October 2012, was responding well to treatment, and was said to have a good chance of fully recovering without any brain damage. Later updates on 20th and 21st October stated that she was stable, but was still battling an infection. By 8th November, she was photographed sitting up the bed.

On 3 January 2013, Yousafzai was discharged from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham to continue her rehabilitation at her family's temporary home in West Midlands. She had five-hour operation on 2nd February to reconstruct her skull and restore her hearing, and was reported in stable condition.

Malala's family had been given a rented apartment in the middle of Birmingham town. Malala, who now lives in Britain, hopes to one day return to Pakistan and enter Politics.

And the day came when, after her recovery, she went to school in Britain for the first time. It was 21 March 2013 she was registered in the Edgbaston High School in Birmingham. Malala said out on her new voyage of life with pink school back on her shoulders and a black scarf on her head. She termed the first day at school as **“the most important day of her life”**. She said: **“I think it is the happiest moment that I'm going back to school, this is what I dreamed, that all children should be able to go to school because it is their basic rights. I am so proud to wear the uniform because it proves I am a student and that I am living my life and learning. I want that every girl in the world gets this opportunity. Of course, I am missing my classmates of Pakistan”**.²⁷

²⁷ Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., *op.cit.*, pp.104-106.



CHAPTER III

CHAPTER III

THE LIFE OF NAME AND FAME

“When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful”.

- **Malala Yousafzai**

The assassination attempt received worldwide media coverage and produced an outpouring of sympathy and anger. Protests against the shooting were held in several Pakistani cities the day after the attack, and over 2 million people signed the Right to Education campaign’s petition, which led to ratification of the first Right to Education Bill in Pakistan.¹ Pakistani officials offered a 10 million rupee (US\$ 105,000) reward for information leading to the arrest of the attackers. Responding to concern about his safety, Malala’s father said, “We wouldn’t leave our country if my daughter survive or not. We have an ideology that advocates peace. The Taliban cannot stop all independent through the force of bullets.”

Pakistan’s president Asif Ali Zardari described the shooting as an attack on “civilized people.” UN secretary- General Ban Ki-moon called it a “heinous and cowardly act.” U.S President Barack Obama found the attack “reprehensible, disgusting and tragic,” while Secretary of state Hillary Clinton said Malala had been “very brave in standing up for the rights of girls” and that the attackers had been “threatened by that kind of empowerment.” British Foreign Secretary William Hague called the shooting “barbaric” and that it had “shocked Pakistan and the world.” Jolie donated \$2,00,000 to The Malala Fund for girl’s education.²

Malala memoir: *The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for educational and was Shot by the Taliban*, co-written with British journalist Christina Lamb, was published in October 2013 by Little, Brown and Company in the U.S and by Weidedfeld &

¹ *The Hindu*, dated: 14.10.2012, p.11.

² *Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., op.cit.*, pp.107-108.

Nicolson in the U.K. A reviewer for the Guardian called the book “fearless” and stated that “the haters and conspiracy theorists would do well to read this book”. Entertainment Weekly gave the book a “B+”, writing that “Malala’s bravely eager voice can seem a little thin here, in ‘I Am Malala’, likely thanks to her co-writer, but her powerful message remains undiluted. This book is being translated into Kannada, Tamil, Malayalam and Marathi.

The All Pakistani Private Schools federation announced that the book would be banned in its 1,52,000 member institutions, stating that it disrespected Islam and could have a “negative” influence.³

After that Malala was started foundation. Malala is Glamour’s 2013 Women of the year Fund honoree. The Money raised goes to the project she is most passionate about, The Malala FUND, which aims to help children all over the world get the education that is their birthright.⁴ The fund recently made its first grant, supporting the educations of 40 girls in the Swat Valley- an achievement that thrills Malala, who wants to expand to other regions and countries (her cities Syria, Afghanistan, and Nigeria). **“Nothing can happen when half the population is in Stone Age,”** she says, **“I believe that when women are educated, then you will see this world change”**.⁵

Malala’s home country of Pakistan has the second largest number of girls not in school in the world. Poor girls in rural areas of Pakistan are 16 times less likely to be in secondary school than boys from the wealthiest households. The Malala Fund’s grant making is working to reduce barriers to secondary schooling for girls. Our very

³ *Ibid.*, pp.110-111.

⁴ *The Week*, dated: 8.11.2015, p.30.

⁵ *Front Line*, (Vol. XXXI), National Insurance Company Ltd., Kolkata, 12.10.2012, p.81.

first grant in 2013 provided former girl domestic laborers with free quality education and helped them establish support systems within their communities.⁶

The United Nations Special Coordinator (UNESCO) Malala Fund for Girls' Right to Education was established at UNESCO in 2012 following the brutal assassination attempt against Malala Yousafzai.

The Malala Fund was launched with an initial major contribution of US\$10 million from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Since 2014, the Cheil Jedang (CJ) Group is the major contributor to the Fund. In 2017, CJ Group contributed US\$3,50,000; this represents 97% of all investments to the Fund during this period.

The Fund recognizes the transformative power of education in creating values and practices that respect and promote human rights, social inclusion, gender equality and peace. Thorough targeted and strategic investments in girls' and women's education and the elimination of gender inequalities in education, the Funds is helping countries to achieve equal, inclusive and just societies and to advance the transformative development agenda outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals.

Today, Malala Fund has invested more than \$17 million in programmatic grants and works in seven countries – Afghanistan, Brazil, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey. We have played a leading

Objectives

The UNESCO Malala Fund for Girls' Right to Education aims to:

- ❖ Expand access to education for girls and women, especially those hardest to reach and affected by conflict and disaster;

⁶ *Ranjani Narayanan, op.cit.*, p.50.

- ❖ Improve the quality and relevance of education, ensuring that education content and teaching practices, learning process and environments are gender - sensitive;
- ❖ Strengthen policy and capacity to ensure safe learning environments.⁷

Participating Countries

The establishment of the Fund, 10 countries and 11 projects have been supported to address gender norms, stereotypes and practices impeding girl's and women's learning and skills developments, promote girls' and women's empowerment, and strengthen education systems for gender equality outcomes.

These countries include: Cambodia, Egypt, Guatemala, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Viet Nam. In 2017, projects were ongoing in all countries apart from Nigeria, for which the project promoting peace and safe school environments in settings affected by violent conflict and school abductions by Boko Haram had been completed in 2016, and Guatemala, for which the project was established end 2017, but initiated in 2018.⁸

Project funded in 2017

Cambodia

Cambodia has remarkable growth in equitable access to primary education in recent decades. The expansion of the garment industry in Cambodia is a major driving force for migration of people from rural and remote areas to city for employment. The majority of garment factory workers are women and girls, of which 14% are illiterate and 29% have low levels of literacy. The project in Cambodia (2016-2018) aims to

⁷ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Malala Fund for Girl's Right to Education*, Annual Report, 2017, p.2.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.3.

build literacy of young women and girls working in garment factors in two provinces, and specifically aims to:

- Build basic literacy skills
- Build functional literacy skills that enable them to cope with the challenges of urban life and support the development of their capacities for better job performance.

Egypt

Illiteracy rates in Egypt remain a major concern. Over 14 million people are illiterate, with 14% of male and 26% of the female population unable to read or write. The Project in Egypt (2016-2018) aims to empower female learners through literacy and lifelong learning in four governorates (Aswan, Giza, Ismailia, Sohag) and specifically aims to:

- Build knowledge, information and skills for women that are relevant to their lives and local realities such as women's roles and responsibilities inside and outside the household, the importance of girl's education, and domestic violence against women.
- Empower women with income-generation and resource mobilization skills, and environmental knowledge, which is key for economic development and building sustainable and resilient communities.
- Build capacity in community participation, and local leadership and a set of values, including citizenship, tolerance, acceptance and non-discrimination

Islamic Republic of Mauritania

The Islamic Republic of Mauritania's humanitarian context is very fragile, as it faces a double crisis of food insecurity and a large number of refugees. The education sector has seen significant progress within the last year, particularly in

terms of primary schooling access and completion. However, transition rates to secondary education are low, at only 55% for girls and 61% for boys. The project in Mauritania (2015-2019) is promoting and expanding opportunities for education and skills development for adolescent girls and young women in the region with the highest rates of illiteracy, poverty and drop-out rates for girls, and specifically aims to:

- Promote and expand opportunities for education and skills development for adolescent girls and young women by creating an enabling and safe environment for education and capacity building
- Reduce poverty and the exclusion of young girls and women through literacy and non-formal primary education.⁹

Mozambique

Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world; 62% of the population live in absolute poverty, and the country is vulnerable to climatic hazards, including floods, droughts and cyclones. While 94% of girls enroll in primary education, more than half drop out by the fifth grade, only 11% continue on to study at the secondary level, and just 1 percent continue on to college. The project in Mozambique (2015-2017) is enhancing family literacy, empowering parents and caregivers to support child learning and skills development in three districts, and specifically aims to:

- Empower young women, their children and families in rural and peri-urban communities through integrated and intergenerational approaches to learning

⁹ *United Nations Educational, op.cit.*, p.4.

- Develop entrepreneurial and vocational life-skills training for young people and women that integrates the improvement of literacy, numeracy and language skills
- Improve competencies and raise awareness of literacy managers, families and communities on gender issues, girls' and women's rights, in order to reduce gender inequalities within families and communities

Nepal

Nepal is one of the least developed countries in Asia, ranking 114th out of 188 countries in the United Nations Human Development Index. Although gender parity in primary enrolment has been achieved at the national-level, girls from remote districts, in the lowest income quintile, and from vulnerable population groups tend to drop out from school, especially in higher environments are implicated in low levels of participation among girls. Two projects have been funded in Nepal (2015-2017). These projects are increasing the participation of adolescent girls and women in quality non-formal education programmes, and specifically aim to:

- Develop the capacity of education providers in gender-responsive budgeting, leadership, school management and teaching
- Empower adolescent girls and young women with locally-relevant income-generating skills
- Improve access to hygiene, health education and life skills to enhance quality of life.

United Republic of Tanzania

The United Republic of Tanzania has been cited for its remarkable achievements in expanding enrolment and gender parity at the primary education level. However, primary completion, transition to secondary, and learning

achievement for girls in secondary education remain a challenge. The project in Tanzania (2015-2018) strives to enhance adolescent girls' performance and retention in secondary schools in seven districts in Tanzania, and specifically aims to:

- Empower girls to be agents of their own transformative process in identified 'high risk' areas
- Establish inclusive and gender-responsive learning approaches and environments in schools
- Empower parents, particularly mothers, to make the right choices in investing in girls' education.¹⁰

Viet Nam

Viet Nam has implemented significant educational reforms in recent decades to modernize education and improve its quality, and review broader legal and policy reforms to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Despite significant progress, girls and women, especially those from ethnic minorities and rural communities, continue to face inequalities in multiple domains of society. This includes male, preference, early marriage, and low levels of literacy, particularly among ethnic minorities. This project (2015-2017) is a direct response to a request for assistance from the Viet Nam Ministry of Education and Training, to enhance the enabling environment for the implementation of the legal right of girls and women to education, through national and sub-national efforts, and specifically aims to:

- Enhance the capacity of the education sector to ensure gender equality in planning and management, and to increase access to quality education for girls and women, including those in disadvantaged and vulnerable situations

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.5.

- Mainstream gender in curriculum, textbook development and teaching practices
- Raise awareness on gender equality and girls' education among students, parents, community members and the media.¹¹

Project results in 2017

This section includes project results across the seven countries funded in 2017 by the UNESCO Malala Fund for Girls' Right to Education.

More than 16,300 women and men were directly reached through the Fund, including learners, teachers, education administrators and educators, parents, religious and community leaders, ministry officials and other government counterparts.

While the large majority of countries focused on direct support to women and girls, the broad community, family and upstream interventions including policy dialogue provided different rates of female engagement. All projects implemented through the UNESCO Malala Fund include upstream policy work as well as efforts to reach women and girls at the greatest disadvantage to education.¹²

The Malala Fund expanded its investment in girl's education in Pakistan through

- ❖ Increasing enrollment for girls at secondary schools in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas to allow vulnerable and married girls to get a quality, post-primary education.
- ❖ Repairing damaged classrooms and providing books, uniforms, and other school supplies to girls at girl's school in Punjab affected by flooding.

¹¹ www.malala.org.

¹² *United Nations Educational, op.cit.*, p.6.

- ❖ Establishing educational programming and psycho-social support at an Internally Displaced People camp in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas for children escaping the conflict in North Waziristan.¹³

Nigeria

Despite important education gains in recent decades, Nigeria, of all countries, has the largest number of girls not in school. Girls in Nigeria face daunting odds. The average girl stays in school only through age nine. Less than one-third of Nigeria's girls enroll in the lower secondary school, and, in northern Nigeria, less than one in 10 girls generally complete secondary education.

The challenges girls wanting education face in Nigeria were dramatically highlighted by the kidnapping by extremists in 2014 of some 250 girls, many of whom were to be married off as child brides. The Malala Fund works with local partners in Nigeria both to offer girls an education, and for those for whom returning to school is not an option, to supply alternative learning pathways.

The Malala Fund provides funding to the Centre for Girl's Education (CGE) in northern Nigeria to support hundreds of in and out-of-school girls through learning clubs held in spaces supplied by the local community. In these "safe spaces" led by a local mentor, groups of girls are taught reading, writing, math, and life and livelihood skills. Funding also supports CGE's provision of scholarships to cover school-related expenses for girls in secondary school. The program is reducing social and economic barriers to girls' education, helping to delay marriage, and expanding the critical years in which girls can acquire social assets and skills that will serve them adults.

¹³ *Ranjani Narayanan, op.cit.*, p.51.

Syrian Refugees

More than one-third of children not in school in the world live in war zones. In order to achieve 12 years of education for every girl, more of the world's attention must be focused on these neglected children. Syria's crisis is one of the world's most acute humanitarian emergencies. Improving access to education for displaced and a refugee child from Syria is a high priority for the Malala Fund.

On her 18th birthday, Malala visited Lebanon to open a new school financed by the Malala Fund and named in her honour. The Malala Yousafzai All-Girls School was established by the Kayany Foundation and provides non-formal education for adolescent Syrian refugee girls in the Bekaa Valley.

In the Jordan the Malala Fund currently funds programs in Za'atari and Azraq refugee camps. We support save the children to offer information technolgh courses for adolescent girls in Za'atari; and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to offer tutoring transportation, and eyeglasses for students in Azraq camp.¹⁴

Sierra Leone

The Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone left hundreds of thousands of girls out of school. In response to the country's education crisis, the Malala Fund has provided funding to support Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee (BRAC's) Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescents programme to address the educational needs of girls affected by Ebola, including survivors of the disease.

In learning club across the country, girls attend "radio schools" -a government initiative broadcasting interactive educational lessons, facilitated by community-based

¹⁴ Anita Gaur, *op.cit.*, pp.154-156.

female teachers and peer mentors. Through the clubs, girls also receive like skills training focused on Ebola and sexual and reproductive health.¹⁵

At the United Nation in 12 July 2013, she brought the general assembly to its feet, “One child, One teacher, One pen, and One book can change the world”. She said, since then she has Skyped with Syrian children, written the memoir ‘I am Malala’, charmed Jon Steward and Barack Obama, and become one of the younger-even nominees for the Nobel Peace Prize. Throughout it all, she has stayed focused: Let girls go to school.¹⁶

On 12 July, Malala’s sixteenth birthday was celebrated in the UN. She became only the second person in history after Nelson Mandela, whose birthday was celebrated in the U.N. She was especially invited to the UN headquarters at New York to address youth assembly. On this occasion, two prominent world leaders, Gordon Brown and Ban Ki Moon present. She addressed the General Assembly at this time. The speech delivered by her on this occasion was telecast the world over. She presented her views forcefully before the delegates from all the countries of the world. She appealed for free education for all children in the world. In the main chamber of the UN, she was given the seat which is generally reserved for the heads of Nation or Government. At the time when Ban Ki Moon was describing her as ‘our champion, our hero’, she listened to him silently when it was turn for her to speak, she said thus:

“My brothers and sisters, please keep one thing in the mind that Malala Day is not my day, it is a day for all those women and children who have raised their voice for their rights. Today there are numerous human rights organization in the world, that are working for peace, equality and educational rights. Thousands of people are killed

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.158.

¹⁶ *Anita Gaur, op.cit.*, p.159.

in the world each year in terrorist attacks, and millions others are injured. I am one of them, so I stand here, one of those girls.¹⁷

After this, the International Day of the Girl was observed in America. When Malala arrived in America on 14 October on this occasion, a meeting was arranged with President Barack Obama in his Oval Office. In this meeting, she stressed the need for education. She was right to say that the future generation could be secured only through a better system of education. This was the reason that she was being appreciated for her views, and as a supporter of hope.

After this functions, she met with the British Queen at the Birmingham Palace in London, where she was conferred with the honorary Postgraduate degree of the University of Edinburg.

Malala's own world has changed hugely, from a small town to global stage. She plans to go to college – oxford, Cambridge, maybe Harvard, “to learn and learn and learn” – and into politics; one of her heroes is the assassinated Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, whose scarf she wore during that address at the United Nations.

She went back to school as soon as she could, and confessed that math was her least favorite subject. She kept campaigning for the Right of Children to go to school – meeting President Barack Obama, attending rights conferences, becoming the keynote speaker at corporate events in London. She begins rubbing elbow with people who had the Power and the Money, to help her realize her dreams. All along, she delighted many by simply being young, determined and most of all, herself. At a simple conference celebrating women, she confessed that she didn't have mobile

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.160.

phone. The crowd gasped, but chuckled at the notion of a teenager who admitted she had no need for a phone.

She co-authored a memoir, “I am Malala”, which revealed to the world that she was, in fact, also a regular teenager. There’s a part of her that loves the TV show “Ugly Betty”, whose main character works at a fashion magazine. “Malala is an inspiration for the many women in Afghanistan and Pakistan who have been fighting for their rights and struggling against the misogynous policies of the Taliban and local warlords”, said David Cartwright, co-author of “Afghanistan Women Speak” and a professor at University of Notre Dame in Indiana.¹⁸

¹⁸ *Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., op.cit., p.104.*



CHAPTER IV

CHAPTER IV

AWARDS and HONOURS

“Do remember one thing. Malala day is not my day. Today is the day of every women, every boy and every girl who have raised their voice for their rights.”

- Malala Yousafzai

The Young girl, Malala Yousafzai has been awarded the following national and international honors:

International Children’s Peace Prize (nominee), 2011

The Hague, September 6th 2013 The International Children’s Peace Prize 2013 was presented to 16-year old Malala to Yousafzai. The champion of the right to education for girls came to the Netherlands especially for this occasion, at the invitation of the Dutch children’s right organization Kids Rights. Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (2011) Tawakkol Karman had the honor of presenting the prestigious prize on behalf of Kids Rights to young winner, in the presence of over 400 guests and the world press.

It was the ninth time that the Children’s Peace Prize, an initiative of Kids Rights, was awarded to a child who had shown special dedication to children’s rights. An independent Expert Committee were unanimous in their choice of Malala as the winner of the Children’s Peace Prize 2013.

National Youth Peace Prize, 2011

The National Malala Peace Prize is a Pakistani peace prize for those under 18 years old. It was originally named the National Youth Peace Prize and awarded to Malala on 19 December 2011 by Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani for her services towards promoting girl’s education in her hometown of Mingora in the swat valley. The prize was subsequently renamed the National Malala Peace Prize in Malala’s

honour.¹ On Malala's request, the Prime Minister directed the authorities to set up an IT campus in the Swat Degree College for Women.

Anne Frank Award for Moral Courage, January 2012

Malala received an award for moral courage. She was honoured with the Anne Frank Award at a ceremony in London. Malala, who campaigning for girl's access to education, was studying for her A-levels at the time the award was announced so she could not attend the event. Her father Ziauddin, a UN adviser on education, accepted the award on behalf of her. It was presented by the actress Naomie Harris.

Sitara-e-Shujaat, Pakistan's third-highest civilian bravery award, October 2012

At the end of 2012, Pakistan's Herald magazine, the country's most widely circulated English newspaper, conducted a poll to determine its "Person of the Year". Malala received the highest number of votes, 30 percent of the total, and won the award. By this point Malala had also been awarded two national awards, including the Sitara-e-Shujaat, Pakistan's third-highest civilian bravery honor.

Foreign Policy Magazine top 100 global thinkers, November 2012

'For standing up to the Taliban, and everything they represent' made Malala, the 15 years old child activist hailing from Swat valley, shine on the Number 6 spot of the Top hundred Global thinkers listed.

The list was released by Foreign Policy (FP) magazine on Monday, November 26, 2012. That year Foreign Policy honored people whose for freedom of speech, for making themselves heard.

Malala was among four Pakistanis who made it to the list this year. The 15-year old stood up against the Taliban to fight for her and many girl's right to

¹ Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., *op.cit.*, pp.112-114.

education. “I Shall Raise My Voice”, she said last year. “If I didn’t do it, who would?”

Time Magazine Person of the Year shortlist, December 2012

Mother Teresa Memorial Award for social justice, November 2012. Since October 2012, Malala’s message has been heard around the world, from cramped classrooms where girls scratch out lessons in the dirt to the halls of the U.N. and national governments and Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs), where legions of activists argue ever more vehemently that the key to raising living standards throughout the developing world is the empowerment of women and girls. Malala was already a spokesperson; the Taliban made her symbol, and a powerful one, since in the age of social media and crowd sourced activism, a parable as tragic and triumphant as hers can raise an army of disciples.²

She has become perhaps the world’s most admired children’s rights advocate, all the more powerful for being a child herself. Former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who is now the U.N.’s special envoy for global education, declared November 10 ‘Malala’ Day in honour of her and the more than 50 million girls around the world who are not at school. That is not how the Taliban intended things to turn out.³

Rome prize for Peace and Humanitarian Action, December 2012

Malala was also honored with honorary citizenship of Rome and the Ambassador of Pakistan to Italy Tehmina Janjua received the document on her behalf, the press release said. Mayor of Rome Gianni Alemanno gave the 2012 edition of the Rome Prize for Peace and Humanitarian Action to Ziauddin Yousafzai on behalf of his daughter at a ceremony on December 20. People love Malala for her great cause and fight for the rights of female education. She is no more an individual, we are all

² www.hellomagazine.com

³ Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., *op.cit.*, p.117.

with her. The Prize for Peace and Humanitarian Action is given to persons or organizations, Italian or foreign for promoting human rights, speaking out against violence and promoting peace.⁴

Top Name of 2012 in Annual Survey of Global English, January 2013

Simone de Beauvoir Prize, January 2013

For its sixth editions, the Simone de Beauvoir Prize for Women's Freedom had been awarded to Malala Yousafzai, the young Pakistani Human rights campaigner. The prize was presented on 9th January 2013 at the official ceremony, which took place at the Maison de l'Amérique latine.

Memminger Freiheitspreis 1525, March 2013 (conferred on 7 December 2013 in Oxford)

Doughty street advocacy award of Index on Censorship, March 2013

Pakistani schoolgirl Malala Yousafzai, Greek journalist Kostas Vaxevanis, Syrian interest activist Bassel Khartabil and South African photographer Zanele Muholi were honoured at the Index on Censorship Freedom of Expression Awards in London. The schoolgirl's father, Ziauddin, accepted the award.⁵

Fred and Anne Jarvis Award of the UK National Union of Teachers, March 2013

2013's Fred and Anne Jarvis Award was presented to Malala, whose story had brought the issue of 'education for all' to international prominence. The Malala Fund has been set up to further her campaign for education. It was announced earlier this month that a world day for girls education will be held in Malala's honour on 12 July 2013, her sixteenth birthday. She is also a nominee for this year's Nobel Peace Prize.

⁴ Melur Thendral, *op.cit.*, pp.85-86.

⁵ Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., *op.cit.*, p.119.

Vital voices Global Leadership Awards, Global Trailblazer, April 2013

One of Time's "100 Most Influential People in the world", April 2013

Pakistan's Nobel laureate Malala and the daughters of US President Barack Obama were among those who made Time's annual list of most influential teenagers, according to the magazines. Malala (17), America's first daughters Malia (16) and Sasha (13); and Grammy – winning New Zealand singer Lorde (17); were all on the Un – ranked list dominated by 20 females.

International campaigner of the year, 2013 observer Ethical Awards, June 2013

She became a powerful voice of protest, speaking on behalf of her school friends and the wider female community in Pakistan.

2012 Tipperary international peace award, Ireland, Tipperary Peace convention, August 2013

The Tipperary Peace convention recognized Malala's courage, determination and perseverance, along with the impact she has had on so many people across the world.

International Children's Peace Prize, kids Rights, 2013

By awarding the 2013 International children's Peace Prize, Kids Rights Shines the spotlight on a brave and talented child who has demonstrated special dedication to children's rights. It carries cash value of 1,00,000 Euros (\$133,000).⁶

⁶ www.worldschildrensprize.org

Portrait of Malala by Jonathan Yeo displayed at National Portrait Gallery, London (2013)

The first painted portrait of Malala Yousafzai, display at the National Portrait Gallery. The portrait, which is around 1 metre in size, is by artist Jonathan Yeo, one of Britain's leading portrait painters. It shows the 16 – year old Malala doing her homework.

Yeo painted Malala in Britain where she has settled since the attack in her home town of Swat in October. He described the experience as “a privilege”.

“Given how much she has already been through and all that she represents to the world, it took a while to adjust to the fact that she is still a very fragile teenager,” he said. “Hopefully the painting reflects the slight paradox of representing someone with enormous power and wisdom yet vulnerability and youth at the same time.”

The picture forms part of a wider exhibition of portraits by Jonathan Yeo, and is the NPG's first display dedicated to the artist. Other subjects on display include some of today's leading cultural, media and political figures: Tony Blair, Helena Bonham Carter, Stephen Fry, Kevin Spacey, Erin O'Connor, Grayson Perry and Jude Law.

The show runs until January, when the Malala portrait will be sold to raise money for The Malala Fund, which campaigns for the right for girls to go to school.⁷

Ambassador of Conscience Award from Amnesty International

Education rights campaigner Malala and American singer, human rights and social justice activist Harry Belafonte were jointly announced as the recipients of Amnesty International's Ambassador of Conscience Award for 2013. The Ambassador of Conscience Award is Amnesty International's highest honor,

⁷ www.malala.org

recognizing individuals who have promoted and enhanced the cause of human rights through their life and by example. The 2013 Award was presented at a ceremony on Tuesday evening at the Mansion House, Dublin, Ireland.

2013 Clinton Global Citizen Awards from Clinton Foundation

In recognition of her courage and advocacy, Malala was honored with the National Peace Prize in Pakistan in 2011 and nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize in the same year.⁸

2013 Anna Politkovskaya Award-Reach All Women In War

Malala, the Pakistani school girl shot in the head by the Taliban for campaigning in favour of women's education won another award instituted in the name of Russian journalist and human rights activist Anna Politkovskaya.

On Malala receiving the 2013 award, Lord Frank Judd, a member of the 2013 Award Nominations Committee, said. "I am convinced that Anna would have been delighted. The courage and effectiveness of Anna Politkovskaya was a journalist in her forties, when she wrote against human rights abuses, Malala is only 16 and still continuing her education." However, like Anna, Malala believes that a pen is a powerful weapon and that education can stop people from falling for ideologies of hatred and violence, Judd said. Like Anna, Malala did not call for violence or revenge against those, who attacked her and compassion, tolerance and peace were principles that she held high in her life.⁹

⁸ Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., *op.cit.*, p.122.

⁹ Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., *op.cit.*, pp.126-134.

2013 Reflections of Hope Award – Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum

Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum honored human rights activists Ziauddin and Malala with the 2013 Reflection of Hope Award.

2013 Honorary Master of Arts degree awarded by the University of Edinburg

Education campaigner Malala has been awarded an honorary degree by the University of Edinburgh. She received the degree of Master of Arts in recognition of her efforts to improve education opportunities for girls and women around the world.

Pride of Britain (October) 2013

The Pride of Britain Awards is an annual award ceremony which takes place in the United Kingdom, first televised on Independent Television (ITV) in 1999. The award honours British people who have acted bravely or extraordinarily in challenging situations and are presented by Carol Vorderman.

For 15 years, the Pride of Britain awards have been praising the nation's unsung heroes and the year 2013 was full of even more inspirational individuals whose stories of courage, selflessness and achievement helped to uplift humanity and society. That year the award was presented to the teenager of courage-Malala.¹⁰

2013 Glamour magazine Women of the Year

The Pakistani school girl, who had risen to fame, when she was shot by a militant whilst coming back from school, was awarded the 2013 Glamour Magazine Women of the Year Award. Since 1990 Glamour salutes inspiring, high-achieving women through our politics and society- sometimes even saving lives. Glamour's Women of

¹⁰ www.hellomagazine.com

the year FUND initiative harnesses the spotlight of our star- studded annual event to raise the visibility of a crucial issue impacting women's lives.

GG2 Hammer Award at GG2 leadership Awards, November 2013

Malala, Kainat Riaz and Shazia Ramazan on 27 November 2013 were chosen for the GG2 Hammer Award, for their bravery at the GG2 (Garavi Gujarat 2) Leadership Awards 2013 at London. The activist Malala won the number one spot in the GG2 Power List 101 for her work in raising awareness for female empowerment.

2013 International Prize for Equality and Non- Discrimination

Mexico awarded its 2013 International Prize for Equality and Non-Discrimination to Malala Yousafzai.

The award seeks to recognize Malala's effort for the "Protection of human rights" and especially her fight to protect the right to education without discrimination on "grounds of age, gender, sex, and religion." The Award ceremony took place in 2014.

2014 Nominee for World Children's Prize also known as Children's Nobel Prize

Pakistani school girl Malala Yousafzai, who survived being shot in the head by the Taliban, she was nominated for the World Children's Prize in Sweden on Wednesday for championing education rights for girls.¹¹

¹¹ www.worldschildrensprize.org

2014 Skoll Global Treasure Award

2014 Honorary Doctor of civil law, University of king's college, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Education activist Malala received an honorary doctor of civil law from the University of King's College, Halifax, at its 225th Encaenia celebrations. To mark the historic occasion, Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the University of King's College announced the creation of the Malala Yousafzai Canada Scholarships.

Canada scholarship are open to young women from developing countries that would not be able to afford a post- secondary education. The scholarship will cover all tuition and residence fees plus travel to and from King's, books, and incidentals. The scholarships are renewable through the full four years of an undergraduate degree, at which point a new scholar will be selected. With an annual value of \$30,000 Canadian (worth of \$1,20,000 over four years), it is the university's largest scholarship offered to international students.¹²

¹² Anita Gaur, *op.cit.*, p.163.



CHAPTER V

CHAPTER V

NOBEL PEACE PRIZE - 2014

In the year of 10 December 2014 Malala shared her Nobel Peace Prize Award with Kailash Satyarthi, a child human rights activist based in India ('Save the Children Campaign'). This award was given in the place of Oslo in Norway. Her name was included in the list of one hundred most influential people of the world. About two million children of the world proposed her name for the Nobel Prize with their signatures. As a result, the Norwegian Nobel Committee, on 5 December 2014, announced that Malala would be conferred with the Nobel Peace along with India's child rights activist Kailash Satyarthi.

The award was handed to the pair "for their struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education," said Thorbjorn Jagland, Chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee. "Despite her youth, Malala has already fought for several years for the right of girls to education, and has shown by example that children and young people, too, can contribute to improving their own situations."¹

This award is for those children who are voiceless, whose voices need to be heard. I speak for them and I stand up with them. And I join them in their campaign, she said at a news conference Friday at Birmingham Library. "They have the right to receive quality education, they have right not to suffer from child labour, not to suffer from child trafficking. They have the right to live a happy life."

¹ *Daily Thanthi*, dated 11.12.2014, p.1.

Nobel Prize – winning education activist Malala Yousafzai has announced that she will donate the \$ 50,000 (£ 31,000) prize money she received for winning the World’s Children’s Prize to the reconstruction of UN schools bombard by Israel in the recent Gaza conflict. Because without education, there will never be peace.²

Nobel Lecture

Bismillah hir Rahim. In the name of God, the most merciful, the most beneficent.

Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses, distinguished members of the Norwegian Nobel Committee,

Dear sister and brothers, today is a day of great happiness for me. I am humbled that the Nobel Committee has selected me for this precious award.

Thankyou to everyone for your continued support and love. Thank you for the letters and cards that I still receive from all around the world. Your kind and encouraging words strengthen and inspire me.

I would like to thank my parents for their unconditional love. *Thank you to my father for not clipping my wings and for letting me fly.* Thank you to my mother for inspiring me to be patient and to always speak the truth – which we strongly believe is the true message of Islam. And also thank you to all my wonderful teachers, who inspired me to believe in myself and be brave.

I am proud, well in fact, I am very proud to be the first Pashtun, the first Pakistani, and the youngest person to receive this award. Along with that, I am pretty

² Kritika Bhardwaj, Ashok Sharma, K., *op.cit.*, p.138.

certain that I am also the first recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize who still fights with her younger brothers. I want there to be peace everywhere, but my brothers and I are still working on that.

I am also honoured to receive this award together with Kailash Satyarthi, who has been a champion for children's rights for a long time. Twice as long, in fact, than I have been alive. I am proud that we can work together, we can work together and show the world that an Indian and a Pakistani can work together and achieve their goals of children's rights.

Dear brothers and sisters, I was named after the inspirational Malalai of Maiwand who is the Pashtun Joan of Arc. The word Malala means "grief stricken", "sad", but in order to lend some happiness to it, my grandfather would always call me "Malala-The happiest girl in the world" and today I am very happy that we are together fighting for an important cause.

This award is not just for me. It is for those forgotten children who want an education. It is for those frightened children who want peace. It is for those voiceless children who want change.

I am here to stand up for their rights, to raise their voice... it is not time to pity them. It is time to take action so it becomes the last time that we see a child deprived of education. I have found that people describe me in many different ways. Some people

call me the girl who was shot by the Taliban. And some, the girl who fought for her rights. Some people call me a “Nobel Laureate” now.³

However, my brothers still call me that annoying bossy sister. As far as I know, I am just a committed and even stubborn person who wants to see every child getting quality education, who wants to see women having equal rights and who wants peace in every corner of the world.

Education is one of the blessings of life -and one of its necessities. That has been my experience during the 17 years of my life. In my paradise home, Swat, I always loved learning and discovering new things. I remember when my friends and I would decorate our hands with henna on special occasions. And instead of drawing flowers and patterns we would paint our hands with mathematical formulas and equations.

We had a thirst for education, because our future was right there in that classroom. We would sit and learn and read together. We loved to wear neat and tidy school uniforms and we would sit there with big dreams in our eyes. We wanted to make our parents proud and prove that we could also excel in our studies and achieve those goals, which some people think only boys can.

But things did not remain the same. When I was in Swat, which was a place of tourism and beauty, it suddenly changed into a place of terrorism. I was just ten when more than 400 schools were destroyed. Women were flogged. People were killed. And our beautiful dreams turned into nightmares.

³ www.nobelprize.org

Education went from being a right to being a crime. Girls were stopped from going to school. When my world suddenly changed, my priorities changed too. I had two options. One was to remain silent and wait to be killed. And the second was to speak up and then be killed. I chose the second one. I decided to speak up.

We could not just stand by and see those injustices of the terrorists denying our rights, ruthlessly killing people and misusing the name of Islam. We decided to raise our voice and tell them: Have you not learnt, have you not learnt that in the Holy Quran Allah says: if you kill one person it is as if you kill all of humanity?

Do you not know that Mohammad, peace be upon him, the prophet of mercy, he says, “do not harm yourself or others”. And do you not know that the very first word of the Holy Quran is the word “Iqra”, which means “read”. The terrorist tried to stop us and attacked me and my friends who are here today, on our school bus in 2012, but neither their ideas nor their bullets could win. We survived. And since that day, our voices have grown louder and louder. I tell my story, not because it is unique, but because it is not. It is the story of many girls.

Today, I tell their stories too. I have brought with me some of my sisters from Pakistan, from Nigeria and from Syria, who share this story. My brave sisters Shazia and Kainat who were also shot that day on our school bus. But they have not stopped learning. And my brave sister Kainat Soomro who went through severe abuse and extreme violence; even her brother was killed, but she did not succumb.

Also my sisters here, whom I have met during my Malala Fund campaign. My 16-years-old courageous sister, Mezon from Syria, who now lives in Jordan as a refugee and

goes from tent to tent encouraging girls and boys to learn. And my sister Amina, from the North of Nigeria, where Boko Haram threatens; and stops girls and even kidnaps girls, just for wanting to go to school.

Though I appear as one girl, one person, who is 5 foot 2 inches tall, if you include my high heels (it means I am 5 foot only), I am not a lone voice, I am many.

I am Malala. But I am also Shazia.

I am Kainat.

I am Kainat Soomro.

I am Mezon.

I am Amina. I am those 66 million girls who are deprived of education. And today I am not raising my voice, it is the voice of those 66 million girls.

Sometimes people like to ask me why should girls go to school, why is it important for them. But I think the more important question is why shouldn't they? Why shouldn't they have this right to go to school?⁴

Dear sisters and brothers, today, in half of the world, we see rapid progress and development. However, there are many countries where millions still suffer from the very old problems of war, poverty and injustice.

⁴ www.britannica.com

We still see conflicts in which innocent people lose their lives and children become orphans. We see many people becoming refugees in Syria, Gaza and Iraq. In Afghanistan, we see families being killed in suicide attacks and bomb blasts.

Many children in Africa do not have access to education because of poverty. And as I said, we still see girls who have no freedom to go to school in the north of Nigeria.

Many children in countries like Pakistan and India, as Kailash Satyarthi mentioned, especially in India and Pakistan, are deprived of their right to education because of social taboos, or they have been forced into child marriage or into child labour.⁵

One of my very good school friends, the same age as me, who had always been a bold and confident girl, dreamed of becoming a doctor. But her dream remained a dream. At the age of 12, she was forced to get married. And then soon she had a son. She had a child when she herself was still a child-only 14. I know that she could have been a very good doctor.

But she couldn't... because she was a girl.

Her story is why I dedicate the Nobel Peace Prize money to the Malala Fund, to help give girls quality education, everywhere, anywhere in the world and to raise their voices. The first place this funding will go to is where my heart is, to build schools in Pakistan- especially in my home of Swat and Shangla.

⁵ Heather Moore Niver, *Malala Yousafzai Nobel Peace Prize-winning champion of female Education Britannica Beginner Bios*, Britannica Publication, United State, 2016, p.67.

In my own village, there is still no secondary school for girls. And it is my wish and my commitment, and now my challenge to build one so that my friends and my sisters can go to school there and get a quality education and get this opportunity to fulfil their dreams.

This is where I will begin, but it is not where I will stop. I will continue this fight until I see every child in school.

Dear brothers and sisters, great people who brought change, like Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa and Aung San Suu Kyi, once stood here on this stage. I hope the steps that Kailash Satyarthi and I have taken so far and will take on this journey will also bring change -lasting change.

My great hope is that this will be the last time we must fight for education. Let's solve this once and for all.

We have already taken many steps. Now it is time to take a leap.

It is not time to tell the world leaders to realise how important education is- they already know it and their own children are in good schools. Now it is time to call them to take action for the rest of the world's children.

We ask the world leaders to unite and make education their top priority.

Fifteen years ago, world leaders decided on a set of global goals, the Millennium Development Goals. In the years that have followed, we have seen some progress. The number of children out of school has been halved, as Kailash Satyarthi said. However, the world focused only on primary education, and progress did not reach everyone.

During 2015, representatives from all around the world will meet at the United Nations to set the next set of goals, the Sustainable Development Goals. This will set the world's ambition for the next generations.

The world can no longer accept that basic education is enough. Why do leaders accept that for children in developing countries, only basic literacy is sufficient, when their own children do homework in Algebra, Mathematics, Science and Physics?

Leaders must seize this opportunity to guarantee a free, quality, primary and secondary education for every child.

Some will say this is impractical, or too expensive, or too hard. Or maybe even impossible. But it is time the world thinks bigger.

Dear sisters and brothers, the so-called world of adults may understand it, but we children don't. Why is it that countries which we call "strong" are so powerful in creating wars but are so weak in bringing peace? Why is it that giving guns is so easy but giving books is so hard? Why is it that making tanks is so easy, but building schools is so hard?

We are living in the modern age and we believe that nothing is impossible. We reached the moon 45 years ago and may be we will soon land on Mars. Then, in this 21st century, we must be able to give every child quality education.

Dear sisters and brothers, dear fellow children, we must work... not wait. Not just the politicians and the world leaders, we all need to contribute. Me, You. We. It is our duty.

Let us become the first generation that decides to be the last that sees empty classrooms, lost childhoods and wasted potentials.

Let this be the last time that a girl or a boy spends their childhood in a factory.

Let this be the last time that a girl is forced into early child marriage.

Let this be the last time that a child loses life in war.

Let this be the last time that we see a child out of school.

Let this end with us.

Let's begin this ending... together...today...right here, right now. Let's begin this ending now.

Malala applies many excellent and brave words in her speech. The audiences give full attention towards the speech. She is a very good role model for other young people around the world.⁶

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.68.



CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

“If you give an education to a girl, that’s how you’re changing her life and that’s how you’re also changing the world”

- Malala Yousafzai

Malala carry in her veins the blood of the same Pashtun tribe the people of which never compromise with their freedom. It is very troublesome to think that the entire generation is going to be enslaved. We cannot think of an entire generation deprived of education, basic rights, to be cast in unfathomable dark, in a generation where women would have no rights. It would be better to die than live in such a condition.

Today, the Taliban can once again kill Malala but the warrior girl says: “They can shoot my body, but it is beyond their power to shoot down my dreams. They can kill Malala, but they cannot kill my goals. My goal is to light the flame of education, which could enlighten the world. Today, people encourage me on the Twitter, they motivate me for my goal. I have much to do yet, and I will keep working for that. My real award will be to get every child his right to education. I will struggle to get that award and work hard for this purpose.”

The women have yet to fight a long battle in both semi aristocratic and capitalist societies for her human rights. It is evident that the new avatar of energy in the form of Malala would continue to reign.

No doubt, Malala is the epitome of bravery; this honour is a symbol of inspiration for the entire world. Her selection for this peace prize is a severe hurt for

terrorism and those who want to keep girls away from education. This time was considered very vital as far as discouraging terrorism in the world is concerned.

So, soon we are all going to witness the rise and rise of a very young warrior human rights' politician in Pakistan, who knows Malala's Nobel Peace Prize Award would one day change even India – Pakistan's relations as well for good.



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GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

- | | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| 1. Burqa | - | female clothing garment that entirely covers the body and face, encouraged by the Taliban |
| 2. Gul Makai | - | Malala's Fake name |
| 3. Jan-e-mun | - | Soulmate |
| 4. Khaista | - | handsome one |
| 5. Mingora | - | Where Malala lived prior to when she was shot |
| 6. Pashto | - | Eastern Iranian language of the Indo-European family |
| 7. Pashtun | - | an ethnic group that spans the borders of Afghanistan and Pakistan |
| 8. Pisho | - | Cat |
| 9. Purdah | - | segregation or seclusion of Women, wearing the veil |
| 10. Quran | - | The Muslim holy book |
| 11. Taliban | - | militant Islamic fundamentalist group that took power in Afghanistan and subsequently Moved into areas of Pakistan, Notably Swat Valley |

E.V.R – AN IDEOLOGY

Project submitted to

St.Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi

affiliated to

Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

By

VISA LAKSHMI .M

Reg.No. 19APHI16



Department of History

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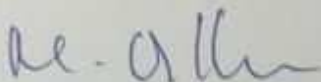
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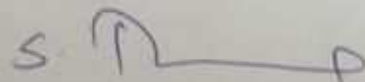
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project entitled "**E.V.R – AN IDEOLOGY**", submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History and is a work done during the year 2020 – 2021 by M. Visa Lakshmi a bonafide student of the Department of History, St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi.

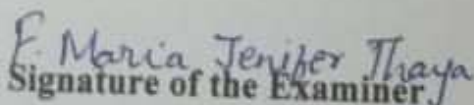


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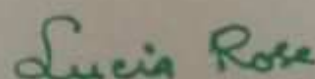
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project entitled **"E.V.R – AN IDEOLOGY"** submitted to St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History, is my original work and it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or similar title.

Place: Thoothukudi

Date: 10.4.2021

M. Visa Lakshmi

Signature of Candidate

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INTRODUCTION

Erode Venkatappa Ramasamy commonly known as Periyar was an Indian social activist and politician who started the Self-Respect Movement and Dravidar Kazhagam. He is known as the 'Father of the Dravidian movement'. He rebelled against Brahminical dominance and gender and caste inequality in Tamil Nadu. He was born crusader against social inequality and injustice in Tamil Nadu. He thundered and raised his voice against social evils in the society, and played a role of "Father Figure" in Tamil Nadu for a half century and reverently addressed as 'Thanthai Periyar'. E.V.R. originated the struggle for social justice in the Tamil Nadu. He strived hard to usher in an egalitarian casteless society where equality of status of the people was ensured.

E.V.Ramasamy was one of the greatest preachers of the nation for social equality and civic rights to all. E.V.R. predicted that unless social and communal justice is not attained, and human rights are not provided to the neglected, marginalized and weaker sections of the society, the nation could not totally enjoy the fruit of political independence and it would witness communal clash and conflict.

To E.V.R., the human rights are included of the attainment of women rights, children rights, the rights of the depressed and oppressed people and the workers rights. He considered the abolition of caste system meant the attainment of social equality. The attainment of social equality, he advocated communal reservation to all Communities in public services in proportion to their population. In this regard, he strongly opposed the situation of elite minority people's domination over the majority people. In fact, E.V.R. was a great social Revolutionary, champion of the underprivileged and

forerunner of the Human Rights movement in Tamil Nadu. He was practical leader and revered by all.

His service to the nation is multi-dimensional. He had absolute courage and a clear plan of action. His Self-Respect ideology was the blend of social equality and equal rights to all. He single handedly struggled against the deep-rooted social maladies in the Indian society. He very boldly attacked the existence of discrimination based on birth, caste, sex etc. His attack on society is based on reason, intelligence and scientific approach. E.V.Ramasamy's struggle for social justice spread the concept of a casteless and classes society which aims at to prevent the frequent occurrence of communal conflicts and riots in the different regions of the nation.

The title Periyar was formally conferred on E.V.R. by women when they gathered in a conference in Chennai in 1938 for his invaluable services in promoting their welfare by enabling them, to have liberty, equality and justice.

Even during his boyhood days, E.V.R. was highly saturated with the social reform idea, due to the evils of caste system and religious obscurantism that was widely practiced at Erode, his native town in Tamil Nadu. To realize his social reform idea, E.V.R. wished to involve in politics. He enrolled himself as one of the members of the Congress party when Gandhi started the non-co-operation movement in August 1920. As a congressman, he strengthened the constructive programme of Gandhi which included the goals of the amelioration of the subterranean Communities, prohibition, and Hindu- Muslim unity.

In order to redress the grievances of the non-Brahmins in general and of the non-Brahmins in Congress party in particular, E.V.R. insisted on the passing of a

resolution relating to the communal representation in proportion to population strength at the annual meeting of the Tamil Nadu Congress party which was held at Kanchipuram in 1925. When intention was not realized, E.V.R. severed his relations with the Congress.

E.V.R. launched the self-Respected movement and started the Tamil weekly Kudi Arasu in which he wrote a number of articles against superstitious beliefs and caste prejudices. An English daily entitled Revolt was started in 1928. Next to Jhithiba Phule of Maharashtra, it was E.V.R. who took up the cause of women on a much larger scale than any other social reformers did earlier.

Aims and Purpose of the study

The main aim and purpose select this topic is to record the great efforts taken by E.V.Ramasamy to bring Social and Political reformation in Tamil Nadu, to explain his versatile personality and to register his contribution for the emancipation of women, eradication of untouchability and social equality .Hence an attempt is made here. This project will be use full and could make some productive impression for the future generation

Methodology

The study constitutes both narrative and analytical one. The descriptive method is used in the presentation of the study in order to make the project understandable to the readers.

Sources

Different source materials have been used to write this project. The primary source materials are Government Reports, Letters, G.O's etc. The secondary sources are the gazetteers of various districts, Tamil Nadu and of south India, the published works, newspapers and journals and the books written by various authors. The contemporary newspaper of E.V.R's days like The Hindu, Swadesamitran, Navasakthi, New India, young India, common weal furnish valuable information about the study.

Chapterization

This project consists of five chapters excluding introduction and conclusion.

The first chapter The Early Life of E.V.R. speaks about E.V.R's early life and his entry into public life.

The second chapter True Follower of Congress Ideals elucidates the active participation of E.V.R. in Congress.

The third chapter Representative of Communal Justice ensures the efforts taken by E.V.R. to achieve communal representation in government jobs and education.

The fourth chapter Protesters against Caste System deals with the actions made by E.V.R. to eradicate caste system

In the fifth chapter Crusader for Women Liberation speaks about the initiatives taken by E.V.R. for the liberation of women and their equality.

EARLY LIFE OF E.V.R

E.V.R. was a great social Revolutionary, champion of the underprivileged and forerunner of the Human Rights movement in Tamil Nadu. He was practical leader and revered by all. His service to the nation is multi dimensional. He had absolute courage and a clear plan of action. His Self-Respect ideology was the blend of social equality and equal rights to all. He single handedly struggled against the deep-rooted social maladies in the Indian society. He very boldly the existence of discrimination based on birth, caste, sex etc. His attack on society is based on reason, intelligence and scientific approach.

Birth of E.V.R

The first two children of Venkata Naicker and Chinnathayamma died soon after their birth. After an interval of ten years on September 28, 1877 E.V. Krishnasamy the elder brother of E.V.R. was born. Two years after him, on September 17, 1879 Erode Venkata Ramaswamy Naicker was born at Erode, Tamil Nadu¹ in a Kannadiga Baliya Naicker family.² His father had been an ordinary man who rose to the position of a leading merchant and philanthropist of Erode by dint of his ability and hard work³. His home town Erode in Coimbatore district was a railway junction and a market centre for cash crops such as cotton, groundnuts, tobacco and products like hides and skins. It

¹.Sami. Chidambaranar, *Tamizhar Thalaivar*, (Tamil), Madras, 1983, p.321.

² The Naicker were originally Naidu inhabitants of the Vijayanagr kingdom who migrated to Bellary and Mysore. Those who migrated to Mysore, now Karnataka state, came to be known as “kannadiga Baliyas” and the caste name became corrupted and came to be known as “Naicker”.

³.Mangaiarkkarasi, *Varalrum Kanda vaikkomveerar*, (Tamil), Madras, 1980. pp.24-32.

was in this mercantile environment that E.V.R. grew up⁴. According to E.V.R. he has seen his father as a councilor in the Erode Municipality and as a prosperous businessman who paid around rupees hundred to rupees hundred and fifty per annum as income tax to the Government.⁵ The Maharajah of Travancore used to stay at E.V.R.'s palace like a house on his way to Delhi to attend the official duties.⁶

Bolyhood

E.V.R.'s maternal aunt, who was a childless widow wished to have the pleasure to bringing up young E.V.R. Though E.V.R. had not much to eat at home, he was bought up as a poor child while his elder brother was rough and wild colt in his earlier days⁷. Worried about the way the boy was growing up, Venkata Naicker brought him back to his home and admitted him in a school at the age of five. E.V.R. attended the school for six years, but learnt very little⁸. The prevalence social inequalities, religious inconsistencies and other ills in the society caught his notice and agitated the mind of the E.V.R. He had friendship with his schoolmates irrespective of caste, creed, religion, etc. He used to drink water in the homes of the low caste people⁹. E.V.R. was a mischievous boy. His playful acts, and disinterest towards education made his parents stop him from going to school¹⁰.

⁴. Eugene F. Irschick, *Tamil Revivalism in the 1930s*, Madras, 1996, p.89.

⁵. Karunanandam, S., *Thanthai Periyar, (Tamil)*, Madras, 1979, pp.15-16.

⁶. Viduthalai, 8 and 9 January 1959 and Ramasamy, E.V., *Untouchability* Chennai, 1980, p.7.

⁷. Gopalakrishnan, M.D., *op.cit.*, pp.1-2.

⁸. Sami. Chidambaranar, *op.cit.*, pp.44-45.

⁹. Mangaiarkkarasi, *op.cit.*, pp.43-53.

¹⁰. *Ibid.*, P.52.

Diversion to Business

The barest minimum education E.V.R. had received seemed sufficient to run his father's lucrative business at Erode¹¹. He had expanded the prospects of the business. It seemed easy for him to pick up the principles of trade and make a good way¹². E.V.R. learnt the techniques of business and earned a good name due to his pleasant conversation and customers¹³. The number and variety of people he was meeting every day during the course of his daily affairs made him delight. There he studied the people, their problem, their ways, their likes and dislikes, as much as their woes and hardships¹⁴.

Religious Discussion

Being a member of an orthodox religious family E.V.R. had the chance of meeting religious people and listening to discourses. He used to discuss Puranic matters with pious people¹⁵. This habit 'not only made him well drilled in conversation and logical discussion but also gave him enough opportunities to know more and more about the inconsistencies abounding in the religious myths¹⁶. The religious discourses which were intended to kindle piety and religiousity in all listeners produced the opposite effect on E.V.R. He became convinced that some people used religion only as a mask to deceive innocent people.

¹¹.Sami. Chidambaranar, *op.cit.*, p.47.

¹².An Admirer, *Periyar E.V.Ramasami : A Pen Portrait*, Erode, 1962, p.6.

¹³.Mangaiarkkarasi, *op.cit.*,pp.53-54.

¹⁴. An Admirer, *op.cit.*, p.6.

¹⁵.Sami. Chidambaranar, *op.cit.*, pp.47-48 and Mangaiarkkarasi, *op.cit.*, pp.54-57.

¹⁶.An Admirer, *op.cit.*, P.7.

Married Life

At the age of nineteen, E.V.R. married Nagammal, his relative girl.¹⁷ Nagammal was a good lady who adjusted with her husband and toed his line. E.V.R. made her even to remove the holy thread as he considered it a symbol of slavery.¹⁸ He also dissuaded his wife from going to temple. The rationalist activities of E.V.R. created difference of opinion with his pious and orthodox parents¹⁹. They thought that his acts would tarnish the image of their family as patrons of Brahmins and other religious heads in Erode. His parents strongly opposed E.V.R.'s act of removing the holy thread of his wife.²⁰ E.V.R. was disgusted and he got enraged when his father reproved him. He became a mendicant at the age of twenty-five.²¹

Wandering

E.V.R. wandered for many days in Bejauada and Calcutta²². Then he went to Varanasi (Benares). There he was shocked to see the immoral life led by the Brahmin priests²³ who were considered to be the saviours of Hindu religion. Added to his dismay was the inhuman treatment meted out to the helpless and hopeless non-brahmins. Being already aware of the Hindu Puranic and Satanic inadequacies and fallacies to some extent, he was able to confirm them with the help of his personal association or

¹⁷ Sami. Chidambaranar, *op.cit.*, p.52.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.52-58.

¹⁹ An Admirer, *op.cit.*, pp.9-10.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.10.

²¹ Sami. Chidambaranar, *op.cit.*, p.63.

²² *Ibid.*, pp.64-66

²³ *Ibid.*, pp.67-69

observance of some pendicants and Brahmins hypocritical life style at Benares. These early and other similar incidents moulded his early life towards the path of social reform ideas²⁴. Thereafter E.V.R. came to Vellore and stayed there with a friend²⁵. At last he was found by the information given by a merchant known to his father, and brought back to Erode²⁶.

Public Life

After returning from Benares on 1904, Venkata Naicker made his son E.V.R. to look after the entire business. Now the “Mandi”, a grocery shop and the wholesale concern clubbed together came under E.V.R.’s complete control. Being a keen observer of men and matters, he came to acquire rich experience regarding human nature and various affairs. Moreover, he came to have intimate knowledge of the miserable lot of the vast sections of the people and of the sharp practices by which they were exploited. Thus he showed real interest in ameliorating their suffering. He apportioned the profit of his business. He divided it into forty nine parts. One part he allotted to divine purpose. The other forty-eight were divided thus sixteen parts for investors; sixteen parts for management; sixteen parts for workers. E.V.R. advocated a system of making workers as partners in business and have a share in management as well in profit²⁷. While running business, E.V.R. involved in public affairs also²⁸, indeed, E.V.R. had an active public career²⁹. E.V.R.’s father Venkata Naicker died in 1911³⁰. E.V.R. and his elder brother Krishnasamy became the custodians of a vast

²⁴.Chandrababu, B.S., *social protest in Tamil Nadu*, Madras, 1993, p.19.

²⁵.Sami chidambaranar, *op.cit.*,pp.69-70.

²⁶.*Ibid.*, pp.70-72.

²⁷.The Modern Rationalist, Chennai, January, 2002, p.23.

²⁸.*Ibid.*, pp.72-76.

²⁹.Mangaiarkkarasi, *op.cit.*, PP.78-80.

³⁰.An Admirer, *op.cit.*,p.12.

fortune, a flourishing business and quite a number of trusts left by their father³¹. His engagement in business and trade was soon followed by a public career. The public activities of E.V.R. brought to him name, fame, and recognition as a sincere social worker, a honest administrator and an able organiser. He was often invited to settle disputes between families and between individuals in Erode. When Erode had to succumb to the agonies of plague, the deadly disease in 1915, and when the distress-ridden people were either dying or leaving the town for want of food and medicine and out of fear, E.V.R. along with a dedicated followers daringly came to their rescue and rendered all possible help. Impressed by this and other acts of self-less service, the people of Erode reposed confidence in him and made him serve in municipalities, temples, taluk and district boards and in other public bodies as a honorary representative³². No doubt an affluent E.V.R. could easily become an influential personality. In late 1910s E.V.R. was holding many posts and positions.

They are: President, Erode Merchants Association, Member, Sub-Committee, South India Chamber of Commerce, President, Devasthanam Committee, Honorary Magistrate, Secretary, Co-operative Urban Bank, Member, Taluk Board, Member, District Board, Secretary, School Committee, President, School Committee, Secretary, Erode Municipal Water Scheme, Secretary, Coronation Committee, President, Old Boys Association, Secretary, War Committee, President, War Fund Connection Committee, Homorary Recruiting Officer, (during war in 1918) and Chairman, Erode Municipal Council, (1917 – 1919)³³.

³¹.*Ibid.*

³². Anita Diehl, Periyar E.V.R. Ramaswami, New Delhi, 1978, p.8. Also Chandrababu, B.S., *op.cit.*, pp.19-20.

³³. Viduthalai, 5 August 1948.

In every one of the public offices he held E.V.R. left his mark as a scientific worker and did not tolerate inefficiency, insincerity or corruption of any kind. As a Municipal Chairman of Erode, he gave protected water supply to the town from the river Kaveri. He improved the management of temples and insisted on the maintenance of correct accounts of income and expenditure³⁴. For a quarter of a century, E.V.R. managed the temple committee at Erode and did not show any religious bias at all³⁵. In a few months of his municipal administration, the sanitation of the town had improved so much that C. Rajagopalachari who was the Chairman of the Salem Municipality then, requested E.V.R. to lend the services of one of the sanitary inspectors to the Salem Municipality for a few months to guide the sanitary work there³⁶. Against the displeasure of a handful of rich people he endeavored to widen the roads in Erode. This facilitated a free flow of business and trade activities in Erode town, there are the major works undertaken by E.V.R. during the formative period of his public career³⁷.

Public interest and concern was so dominant in E.V.R. that he felt that his family had much more wealth than the needed one and he persuaded his family to create a public trust to run some charitable institutions. Soon a school and a hospital were built out of the Trust funds and were maintained admirably. E.V.R.'s elder brother E.V. Krishnasamy who had objected to creation of the Trust, relented later, qualified himself in medicine and gave free treatment at the Trust hospital to all³⁸.

³⁴.Veeramani, K., *op.cit.*, p.xi.

³⁵.Baker, C.J., and Washbrook, D.A., *South India: political Institutions and political change*, 1880-1940, Delhi, 1975, p.76.

³⁶.Veeramani, K., *op.cit.*, p.xi.

³⁷.Chandrababu, B.S., *op.cit.*, p.20.

³⁸.Veeramani, K., *op.cit.*, p.xii.

TRUE FOLLOWERS OF CONGRESS IDEALS

In the beginning of his public service and political career, E.V.R adopted the goals of congress as his aims. He fully utilized the period for building up his image in the congress and became one of the chief exponents of Gandhi's constructive programme in Tamil Nadu. He fully dedicated during that period his life for the temperance campaign and spread of khadi and the removal of untouchability.¹ In 1920 itself he became the president of the Tamil Nadu congress. Seeing his sincerity and tremendous work in spreading Congress ideals, T.V Kalyanasundaranar, a prominent Congress leader astonished and highly praised E.V.R. The Congress organization was much pleased to utilized the service of E.V.R. an elite of merit of merit and selfless social worker.

E.V.R's acquaintance with the Congress can be traced from 1908 onwards. He used to visit Congress Conference E.V.R. was engaged in the National Movement from 1915 onwards. His service in the Coimbatore District Conference held in 1915 were commendable.² E.V.R. attended the Madras session of the Indian National Congress held in 1914 under the presidentship of Bhubendranth Bose.³

The exit of E.V.R from the Chairmanship of Erode Municipality in 1919 and from most of the positions he was holding was a turning point. He had join Congress within weeks of giving up his Municipal Chair.⁴ Afterwards he was engaged in Congress work. Rajagopalachari wanted to strengthen Tamil Nadu Congress committee wished E.V.R to enter into the Congress, for 'E.V.R. possessed both wealth and popularity'.

¹ . Aanaimuthu, V., (ed.), *Periyar E.V.R Chinthnaigal (Tamil)*, Vol .I , Madras, 1974, p.XXI.

² .Sivaprakasam, S., (ed.), *KaruthuraiThoguppu, (Tamil)*, Pondicherry, 1949, p.31.

³ .Aanaimuthu, V., (ed.), *op.cit.*, Vol-1, p. 345. Also, Visswanathan , E.Sa.,*op.cit.*, p.22

⁴ . Viduthalai, 5 August 1948. Also Baker C.J., and Washbrook D.A., *op.cit.*, p.130.

Moreover, Rajagopalachari thought that E.V.R's entry would influence other Balijas.

⁵Hence, Rajagopalachari and P.Varadarajulu Naidu influenced E.V.R. Both of them urged E.V.R to join the Congress not merely to achieve political liberation for the country but to fight against the social inequalities prevalent in society. Eventually, on Rajagopalachari's advice, E.V.R. joined the Congress towards the end of 1919.”⁶

E.V.R involved in the congress activities hoping that social reform and national liberation would be done by the Congress simultaneously.⁷ Freedom of the country and enforcement of prohibition, which the Congress advocated were agreed with his own views.⁸ When Mahatma Gandhi announced to observe April 6, 1919 as the day of Satyagraha in protest against the Rowlatt Act, E.V.R helped to convene several meetings in all the district centers.⁹

The constructive programmes of Gandhi which attracted E.V.R included the promotion of Swadeshi, particularly the revival of hand spinning and the use of alcoholic drinks and the collection of a crore of rupees for the memorial of Tilak.¹⁰ E.V.R was very sincere and tirelessly worked for the growth of the Congress. Gandhi's plan of non-co-operation was very much appealing to him and he actively participated in it.

Temperance Campaign

The temperance campaign was vigorously organized by way of propagating against the evils of drinking and by the way of picketing before liquor shops as a part

⁵ Balijas – a subsect of Naidu Caste to which E.V.R. belonged .

⁶ Viswanathan, E.Sa., *op.cit.*, p.23.

⁷ Selvarajan P., *E.V.R. Ulakapperiyar, (Tamil)*, Madras , 1938 ,p.13.

⁸ Sen, S.P., (ed.), *Dictionary of National Biography* , Vol.3, Calcutta, 1974, p.185

⁹ Viswanathan. E.Sa., *op.cit.*, p.38.

¹⁰ Baker, C.J., and Washbrook , W.A., *op.cit.*, p.8.

of a Non-Co-Operation Movement. E.V.R. organized one of the most impressive temperance campaigns in the Madras Province in 1921.¹¹ In November 1921 he launched a successful temperance campaign at Erode. It was commended by no less than a great person like Gandhi as follows: “Erode alone has done bravely in the matter of temperance. Mr.RamaswamyNaicker has therefore,been rewarded with one month’s simple imprisonment.¹²

About a hundred persons were sentenced to short terms of imprisonment under section 188 of India Penal code for their acts of disobedience at Erode.¹³ To E.V.R, this was the first occasion of imprisonment.¹⁴ Following the footsteps of E.V.R his wife Nagammai and his sister Kannammal took up the task of temperance campaign, and were arrested.¹⁵

There was an overwhelming response to the campaign.¹⁶ The authorities found it impossible to curb the tide of the agitation. Expecting a grave situation they decided to lift the prohibitory order issued under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code.¹⁷ Perhaps this lifting could have been effected only in Erode.

Spread of Khadi

Gandhi advocated the use to Khadi cloth thereby creating a sense of patriotism among the Indians. The spinning and weaving were no doubt originally intended as an

¹¹ .Backer C.J., *op.cit.*, p.250.

¹² .Young India, 22 December 1921.

¹³ .Fortnightly Report (hereinafter referred as FNR), 6 January 1922. p.1.and David Arnold, *op.cit.*, p.65.

¹⁴ .Sundaravadivelu .N. D ., PuratchiyalarPeriyar , Madras, 1980 , p.34

¹⁵ Young India, 22 December 1921.Also Sami Chidambaranar, *op.cit.*, pp.88-89.

¹⁶Ramasami, A., TamizhNattil Gandhi, Madras, 1969, p.393. Also Sami. Chidambaranar, *op.cit.*, p.89 .

¹⁷Meimozhi, T., *Periyar E.V. Ramasami and the Indian National Congress, 1919-1927*, M.Phil Dissertation, Madurai, 1986, p.48.

economic upliftment of poor section of the society.¹⁸ E.V.R gave up his costly clothing and switched over to Khadi clothing. He started wearing the rough khadi.¹⁹²⁰ E.V.R made his wife Nagammai and all members of the family to wear khadi cloths.²¹ E.V.R thought that by the use of khadi, he could give a fillip to cottage industries in the country but also enforce sanctions, however small they might be, against British economic interest by boycotting their textiles.²² E.V.R extensively toured many parts of Tamil Nadu to spread khadi. He visited with a charka. He carried with him khadi cloths and sold them out.²³ Selling out cloths by a rich man like a hawker was indeed a great social service.²⁴

“The credit of spreading khadi in Tamil Nadu went to E.V.R.”²⁵ In Coimbatore district, both in Erode and Tiruppur, handloom industry was thriving and khadi also played a prominent part which became a center for gathering hand spun yarn and khadi.²⁶ E.V.R’s services were commendable for this achievement. E.V.R was elected president of the Tamil Nadu branch of the All India Spinners Association, an organization launched to control the retail price and push up the sale of khadi.²⁷ In Erode, the Tamil Nadu Congress KhadiVastriralayam was functioning under the supervision of E.V.R.²⁸

¹⁸.The Hindu, 19 January 1922.Also Ramasami A., *op .cit.*, p.392

¹⁹ .Sami. Chidambaranar.*op.cit* ., p.83.

²⁰ .Navasakthi, 24 May 1924.

²¹.Same Chidambarnar, *op.cit* ., p.84.

²² .Viswanathan ,E.Sa., *op.cit.*, p.41.

²³ .Anaimuthu, V., (ed.)*op.cit.*, Vol.III,p.1665.

²⁴.Sundaravadivelu , N.D., *op.cit.*, p.32.

²⁵.Kalyanasundaranar, T.V., *op.cit.* Part I, p.334.

²⁶.Periyariyal, Madras, 1981, p.249.

²⁷.Viswanathan,E.Sa., *op.cit.*, p.41.

²⁸.Ramasami. A., *op.cit.*, p.449.

Non-Co-Operation movement was the first national agitation against the British government which exploited the wealth and labour of the ignorant Indian masses. E.V.R took part in this struggle too.

Cheranmadevi Gurukulam Issue

A *Gurukulam* was established at Cheranmadevi, in Tirunelveli district. It was started with the noble ideas of imparting nationalism and spreading the spirit of patriotism and infusing a passion for social service among the youth. It was founded by V.V.S.Aiyar and funded by the Congress. It was partial and discriminative in the sense that it imparted education to the boys only. But the girls were not admitted into the school even though Gandhiji, the leader of the Indian National Congress, encouraged and inspired women to participate in the national struggle. No leader bothered to provide national education to girls. But *Periyar*, the crusader for social, wanted to mobilize women as a great force not only to transform the society but also to enable them to enlighten themselves. He expressed his anger for not admitting girls in the *Ashramam*.

Even though V.V.S.Aiyer was a veteran Tamil scholar, freedom fighter and the editor of

DesaBhaktan, he endeavoured to strengthen *Varnashramasystem* in the *Ashramam*. He introduced separate dining for the higher and lower caste pupil. Accordingly, the Brahmin inmates were given rich food and better comforts whereas, the non-Brahmin students were discriminated in boarding and lodging i.e. they had to take their meals outside the dining hall. Separate water pots and vessels were kept for the low sections. *Periyar*, the then Secretary of Tamil Nadu Congress Committee allotted Rs.5000 as the first installment for the *Gurukulam* out of a total of 10,000 for its development and later, he refused to pay the remaining amount of Rs.5000 on the grounds of discrimination followed in the *Ashramam*. But V.VS.Aiyer, the President of *Ashramam*

received the remaining amount of Rs.5000/- from K.Santhanam, the Joint-Secretary of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee without consulting *Periyar*.

The discrimination policy of V.V.S.Aiyer and other Brahmin leaders of the Congress party forced *Periyar* to start Self-Respect Movement. As the first step, *Periyar* published a Tamil weekly, *Kudi Arasu* on 2nd May, 1925 from Erode in order to instigate and arouse Self-Respect, propagate socialism and to establish a sense of brotherhood among the non-Brahmin to fight against the Brahmins. Later, it became the organ of Self-Respect Movement to express his ideologies and to create awakening among the public.

VAIKOM SATYAGRAHA

Practice of untouchability

Vaikom, a small village stands on the eastern bank of Kambanad Kayal lake in the central part of erstwhile princely state of Travancore²⁹. A Siva temple is situated in the central part of Vaikom. The temple had four entrances on four sides which were surrounded by four streets. Generally, the avarnas (outcastes) were prohibited even from the preliminary right to walk in the four streets. They were forbidden to the distance of four furlong the temple streets³⁰. The avarnas or low caste people such as the Thiyaas, the pulayas, the Nadars and Ezhavas were disallowed to use the four streets as the Brahmins and caste-Hindus had used³¹. In this way in and around the streets of the temple at Vaikom untouchability was strictly practised

²⁹. Sen, S.P., (ed), *op.cit.*, 185

³⁰. Anaimuthu, V., (ed), *op.cit.*, p.88

³¹. Veeramani, K., *Congress Varalaru: Maraikapadum Unmaigalum, Karaipadintha Athiyayangalum, (Tamil)*, Madras 1986, p.20

Arrest of kerala congress Leaders

The leaders of Kerala congress Committee and British India decided to organize a satyagraha at Vaikom. T.K. Madhavan, a prominent leader insisted the Kerala Congress to commence the agitation for social equality on march 30, 1924. For this purpose, the Karla congress formed a special committee consisting of the leaders like K. Kelappan Nair, T.K. Madhavan, Sankaran and Velayutham. The committee members went to Vaikom and addressed a public meeting on march 31, 1924.

Under the leadership of K.P. Kesava Menon, the president of Kerala congress committee and a group of Ezhavas entered the prohibited streets at Vaikom on April 1924. When the satyagraha was started, the Maharajah of Travancore issued an order to W.H. Pitt, the police commissioner to arrest the satyagrahis³². Following the order, K.P. Kesava Menon, T.K.Madhavan, K.Kelappan, and nineteen others were arrested³³. T.K.Madhavan and K.P.kesava Menon were convicted by the District court and sentenced for six months imprisonment³⁴.

Appeal to E.V.R

The continues arrest of the agitating leaders made the Satyagraha to come to a standstill. The leaders also realized that in the absence of any proper leadership their satyagraha would fail. In order to regenerate the movement, they decided to send an appeal to the social reformers of Tamil Nadu congress. E.V. Ramasamy, the great social revolutionary was then president of the Tamil Nadu Congress. George Joseph and Barrister K.P. Kesava Menon together sent a letter to E.V. Ramasamy on getting that

³².Sivagnanam, Ma. Po., *Viduthalai-p-poril Tamizhagam, (Tamil), part.I* Madras, 1982, p.544.

³³.Devanadan, P.D., *The Dravida Kazhagam*. Bangalore, 1960, p.19.

³⁴ .Navasakthi, 11April 1924.

invitation. E.V.R along with kovai ayyamuthu and Sami Chidambranar and a few volunteers at once proceeded to Vaikom.

E.V.R. at vaikom

On April 13, 1924 E.V.R. arrived at Vaikom and took charge of Vaikom satyagraha campaign, In order to give a new strength to the movement, on the morning of April 1924 E.V.R led two batches of volunteers and attempted to enter the northern and eastern roads at the Vaikom temple³⁵. At the Vaikom thus, E.V.R violated the prevailing order and was arrested for violation of the P.C.26 of prohibition order³⁶. E.V.R underwent jail life as a fighter for social justice at Vaikom. He was sentenced to undergo one month imprisonment along with kovai Ayyamuthu and a few other volunteers of Tamil Nadu³⁷.

Hectic campaign of E.V.R

On his release from Arivikkuthy prison, after a month imprisonment the Travancore Government issued asking E.V.R. to leave the state immediately³⁸. Ignoring the warrant, E.V.R again involved in the satyagraha.

Arrest E.V.R and his family Members

Due to his continuous fight for social justice at Vaikom again E.V.R was arrested and put in jail for the second time³⁹. This time he was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment in the central jail of Trivandrum. At this juncture, Nagammai, the wife

³⁵.Ravindran, T.K., *Vaikom Satyagrahand Gandhi*, Tiruchur, 1975, p.88

³⁶.The P.C.26, *prohibition order is just like The IPC 144 Prohibition order*.

³⁷.Ravindran, T.K., *op.cit.*,p88

³⁸.Anita Diehl, *Periyar E.V.R. Ramasamy*, New Delhi, 1978, p11-13

³⁹.Navasakthi, 12 September 1924 and 23 May 1925.

and S.R Kannammal, the sister of E.V.R. unflinchingly carried on anti-untouchability propaganda throughout the Travancore State by organizing a women wing⁴⁰.

Abrogation of prohibitory order

On account of E.V. R's effort the anti-untouchability campaign got momentum in Travancore⁴¹. The Prohibitory Order was totally revoked on November 23, 1925 bowing to the mounting pressure from the public. In consequence, the roads were thrown open by the Travancore Durbar to the segregated people⁴². the Vaikom satyagraha was the first successful agitation of E.V.R against untouchability. After this, he earned the title 'Vaikom Hero'.

⁴⁰.Paul Raj, R., *Salvation and secular Humanists in India*, Madras, 1988, p.112.

⁴¹.Dravida Kazhagam, (pub.) *Dravida Kazhagam what it stands For?*, Madras 1982.p.5.,

⁴².Director of publication Division, *op.cit.*, Vol. XXV, p.116. Indian Quarterly Register, July -1925,

REPRESENTATIVE OF COMMUNAL JUSTICE

E.V.R. had great sympathy for non Brahmins' cause from 1900 onwards and was much concerned with the upliftment and welfare of non Brahmins. On the dawn of Justice party the Brahmin and Non-Brahmin conflict within the Congress party came to surface and it led to the formation of the Madras presidency Association in 1917. E.V.R. was elected as one of its vice-presidents. He was the chairman of the reception committee of second annual conference of the Madras presidency Association which was held at Erode in 1919. For a while the Government of India Act of 1919 extended the communal representation which was introduced earlier by the Minto-Morley Reforms. The allocation of seats in the legislature was done on communal basis. Twenty-eight seats were reserved for non-Brahmins in the Madras Legislative council as per the award of Nesting. E.V.R. and other non-Brahmin leaders had cherished the idea of getting communal representation to Non-Brahmins. The successful attempt by the Justicities in securing communal representation for the Non-Brahmins, induced E.V.R. to extend a similar demand for positions within the Congress party.

Entry into Congress

E.V.R. championed the cause of all the communities ever since he entered into the public life. He joined the All India Congress party in 1919 with the notion that the Congress would work for the salvation of the suffering Non-Brahmin communities. As a Congress man and follower of Gandhi, E.V.R. sincerely devoted his life for the Congress party countering the Justice party. The then Brahmin leaders in the Congress party used him as a tool to counter the propaganda of the Justice party without implementing the assurance given to him regarding communal Justice.

Role In Madras presidency Association

It was because of E.V.R., P.Varadarajulu Naidu and T.V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliyar were pushed to the forefront in the Congress and many Non-Brahmins came forward to support it.

With the backing of the Congress party, the Madras presidency Association was started in 1917 with two specific motives. One is the attainment of Swaraj and the other is the implementation of social justice. Leading Non-Brahmin members took part in the activities of the association. E.V.R. was the vice -president of the Madras presidency Association and Pattu kesava Pillai of Gooty was the president.

Even though the Justice party and the Madras presidency Association were strong opponents in the political arena, on the social front both vehemently pleaded for communal representation in all walks of public life. As a result of this, the government came forward to give ample representation to Christians, Muhammadans, Anglo-Indians, Merchants, Agriculturists, Labourers and others. Many constituencies were reserved for this purpose by the Government of Madras.

Similarly, in the Congress party adequate representation to the Muslims was given in all its wings in all over the India. At the Kakkinada session of the Indian National Congress a separate committee was formed to find out the ways and means to bring about unity among the Hindus and the Muslims.¹ At the Tamil Nadu Congress session, the Non-Brahmins conducted separate meetings, excluding the Brahmins, to find out ways to redress the grievances of the Non-Brahmins.

¹. The Hindu, Chennai, 23 September 1998.

Demand For Communal Representation

At the twenty-fifth political conference held at Thiruchirappalli in 1919 separate meeting of the Non-Brahmins was held under the presidentship of Somasundara Bharathi in the Congress forum itself. There passed a resolution urging for communal representation.

In the second annual conference of the Madras presidency Association which was held at Erode in October, 1919 E.V.R. was the chairman of the Reception committee, and raised the demand for Communal representation. The twenty-sixth provincial conference of Tamil Nadu Congress committee was held under presidentship of E.V.R. It was in this conference a resolution was piloted demanding reservation of constituencies and public services for the non-Brahmins.² When the resolution came up for discussion in the subject committee, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar suggested that the term 'adequate representation would be appropriate in the place of 'fixing up percentage.'³ After all the resolutions were taken in the open session, suddenly the president Srinivasa Iyengar all in a hurry proceeded to deliver the concluding speech. The non-Brahmin delegates were shocked. When they questioned, the president said that he ruled out the resolution,⁴ as it was against public interest.

At the twenty-seventh provincial conference of Tamil Nadu Congress committee held at Thanjavur in 1921, C.Rajagopalachari asked E.V.R. to have communal representation proposal only in principle and not to bring in the form of a

². The Hindu, 1 July 1920.

³. Nambi Arooran, *op.cit.*, p.154.

⁴. Sami chidambaranar, *op.cit.*, p.100.

resolution.⁵ A separate session of the non-Brahmins was held under the presidentship of V.Chakkarai Chetti. A committee consisting of Singaravelu Chetti, Kalyanasundara Mudaliyar, Varadarajulu Naidu and E.V.R. was formed to propagate communal representation policy by convening meetings and conferences.⁶

At the twenty-eighth provincial conference of T.N.C.C (Tamil Nadu Congress committee) held at Tiruppur, in 1922 scenes were created.⁷ Hence, this meeting also could not satisfy E.V.R.'s demand for communal representation. In the subsequent conference held at T.S.S. Rajan's house at Tiruchi in 1923 there were controversies over the Brahmin versus non-Brahmin issue. P.Varadarajulu Naidu once again tabled a motion pleading of communal representation. C.Rajagopalachari cleverly postponed the motion for discussion to the next conference.⁸

As an improvement in this line, in the Congress meeting held at Coimbatore in June 1923 where it was resolved that steps should be taken to give adequate representation to Non-Brahmins in all Congress bodies in Tamil Nadu and that for the time being not more than fifteen per cent of the office bearers should be Brahmins.⁹ Yet, whenever similar resolutions were brought, the Non-Brahmin leaders like E.V.R. met the same disappointment and their resolutions were defeated. Brahmin and non-Brahmin leaders over the proportional representation.¹⁰

When the thirtieth annual conference of T.N.C.C (Tamil Nadu Congress committee) was held at Tiruvannamalai during November 15 and 16, 1924, E.V.R. as

⁵. *Ibid.*, P.101.

⁶. Veeramani, K., *The History of the struggle for social justice in Tamil Nadu*, p.32.

⁷. Nagoorkani, p., *op.cit.*, p.149.

⁸. Veeramani, K., *op.cit.*, p.32.

⁹. Nambi Arooran, *op. cit.*, P.184.

¹⁰. Eugene, F. Irschick, *politics and social conflict in south India*, p.268.

the president of the conference expressed his anxiety over the unsolved major grievance of the Non-Brahmin movement by T.M. Nair and former prominent non-Brahmin Congress leaders.¹¹ Further, he expressed his grief over the matter that the non-Brahmins were not allowed to meet All India leaders like Gandhi to Ventilate their grievances. E.V.R. openly Cried "Gandhi could not know those grievances nor there were persons to tell him about them."¹²

E.V.R'S Exit

E.V.R. wanted to give a final opportunity before launching an open triade against the Brahmin dominated Congress. In the TNCC (Tamil Nadu Congress committee) conference held at Kanchipuram during November 21 and 22, 1925 matters took a serious turn. E.V.R. took the lead in moving the resolution in support of the communal representation T.V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliyar, the president of the session demanded twenty-five delegates to support the resolution.¹³ E.V.R. obtained more than fifty signatures from the delegates.¹⁴

Addressing at Kanchipuram session E.V.R. pointed out thus: "we are talking about making sacrifices for Swaraj. If we attain Swaraj it must be a Swaraj for all. Today there is fear in the minds of our people the Swaraj would be the 'Brahmins Raj' in toto. We must instill confidence in them. Different communities in India should be cordial with one another. We must see to it that every community is secure and thriving. Today millions of people are in a pitiable State. They are dumb. The only way to render them social justice is to give them legitimate representation in all walks of life."

¹¹. Eraiyar, A., 'Ayya Entral Vaguppurimai: Vaguppurimai Entral Ayya,' in (Tamil), Thanthai Periyar E.V.Ramasamy's 112th Birth Commemoration Souvenir, Madras, 1990, p.230.

¹². Ramasamy, A., Tamil Nattil Gandhi, p.447. Also Nambi Arooran, K., *op.cit.*, p.187.

¹³. Visswanathan, E. Sa., *op.cit.*, p.58.

¹⁴. Collected Works of Periyar E.V.Ramasamy, p.155.

The speech of E.V.R. revealed his love for nationalism and a desire for strong united India. Unfortunately, all his attempts to bring about unity and cordiality among different communities were opposed by the Brahmins.¹⁵ As was manipulated earlier the Brahmins leaders did not allow the resolution to be taken up in the open session on the ground that it was against the fundamental principle of Congress.¹⁶ In protest against the stubbornness of the Brahmins against the resolution, E.V.R. along with S.Ramanathan, Surendranath Arya, Sakkarai Chettiyar and some others walked out from the Kanchipuram conference.¹⁷

The Brahmins made the Congress party a communal organization to serve their own interests primarily. Their unyielding attitude led to the growing strength of the non-Brahmins. Hence, E.V.R. expected a whole-hearted support from at least the top men of the Congress. But, there was no co-operation as expected. In fact, none was in favour of any real change in the policy on social and communal reservation.¹⁸ Thus, the non-acceptance of the principle of communal representation for which he moved resolutions in more than one annual conferences of TNCC made E.V.R. disillusioned. These bitter experiences gradually turned his whole attitude against the Congress. It was generally reported that "E.V.R. unofficially left the Congress as a result of disagreement on the demand for proportionate and caste-wise representation."¹⁹

E.V.R. believed that Gandhi would favour him and his demand in the Congress party. With that belief, without attacking personally Gandhi, he made attack on the

¹⁵. Veeramani, K., *op.cit.*, p.33.

¹⁶. Visswanathan, E.Sa., *op.cit.*, p.58.

¹⁷. Murugesan, K., and Subramainyan, C.S., *Singaravelu-first Communist in south India*, New Delhi, 1975, p.65.

¹⁸. G.O.No.729, public (confidential) Department, 3 August 1926. Also Navasakthi, 19 February 1926.

¹⁹. Nambi Arooran, K., *op.cit.*, p.159.

TNCC (Tamil Nadu Congress committee) which was controlled by the Brahmins. This stand of E.V.R. was very clear at the south Indian Liberal federation meeting which was held at Madras in January 1927. In that meeting E.V.R. was requested to be the chief organizer but he rejected it by telling he was not yet joined the S.I.L.F. He also pointed out that if Gandhi called him for civil Disobedience Movement, he would go at any time for the ad hoc purpose.²⁰ Therefore, in order to know Gandhi's mentality E.V.R. and S.Ramanathan met him at Bangalore in August 1927.²¹ E.V.R. expressed his opinion on the Brahmin domination in TNCC (Tamil Nadu Congress committee) and about the Varnashramadharma and wanted to get rid of caste system and the establishment of a casteless society, but Gandhi's stand the former. Hence E.V.R. hardened his attitude and concluded that Gandhi's opinion would not support social philosophy. He took leave of Gandhi along with S. Ramanathan.²² E.V.R. concluded that Gandhi was also one of the staunchest protagonists of the Varnashramadharma, and in order to prepare his fight against him, E.V.R. came out of the Congress.²³

E.V.R's Propaganda

On April 13, 1926 E.V.R. condemned the British Government and the Brahmins for putting hurdles in realizing communal representation. The British tried to prolong their rule in India by creating a split amongst the different Indian communities. Accordingly, they sowed the seeds of dissension and hatred among people. If communal representation had been awarded during the one hundred and fifty years of

²⁰. Madras Mail, 1 March 1927, and kudiarasu, 30 January 1927.

²¹. Ramasamy, E.V., *Inthumathamum Gandhiyamum - Periyarum, (Tamil)*, Bhavani, 1948, p17.

²². Kudi Arasu, 28 August, 1927. Also Sami Chidambaranar, *op.cit.*, pp.109-110.

²³. The Modern Rationalist, July 1982, pp.24-25.

the British rule, the vast majority of the non-Brahmins would have progressed and prospered.²⁴

Addressing a mass gathering at Coimbatore on June 13, 1926, E.V.R. declared that there would be no salvation to the Non-Brahmin Communities without attaining social justice. He called the Congress in the south as the 'Brahmin Congress', and warned that unless it became a true representative Gandhian Congress, it will serve the interests of the Brahmins only.²⁵

In an another editorial written in kudi Arasu on November 22, 1926, E.V.R. demanded reservation in administration besides in the legislatures. He wrote thus: "Ever since the talk of indianisation of service, only the Brahmins have been opposing the wholesome policy of the communal representation. The Brahmins are cunningly postponing the issue. They are putting all sorts of obstacles in implementing the policy. The government itself had condescended to accept this policy."²⁶

E.V.R. added that "while the non-Brahmins exhibited wisdom in dealing with the problem of the communal representation, the Brahmins resisted the move with of the determination safeguarding their dominant and monopolistic interests in the name of nationalism and the Congress. Having won the support of a handful of quislings amongst the non-Brahmins, they indulged in anti-non-Brahmin activities. Even some of the journals were given doles to slander the non-Brahmin leaders. The non-Brahmin leaders were needed courage and not be disheartened."²⁷

²⁴. Kudi Arasu, 13 April 1926.

²⁵. Ibid., 13 June 1926.

²⁶. Ibid., 21 November 1926.

²⁷. Veeramani, K., *The History of the struggle for social Justice in Tamil Nadu*, p.34.

E.V.R. wrote a series of articles in Kudi Arasu exposing the evil minded and mischievous propaganda of the Brahmins. In his editorial on Kudi Arasu on December 16, 1926, he traced the history of the different nations pointing out that there had been evil forces everywhere opposed to the formation of a society based on equality. He continued: "Those who condemn and criticize the communal representation have not put forward any sensible arguments as to why they oppose it. They have not given any alternative proposal acceptable to all the communities. They exhibit their insincerity in advocating socialism. They show their disinterestedness in solving the problems facing all the communities." He openly said : "Eight crores of Muhammadans were for communal representation. Five crores of Untouchables were for the communal representation. The Christian population wanted communal representation. Under these circumstances, what is wrong on the part of the non-Brahmins in demanding the communal representation? Why should the Brahmins stand in the way? Their conduct clearly indicates their ambition to prolong their monopoly and domination in all walks of life."²⁸

E.V.R brought a number of resolutions on a number occasions demanding communal representation in appointments within the Congress organization as well as in public services. But in all such occasions, his resolution was rejected. E.V.R. was disheartened over the influence of Brahmins in Congress. In the municipal elections that were held in Madras in November 1925, E.V.R. worked for the candidates of Justice party. This drift of E.V.R. to the Justice camp was clearly noticeable from 1925 onwards. The efforts of Brahmins to block the growth of Justice party the domination of Brahmins in the Congress and their exploitation, etc., were responsible for his exit

²⁸. Kudi Arasu, 21 November 1926.

in 1926. He was considered to have ceased to be Congress committee member. His faith in Gandhi also lasted only upto 1927. His expectations to be an active politician were fulfilled by his role in the Congress. The growth of E.V.R as a prominent leader and the development in his thinking gradually culminated in his exit from the Congress to chalk out an independent line of action and the launching of the Self-Respect movement.

PROTESTER AGAINST CASTE SYSTEM

E.V.R. strongly preached against Brahminism and insisted the enforcement of communal representation in education, administration and politics as a way to remove the evil of the caste system in society. To eradicate caste totally from society he wanted to secure the legitimate right for the untouchable, their free access to public utility-places, entry into temples and freedom for religious conversions in order to attain equal right.

Caste System

Caste system led to the emergence of a numerous caste groups. As a result of expansion of trade, commerce and markets a change take place in the production relationship in the society. Varnasramadharma, the ancient scripture, noted four- fold caste system which included, Brahmin, Kshatriya, vaishya and Sudra. These castes were based on birth and ordained to be so by God.¹ Due to the inter mixture of these castes the mixed castes, namely, anulomas, paratilomas, anderalar and virathiar came into being.² Further, among them had increased the number of castes and communities in hundreds. For easy social identity and for political expediency they were broadly categorized as Brahmins, Non-Brahmins and depressed classes from the beginning of the twentieth century in the Madras presidency.

¹.Samara pungaSastri, (ed.), Sri Vyasa's, VarnasramadharmaTirunelveli, 1884, pp.-1-4

².Gnanaprakasa Swamigal, *A Treatise on caste*, Madras, no date, p.2.

Against Caste System

Brahminsism was the main target of attack, on the speeches of E.V.R. because its powerful influence in determining social relationship had relegated the Tamil society to an abominable condition. Hence, its abolition would lead to a casteless society according to E.V.R.

For a few years, from the first issue the *KudiArasu*, the mouth piece of E.V.R.'s thoughts in its front page carried the message of poet SubramaniaBharathi stating that all are one caste and one race, and observing caste mean a great sin.³

E.V.R. and Gandhi

At a district political meeting held at Karaikudi in 1925, E.V.R. spoke that for Tamil the caste system was new. It was imposed on them by Brahmins through Manusmriti; other than Brahmins were the low born sudras.⁴ To discuss the issue E.V.R. met Gandhi at Bangalore in 1927.⁵ There, both of them had clarified their respective stands on the issue of varnasramadharma, the citadel of caste system. Gandhi maintained the need of caste system for the establishment of social order and regulation of the society. E.V.R. strongly opposed this Gandhian approach and wanted the abolition of varnasramadharma.⁶ Thereafter, E.V.R. continued his attack against caste, by taking an anti-Gandhi and anti-corruption stand. He along with his followers

³.KudiArasu, 2 May 1925.

⁴.*Ibid.*, 7 and 21 June 1925.

⁵.Ramasami, A., *TamizhNattil Gandhi*, p.540.

⁶.KudiArasu, 16 October 1927 and Indu Madam - Gandhiyarumperiyarum, Bhavani, 1948, pp 10-7.

publicly decried and denied caste difference and other discriminations at the first provincial self Respect conference held at chengleput in 1929.⁷

The Thirteenth Nadar conference which was held on April 29, 1929 at Poraiyar in Thanjavur district. E.V.R. and W.P.A. soundarapandian, a self Respect delivered lectures in the conference. The conference provided the message that "if any particular caste or community suffers, it will affect the whole nation, so, such caste conferences which strive for their development would in the end serve the nation in its well being and prosperity."⁸

The second provincial Self-Respect conference which was held at Erode on and may 10 and 11, 1930 under presidentship of M.R. Jayakar of Bombay criticized the castes and their associations that perpetuate discrimination and difference in the society.⁹ The third provincial Self-Respect conference, and sixteenth provincial Justice conference held at virudhunagar in 1931 and at Salem in 1944 respectively had passed resolutions on the same lines.¹⁰

Caste system was linked with the enslavement of women. Neelavathi, a self-Respector from Tiruchi, in a women's conference which was held at Aruppukottai in Ramanathapuram district, viewed that it was the caste that stood in the way of women's emancipation binding them everywhere in chains.¹¹

At a Self-Respect meeting held at Gudiyatham in North Arcot district on December 4, 1927 under the presidentship of Janab Abdul Kareem shaib, the editor of

⁷.KudiArasu. 18 May 1930.

⁸.*Ibid.*, 5 May 1929.

⁹.*Ibid.*, 18 May 1930.

¹⁰.*Ibid.*, 24 May 1931 and Muthiah, S., Dravida Nadu, Madras, 1947, p.3.

¹¹.*Ibid.*, 14 July 1945.

Dravidan, Justice, J.S. kannapar and sarangapani Naidu spoke against Manudharamasastra. Later, they along with the audience involved in the activities of firing the printed books of ManudharmaSastra.¹²

The varnasramadharma was ridiculed with by a Tirunelveli based self respect magazine, Thondon. It pointed out that varnashramdharma is an evil that spoil life and it paved the way for the supremacy of Brahmins and lower position of all in the society.¹³ Swami SivanadaSaraswathi'sGnanasuriyan deplored the Brahmins role in the creation of a discriminatory social order which was exposed in Vedas ,puranas , Smiritis, etc. The kudiArasu publications in 1937 translated into Tamil the Work , The Annihilation of caste authored by B.R. Ambedkar. The work deals with the rise and growth of caste, and the distinction of high and low based on birth.

The followers of E.V.R. all over Tamil Nadu did not invite the Brahmin priests in celebration festivals in temples. Likewise, several birth and death ceremonies, and anniversaries were performed with all the rituals, without a Brahmin Purohit but with a local Non-Brahmin leader presiding over the occasion, KudiArasu published the names of such Self-Respectors who denounced Brahminism and ultimately caste, following the footsteps of E.V.R. who relinquished his caste appellation in 1927.¹⁴ E.V.R. appellations at the time of enumeration instead they should address themselves as rationalists.¹⁵ Thus, this brand E.V.R.'s followers became for the first time, a new progressive community and they entered into census records for every ten years.

¹².*Ibid.*, 11 December 1927.

¹³.Thondan, Tirunelveli, M.N.N.R., July - August 1929, p.16.

¹⁴.KudiArasu. 25, December 1927.

¹⁵.*Ibid.*, 9 November 1930.

Nadars in Self-Respect Camp

W.P.A. Soundarapandian, a Nadar community leader soon fell under the influence of E.V.R. Seeking to draw the mass support of the Nadar community for his ideology of social justice, E.V.R. selected Soundarapandian as the president of the first Self-Respect conference, held in the predominantly Nadar town of Virudhunagar. The Nadars' response to E.V.R. ideology was tremendous. Increasingly within the community, the Nadars began to desankritise their manner of life, in abandoning the pretensions to high caste adopted in the last years of nineteenth century. The sacred thread was thrown away and the use of Brahmin Purohits was discouraged. The self respect marriage became widespread, as the people sought to release themselves from the priestly authority which held them in atleast psychological subservience to the high castes.¹⁶

Caste practice among christians

At a Christian Girls school in Tiruchi, a self Respector found that there prevailed discrimination between the low caste Christians, It was a practice against Christian principles. To highlight the issue, the self Respectors ridiculed to issue a separate Bible for them ¹⁷A section of the depressed class converted Christians held a conference on July 23, 1933 at Tiruchi under the presidentship of Altons Lahash and passed a resolution stating that the high caste Christians derived maximum benefit at the cost of the depressed class Christians. The self Respector Neelavathi and M.A. MuthiahChettiar spoke in the conference deploring the injustice meted out to the depressed class Christians. The conference endorsed the self-respect ideals.¹⁸

¹⁶. Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr., '*political participation and primordial solidarity : The Nadars of Tamil Nadu, 'in caste in Indian politics*, Hyderabad, 1995, pp.114-115,

¹⁷.KudiArasu, 28 August 1932.

¹⁸.Udhaya Sankar,I., *Periyar E.V.Ramasamy community Justice & Social Recognition, The Academy of Public Affairs*, Chennai, 2006, p.98

Interdining

The followers of E.V.R. conducted several inter - dining social meal gatherings in various parts of Tamil Nadu. At one of them, convened under the auspices of the Nagapatnam Youth Association on January 2, 1927 about a hundred people from different communities assembled and interdined. There the depressed class people served the meals to all the people¹⁹ At another instance on April 24 , 1932, A.R. Sivanandam the president of the Coimbatore Self-Respect league arranged an interdining of all people irrespective of any caste. On that occasion, nearly about hundred persons interdined without any discrimination.²⁰

Against caste practices in Restaurants

E.V.R.'s followers agitated against the Railway restaurants run by the Brahmins, for there food and other refreshments were not served to the non -Brahmin and low caste people K.A.P. Viswanatham, Manavaiparamasivam and a host of other self-Respectors , marched to a hotel named, ' Bala Murugananda Bhavan ' run by a Brahmin at Big Bazaar street in Tiruchi and insisted its proprietor to remove the name board bearing the discriminatory note that "Brahmins alone are entitled to take meals in the hotel." Even they threatened to stage a satyagraha in front of the hotel, if the proprietor did not remove the board. Other wise, the proprietor came forward to serve food to all without any distinction.²¹ For his part E.V.R. also threatened to stage stayagraha outside the Railway restaurant rooms and coffee hotels if the words "For Brahmins only on the sign boards were not removed. He also viewed that the various eating houses should be opened to all classes of people without distinction.²² His continuous appeals to the

¹⁹.*Ibid.*,

²⁰.*Ibid.*, 1 May 1932.

²¹.*Ibid.*, 2 October 1927.

²².Chandrababu, B.S., *Social Protest in Tamil Nadu*, p.73.

railway authorities bore fruit and on March 20, 1941 they issued an order ending such discriminatory practice in Railway canteens.²³

Access to public places

In Thanjavur district under the leadership of Karikudi, R, Chinnian, a self-Respectors, a satyagraha committee was formed in order to enlist activists for launching a satyagraha all over the Tamil Nadu wherever caste based evils continued. The Kudi Arasu and Justice deplored the social disabilities from which the people suffered highly. The papers even appealed both the Brahmins and the high caste Non-Brahmins to end the practice. Justice even demanded a royal proclamation to end this evil in society.²⁴

In 1931, at Villiputhur in Chengleput district, a Nadar community member was prevented by Brahmins from carrying water from municipal well situated in a Brahmin street. He was stabbed and as a result of it, the Nadars of that area protested.²⁵ Similarly, a dispute came to surface between the Nadars and non-Nadars in Kalloorani, Ramanathapuram district, over the Nadars access into a local Hindu temple. The issue created a serious communal problem. Fortunately, due to the timely intervention of some self-Respectors in that area the issue was amicably settled in favour of the Nadars.²⁶

Dravidarkazhgam and attack on Brahmins

The 'forties' was the emergence of the militant DravidarKazhgam which preached propaganda against the Brahmins. With the extension of the franchise after

²³. Viduthalai 21 March 1941.

²⁴. M.N.N.R., October to December 1931, p. 1504, Justice, 6 November 1931.

²⁵. KudiArasu 12 July 1931.

²⁶. F.N.R. second Half of April 1936. Home department, 4 May 1936, pp.4-8.

Independence and the introduction of panchayat Raj keen awareness developed among the Brahmins of their weakness and isolation. In 1962 Brahmins voters in Tiruchi had to be escorted to the polling booths for fear of protest from the DravidarKazhgam. Brahmin representation in the military, the legislature and the Congress party had dwindled into insignificance.

Political developments over the last fifty years have created among the Tamil Brahmins a strong sense of identity as a minority. They described themselves as the Jews of south India. A strong feeling had taken them that they were made victims of every kind of discrimination.²⁷

In the early fifties the Tanjore Brahmins were under attack from two quarters, the communist party and the DravidarKazhgam, both of which were then quite strong. Further, the two parties were united in their opposition against Brahmins, the first on the ground that the Brahmins were mirasdars and the second because they were Brahmins. At about this time peasant riots were organized in Mannarguditaluk, a stronghold of Brahmin mirasdars. The alliance with the staunchly anti - Brahmin DravidarKazhgam made the communists a little wary of antagonizing the non Brahmin landowners. In Tanjore district the communists drew much of their strength from the DravidarKazhgam. In 1952, when the DravidarKazhgam supported the communists, the latter held six assembly seats out of a total of nineteen from the district.²⁸

Things began to change rapidly after the mid-fifties. The veteran Brahmin leader, C.Rajagoplachari, was replaced by the non Brahmin K.kamaraj as chief Minister, and the DravidarKazhagam, known and feared for its militant anti Brahminism,

²⁷.Andre Betellie, '*caste and political Group formation in Tamil Nadu*,' in *Caste in Indian politics*, Hyderabad, 1995, p.256.

²⁸.Selig Harrison, *India : The most Dangerous Decade* , New Delhi, 1960, pp. 182-190.

Switched its support to the Congress. The Congress enacted a series of laws curtailing the rights of landowners, and many of the Brahmins mirasdars in Thanjavur viewed these as being specifically directed against themselves. Finally in 1959 the Swatantra party was formed under the leadership of Rajagopalachari and many of the Brahmins of Thanjavur turned avidly towards the new party.²⁹

In the name of honoring traditional practices, customs and habits the courts upheld Varna jathi system on the basis of the Articles 13, 25 and 372 of the Indian constitution. As a protest against these provisions, on November 26, 1957, the DravidarKazhgam volunteers burnt pieces of paper with these articles written on them. In this agitation aimed at eradication of casteism by making the system illegal nearly 4000 followers of E.V.R. were sentenced to undergo imprisonment for different periods ranging from six months to three years. Two persons died in prison, and twenty other after their release, due to the ordeal they underwent in the jail.³⁰ Referring to this agitation, E.V.R. said " Either in the members of DravidarKazhgam, numbering 3,500-4,000 have gone to jail in a single day on a social issue for the purpose of eradicating caste."³¹

Agitation against caste system

An obvious instance of observing caste discrimination took place in the appointment of archakas in places of workshop consecrated according to agamas. Only Brahmins who belonged to the upper most Varna are eligible to become archakas in these temples, and not those born in other varnas and in avarna castes. When E.V.R. was preparing to launch a vigorous agitation against the flagrantly divisive and unjust

²⁹.Andre Betellie, *op.cit.*, p.258.

³⁰.The Modern Rationalist, (monthly) Chennai, may 2001, pp.28-31

³¹.Viduthalai. 6 April 1959.

tradition that condemned and confirmed the lower castes as shudras, the Tamil Nadu Legislature passed unanimously a bill in 1970 and it became a law in 1971. It enables a person born in any caste to qualify for the post of an archaka and to get the opportunity of being appointed for the same. But when the orthodox vedicsanathanists questioned the constitutional validity of the law, the supreme court gave a judgement in March, 1972 that made the implementation of the law practically impossible. This pronouncement ultimately validated the Sudra status of about 97 / of the Hindus, as prescribed in the scriptures known as srutis, Smirtis and agamas. When E.V.R. came to view of the supreme court's verdict, he was deeply pained and became more determined to remove the scripturally and legally sanctioned stigma or indignity of sudrahood. Even in his ninety-fifth year, he did not take rest: he continued to write and to speak to the people.

Five days before his death on December 24, 1973, he delivered his last public speech at Thiagaraya Nagar in Chennai on 19th, in which he said: "Dear comrades what we need now is sense of honour. The indignity in which we live should be removed. Then we can rise up. We have to progress; before we climb up, we have to come out of the pit to the level ground. Now we are in the pit below. We are the fourth caste (sudras), fifth caste (panchamas) untouchables; we are born to the Brahmin's concubine- this is how we are described in the Hindu Dharma sastras upheld by law. This has to change before we move up."³² Successful completion of E.V.R.'s last agitational programme by way of fulfilling one of his basic demands still remains a major task constantly engaging the attention of DravidarKazhgam.

³².The Modern Rationalist, May 2002, p.28.

Removal of untouchability

From the first decade of the twentieth century, the middle class non Brahmins emerged as prominent socio economic force in Tamil Nadu. However, the Untouchables were being socially oppressed, and economically, exploited. E.V.R. strongly advocated the removal of social disabilities from which the Untouchables were suffering.

It was usual for E.V.R. to write many articles in *kudiArasu* stressing the need of removal of the practice of Untouchability. In one among the articles he noted that it is one of the primary duties of the non Brahmins to abolish or to do away with Untouchability, because the development of the Untouchables lies very much in the development of the non Brahmins. The distress of the Untouchables is the distress of the non Brahmins. The non Brahmins can achieve progress if only the Untouchability is totally removed from the scene.³³

To mobilize the support of a section of the depressed classes who were disappointed at Gandhi's stand on *varnasramadharma*, E.V.R. started giving little more coverage in the columns of *kudiArasu* for *AdiDravida* meetings and speeches. Even the name of the reformers, who worked for the upliftment of the *AdiDravidas* were referred to.³⁴ At the second Untouchability Abolition conference held in Madras on February 6 and 10, 1929, E.V.R. was invited to speak on the occasion. There, E.V.R. was given an opportunity to pass a resolution thus; "for the development of human society and ultimately of the nation, on humanitarian grounds, the evils of Untouchability from which larger section of population suffers should be done away

³³.*KudiArasu*, 15 November 1925.

³⁴.*Ibid.*, 15 January 1928.

with and the eyes of such helpless people opened.³⁵ This resolution was seconded by GeethaRangiah Naidu. The resolution passed at the first provincial Self-Respect conference (1929) gave an impression to the depressed class community and the opponents of the Congress party that E.V.R. was really championing the cause of the Untouchables in Tamil Nadu.³⁶ At another instance E.V.R. declared open the south Arcot District AdiDravidas conference held at kallakurichi on June 12, 1929 and spoke thus : "Like the Untouchables the bulk of the non Brahmins also suffer from the social indignities at the hands of the Brahmins for Brahmins we are Untouchables so defy, deny and confront the Brahmins and Brahminism."³⁷

³⁵.*Ibid.*, 17 February 1929.

³⁶.*Ibid.*, 24 February 1929.

³⁷.*Ibid.*, 16 December 1929.

CRUSEDER FOR WOMEN LIBERATION

A galaxy of social reformers and a few reform minded elites emerged in the nineteenth century to weed out societal obstacles that stood in the way of women's emancipation and development. Of all the reformers, E.V.R. alone attacked for the first time, the ideological basis of the "enslavement of women" in society. E.V.R. worked for the cause of women during his seven decades of public service with a well disciplined supporters and followers. His papers and organisations came to his defence against vituperative attacks and brickbats. It is a well known fact that to retrieve the "marginalized section" (women) of the society from the "dominant culture" E.V.R took up the cause of women as his life mission right from the day when he entered the public service. Through propaganda tour and platform speeches, and through the social organisation like self - Respect movement and DravidarKazhagam E.V.R. courageously met the forces of orthodoxy and reactionaries.

Property Rights

At Thirunelveli district Self Respect conference held on November 28 , 1927, E.V.R as president, pleaded with the Government to give equal rights to women like men to inherit or possess property as that would make them economically independent. On that occasion, among other resolutions, the following two resolutions were passed to that effect.

1. "In Hindu families where the widows refused to remarry, they should be given right to property of their deceased husbands".

2. "properties in Hindu families should be equally distributed between men and women without any sex discrimination".

E.V.R. emphasized the need once again in his editorial in *Kudi Arasu* in December, 1929 thus; "Like men", the women should have property rights and like women, the men should have all virtues and good character and enforcing these should be made without any delay¹.

According to him, if the women do not have the right to property that would be against their self Respect. Hence, while speaking on the occasion of a marriage in July 1930, at virudunagar, E.V.R. thundered, "The parents of this bride should give a share of their property to her. Like men the women to have right to property and right to work. If not, how will the women live with Self Respect in the society². E.V.R. praised highly a bridegroom who in his marriage held in September 1939 at Nagercoil registered a property worth of Rs. 5000/- in the bride's name³. Even, E.V.R. appealed to the government to pass a legislation giving equal property rights to women like men.

E.V.R realised that the denial of some rights to women such as right to own or to inherit property, right to widow remarriage, and the right to divorce would lead to other social evils like prostitution. Hence, to eradicate these ills from society, he stressed the need to attend those ills by passing social legislations. While detailing some of the rules and regulations for the conduct of self Respect marriages, E.V.R wrote in *Puratchi* in June 1934 thus: "As per the old marriage system the women did not have the right to property. They did not have equal rights with men in the family, whereas the self Respect marriages are based on the recognition of equal rights of women in owning

¹.Kudi Arasu, 29 December 1929.

².*Ibid.*, 28 July 1930.

³.UdhayaSankar ,I., *Periyar E.V.Ramasamy community Justice & Social Recognition, The Academy of Public Affairs*, Chennai,2006,p.98.

or inheriting property and also in sharing rights equally with men in running the family"⁴.

In 1937, the Government of India passed the Hindu women's Rights to property Act in the central Legislative Assembly. E.V.R commended this act in the editorial of KudiArasu thus: "The Bill that forwarded by Bhagawan Das at last put into an Act against strict orthodox opposition and at least it has established the necessity of Hindu women's right to property on a firm ground"⁵.

At a marriage held at Kanchipuram in June 1940, E.V.R. as a common man urged the need to give Women an equal share in the family property like their male counterparts. He said that "If we give a share of our property to our daughters, the daughter- in - laws will also bring in their share of property to our family. In such a case, there will not be any profit or loss in the family"⁶. Thus, E.V.R. drawn the attention of the masses to the point that the people should recognise the rights of women to property⁷.

E.V.R did not accept the notion that women in society have been the real stumbling block to progress. On the other hand, he strongly viewed that if the right to education, property owning and inheriting rights are given to the women, they would not wish to confine their lives to the kitchens, bedeck themselves with jewels and end up with innumerable problems of marriage.

⁴.Puratchi, 17 June 1934.

⁵.KudiArasu, 7 February 1937.

⁶.*Ibid.*, 30 June 1940.

⁷.*Ibid.*, 29 September 1940 and 18 March 1947.

Emancipation of women

E.V.R did a lot for the women's rights. He said that each women should learn an appropriate profession for herself, so that she is also to earn. If she is able to eke-out a living at least for herself, no husband will treat her as a Salve.

E.V.R strongly opined that as long as restrictions are imposed on womenfolk, women have to subservient to men and depend on them for help. He remarked that if women have to live on terms of equality with men, they must have the liberty, kind of education, and work suitable to the knowledge, ability and taste. He added that women should not listen to religious instructions, which preaches against them. E.V.R. focused the fact that the slavish attitudes, timidity, superstitious beliefs, obstinacy in adopting traditional customs are all due to religion. He vehemently condemned penadimai (slavery of woman) and pen Izhivu(degradation of woman)⁸.

E.V.R advocated that women should develop their physical strength like men, take exercise and get trained in the use of weapons. They should be able to protect themselves from sexual assault.

E.V.R. considered the women's craze for ornaments in any way could not elevate their condition in the society; instead it would bring them in danger. Its results, E.V.R. listed, were self- pride, vanity, domestic quarrels and insecurity. He called upon women to throw away their golden flatters and be emancipated⁹.

Marriage

E.V.R was vehement while saying that I do not accept the words 'wedding' or 'Marriage'. I term it only as a contract for companionship in life. For such a contract, it

⁸.Anaimuthu, V.,(ed.), *op.cit.*, pp.21-22.

⁹.Nagoorkani, p., ' Periyar E.V.R. The pioneer of Women Liberation Struggle in Tamil Nadu' paper presented in the Thirty- Eight Annual Conference of Institute of Historical studies, Kodaikanal, 8-10 November 2001, pp.6-7.

is enough a proof of registration. The other marriage ceremonies meant that waste of mental effort, time, money, enthusiasm and energy. According to him, a wedding should be contracted only on the principle of equality of the sex and equality of treatment. He added that if child marriages are abolished and provisions exist for divorce, widow's remarriage, intercaste marriage and for the right to marry by one's own .

Women's freedom

E.V.R found out the reason behind the statement that "Man can live without woman, but a woman cannot live without man". According to him because of the problems of child bearing, women are unable to demonstrate that they can live without men. As men have no such burden, they are so placed as to declare that they can live without women. Besides, the problems of maternity make women seek the help of others and this gives rise to male domination. Therefore, for true emancipation of women, they should be completely freed from the bothersome obligation of child bearing¹⁰.

Widows Remarriage

E.V.R. also reformed and modernized several aspects of marriage. The reforms of E.V.R. have helped to improve the quality of life of women in general. E.V.R. opposed the widowhood ever since his niece Ammayi aged ten lost her thirteen year old husband due to cholera. It was a rude shock for him and thenceforth he took a vow to eradicate child marriage and popularize widow marriage¹¹.

¹⁰.Gopalakrishnan, M.D., *A Garland to Periya*, Chennai, 1999, pp.80-83.

¹¹.KudiArasu, 22 August 1926.

True to his vow, he championed the cause of widows by arranging several widow marriages, popularizing them and helping the widows in the society to attain a new lease of life.

E.V.R emphatically supported the rights of women to divorce when they could not get along with their husbands.

E.V.R also strongly condemned polygamy. He cited the practice of the Namboodiris, girls while all the other younger brothers can keep the Nair girls as concubines. The children born to the concubines have no right over to the father's property. This practice keeps the Namboodri old man with six or seven wives¹².

Empowerment of women

E.V.R. advocated enlightened ideas even long before the developed countries enabled their women to attain legitimate rights in society. In the first self-Respect conference held at Chengelpet under the chairmanship of W.P.A. Soundarapandian in 1929 he adopted new policy guidelines to empower women.

The resolution stated that the age for a girl's marriage should be above sixteen, and that if the husband or the wife disliked the alliance and wanted the marriage to be cancelled, he or she should be given the right to get it annulled; that widows should be helped to get married again and that widows should be given the right to choose their partners without attaching any importance to religion or caste¹³.

E.V.R's concept of women's status was different from the notion of others. Urging the women to respect themselves as individuals in their own right, he wrote,

¹².*Ibid.*, 26 October 1930.

¹³.Veeramani, K., *Periyar on Women Rights*, p.62.

"wearing silk saris, putting on gold and diamond jewels, riding in motor cars and declaring that she is such and such an officer's wife will not bring honour to any woman. If a woman thinks like this, she will be only demeaning herself, Does a dog's merit increases simply because it belong to is Rajapalayam, or Alsatian or a local dog.¹⁴ He believed in the development of women through education and employment which would help them to attain status and empowerment in society.

A woman for E.V.R. grows in beauty by modern and higher education. He used to cite a verse of Naladiar to impress upon women the need for education. He gave certain practical suggestions to empower women. He advocated that all teaching jobs in schools must be given to women, and in the job oriented institutions like nursing schools, polytechnics and engineering colleges the training for women should be given.

E.V.R was emphatic about giving equal preference to women in employment. He advocated fifty per cent of reservation for women in all jobs. He further stated that some of the jobs should be exclusively reserved for women, for example, the teaching profession upto high school standard might be reserved for ladies. In that case they will be engaged in teaching and preparing lessons. This must be the policy of the government¹⁵. He also recommended the large- scale expansion of the nursing profession for the employment of women and for the promotion of health in society. E.V.R ridiculed child marriage as this practice went against the very spirit of women's development.

¹⁴ .Viduthalai.13 March 1950.

¹⁵ . The Periyar Self- Respect Propaganda Institution, *Collected Works of Periyar E.V.R.*, Madras, 1981, p.214.

Family planning

E.V.R's views on family planning measures and emancipation of women deserve serious consideration. He desired girls to be well educated, and not to consider their marriage until they attain proper age. E.V.R wanted married women to be employed and not remain content with forming a family as was done traditionally.

For the emancipation of women E.V.R held rather extreme views on pregnancy and bearing more children. He said; " They (women) forfeit their self - respect and work like slaves because of more children. It is mainly because they shoulder the responsibility to protect their many children. It is more applicable to womenfolk. Why? This pregnancy is the root cause for premature deaths¹⁶.

E.V.R. in his long crusade against injustice singled out women, who are to be given equal opportunities in society. He thought against child marriage, devadasi system, unequal marriage alliances, widowhood, ignorance and illiteracy of women. In his struggle against women inequality he advocated property inheritance right for women on par with men. He considered the biological otherness of women will not stand in the way of women exercising equal rights with men. The catch words of his propaganda included like this "women are not baby producing machines", "women are not bedroom commodities", "women subordination to men a shame on society". E.V.R. served the society almost like a representative of women cause. Therefore, it is no denying fact that he is considered to be great pioneer in the cause of women welfare and empowerment in the twentieth century and in the years to come.

¹⁶.Gopalakrishnan , M.D., *op.cit.*, p.59.

CONCLUSION

E.V.R. was a social activist, political leader, rationalist thinker in Tamil Nadu. He was a staunch critic of Hindu Gods and Goddesses. He strongly opposed Hinduism and the caste system. His virtue was his frugality and simplicity. His ambitions were high; but his wants were modest; he kept them to the barest minimum. He was free from addiction of any kind. He dressed in the simplest piece of cotton material, ate whatever was served, slept anywhere when he needed rest. He left behind him a society vastly different from the one he inherited. More modern and in general closer to take off point for a state of living that would be richer in all respects.

E.V.R is immortal, he will never die, and his struggle for social justice is getting popular and stronger every passing day. His social justice and human rights message and his revolutionary ideas spread all over the world. His influence in all spheres of life is so deep and his rationalist thoughts are so powerful to drive the nation successfully on the path of progress and modernity. He was a born revolutionary, though born in orthodox family. He never accepted social evils, religious bigotry and superstition. From his experience, he found that religion was nothing but an exploitative system.

By the Gurukulam issue, E.V.R. became the champion of the non-Brahmin leaders in congress and by his active involvement in the Gurukulam issue of communal restriction, there witnessed ever widening gulf between E.V.R, and Brahmins in Tamil Nadu.

E.V.R.'s heroic struggle and his victory at vaikom gave encourage to his followers. E.V.R. was a great champion of women rights and their equal rights status in the society. He advocated that women should be given equal rights along with men in the family property. He suggested for women getting job and remuneration on the

basis of their qualification and equality. The uplift of women was one of the objectives of E.V.R. Since the beginning of his public life. Just as he was particular that there should be no social difference between man and man so also it should not be between men and women. He hated the idea of considering women as an object of beauty and utility. He advised women to develop self-respect and organize themselves and come forward and fight social discrimination. He preached and practiced that at a time when the leaders of political parties and communal groups did not bother about this aspect in their life mission. He constantly engaged himself in propaganda against child marriage, and during his own life time succeeded the government in fixing the minimum age of marriage, for girls eighteen years. E.V.R. had even foresight to anticipate the population growth in India and advised married couple to limit the birth of children.

E.V.R. was a great fighter for human rights. He wanted to see a casteless and classless society on his time. He wanted to bulldoze, dynamite and blast off the reactionary obscurantist citadels of superstition and caste bar which was infinitely worse than the apartheid. He was very eager to see a new social order where the original sons of the soil are not branded as 'Shudras' and 'Chandalas'.

As a multi-faced personality, he was blended with the virus of will the virtues of will and determination, force and magnetism, courage and resolve and above all compassion and love. It should be noted to the credit of E.V.R. that his repeated public meeting on the question of communal representation forced the Government to pass G.O. No. 1129 on December 15, 1928 which ensured proportionate representation in public officers. His fight retained the Communal G.O. finding a permanent place in India Constitution by the amendment of Article 15(4) of constitution. His thoughts of gender equality, removal of outdated custom for the emancipation of women, family formation, family planning, removal of civil disabilities, property rights to women,

basic amenities to the depressed class people placed him a pioneer of Human rights in Tamil Nadu. Though E.V.R.died, he sowed the seeds for the Human Right Movement in Tamil Nadu. E.V.R.'s Dravidar Kazhagam as a social organization, is serving the people in protecting human rights.

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