

# WE TAMILS



P. SANGARAPILLAI

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# **WE TAMILS**

**A SHORT HISTORY OF THE TAMILS  
UP TO BRITISH PERIOD**

**P. SANGARAPILLAI**

B.A. (Lond.), B.Com. (Hons) (Lond.), M.Sc., (Econ.) (Lond)

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**P.SANGARAPILLAI**



## FOREWORD

(Tamil Edition)

Many scholars have written on the History of the Tamils looking at it from varied angles and after having done a lot of researches. The history of the Tamils is something that is hoary with the richness of its past glory. This work, by name, **‘We Tamils’** is one such among them. It is one of those works known for its depth of information and thought-provoking.

The author is known for his erudition, scholastic outlook and is well versed in the subject. He is a great thinker. He is known for his deep aptitude for research. He has gone deep into the subject, done personal research on the subject of the Tamils’ history since time immemorial covering upto the present day history. This work is complete in all respect and should serve as an authentic piece of its kind.

Recognising the worth of a work of this nature, the Colombo Tamil Sangam has considered it fit to go in for a new edition. The author’s wife and sons have given permission to do so. They have extended necessary monetary help also.

Sri S. Chandrasekaram, the Head of the Department of Education (Social Studies and Science) in the Colombo University, has given preface to this work. Mr. Ganesalingam, who is a longstanding friend of the author of this work, has agreed to print this book. He is the proprietor of the Colombo Kumaran Achagam. This Tamil Sangam is deeply indebted to all these friends.

It is a veritable repository of the great history of the Tamils. Everyone should read this book and be benefitted out of it. May this work and the name of its author continue to live in the gloried annals of this world’s history.

Tamizhavel **S.E.K. KANTHASWAMY**

Secretary,

Colombo Tamil Sangam

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## LIFE AND WORKS OF

**P. SANGARAPILLAI,**

(Member of Association of Tamil Scholars.)

The land of Srilanka is an ancient one and known for its great works in literature, Poetry, Ethical works, Puranaas and History. It is a land where great scholars were born and became very famous. P. Sangarapillai, who has written this book, is one among them.

He was born as the eldest son of Kumaru Ponnambalam, in the place called, Maaviddapuram, a part of the glorious city of Yaazhppaanam, on the 13th day of December, 1913. He first studied in the Union College of Tellippalai; later in Victoria College of Chulipuram. He later obtained Honours Degree in Commerce from the University of London.

He joined as a clerk in the office of the Attorney General of Colombo. He married Manonmani, in the year 1938. She was a great woman. He then obtained successively a Degree in Science and Postgraduate Degree in Science. He obtained a First Class Degree in Economics. He became the Assistant Director in the Regional Transport Office.

After retirement, he served as Administrative Secretary in the Srilankan Chamber of Commerce for a period of 19 years. He was also serving as a part-time lecturer in the Colombo Vidhyodaya University. He was a member in the group of scholars who were entrusted with the Development of official terminology, in the Ministry of Education.

He had five sons, whose names are, Chandramohan, Asokan, Nagendran, Mahendran and Manoharan. He had two daughters by name, Jayanthi and Manohari. All the five sons are Doctors. Some of them are settled in United States and the rest in Australia.

The author of this book was drawn towards understanding the Tamil heritage in depth due to the inspiration given by Mr. Sivapathasundaram, a great Saivite scholar, who was the principal of Victoria College of Chulipuram. Sangarapillai studied them with a view to understand them deeply and do research. Incidentally he studied Astronomy also and became a great scholar in the subject.

Apart from this book that you have in your hands, Sangarapillai has written books on Economics, Saiva Siddhantham, Kalyaanapporuththam and 'Life After Death?' All these books reveal the depth of his knowledge and outlook on research. The book entitled, 'Life After Death?' compares the Western thoughts with the Eastern views on the aspects of life after death.

Sangarapillai was known for his social outlook. He thus became a life-member of Colombo Tamil Sangam in the year 1950, its vice-president for the years 1977-79 and ultimately its president for the years 1980-83. Later he became one of the trustees of the Sangam. He was in continuous membership until he died.

It was during the period of his Presidentship, the accounting procedures of the Association were duly regulated. He instituted trusts for giving scholarships to students. He created Corpus funds from out of the donations received and arranged for the interest monies that were accrued to be defrayed to deserving students. The various departments that were benefitted in the form awards instituted, were, Public Speaking, Tamil writings, Poetry, Research and other works. As many as 15 such departments were benefitted.

This author died on the 18th February of 1990. The obsequies were performed in the USA only. The ashes were immersed in some of the important rivers of India. His wife and last son visited Srilanka and India for performing the final rites.

There was a condolence meeting convened under the auspices of the Colombo Tamil Sangam. H.W.Thambiah, the famous legal luminary, S. Ganesalingam, the senior Tamil writer, Poet T. Kanagarathinam, the Director of Srilankan Chamber of Commerce, a member of majority group of Srilanka, and a close friend of his were the speakers on the occasion.

The kind of noble deeds done by this great Savant of Tamil literature will serve as Memorials for long. He has served the cause of the language of Tamil and the Tamils, and Education in general.

He was a great scholar in the field of Arts and Science. The book that you are perusing now will speak of his erudition and wide knowledge of the World History and World leaders. It is he who brought out a unified volume of the history of Tamils scattered all the world over, particularly the Tamils from Eelam who had gone out to varied lands of the world and who were living in different places of the world.

He has given the history of Tamils starting from the pre-historic times and upto the present times. A great thinker that he was, his memory must be cherished by every Tamilian in his heart for his great contributions. This book must be read by every Tamilian from Eelam.

**Tamizhavel S.E.K.KANTHASWAMY**  
Secretary,  
The Colombo Tamil Sangam

## PREFACE

P. Sangarapillai was a great scholar in varied fields of knowledge. He started his career after graduation in Commerce and then went on acquiring degrees one after the other and his contributions have left a deep impression of pride in the heart of every Tamilian. The varied fields that he touched upon for the purpose of wide understanding were Tamil as a language, the History of Tamils, Tamil literature, Politics, Sociology and Spiritualism. His knowledge was never superficial. He went into great depths on every subject.

I am pleased that this book, originally published in 1979, is getting its second edition now. Apparently it looks as a book on history but it describes more by way of presenting the Cultured life of Tamils, their Arts, literature, Religion, Industry, Agriculture - all at once, to give an integrated view of the Tamils' life that obtained through history. It gives by its research an insight into the status of the Tamils through the chequered periods of history.

Sangarapillai has, by his extensive research, brought out from the hoary Tamil literature, a wealth of information and presented in this book. They were not just pieces of literature but they reflected the life-style and ethos of the Tamils and that has been proved by the author in this book. Besides, he has read widely books on Tamil History and History of Tamil literature and used all that he could gather from those books.

Any Tamil Scholar who ventures to write books on the history of Tamils could as well refer this book for producing his work.

We are living in days where we seek to find unity in diversity. Many countries of the world are multi-racial in nature as obtaining on date. It has been accepted after all that ours also is a country which is multi-racial in its nature.'

The unique perceptions and individual culture of every race are sought to be maintained, preserved and developed also by first having a deeper understanding of the culture, language, arts and literary traditions. This is observed to be so in various countries which have by historical forces become multi-racial in character. This is true not merely of the developing countries but developed countries also.

Time was when the minorities of a country felt that by merging with the majority, they could reap economic benefits. Yet by 60s the minorities started developing or perpetuating their racial individualities and showing deep interest in such activities. Today, nobody feels shy about identifying oneself with his race, culture, conventions and traditions. They feel, instead, that such things give them a sense of pride.

When viewed from this background, this book, 'We Tamils,' written by Sangarapillai, must carry its importance to the minds of its readers. Sangarapillai shall for ever live in the minds of the Tamils for this onerous work of his.

#### **S.CHANDRASEKARAM**

Chairman, Science and Sociology,  
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### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Sangarapillai family would like to sincerely thank all those who were involved in bringing out this book.

Our sincere thanks goes to all those who were involved in the English translation of this book. Specially to Mr. M. Srinivasan who translated the text to English and to Mr. E. Gopal, journalist, for his valuable advice and proof reading.

We sincerely thank Mr. Ganesalingam who undertook this project without any hesitation. Mr. Ganesalingam has been associated with the late Sangarapillai for a long time. Even when Sangarapillai moved to USA, he kept in touch with Mr. Ganesalingam who by that time had permanently shifted to Chennai in India. Mr. Ganesalingam published all of Sangarapillai's Tamil books. When we approached him in Chennai last year about bringing out the English translation of this book, he readily agreed to undertake this project. Mr. Ganesalingam is a great Tamil patriot, author of many Tamil books, and has had done yeoman service for the Tamils. We wish him well in all his endeavours.

We take this opportunity to thank the Colombo Tamil Sangam, for which our father had great respect and admiration. It was they who published the Tamil version of "We Tamils." The office - bearers of the Sangam have been an enormous strength and support for our family. We would like to say "thank you" to the President, General Secretary and all the members of Colombo Tamil Sangam.



## PONNAMBALAM SANGARAPILLAI – THE TAMIL DOYEN

Ponnambalam Sangarapillai was born on December 13, 1913 in the historic town of Maviddapuram in Tamil Eelam in Srilanka. He was the second child in the family. His father, Kumaru Ponnambalam was a farmer by profession. His mother, Achimuttu, was a pious housewife.

Sangarapillai's life history should be a lesson for all those who are born poor and struggling to come up in life. Though born very poor, he demonstrated that through hard work, patience and honesty, one could overcome all the struggles and rise up in the society. He never gave up hope even in the presence of dire hopelessness. We sincerely hope that his life history would be an encouragement to all those who are in such dire circumstances.

Sangarapillai had his early education at the Union College in Tellipalai. He was a brilliant student, who had the ability to grasp any subject or topic very easily. He had an astounding memory. This made him excel in mathematics. He then joined the Victoria College in Chulipuram. His family was so poor that he did not have the means to utilize the public transportation. He would later recall that after helping his father early in the morning with his cultivation work, he would walk about 8 to 10 miles to his school bare footed. It was here that he came under the influence of a great Tamil scholar, "Puloli" Sivapathasundaram. This Tamil scholar was solely responsible for Sangarapillai's love and dedication for the Tamil and its culture.

Due to unavoidable circumstances, the family had fallen into great financial difficulties. When he was thirteen years of age, his father had left the family and moved to Singapore. Hence, he had to bear the full responsibilities of his family at an early age. He had a sick mother and four young sisters to take care of and feed. The family could only afford to have meals once or twice a day during those difficult times. He was so poor that he mostly wore shorts and a shawl to cover his upper torso. He did not have the opportunity to wear shoes or slippers to protect his feet against the scorching sun. Yet, he was determined to raise his family and himself against all odds. He had made a promise to his mother that he will dedicate his life to pull the family out of the dire financial circumstances.

A brilliant student at school, he impressed his teachers with his hard work. He was very much interested in sports and actively participated in soccer and volleyball.

In 1925, even after his father return, the family's dire economic situation did not improve. In 1926, when his eldest sister got married, the family was happy that they were able to get her married in spite of the poor circumstances. The very next day, his father was found dead due to natural causes. This had a great impact on the family. It was learnt that his mother was four months pregnant at the time of her husband's death. Such tragedy would not deter Sangarapillai's determination and courage to pull the family out of doldrums.

After his schooling, he entered the Colombo University. By twenty-two, he had obtained double degrees, passing both with flying colours – Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science. He obtained first class in both these exams, awarded by London University. He then joined the Attorney General's office as a clerk in Colombo.

In 1934, the Jaffna district – especially the village of Maviddapuram – was affected by typhoid fever. There were

many deaths due to lack of proper medical care. Sangarapillai's whole family was affected with the typhoid fever. He only escaped because he was working in Colombo at that time. His only brother (posthumous baby) was so sick that he was given up for dead. However, this small child survived the deadly typhoid. His three teenage sisters were not that lucky. All three died within a week.

The family was so poor at this time that they did not have money to cremate and provide a decent funeral for the three sisters. This had a devastating impact on his life. He would later recall that if only he had some money, he would have given his three loving sisters a fitting burial. This tragedy would only make him more determined to pull his family out of the dire economic situation.

In 1936, Sangarapillai married the only daughter of Kuttithamby of Koddadi in Jaffna. His wife's name was Manonmani. Manonmani came from a wealthy family. Kuttithamby was a leading criminal lawyer in Burma (now Myanmar). Kuttithamby was initially averse to this marriage proposal only because of Sangarapillai's dire economic situation. He wanted his daughter to be married off to some wealthy individual. He agreed after his mother-in-law successfully argued with him that in any marriage it is not the wealth but the character of the bridegroom that should be considered. Kuttithamby was very appreciative that though the boy was poor, he had worked hard and qualified himself with double degrees from the London University. Kuttithamby spent lavishly on the wedding.

After his marriage, Sangarapillai obtained further degrees from the London University. He passed B.Com and the M.Sc in Economics with honours. However, the pinnacle of success would come a few years later when he passed the London

Institute of Transportation examination and was placed first in the Commonwealth. He was the first Ceylonese to qualify this exam. Thus he became the first transportation economist in Srilanka. Even today, only a handful of Srilankans have qualified this exam.

By this time Sangarapillai had joined the Motor Traffic Commission in Srilanka, and was quickly promoted as the Deputy Commissioner of Motor Traffic.

In 1956, the Bandaranayake Government in Srilanka implemented the "Sinhala Only" Act. Through this Act, the government of Srilanka forced the Tamil government servants to learn Sinhala. The Tamils were very much offended by this. The Tamil politicians protested both inside and outside the Parliament. But self-respectful Tamils like Sangarapillai went even further. He resigned his top government job in protest against the "Sinhala only" Act. At that time of his resignation, he had risen to the one of the highest government positions in Srilanka. Had he stayed back a couple of more years, he would have risen to the top civilian position in the Transportation Ministry. Yet, by resigning, he placed the interests of the Tamils above his family. He did not even tell his wife about his resignation. At the time of his resignation, he had seven young children to take care of. The financial situation of the family was very precarious at this time. His wife stood by her husband's decision and strongly supported him.

For a short time after his retirement he worked for a private transportation company. He then joined the Ceylon National Chamber of Industries in 1961, and quickly rose to become its Chief Executive. He held this post until his retirement in 1982. This firm acted as a conduit between the government and major industries in Srilanka.

In 1968, he was appointed by the then Minister of Transport as a member of the "Dowa" Commission to probe into the tragedy of a bus accident that killed many people. Shortly after that, the Minister appointed him as a Director of the Ceylon Transportation Board (CTB). At that time, CTB was responsible for the entire public transport in Srilanka. While he was the Director of the CTB, he provided hundreds of jobs to the Tamil youths from Jaffna district. Some of the youths whom he recruited would later rise to the top positions in the CTB. He was magnanimous even to offer employment to those families that had spurned him and his family while they were struggling to meet their economic needs.

In the mid sixties, Srilanka did not have enough qualified people to lecture Tamil students in economics and commerce. In spite of heavy work schedule and family commitments, he offered his services at the two premier teaching institutions, namely the Aquinas College as well as Technical College. He was a popular lecturer, who kept his students spell bound with his knowledge in economics. Many of his students would later rise to some of the top positions in Srilanka. He also lectured at the Vidyodaya University in Colombo.

As a youngster, he was very actively involved in volleyball and soccer. Later in his life, he had a passion for cricket. He also enjoyed playing bridge. He was a long standing cigar smoker – he used only the "Kanagalingam" brand. He enjoyed his cigars very much and had to quit once he settled in the United States - only because he could not get his brand of cigars in the U.S. In the mid seventies he became very much interested in astrology. He would spend long hours studying astrology. He never profited through astrology. He wrote a book on astrology and published many papers on the same subject. He charted horoscopes free of charge for his relatives and friends.

Sangarapillai's association with the Colombo Tamil Sangam (CTS) began in the early nineteen fifties, when he joined as a member. CTS is one of the premier institution that protects and propagates Tamil culture in Srilanka. He began to closely associate with this premier Tamil institution in Colombo in the early seventies. He was the President of Colombo Tamil Sangam from 1980 to 1983. While he was the President, he brought many administrative changes at the CTS. He established many scholarship funds; he meticulously organized the financial and accounting practices at the CTS. He encouraged for the CTS to have its own library as well as a conference hall. He helped the CTS regain some of its land that had been occupied for a long time by a tenant. He was instrumental in the collecting funds for its building. Once he retired from the private sector, he spent long hours at CTS. He nurtured CTS as though it was a part of his family. He had a great affection and respect for CTS and for all those who worked there. He continued this close association even after he migrated to U.S. Today, the family has constructed a beautiful hall and a well stocked library at the CTS premises in memory of the late Sangarapillai. Both the hall as well as the library are extensively used by the Tamil community in Srilanka.

Sangarapillai was very keen to settle down in Jaffna after his youngest daughter's wedding. He wanted to be close to the place where he was born and brought up. He wanted to continue his selfless service for the Tamil people. He had made all arrangements and had even built a house in Jaffna town. However, the racial riots of July 1983 would permanently change all these plans.

In the early part of 1983, he developed a small wound on his right foot; he was a chronic diabetic. Unfortunately during the racial riots in July of 1983, he could not get proper

treatment for his wound, and it turned into gangrene. About a week after the riots, his sons decided to bring him and his wife over to USA. When he left Srilanka during those tumultuous times, he never dreamt that he would never return to Srilanka. When he consulted the doctors in Chicago, they advised amputation below his knee since there was no blood circulation. His initial reaction was that of shock and depression. He later decided that depression and dejection would do no good for him, and decided to fight back his misfortune. Within weeks after the amputation, he was fitted with prosthesis and he worked hard while in rehabilitation. Within months, he was walking perfectly with the prosthesis. He gained weight and immersed himself in American politics and sports. He loved watching Tennis, Basketball and American football on TV. He loved to talk about American politics and would passionately argue for those politicians he liked the most. One of his favorite politicians was the late Ronald Regan. One could say that his best years in life were spent in USA. While in USA, he and his wife were taken care by his daughters-in-law, who looked after them lovingly. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1989 both in Sydney (with their daughters) and in California (with their sons). Though he liked his stay in USA – from 1983 until his demise in 1990 – he always desired to get back to Srilanka. It is most unfortunate that his desire was never fulfilled due to the ethnic troubles in Srilanka.

Sangarapillai authored many books. His first book was the translation of a famous economic book (by the famed economist Keynes) into Tamil. This book is widely used in Srilanka by the students who pursue economics in Tamil. He also wrote few books on Economics in Tamil. He wrote many books in Tamil. These books are 1) *Naam Thamilar* (We Tamils). This book traces the history of the Tamils up to the British period in Srilanka. This book is considered to be an excellent source on

the Tamil history, and has been reprinted several times in Tamil. 2) *Saivasiddantham* (Hindu philosophy). This book explains the various aspects of Saiva philosophy. 3) *Maranathirkupin* (Life after death). This book analyses the views on this subject by all the major religions of the world. 4) *Kalyanaporuthangal* (Permutation- combination of marriage proposals). This is an astrological book that explains the complex permutations and combinations of the horoscopes of those intending to get married.

Sangarapillai had eight children – six boys and two daughters. His eldest son, Siddharthan died at the age of eight due to complications of appendectomy surgery. His other sons are Dr. Chandramohan (Psychiatrist, Chicago), Dr. Asokan (Radiologist, Chicago), Dr. Nagendran (Internist, California), Mahendran (Accountant, California) and Dr. Manoharan (Emergentologist, California). His eldest daughter, Jayanthi lives in Sydney, Australia and is married to Suthanthiraraj, who is an electronics engineer. His youngest daughter is Manohari, also lives in Sydney, Australia, and is married to Jeyendran, who is a civil engineer. The last two children - Manohari and Manoharan - are twins.

Late Sangarapillai has many grand children. They are: Shankar (pursuing a career in the U.S. army), Nina (multi talented girl with interests in poetry and Indian dance), Anjali (major in English music), Praveen (student, business administration), Julian (student), Devein (student), Suganya (pursuing a career in law), Lavanya (law college student in New York), Srividya (college student), Kavitha (economics graduate working in UK), Janakan (graduate in information technology), Abarana (business major graduate), Shivani (business major graduate), Aswini (college student), Sathya and Prashanthi (students). Grand children are well versed in Flute, Violin, Miruthangam, Vocal music and

Bharathanatyam. Two of grand children performed Arangetram in Miruthangam and Bharathanatyam last year.

Sangarapillai's wife, Manonmani, presently lives in USA. She was a devoted wife, who cared and loved her husband very much. Sangarapillai had developed Diabetes at an early age, and it was her total dedication that helped her husband pull through many difficult situations in his lifetime. One could say that she was like a third leg to her husband. Coming from a wealthy family, she faced difficulties of life with courage and optimism.

Sangarapillai passed away in Los Angeles on February 18, 1990. Since he was an astrologer, he knew his end was coming close. He had told his family that he would be going through a bad period (Maranathisai) in 1990 and his chances of surviving this period was very slim. He fell ill after complaining of shortness of breath, and was diagnosed with having mild heart attack. He was hospitalised briefly for a week, and passed away surrounded by all his children. The funeral rites were conducted according to the Hindu rites. There were many tributes to him in the Srilankan papers. His ashes were taken to India by his wife and the youngest son, and immersed in the sacred Ganges River.

The Sangarapillai legacy should be an example to all those who are struggling in their lives. His life is a perfect example of sheer hard work, sincerity and patience. He was a poor village boy from a small hamlet in Jaffna, who through his courage and dedication made it to the top of the society.

Sangarapillai would always say that if there were another birth for him, he would like to be born as a Tamil. He totally dedicated himself to the welfare of the Tamils and its culture. We, the family hope to pursue his dreams and desires.

**Dr. S. Manoharan.**

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***Every city is your city  
Everyone is your kin  
Failure and prosperity  
Are not made by others.***

*- Poet Poonguntran, AD 150 (Circa)*

## **We, the Tamils**

**"There is a race called the Tamils,  
They are distinct and unique by their culture,  
Their language is nectar like,  
True kindness marks their life and culture"**

*- Namakkal Kavignar*

**"Millions of years ago,  
The earth was just getting solidified into rocks,  
and when rocks were yet to become earthen sand,  
the Tamils were already there,  
as the valourous and a cultured race,  
and the earliest of the entire human clan."**

*- Aiyanaarithanaar*

**"The other name for the language Tamil is Nectar;  
It is our life and soul, dearest to our heart  
and the sweetest of all;  
Tamil is like our mother's lap  
the enviable abode of our lives  
ordained by the destiny."**

*- Bharathidhasan*



## CHAPTER I

# WE, THE TAMILS

**W**e are Tamils. Tamil is our language. The word, 'Tamil' means 'sweetness', 'purity' and 'love'. It is the language of languages, prime and supreme, towering high among them. It has the sweetness of nectar and is ever young, expressive and vibrant with life. We are the ones who had ruled the entire world once. Our culture, language and religion had spread throughout the globe. We had built cities all around and people were happy, peaceful and prosperous. We were rich, strong and proud by wealth, industry and economy. Literally we had bathed in milk and always draped in silk. Driving chariots on the roads was a plaything for our children. The expanse of our culture, way of life and economy were indirectly proclaiming our strength and greatness. Once upon a time, we were the supreme, no doubt.

Where are we today? How come, that we have forgotten our own past? Have we lost a sense of our own identity and that of our friends? Like a boat that has lost its moorings, we have lost the identity of our past; we are able to recognise our own kith and kin. Struck by slavery and sick with poverty our life is in shambles today. We are a sorrowful lot of people now. Why?

We are Tamils. Ours is the culture that had ruled the world once. In the ancient days, we were spread right from the East Indian Islands in the Pacific upto America in the West and extensively on the lands on either side of the equator. Westerners used to describe this as 'the Mediterranean Sea Culture' and our forefathers as 'the People of the Mediterranean Sea'. Some of the countries among them like Lemuria and Aitlands have disappeared into sea. The kings who were ruling in the North invaded most of the other countries and killed their civilisation too.

Lemuria is called the cradle of human civilisation. It is the place where our civilisation had its primal beginning. It is where the human being was born and the human society germinated. The language that the people of that land spoke was Tamil.

In due course of time, by forces that were presumably economic in nature, the ancient Tamils migrated into other countries and settled in distant lands. They adapted themselves in turn to the new culture, living and language obtaining in places they had migrated to. One could find details of this migration and related history in *Karnamirda Sagaram*.

The Tamils were no doubt the earliest among the races

**The earliest to stabilize into a cultured community**  
**They lived together and grew together**  
**Bound by love and amity.**  
**They spoke in Tamil, the sweetest of all languages**  
**sweeter than melodies rendered in flute.**  
**They went from place to place**  
**And settled in varied lands**  
**Adapted themselves easily into new environs**

**of culture, language and life-style,**  
**Started living happily with their new found friends**  
**Calling themselves by their new names,**  
**and grew from time to time into an ever glorious race.**

We understand from the writings of Professor Cuckcele that the Egyptians of the ancient times and Dravidians belonged to one and the same race and that these people who were brown in colour had spread right from India upto Spain. H.G. Wells, the great historian, writes in his concise 'History of the World' that these people who were black and brown in colour had spread beyond India right upto the Pacific Ocean; they were the only civilized race in the ancient world; they were the architect of the new stone-age civilisation. In fact, the people of the present day world, though so widely divergent in races as they claim themselves to be, fundamentally belong to this one single race only.

We understand from Rev. Father Keres' writings, that 'the Dravidians migrated to countries in the west after fully establishing their culture in India and remaining there for centuries. They went and settled in places like Mesopotamia and extended their civilisation upto British Isles.' Recently the Russians who did some research on Dravidians guessed that the Eskimos who were living in North Pole were none other than the Dravidians. Dravidians were the only race who had ruled over both the land and the sea and spread to every part of the world in ancient times.

Stories on the birth of human culture abound in many countries of the world. Was the human being born in one land? Or was his birth a phenomenon that occurred simultaneously in different parts of the world? Such thinkings are futile exercises. The basic

characteristics of any human society and the people's conduct hold the key for understanding their pedigree, race, culture and civilisation.

**"All men that live are one in circumstance of birth;  
Diversities of works give each his special worth."**

**" The men of lofty line, whose souls are mean are never great;  
The men of lowly birth, when high of soul, are not of low estate."**

– *Thirukkural*

The aim of this book is nothing but to establish with full historical authority the fact that the Tamils had lived a glorious life, a life of total freedom and enviable culture. They were the most civilised and had extended their culture during the ancient times of stone-age civilisation. This is not a book on history. Yet my idea is to present to the readers, as briefly as possible the great story of ours, the Tamils, right from the period of 16000 B.C. I have extensively gone through various books written on this subject in both English and Tamil before I chose to write this one. It is these jottings which I made during my study, that form the basis of materials for this book.

It is a tragedy that our forefathers had not chosen to write our history. It is often said that Indians have no sense of history at all. Even if they had placed on record any part of their history, they have either been completely lost to posterity or perhaps were destroyed. Most of the works in Tamil were lost buried in the sands of time or consumed by seaquakes. The names of some of these monumental works are given in Appendix II. Many of the works published in Yaazhpaanam (Jaffna) in the 19th Century

have been lost; no wonder works much older than these have been totally lost.

**Lo! the surging waves of the sea, that rose sky high  
devoured on the extensive lore that the Tamils had developed  
over ages**

**Their hoary wisdom on Logic, Fine-arts, Yoga, Science and  
Maths  
and volumes on life-style dedicated to righteousness and  
character,**

**The cruel waters took them to be consumables  
and with it went the great works, fame and greatness of the  
Tamils**

**Deep down the ocean never to be discovered and for ever lost.**

The Kumarinadu lies buried deep under the sea of Indian Ocean and there is no room for any archaeological research on these lands any more. Yet some of the findings made in the twentieth century read along with our own literature, give us a fair glimpse of our own past. Though Puranas are none but a bundle of lies, we get some facts from them too.

Besides, historical events are, marked by Yugas in which they had taken place as per our books. Since a long time in the past, these Yugas have been used to mark well defined periods of ages. It would be unwise not to lay our faith on these Yugas as it would be like not to believe in the Christian calendar of the west. It is no doubt strange that historians do not seem to have depended on these Yugas for arriving at conclusions. Their beginnings are as given below.

Kali Yuga	3102 B.C. February 17/18
Yuga	3076 B.C.
Sagar Yuga	550 B.C.
Saalivahana Yuga	76 B.C.
Vikramaaditya Yuga	56 B.C.
Valluvar Aandu	31 B.C.

If in any of the Indian works, mention has been made of the above Yugas, there could be little doubt as to the date of the particular historical event or happening.

The English historians who wrote the Indian history chose to ignore our Epics and Puranas. These books were written in those days when the Brahmins were in the ascent, their influence greatest and the Pouranika religion too was in the peak of its glory. The followers of Buddhism were indeed against the principles for which Pouranika religion stood but they too wrote their own religious books. William Lokus the historian said that the Puranas were none but a bundle of lies and totally made up stories. He said, "These are stories which had nothing but untruths and total falsehood, written by Brahmins who wanted to establish themselves and earn a livelihood out of the gullible public."

In the later days to come, the wealthy and the rulers of smaller kingdoms followed a similar practice of patronizing the writers of Puranas asking them to write in loud praise of their glory and the glory of their own kingdoms, pedigree and families. These Puranas always followed a conventional style of presentation.

1. They invariably started with describing the birth of the earliest of the kings and the glory of his pedigree and race. Every

pedigree had its beginning in Agni or Yaga or the Chandra (Moon) or the Surya (Sun), or Devas (Angels), Sages or the Lion or Yazhi.

2. The latter among the decendants was praised in the background of the former's glory.
3. They sang the praise of the descendant.
4. They threw mud on their enemies. The religious works of others were condemned.

Like epitaphs written on the tombstones eulogising the dead, as we see nowadays in our own times, these Puranas by and large contained a large amount of falsehood and at times a small amount of truth also. Yet no one could discount them completely. One could sieve out of these Puranas a sizeable amount of certain truths.

The Indian History is one that was written by those English historians who had come seeking a job for themselves during the 18th or 19th Centuries. They had braved to write the history of this great land, basing their knowledge got out of certain books written in a language that was dead already. They started coining history from out of fragments that were incoherent. The periods they quoted were baseless guesses. They had little knowledge about the ancient Indians, their languages, culture and religion. There were many races who had migrated into this land. There were some uncultured tribes who had migrated too and they were nomads; they had their own folk songs to be sung for enjoyment; and it is from out of such songs, these historians chose to write the Indian History. They had sweetly ignored the historical fact that there were many many races and cultures which had their

vibrant existence in this land before but became extinct long before the entry of those nomadic tribes. They tried to see certain principles of Hinduism in these folk songs. They had never learnt the oldest of the Indian languages, namely Tamil. They had little or no realisation of the fact that the southern part of this peninsula, the north-eastern and the central parts were the real seat of the ancient Indian culture, religions, arts and literature.

Today India is an independent republic. The slavish outlook too has left us for good. We understand many things from out of the archaeological excavations done in the twentieth century. Happily the Indian History is getting literally re-written. The history of the Tamil race is inseparable from the history of India. The one becomes a negation in the absence of the other. That is because, right from Himalayas upto Olinadu down south, it is the Tamils or the Dravidians, who had ruled and lived a glorious life. Despite the invasion of the Mongols and the Caucasians, the Indians are the one undivided race of Dravidians of the Mediterranean Sea Culture.

There are certain wrong assumptions and presumptions behind the conclusions drawn by the Western historians. We will briefly go through a few of them.

1. Those historians who wrote the Indian History were Christians by faith. They took the Old Testament Bible as the source of historical facts. Adam and Eve were the earliest of the human beings. The entire humanity is nothing but a long lineage of this primal couple. Adam and Eve were born in Central Asia or West Asia or East Africa. Their period was 8000 B.C. If these things were true, then the following conclusions flow out of them like a logical sequence.

- a. The human race must have been born about 10000 years ago.
- b. The people must have migrated to other parts of the world from the Western or the Central Asia or Eastern Africa. They must have migrated into India also. One could find this conclusion or the idea, in most of the works of the Westerners, either indirectly or explicitly put. Therefore, it is no wonder that they took the Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilisations to be older than and earlier to the Indian civilisation and that the latter had germinated out of the former.

Before they chose to do research on the Indian civilisation they had a good knowledge about the ancient Egyptian and Sumerian cultures. This is what made them assume a connection between the two and write that the latter followed the former as a logical sequence. It did not strike them that the Indian civilisation could have either simultaneously been born and developed or that it could have also given birth to the Sumerian civilisation. Civilisations could have had their births in contemporary times and developed too in different parts of the world separated from each other and it is strange that this fundamental possibility escaped their thinking. It is amazing indeed that such natural possibilities should have gone beyond their imagination.

They took the word Arya as used in our own country and the same word used in the West to mean one and the same thing i.e. it indicates the name of one and only race. And hence, they thought that the northerners of our own country might have been the Caucasians of Germany who had set their foot by migration. They set the period of their entry also. They interpreted the events

to suit this theory. Obviously this made them ignore the Puranas and stories of our own traditions.

Their presumptions and conclusions can never stand to reasoning and truth. There are widely divergent views and estimates on the exact period of the beginning of the earth and civilisations. Yet no one could affirm the exact date. But there are concrete evidences to prove that human beings lived quite a few millions of years before the times given by the Bible. Besides, the contemporary historians say that rising from a single continent of the great Indian Ocean, people had migrated to different parts of the world.

- a. Some of the ancient Egyptian stories refer to a country called "Pant" and a Sea-port by name 'Oviir'. They also refer to gold, teakwood and earthenwares which were found on excavation at the port city.
- b. There is a country by name Sierre Lone in Western Africa. The people of this country speak French. Yet they consider themselves as Tamils who had migrated from Tamilnadu. They show serious interest in Tamil culture and language.
- c. The natives of countries in Western Asia and Smaller Asia claim themselves to be the ones who had migrated from Eelam and settled there. This was originally a country called Eez in the continent of Kumarinad.
- d. Researchers who had studied the "Kuried" people of ancient England and their way of life and religion say that these people belong to the Mediterranean Sea Culture and must have migrated from a big continent in the Indian Ocean.

- e. Rev. Father Keres says that the Catrilonian people of Spain and Pascal people must be the Mediterranean Sea Dravidians.
- f. According to Prof. Raale, "the human race was born first in India only after the great deluge."
- g. "The oldest part in South Asia was South India," says the historian, Doppinard.
- h. "The birth of human race took place only in South India" (Edbans)
- i. "The most ancient of human civilisations existed only in South India. You learn this from the history of South Indian people. The hilly regions of this part of India are much more ancient than the Himalayas themselves. The Himalayas, rose as they are, from the Indian Oceans." (Scott Elliott)
- j. Railer, the historian, has demarcated the various periods of the ancient human history including the Metal age.

The Eolithic Age	400,000 B.C. to 35,000 B.C.
Paleolithic Age	10,000 B.C.
Neolithic Age	10,000 B.C. to 5,000 B.C.
Beginning of Indus Valley Civilisation	10,000 B.C.
End of Indus Valley Civilisation	3,000 B.C. to 2,000 B.C.
Beginning of Metal Age	4,000 B.C.

Even in those ancient times, the Dravidians lived in India. The caves where they were living and the tools made of stone have been discovered in various places in South India like Madurai, Trichy, Tanjore, North Arcot, Bellary, Mysore and Hyderabad. The excavations in various places in South India have brought to



light many details about the life of people who lived in the Neolithic Age. They had lived a peaceful and a stable life. They cultivated the lands and reared plants. They wove clothes from threaded yarn. They made mud pots. They had the fear of God. They lived in a period that was in between that of the earliest of the Sangams and the one that existed in the beginnings of the medieval period. *Tholkappiyam* describes the life of people of four divisions of land.

You could find in all the Indian Almanacs the following demarcations of the various Yugas or ages.

Yuga	Years
Kritha Yuga	1,728,000
Trethayuga	1,296,00
Dwaparayuga	864,000
Kaliyuga	432,000
Chathuryuga	4,320,000
1 Manuvanthram	71 Chathuryugas
1 Kalpam	1000 Chathuryugas

After the end of every Kalpam, the world will come to an end. The Kalpam that is running now is Swethavaraha Kalpam. The 7th of the Manuvanthiram is Vaivasvatha Manuvanthiram. Of these 27 Chathuryugas have already gone. Of the 28th Chathuryuga, after the Kritha, Tretha and Dwaparayugas, we are now in Kaliyuga and in the 5078th year of its running. Hence, it is now 96 million year in this Kalpam since the birth of this world. There are still 2359 million years due to come before the next Great Deluge and the end of this world. One could compare this Macro calendar with those given by the Western scientists.

They said that this world was nothing but a ball of fire. It must have taken a few 100 million years for the earth to become cool and species were borne. It should have taken some more millions of years for the human race to have come upon the earth. The oldest of the human fossils belong to periods even a little before 500,000 years. These fossils were discovered in India, China, East Indies and East Africa. The human beings whose fossils were so discovered were named, 'Ramapithicus'. We were born out of these beings only. Recently in Burma they had excavated bone fossils of human beings who must have lived a 40 million years ago.

The birth of Rama, the hero of *Ramayanam*, must have taken place in the end of Threthayuga and that of Hiranyan was the end of Kritha Yuga. There are some who believe that Kritha Yuga was itself the period of Vedas. If one were to go by the above Tables of various ages, the happenings quoted become unbelievable pieces of imagination. But what was said earlier are the ones according to the school of Devas (Angels.). What applied to human beings and their history was different. People just forgot about it. The years given must be taken as the Solar years (i.e. days). According to this table:

Yuga	Years
Krithayuga	12000
Threthayuga	2400
Dwaparayuga	3600
Kaliyuga	4800
Chathuryuga	4,320,000

What is now running is the 5078th year of Kaliyuga. Lord Krishna died right in the beginning of Kali Yuga. The War of Mahabharatha went on for 36 years. It must have been 3138 B.C. Besides, there is a story according to which the land of Kapatapuram was destroyed by Ayodhya Krishnan in the year 3105 B.C. The period of Medieval Sangam is even earlier to the beginning of the Kali Yuga. The birth of Rama must have taken place at the end of Thretha Yuga i.e. it must have been around 6702 B.C. The Sri Lanka could have got separated from India even before. The period of Hiranya was the end of Kritha Yuga i.e. it must have been 9102 B.C.

The Western historians tried to coin the happenings in the period of 9000 B.C. to 3000 B.C. in order to make them appear to have some connection with a group of people from Turkey and Iran who came to India in 2000 B.C. How to describe this foolishness? The stories of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharatha* were after all in vogue amongst the ancient Indians. The works also could have existed. These stories were later translated into Sanskrit from these works. The Western historians could rather define the period when these translations were done and certainly not the original period of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharatha*.

There is a story in *Mahabharatha* which speaks of Arjuna, one of the five Pandava brothers. It says that he once happened to visit Manipuram wherein was the hill of Naguramalai. He met the Nagakannika Chithraankanai and fell in love with her. Shortly after he married her too. Chithravaahana was the son of Arjuna who while on Dhigvijayam, happened to come to place where his father was ruling and conquered him also. The *Mahabharatha* says that the flag which Chithravaahana had as his symbol carried

the picture of Lion and a Palmyrah tree. Chithraankanai belonged to the Tamil race of Naagarkulam. In what language did Arjuna talk to her? There is no mention of any language difficulty that he seems to have experienced in his romantic experience nor that he had taken an interpreter along with him. The *Mahabharatha* says that the southern kings too had joined the *Mahabharatha* war. Rig Veda says that Krishna was one of those dasa kings. There were no two different races in India in those days, one in the North and the other in the South. Hence, it is clear that right from the days of the *Mahabharatha* it was one and the only race that existed in India of those times right from Himalayas upto Kumari down South including the Eelam and that they spoke in one and only language or the varied dialect of the same language.

We saw that the period of *Ramayana* must have been earlier to 6702 B.C. The war of *Ramayana* was the one between the Dravidian King Rama who ruled the plains in Gangetic north and Ravana, the king of Sri Lanka, who belonged to the Iyakkar pedigree. Rama was black in colour. Ravana was fair in complexion. Vaalmiki says that Hanuman did not speak in Sanskrit (the Devas' dialect) while he talked to Sitha but he spoke in the sweet language of people. This language was nothing but the ancient Dravidian language or the ancient Tamil only. Hanuman and Sugriva were human beings and not monkeys. They belonged to the caste of Mundars. They carried the flag of a monkey. They were called the Vanaras. In the later periods to come, Vaalmiki who wrote *Ramayana* in Sanskrit described these characters as monkeys. Vaalmiki used the story of *Ramayana* as a platform to propagate his Pauranika religion. It is the reflection of these conflicts that one could find easily in many chapters of

*Mahabharatha* and *Ramayana*. Kambar, the author of *Kamba Ramayana* calls both Ravana and Rama as 'Aryans' as both of them were Hindus. Vaalmiki, Viswamitra, Agasthiyar and Manu were after all names in vogue during the ancient Dravidian periods. The people who had lived in India fully were Dravidians. The language that these people spoke must have been the ancient Dravidian or the ancient Tamil.

"It is only the Dravidians who form majority of those now in existence between Sri Lanka and Himalayas" (Prof. Ricile).

## CHAPTER II

### THE ARYANS AND THE DRAVIDIANS

The Westerners who wrote the Indian History during the 19th Century took it without any basis that there were by and large two significant races of people living in India. And they named these races - who were borne in their imagination - as the Aryans and Dravidians. According to them the descendants of Caucasian groups who had come into this land from Iran and Central Asia were the Aryans. They just ignored the other migrants namely, the Mongols and the Siddhiya tribes.

The terms, Aryans, Dravidians, India or Hindu religion were after all words that came into usage only later. Either in Sanskrit or Tamil, the word Aryan was not to mean any single race nor one that was borne on the basis of a racial reference. It was a word that must have been used in any single part of the country and perhaps the same should have been by popular adoption carried to other parts. The various kingdoms in the North were called the Aryavartha. Besides, there are many meanings and interpretations for the word Aryan. It used to mean 'elderly', 'great',

'old', 'cultured' or 'cultivator' and the list is not exhaustive. It was also said that the word, 'Tamil' soon came to be known as 'Dravidam'. If that were so, only the Tamil speaking people should be called the Dravidians. The people who speak in Telugu, Maratti or the Oriyan language never agree that they are Dravidians. Today the Malayalees claim themselves to be Ariyans. They have got Puranas written down to substantiate this claim. And the Bengalis though they are as a race none but the Mongol-Dravidians, claim themselves to be Ariyans. People belonging to many other origins, though they were underdeveloped in culture and civilisation – like Iyakkars, Nagars and Mundars – produced a Puranic lore just to lay a proud claim to that they are descendants of Ariyans. There is also a set of interpreters who say that the word 'Tamil' had its origin in the Sanskrit term, 'Dhramilam' meaning 'a set of people driven away'.

There is an opinion that the word Ariyan stemmed out of a religious basis. According to this, the Ariyans are those who follow Hinduism as their religion and its discipline. Kambar, the great poet who wrote *Kambaramayanam*, chose to call both Ravana and Rama as Ariyans as both of them were Hindus. The word 'Ariya' in other words 'Aryavartham' or 'Aryamatham' stand to mean that the people belong to the religion of Hinduism. If one applies this principle, anyone following the precepts of Hinduism becomes an Ariyan. It becomes a corollary that if one were not a Hindu, he could not be an Ariyan.

A portion of the land to the East of the river Sindhu forming part of the Gangetic plains was used to be called 'Aryavartham'. The people of this land, for reasons unknown, used to call themselves as Ariyans. It was here the Vedas, the Upanishads

and the Agamas were born. It was here saints and sages lived. The Pauranika religion too had its birth at this place. The people called the immigrants from Iran and Caucasia as Milechas. It is a point to be noted without fail that these people never refer to Ariyans as a race who had come from beyond. Vedas tell us that the earliest of the human beings was born on the banks of the river Saraswathi who had later migrated to different parts of the world. The Puranas too reinforce the same point.

- a. The Saptharishis who are said to be the earliest and the forerunners of the human race were born on the banks of the Saraswathi river.
- b. It was here that the Vedas, the Agamas and the Upanishads were sung for the first time.
- c. The Ariya Dharma and religion were born here only.

There are many such stories widely prevalent and people believe them to be true. Vedam was also one such story that was born in between. And the story of ours is that people had migrated to other parts of India and other countries, basically originating from Kumarinadu. That is precisely the story that this book wants to present. It is the story of the North Indian Puranas that human beings had their origin on the banks of the river Saraswathi and the people had later migrated to different parts of the country and the world at large. Let the future historians establish the real truth lurking behind these stories. One thing that stands supremely clear from out of all these is that Indians basically belong to one and only race and the words, Ariyans and Dravidians as applied in our literature do not possess any such ideas to mean that they were coined on a racial basis. People belonging to the different

parts of this country became Ariyans too when the Pouranika religion and the Aryan culture started spreading to those places. People who lived in Deccan and the North Eastern places were not called as Ariyans during the Sangam period as per our great epic *Silappadikaram*.

When one reads the actual portion of the verse, 'North Aryatodu' one could find that the word Aryan used here means that it is based on the name of a particular place.

The Westerners invariably used to refer to the words Aryans and Dravidians with a racial significance. They divided the entire human race into four basic ones – Aryans, the Mediterranean Culture people, Negroes and Mongols. The people in the north were Aryans, according to them. Germans, Caucasians and the Iranians are examples of the Aryan race. They were tall by nature; white in complexion with blue eyes. They had hair all around their face. They had a protuberant head. Despite their height, they had stubby noses which showed no prominence nor of normal length. After their entry into India, the historians took a fancy to name them as Aryans and this was precisely the point of confusion in the history.

As a contrast, Giyerson, another historian, looks upon the Indians as divided into seven basic races. They were (1) people who had come from Turkey-Iran, (2) The Indo-Aryans, (3) The Arya-Dravidians or the Hindusthanis, (4) the Siddhi Dravidians, (5) the Mongols, (6) the Mongol Dravidians and lastly (7) the Dravidians themselves.

He adds, "it is plain nonsense to define those living in the Tamilnad state as exclusively belonging to the race of Dravidians and those in Bengal as exclusively the Mongol Dravidians. Since

time immemorial these races have existed together and lived out periods of their existence only to get mixed inextricably with each other. Hence, the point of view of these races as Aryans and Dravidians must be taken purely for purposes of research." Today the people are looked upon to fall into divisions on the basis of language only.

There is no doubt over the fact that in the ancient times the people living in the whole of India and in Kumarinad in the south belonged to the only race of the Mediterranean sea culture. We will call them as Dravidians. But from time to time, there was always an influx of the migrants from distant lands who came into ours only to get mixed. You could name three of them as important. They were –

1. The Mongols. The time of their entry is set at 144,000 B.C. They spread themselves to live in the Himalayan bases and the North eastern lands. There is also a theory advanced that on the eastern coast, they had come upto Sri Lanka and Yakkars and Nagars were none but Mongols. People living in Assam and Bengal are none but Dravidians of a mixed race and they are called Dravidian - Mongols - Dravidians. It is in these areas you still find a huge population of Dravidians who belonged exclusively to the group of Dravidians unmixed with Mongols.
2. The Siddhi groups. The time of their entry into India is set at 9000 B.C. These groups also mixed with the Dravidians. Those people living in Gujarat, Maharashtra and Sind are the Siddhi-Dravidians. That means they are a fairly mixed population having mixed with the people

in Sind. In the later days to come there were many groups of such migrants who had come into India and settled along the western coast. Yavanars, the Greek, the Arabians and the Syrians were some of them.

3. We shall also use the word 'Aryans' as the Westerners do on a racial basis. There were quite a few of the nomadic races that had come into our country from Central Asia and Iran. The Westerners took it that these were the most primal immigrants. 'Max Mueller, the great German philosopher and other historians who wrote the Indian History in the latter periods, fixed the Rig Veda period as 2000 B.C. was a contention that the Western historians took without any logical basis. We, the Hindus had never agreed with this conclusion. The time when the Vedas and Upanishads were born in Aryavarttha, was many thousands of years before 2000 B.C. There are two theories prevalent which throw light on the motherland of the Indo-Aryans.
4. Those set of people who were called the Indo-Aryans never came from beyond. They were the original inhabitants since time immemorial. They called themselves as Aryans either on the basis of religion or the geographical direction. They were not the Aryans as the Westerners would like to call them on the basis of race. These people called those immigrants from Iran and Caucasia as Milechars. If this were true, then one must admit that the language of the Vedas was also one of the ancient Indian languages. I stress this point at various portions of this book. The conventional theory is that the

Aryans and Tamil were none but two languages that people belonging to the same caste had given to this land.

5. It should have been earlier than 2000 B.C. when the Iranian groups entered. This is estimated to be around 9000 B.C. These old groups freely mixed with the locals. Those who lived in Aryavartham were called the Arya - Dravidians. The Vedic language and religion reveal the Dravidian mixture. Many groups might have landed in the later centuries. One out of these might have entered by 2000 B.C.

Alexander's troops conquered those places upto the river Sind. They entered the Gangetic plains also. After the death of Alexander, his warriors ruled the lands which had been conquered by Alexander. The lands to the west of the river Sind were in their control. After this period and right upto the times when the English started ruling over India, these places never appeared in the Indian history. There were Yavanars, Greeks, Arabians, Turks and Iranians as warriors drawn from various countries and employed in Alexander's army. These people and those who had entered by 2000 B.C. might be considered by the Westerners as Aryans on the basis of race.

In the beginning of the Christian Era, there was the Roman empire in the west and the Chinese empire in the east. There were four others in between.

1. **Parthan's kingdom.** Parthia, Media, Persia and Babilonia were the countries under this empire. The delta region of the Sind River and Gujarat were ruled by the Parthan king, Senaiveera.



2. **The Kandhar kingdom:** This had extended upto the place where the Yamuna was starting to flow. This was ruled by the Sagar dynasty.
3. **The Magada kingdom:** Starting from the East of Himalayas and right upto Tamilnad (including the Gangetic plains), this Magada kingdom had spread. The Mahakarnas belonging to one of the earliest of the races in Andhra were ruling this kingdom.
4. **The Trio Kingdom:** And in the South, there were the Chera, Chola and Pandya kingdoms.

We had mentioned that all the Hindustanis were Aryans. The people who lived in the Gangetic plains, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh were also Aryan-Dravidians. Those who lived to the south of Vidhyas were Dravidians. In Deccan there was a sprinkling of the Aryan mix in the races. Those who lived in Kashmir, Rajasthan, North-western provinces were alone the Aryans by race. Even here there was always the mix with the Dravidians. Most of these areas are now in Pakistan.

Those people who came into Tamilnad after the Sangam period and who were called the Aryans, were by and large the Kalingas, the Kannadigas, the Chalukkiyas, the Rashtrakutas, the Gangars, the Kosars and the Telugus. These are the people who spread the Brahminism and Sanskrit in Tamilnad. These were none but Dravidians by race. By practice, the Brahmins called themselves to be Aryans. Again these Brahmins were not Aryans by race. There are many many races and pedigrees amongst these groups of people.

1. Amongst the Dravidians, there was a group like the Egyptian gurus. These people were called the Brahmins, the Parppanars, Anthanars and so on. They are referred in *Tholkappiyam* as below.
1. There were six groups of Brahmins, five on the king's side and two groups of three each on the rest.
2. There were Priests amongst the Nagars and Mundars who were well versed in Medicine and Manthras.
3. The Arya-Dravidia Brahmins who had come and settled in South.
4. The Dravidian Brahmins of the Deccan
5. Those Dravidians who started wearing the sacred thread for the purpose of livelihood.

## THE DRAVIDIANS

We shall use the term, 'Dravidians' just as the Westerners do to mean so on the basis of race. We shall take that the people who belonged to the Mediterranean Sea Culture and the Dravidians were one and the same. As this is the conclusion of many of the researchers, we shall guide ourselves by the same theory as we would be otherwise landing in confusion. Anyone would agree that the Tamils were none but one among the Dravidian races. We never indulged in writing Puranas (of falsehood) like the rest of the Dravidians. Our kings never claimed to have originated from lions, Sages, Devas or Agni or Surya-Chandras. We had as any other human being, our origin and

development purely by the natural biology. The pre-historic man was Ramapythicas and the next to follow in step was Authrepythicas or Lemurians. As our own real history bears ample testimony to our ancient culture and civilisation, we do not need any Puranas to elaborate on our past. They were not necessary.

Today the word 'Tamil' is used on the basis of language. Though the people who talk in Tamil belong to the Dravidian race, they do not belong to the same pedigree. The Tamils who had expanded their rule all over this country, helped the civilisation and culture also to spread along with them. It was then they mixed with the rest of the Dravidian races. Tamil was the earliest among the Dravidian languages and the first too. The rest flowed from Tamil. The rest of the Dravidian races gave up their own languages in preference to Tamil and sweetly adopted it. In the adopted style, perhaps, the language they speak might sound as Tamil but in corrupt form; but it could be seen that there are sub-groups among the Tamils like Mundars, Nagars, Iyakkar, Velir and Gandharvas.

In the ancient days, people belonging to the Dravidian race lived in the whole of India, Sri Lanka, in the vast stretch of land right from East Indies right upto America and in all the countries that existed on either side of the equator. Researchers Ricile and Nabson are firm on this conclusion. These are the people who migrated into places upto America leaving the Lemurian continent. This is what we understand from *Karnamirda Sagaram*. We understand from H.G.Wells' writings that all those who are brown in colour are basically people who had so migrated from the Lemurian continent. Prof. Ricile writes that the vast groups of people who are living in places stretching right from Sri Lanka

upto the Himalayas are none but Dravidians. This is also the conclusion drawn by many historians.

All the Dravidians are not black in colour. There are people of different colours amongst them – ranging from purely blackish they extend upto slightly whitened, reddish, golden tinted or brown. According to H.G.Wells, these were the people who ruled the world in the beginning of human history and that they were the most civilised beings on the earth. There were many Dravidian races who had control over both the sea and the land. Dravidians were the only races in those times who were at once the seafarers and involved in the world trade also. There were many Dravidian races who were having such extensive control over land and sea, trade and commerce with many other kingdoms. They were (1) the Iberians from North Europe, the Pascans from Spain, the Edruscans from Italy, the Kartesians who had spread to North Africa, East Asia and Southern Erope, the Finisians, the Egyptians who were ruling in Greece, the Erithriyans after whom the Red Sea was named, the Sumerians, the Elamiyars and the people in Sind Valley. The Thirayars who had lived in India and Barathars went upto Anthland in the East and Pacific Islands in the East principally for trade and ultimately settled there.

There were plenty of sub-races of the main Dravidian race in the ancient India.

1. **The Mundars.** These were the Authrolites. Majority of those who are now living in the East Indies and Pacific Islands belong to this race only. There is a theory which states that they entered India from East Indies. There is another theory which states that these were the tribal people who were once living in the Lemuria continent and India too.

Before the Tamils set their foot into India, according to some historians, these were the people who had inhabited this land. But doubtless it is a wrong notion; because the Tamils were not the people to have come into this land from beyond. It is this Kumarinad which is the motherland of the Tamils since eons. Since the prehistoric times, the Tamils and the Mundars had mixed inextricably with each other and lived together. Even in those times, the Tamils had embraced the culture of the Mundars, their language, their religion and civilisation completely and became the Dravidians.

They are called by different names in different parts of India. The names are, the Mundar, the Kolar, the Chandalar, the Pilsukal, the Kurumbar, the Kaanavar, the Kuravas and the Tamils in Sri Lanka. You find the same people in some of the Sinhalese groups. Even today, the Mundars' language is spoken in different parts of India – in Deccan, Madhya Pradesh, Coorg.

**2. The Nagars.** In the ancient times, these Nagars had spread throughout Sri Lanka and India. These were also the original inhabitants of the Lemurian continent. The Nagars had lived in South East Asia, India, Srilanka and Burma, Malaysia and East Asian countries. Besides the Tamils, the Sinhalese, the Kalingars, the Bengalis, the Burmese, the Malesians, the Tibetans, the Nepalese also were mostly belonging to this group of Nagars. The type of connection amongst Burma, Malaysia, Java and Sumatra is principally Nagars who had their primal beginnings from the time of Lemuria continent. These Nagars who had in due course

of time, migrated to these lands. We are able to see the strong connections in the names of the kings' pedigrees, the names of places, in the way the people were called, the language, the general life, the religion and in so many phases of life. We had a lot of general connection with the ancient Savaga kingdoms and also in particular the connections with our Pandiya kingdoms. Even more than 4000 years ago, we find that names like Pandiyan, Sivan, Uur and Meenan were in vogue. It is the Nagars who had lived throughout India, in the north and south, in the east and the west. There were quite a few Nagar kingdoms. Mandothari, the wife of the king Ravana, hailed from this Nagar community only. In those days, the Nagars and the Iyakkars were speaking in the same language and belonged to the same and single religion. They lived in amity too. Arjuna, one of the Pandavas, married Chithraangani, a lady belonging to the Nagar community. In the days of the Buddha, there were Nagar kingdoms in the north. It was the Saisunagar who had ruled the Magadha kingdom for a span of 300 years before the Mauryans. 'The Buddha who descended from Kapilar belonged to Nagars only', says Oldham, the historian. The Buddhism had biggest following from among the Nagars. And it spread to all countries wherever the Nagars had gone and settled.

Today, the Nagaland is in the Himalayan base. These Nagars are those who were ethnically mixed with the Chinese. There are some researchers who would like to call the Chinese also as the Nagars. We understand from the Tamil literature that there were many Nagar kingdoms in the south India. The Nagars were living in great number in places like Takshasila in the North-

western provinces of India. And what is today called Kerala was the place specially known for the Nagar's original inhabitation. There were quite a few Poets who lived during the Prime Sangam period, the Medieval Sangam period and the Last Sangam period. Tamil was the mother-tongue of the Nagars. The Tamils and the Nagars basically belong to the same race. Do they belong to different communities? Or do they belong to the same and single community? Though there are many evidences to prove that they are one and the same community, when one goes deep into their religions, culture and tradition, one has to conclude that they belonged to different communities. At times it appears that they belonged to the group of the Tamil Vellalars of Eelam Nadu. These people and the people belonging to the 'koygama' caste of Sinhalese are none but the Nagavellalars only.

In the ancient times, the Nagars were sculptors, seafarers, traders and engineers. They were educated and well versed in arts and cultured too. One could find even today these Nagars performing their religious rites in both India and Srilanka.

In and around the year 600 B.C. there were quite a few Nagar kingdoms which were ruling different parts of Srilanka. One could pinpoint, for instance, the western area where they were ruling the first Manipallavam which is nothing but the present-day Yaazhpanam. Mathottai was the next. This is nothing but Mannar of our times. The third was Kalyaani. Today you call it as Kelania. In the second century B.C. a very big area of this Kalyaani land was submerged into the sea, as we understand from Buddhist literature. "In those days the sea was hardly at a distance of 21 miles from Kalyaani. It was a scourge that made the sea waves swell into a devouring spree and submerged the lands. About

10000 big cities, 770 places where the fishermen lived and 400 towns – all went into sea; these formed 11/ 12 of the entire Kalyaani." (Rajavalli)

Kantharodai, a place in the northern Sri Lanka, was the capital of the Nagars kingdom. We understand from *Mahavamsam* that Lord Buddha had to visit this place three times in order to settle some disputes among the Nagars. First time, it was Mahianganai, the second time it was Nagadeepam and the third time, it was Kalyaani. The other kingdoms under the control of Nagars in those days were – Thisamagaraamai in the South, Irunuvurai in the East, Lenathothai to the north of Maththalai. This island was named after the Nagars who lived there. After the 5th generation of the King Vijayan who was the last of them to rule, Anurathapuram fell to Nagars. Names like Thisan, Nagan indicate clearly that they belonged to the Nagar community. In the ancient days, the Nagars civilisation had spread right from Egypt and extended upto East Indies. There were quite a few other ethnic divisions among the Nagars also. The Oviyar community was reckoned as the most civilised amongst them.

3. **Iyakkar:** Iyakkars were living in different parts of India starting from Himalayas ending upto Eelam and had spread to the eastern parts of India too. They were known for their valour and were big warriors. There were many Iyakkar kingdoms in those days. Ravana, the king of Sri Lanka, was a great Tamil warrior, a staunch devotee of Lord Siva and a mighty big soldier. In the later days to come, those Brahmins who wrote the Puranas, wrote in loud praise of Vibhishanan who was a coward and of cunning temperament, and one very much after the kingly power.

There was a sharp decline in the status of Iyakkars after Ravana died. Some historians say that these Iyakkars belonged to the Mongolian race. It is now realised that this theory is wrong. Iyakkars were Dravidians only. There might have been some mix of these Iyakkars with the Mongols in the North Eastern parts of India.

4. **Niruthar:** Since time immemorial there has been a strong connection between the Negroes and the Dravidians. Time was when these two races had lived together in the country of Oli in Lemuria and Peruvala. When these places started getting lost in sea, most of those who escaped went and settled in Africa. Some came to Kumarinad and different parts of India. And those who came to India and settled mixed with the Dravidians. One can find the indications even today among certain Indians, that they could in all probability be the descendants of Niruthars. For instance Kochi Naattukkaadar and Pulaiyar look like Niruthars only. Puranas say that Niruthars had won kingdoms upto Pothiyam during ancient days.

5. **Parathar, Thiraiyar, Paniyar:** These were the most original seafarers amongst the Dravidians. These people not merely indulged in trading with people of different lands, settled in those places also and adapted themselves to the local conditions soon. They learnt their languages and by ethnic mixture, their successive generations attained their colour too.

6. **Tamils:** By and large these were the people who lived in Kumarinad and belonged to the Dravidian race. Originating from the South, they extended their power throughout India,

got total control over the entire land and spread their language also. There are some researchers who call the Tamils as Gantharvas. The reason behind this is that by and large the characteristics of Gantharvas depicted in the literatures are the same like the Tamilians' culture.

7. **The other Dravidian races:** Communities like Kadambars, Villavars, Meenavars, Einars, Oliyars, Thodars, Maravars, Maarars, Kochars, Kurumbars, Gangars and Vaanarars were the other members of the Dravidian race, living in those times. During the period of Rig Veda, the ancient Indians were called Daasus. They had their own flags to indicate their race and were called by the symbols in their flags.

* Paravar	— Flag with a bird as symbol
* Meenavar	— Flag with fish as symbol
* Paaniyar	— Flag with palmyrah as symbol
* Anilar	— Flag with squirrel as symbol
* Cipaiyar	— Flag with parrot as symbol
* Kozhiyar	— Flag with hen as symbol
* Nagar	— Flag with snake as symbol
* Villar	— Flag with bow as symbol
* Vaanarar	— Flag with monkey as symbol

When the Kumarinad was submerged in the sea, the Dravidian races which went to North and settled in South India and North India were called by the following names: Bragulier, Andhras Kodars, Thodars, Kondars, Naagars, Thuluvars, Karnataks, Malaiyaalars, Veleer and Gandharvas.

The people who lived in North India, South India and Eezam in those ancient days were Dravidians. They had lived extensively right from East Indies upto America and in all countries on the Mediterranean sea. The civilisations obtained in these lands in those days, their religious practices and their arts prove this point. Researchers say that the script of their languages and that of Tamil were one and the same. There are three kinds of theories current in the field of historical analysis about the origin of Tamils in India. One speculates on that they might have come from beyond. The second guess is that they might be aboriginals of a distant land who had come and settled here. The basis for these conclusions are:

- a. The language spoken by a group of people in Baluchistan has lot of similarities with the Dravidian language.
- b. There is a lot of similarities between the Sumerians and the Tamils, in their ways of worshipping God, the structure of their temples, architecture and the kind of containers to hold the dead bodies when they buried.
- c. There is a lot of similarities again between the cultures of the Mediterranean sea people like Mittaniyans, Elmiyirrukkal, Kasaitrukkal and Dravidians especially in languages.
- d. There is a lot of similarities between the body structure of the Caspians of Iran and the Dravidians.
- e. The word 'Tamil' originated from the Sanskrit word, 'Dhramilam' meaning the 'one driven away'. Hence it could be taken that the Tamils lived in the North Western parts of India once and then were driven South.

These also form the basis to conclude that the Tamils had gone from India to settle in these lands.

2. The second theory is that the Tamils were none but Mongols who had come into India from Tibet. This has been explained by Surya Narayana Sastry in his 'Tamilar Varalaaru'. The basis for this conclusion are:
  - a. There is a lot of similarities between the body structure and their social habits between the Tibetans and Tamils.
  - b. There is a lot of similarities between the Caspians of Assam and the Dravidians in many respects.
  - c. There is a story handed down from traditions which says that the kings of Tamilnad originally hailed from the Vaanaras. Some argue that these Vaanaras had come from Tibet.
3. Tamils are the primal and the most original inhabitants of India. They are living in this country since the birth of human beings and the primal days of the human civilisation. Later, they spread throughout India from Kumarinad. This is the third theory. It is this theory which is also substantiated by our literature and Puranas and traditional stories.

Did the Dravidians or the Tamils come into India from the countries around the Mediterranean sea? Was the Kumarinad or India their motherland? I give briefly the conclusions drawn by historians in this regard:

The earliest of the human beings must have born in the big continent which lay between the Mediterranean sea and the East Indies. Their societies grew in dimensions



since then. They were golden black in colour. The language which was called Pasc and spoken in the Mediterranean countries and the Dravidian language were very much similar. (H.G. Wells)

Amongst the widely varied geological structures of the earth, the one obtaining in Deccan is the oldest. The oldest of the fossils belonging to the Stone-age are found in Deccan only. (Prof. S.H.Wrestley)

The religious practices of those people in the Mediterranean countries were one and the same as those of the Dravidians. Though such practices have become extinct in other countries, they stayed with the Indians and India.

Australia, India and South Africa were once upon a time linked by land and continuous in structure. It was this continent which was the cradle of the earliest man's civilisation.

You still find in Deccan the remains of the Stone-age civilisation. It is from here people migrated to Central India and the Gangetic Plains and the North-western parts of India. They went upto Himalayas. (India and the Pacific world)

It was only in this country that the pre-historic man grew up in social life and expanded his society. It was here that the earliest of the human beings started growing up amidst odds, gradually developed himself, in due course of time developed himself into a society and ultimately formed a kingdom.

One of the currently believed theories, thanks to historians, is that the people from the lands of Central Blue Ocean migrated from West towards East. But the researches done later indicate that the migration was from the East towards West. (Rev. Father

Keres)

They had stayed for a very long period and migrated towards west only after stabilizing their culture in India. They spread our culture right upto Mesapatomia and other British Islands. (Rev. Father Keres)

It has never been proved that the ancient Dravidians of the pre-historic times had no civilisation for themselves and poor in culture. There is no doubt about the fact that they were the kind of people who had founded a big civilisation for themselves long before the Aryans had set their foot into this land. (Caldwell)

Long before the Aryans had come into this land, it was the Tamils and their associates of Dravidian race who had spread throughout this country in very large number.

The body structure of an average human being reveals the race to which he basically belongs. If one were to look at the Indians on this basis, there is no doubt about that a majority of the Indians were Dravidians only. (Prof. Irskeley)

The Dravidians are the earliest of the tribes of India. There is nothing to prove that they were not the earliest tribes. (Kalanidhi Kiyersan)

South India was their mother-land. There is no story handed down since ages to say that these were the people who had come from beyond. (Backson)

It was the land on either side of the equator which became inhabitable in the earliest time since the formation of the earth. It was here the earliest of the human beings was born and the civilisation sprouted. (Kokkal)

### CHAPTER III

## LANGUAGES AND RELIGION

We believe that Sanskrit should have originated in the North and Tamil from the South. We seldom realise that there are many other languages in both the North and the South. Which is greater – Sanskrit? or Tamil? Which is earlier by age? On hearing any term that we use in language – we start breaking our heads immediately to find out whether it originated from Tamil or Sanskrit. Not infrequently we indulge in frivolous arguments like these. If one finds a typical word existing both in Sanskrit and Tamil, one immediately concludes that the word must have originated from Sanskrit only. Could it not be that the word could have also gone from Tamil into Sanskrit?

There was one and only one race of people who lived in the whole of this country (in the North, South, including Eelam also). They spoke in only one Dravidian language or a language that had its roots in the Mother language. Historians say that all the Indian languages as they are spoken today, had primarily originated from one and the same Dravidian language only. It was only one single language that in due course of time developed

into 18 different dialects as per the *Merumandira Puranam*. As per the historians, it was this primal language alone that was singularly responsible for giving birth to the languages which later developed in Egypt, Western Asia, Eastern Asia, East Indies and such other countries. This could have been possibly the earliest dialect of Tamil. Or perhaps the earliest form of Tamil itself could have originated from this language.

Since then through ages, race after race came into this country from distant lands. They conquered kingdoms that were ruling in our land and settled down. There was a continuous mixture of their languages with the ones obtaining in our own land. It was because the Northern part of India suffered greater number of invasions, the North Indian languages had the impact to a greater extent. You cannot find the origin of a particular language from a group or a set of its own words. One must bestow serious attention to its grammatical structure and the structure of its prose. It is the confirmed opinion of philologists that the North Indian languages also had their basic roots in a Dravidian language.

By 2000 B.C. and upto some later period, there were quite a large number of nomadic groups which entered into India from Central Asia and Iran. Everyone of them had their own local dialect. They were crude, unrefined and ungrammatical. But these languages started getting a healthy process of mutation due to their mix with the Dravidian languages which had a superior disposition of well defined letters and fully developed grammatical structures. Thousands of words of Dravidian origin were freely borrowed. The Dravidian dialects obtaining in the North had the impact of the cross-cultural mutations and showed the developmental change. The languages which are spoken today in the North were born out of such mixtures only.

Sanskrit was after all a language that was developed later. It was an artificial one. What I mean is that it had to be rather naturalised only in later days to come. It was the one developed by the Arya-Dravidians. It was the language of the pedantics and the learned. It was the official language of the Governments. After the Sangam period and during the times of Kalapiars, Chalukyas, Gangars and Rashtrakuts and in Tamilnad also, Sanskrit was the official language for a period of 500 years. It was during this period that there was a large-scale import of Sanskrit words into Tamil. It was during this medieval period Sanskrit spread into many other countries besides our own. Hence, Hindus as we are, look upon Sanskrit as the Divine language on the basis of our religion. This is also an Indian language only. We find the element of hatred in some of the Tamils towards Sanskrit. This hatred comes out of pure ignorance. Both the Aryam and Tamil were but two different languages developed by a single community. They originated from one and the same primal dialect.

**Time was as millennia before as  
when the humans  
had hardly understood the seasons varied,  
like the spring, summer, autumn and winter,  
.. it was Lord Siva who gave unto this world  
the two brilliant languages of Tamil and Sanskrit  
through his dialogues with Parvathi.**

The language of Tamil had its birth in Peruvala Nad, grew up in Kumarinad and later spread throughout India. The time of its birth is just inestimable and it is so old and its age is indeterminable.

One could compare only the Vedic dialect as one that is nearest to Tamil. Was the Vedic language the earlier one or the Tamil? The answer lies in our own concept about the Aryans.

The Vedic language was the spoken language of the groups who had come from the Central Asia and Iran around 2000 B.C. This language, thanks to mutation with the Dravidian languages, brought forth a different dialect. This was the theory that the Westerners propagated during the nineteenth century. If this were true, then the Vedic language must have originated only much too later than the Tamil language.

We, the Hindus cannot accept it. Vedas were born very much earlier in our ancient India. It was on the banks of the river Saraswathi that our sages and the learned lived. The Vedic language was nothing but one of the Indian languages of those times. But this Vedic language also suffered by mix with the spoken languages of the later groups who had come into India. If this were true, it is impossible to guess the period in the time-scale and determine as to when exactly the Vedic language was born. It is so old that one cannot fix the date or year when it was born.

**Lord Siva, the God who rides on a an ox,  
blessed the bard Panini with the language of Sanskrit,  
and unto Agasthiar the world renown poet of the South  
he gave the glorious Tamil.**

*(Kanchi Puranam)*

By virtue of the timelessness of their origin, these languages are called as those that came into our land by a divine dispensation. They were like Lord Siva and Sakthi or Wisdom and Love.

We shall now briefly go through the conclusions drawn by some of the philologists.

Right from the days when Sanskrit came to be spoken in our country, it became indebted to the Dravidian language by drawing heavily from the latter. In those days, the Dravidians had spread right from Baluchistan upto Bengal. They spread their arts, religion and language which in subsequent period started taking roots among the Aryans. (S.K. Chatterjee)

Letters like 'A' and 'O' are obtaining in the Pali language also. Yet, some of the letters which are normally pronounced as if they were emanating from teeth, were getting pronounced as if they were spoken out by tongue. This shows that the Dravidian languages had precedence by birth over the ones spoken by the Aryans. This could have been possible if only one accepts the theory that it was the ancestors of Dravidians only who should have been speaking in Pali language. Bengali also remains by and large indebted to the Dravidian language. The 'kal' ending (of verbs) became 'kali' or 'kuva' in Bengal. (Prof. Bhandarkar)

Sanskrit belongs to the group of Indo-European languages. Yet, there are quite a few words and verbs found in Sanskrit, the like of which is not seen in the other Indo-European languages. Many of these have been borrowed from the Dravidian languages only. The North Indians were not pure Aryans. They were an ethnic blend of both the Aryans and the Dravidians. (Kiyersan in the History of Indian Languages)

The language of the people who lived in the plains of Sind was spoken even earlier to the period of Aryans. The reasons for this is threefold.

1. It was only the Dravidians who lived in the North India long before the Aryans had come. Theirs was a great civilisation.
2. Close in the vicinity of the Sind Valley, even today one finds the evidence of the Dravidian languages having been spoken once upon a time. Hence long before the entry of Aryans, the Dravidian languages must have spread to different parts of the area.
3. The Dravidian languages are a kind of link-languages. One could understand this background of the structure of these languages when one compares them with that of the Sumerian link languages. (John Marshall on Mohenjadarao and the Sind Valley culture)

If one were to study together the languages of Sanskrit, Praakrit and Dravidam, it is clear that the Dravidam had spread throughout the North India during those ancient times. There is a distinct difference in the structure of words as they were formed in the Praakrit language like Pali. The case-endings are added to the end of the words unlike Sanskrit which takes them at the beginning of the word and this is precisely the way the words are handled in the Dravidian languages. (Dravidian Researches)

The people belonging to the New Stone-age Civilisation spoke the Dravidian languages only throughout India. Only in certain portions of the Vindhya Region, the languages of Authraloit were spoken. Most of the languages that are now spoken in the North India must have been derivatives of the Dravidian languages only that was in vogue before the Aryans had set in. They lost their original character due to the influx of the Sanskrit. They have not

been derived from Sanskrit or the Praakrit. They lost their identity due to the mixture of these two languages. The various North Indian languages now spoken right from Punjab upto Orissa are closely matching in Grammatical Structure to the South Indian languages. In gender, number, case - endings and the way they are written following words, participles and varied parts of verbs, the structure of sentences, word, figures of speech – in all these cases, the North Indian languages are like the Dravidian languages only.

The North Indian languages of the present day were the Dravidian languages only before the Aryans had set their foot in. Basically they are Dravidian in nature and Aryan in other aspects. Sanskrit was never a spoken language. Hence it could not have generated the birth of North Indian languages. The Dravidian languages that were spoken during these ancient days in the North, had a free mix with Sanskrit and spoken in the mixed way for over 10000 years apparently, subsequently lost their original identity and today they took different form from languages like Tamil. "It is this apparent phenomenon which made certain people think rather ignorantly that the North Indian languages were different from the South Indian languages. All those languages obtaining today in the speaking vogue are nothing but mutations of the Dravidam only." (Sri Venkateswar)

Long before the entry of the Caucasian and Siddhi groups into India, it is only the Dravidian languages that were spoken in the North Western India and there is no doubt about it. (Prof. Robson)

The people who had inhabited the Sind plains were Dravidians only. They spoke in some Dravidian dialect only. There is a lot of

similarities and connections between this and Tamil. This emphasizes the fact that Tamil was the most ancient among languages. (Rev. Father Keres)

Among the ancient languages, it was Tamil which was rich in grammar and literature (Max Mueller)

There are a lot of Tamil words in the ancient languages like Sanskrit, Hebrew and some Greek languages. (Rhyes Davies)

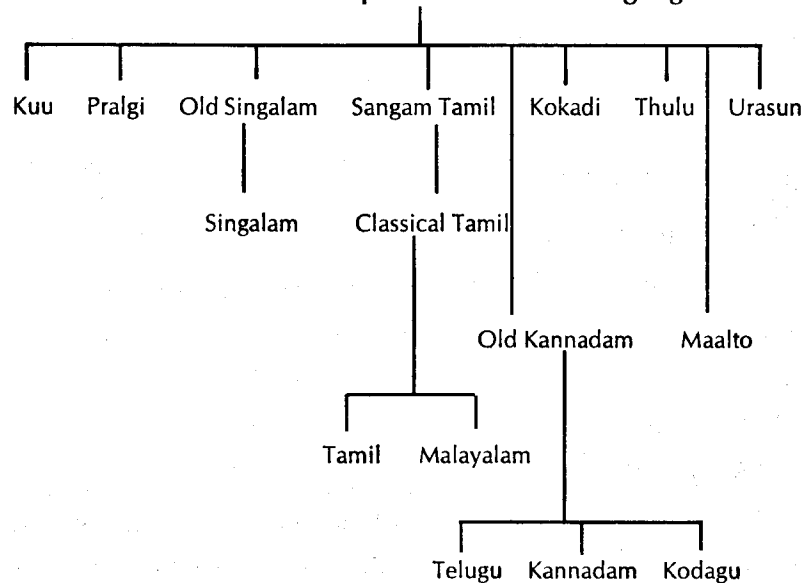
One can never find a parallel in any language, for crispness and brevity in expression – short expressions to convey big range of meanings and interpretations – other than in Tamil. Tamil is the greatest tool for worshipping God. (Rev. Basircivell)

When one compares Tamil with the Greek language, one is struck by clarity and depth in Tamil. It has a wider range of vocabulary than Latin. In its linguistic power and perfection, Tamil compares admirably with the present-day English and German. (Prof. Wincilo)

The base of Indian Civilisation lies in the Dravidian culture, language and religion. (Prof. Gilbersilator)

We, the Tamils say that Tamil was the primal source and the root for all the Dravidian languages. But, all of them including Tamil could have originated from a more primal Dravidian language. You cannot say that the Tamil that was obtaining in those ancient times were like the one in which you and I are talking today. Growth and change are the natural characteristics of any language. A philological tree-table given by a philologist is furnished below.

### The earliest and primal Dravidian language



Of the above those which were later subjected to some corrections were 6 in number. Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Kannadam, Thulu and Kudagu do not belong to the category of those which underwent corrections. The North Indian languages like Thuutham, Kotham, Kondu, Kuu, Orion, Rajamahar and the one spoken in Sind plains were all born from the primal Dravidian language only.

### The Hindu religion

One cannot think of India as something separate from Hinduism. Whether you call it Indian civilisation or the Hindu civilisation, it is one and the same. India has been the birthplace of Spiritual wisdom and Religions, since time immemorial. There are certain unique principles underlying the religion of Hinduism. These are the principles which holistically explain Godhood, life,

human body, Re-birth, the law of Karma, temple-worship, idol worship, non-violence and love for all.

**"It is the ignorant who think that Sivam and Love are different  
Sivam and Love are but one and the same,  
The moment one comprehends the sameness  
One could see Siva as embodiment of love"**

It was the effect of propagation by the Dravidia Brahmins in later times that all the principles underlying Hinduism are there in Vedas. One cannot find the above principles in Vedas. There are some as on date who interpolate such ideas into Vedas. There is no holistic explanation of the threesome principles given above, in the Vedas originally given by Aryans. One cannot find any mention about re-birth or the law of Karma. The Aryans did not like Temple worship nor the Idol worship. Until 500 A.D. the protagonists of Vedas considered these as conflicting ideologies.

In the Rig Veda, barring the 10th chapter, everything else belongs to the group of folk songs. The 10th chapter was later written after mixing with the Dravidians and people became civilized. The people were nomads. They were living a nomadic life shifting themselves from place to place and were greatly stressed by the natural forces like rains, storm, sun and floods. They created songs to be sung in propitiation of these Gods – Indra (thunder), Varuna (rains), Vaayu (storm) and Agni (fire). These nomads had no knowledge of virtues, non-violence or ethics. They had no notion of sins nor a sense of friendliness, nor again a social code of life. They did not love their fellowmen. Their life was essentially tribal and barbarian in nature if not cannibalistic. They drank to their hearts and lived on meat. They were uncultured and brutish. They enslaved women. They wanted to covet others'

possessions. Upanishads and Agamas were the Vedas of the ancient Dravidians. These were later translated into North Indian languages.

“The law of Karma, re-birth, Yoga, Siva, Sakthi and Vishnu and the associated religious principles and practices obtaining in the Hindu temples were all part of the Dravidian life. The Puranas and the stories from Ithihasaas – all belonged to the Dravidians only. Arts, handicrafts and agriculture were part and parcel of the Dravidian culture.” - (S. K. Chatterji)

There were the ancient Vedic lore of the Tamils too. These were called the ‘Marai’. The ideas enunciated under the captions, ‘Marai’ and ‘Vedas’ are one and the same. The word ‘Marai’ was translated and certain poets called their folk songs by the translated term of ‘Marai’. One could find references about this Marai in Tamil literature. The great Manikavasakar says in his verse that these Tamil Marais were originally born from the societies which lived in the hill of Mahendram.

**And thus he gave Agamas unto this world  
Mahendra Hills was the sacred place  
from where he pronounced the Agamas**

**He styled himself as a fisherman  
caught into his net the Kelitru fish  
He was a great hunter,  
He gave unto this world a philosophy of life  
sitting atop Mahendra Hills.**

These Marais in Tamil dwell upon the holistic truths of threesome principle, the law of Karma, re-birth and non-violence. We do not find any of these works today.

They have been lost. *Tirukkural* and *Thirumanthiram* which were written in the later times to come dwell upon the principles which the ancient Tamil Marais were emphasising upon. The Brahmins translated these Dravidian Marais into Sanskrit in the later times to come.

Structure of temples, the rituals and ways of worship are explained in Agamas. How could the Aryans who had no faith in temple-worship or idol-worship have written these works? All the Agamas now available in Sanskrit were translated from the Dravidian languages only. The Puranas and Ithihasaas dwell upon the periods of history long before the entry of Aryans. These must have been already available in the Dravidian languages. When the Brahmins re-wrote these literature by translation into Sanskrit, they interpolated here and there with their own ideas, expanded on the original with their own imaginations and most often the spirit of the original became corrupt. They added their own stories in between and some of their own pet ideas and theories.

Saivism was the only religion of the Tamils. This was a unique religion. One could find a distinct reference to this Saivism in *Tholkappiam* – a work done about 5000 years ago.

**“O Lord Siva ! our God who reigns the broad domain of  
South! We bow down before thee;  
Thou art the God for people of the globe!  
We bow down before thee;”**

The Siva worship and the worship of Sivalingam were prevalent in all the countries of the Mediterranean Sea Culture. But one cannot say for definite that Saivism was the only religion of all the Dravidian people. This was a religion of a group of Tamil

kings. The ways of worshipping God differed amongst the different Dravidian communities.

After the Sangam period, Jainism and Buddhism gained enormous following for a period of five centuries. Though Buddhism was born in the North, this was a rebellious offshoot and a revolutionary religion against the Pouranika religion. The religion propagated by the Vedas mixed with the one of the Dravidians and became the Pouranika religion. After the Sangam the above Pouranika religion got mixed with the religion of Saivism. In the field of religion, the Indians hold the conciliatory view of a 'universal acceptance of all religions'. Principles of various religions and concepts got mixed with those of Hinduism. But basically the Hinduism was a Dravidian religion. This is a dispassionate view of most of the researchers.

"The Hindu religion is an ancient Dravidian one. It suffered very minor changes due to the influx of the Aryans."

– (Sir Charles Eliot)

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ANCIENT INDIA AND LEMURIA

In the very ancient days, there was a big ocean to the north of the Vindhya mountains. There was no Himalayas nor the Gangetic plains in those times. They were there deep within the sea. This sea had stretched from India upto the Mediterranean sea and also beyond upto Central Europe. Most of the countries as obtaining on date – like the Gangetic plains, Kashmir, a vast portion of Pakistan, Baluchistan, Afghanistan and lands like Persia – were all under the sea. Recently a team of oceanographers from Leningrad University have found and declared after their research that there was a very big ocean in the Central Asia and in later times it disappeared bringing forth the lands and hills from depths. The Vindhya hills were just overlooking this ocean. The rivers that started as rivulets, enlarged and ultimately flowed as big rivers down the Vindhya and then into the above sea only. The Lemurian continent which was a very big one, lay to the south of the Vindhya.

Millions and millions of years ago, there were many upheavals of land in various parts of the world and at different periods of



history both recorded and unrecorded. One can never define these periods. These upheavals brought forth big folds on the surface of the earth. The alluvial and black soil which were underneath the sea and the rocky bottoms suddenly came up and became the Himalayas. The sea receded to the west, and the Gangetic plains and the above lands came up. It should have taken millions of years for these changes to have taken place.

The Himalayan hills blocked the southern winds from reaching Tibet. This brought forth rains in the Himalayan region. The rivers started as springs and falls in the Himalayas developed into rivulets and became rivers flowing through the Gangetic plains to ultimately reach the ocean. In the beginning, there were many water falls which contributed to become a big river and made it flow from the east towards west. These rivers started from Brahmaputra in the east and flowed to reach Yamuna in the west. From then onwards the rivers started turning towards south to flow through the Sind plains and ultimately flowed into the Arabian Sea. These are the findings of the researchers. The Himalayas rose up from the sea about a million years ago and there were quite many changes that accompanied. The river that we mentioned above finally became six in number and some of them started flowing towards east.

Very very long after the Gangetic plains were formed, people from South India and the Lemurian continent started migrating slowly in steps to reach the Gangetic plains and ultimately the foot of the Himalayas. We had read in the Chapter II about the various races who had come into India upto the period of 2000 B.C. But even after the above period, races after races entered this country from time to time. Whatever was the reason, one

does not know, but this country attracted people from beyond who started migrating into it in large numbers. For quite a few uncivilised nomads, this land became a hunting ground. The groups which came later were:

1. Greeks, Romans, Macedonians, Turks, Arabians and Iranians in the army of Alexander which was by and large a group of hirelings. These people came upto the river Yamuna and settled there.
2. Kushan and Hans were the Mongols who came through the North Western Ghats and settled in India.
3. Yavans, Egyptians, Arabs were the people who came and settled in the South India and the South Indian ports.
4. Jews and Parsis also came into this land and settled.
5. The invasion by the Mughals. These people came from Arabia, Iran, Turkey and Afghanistan. The great king Akbar was one among those Mongols among the Muslims.
6. The Europeans, Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and then the English were also the people who came into this land to ultimately settle down.

Like many rivers flowing into the sea there were many large number of such races of people who had come into this land; yet the Indians as a race were Dravidians and by culture and civilisation they were Hindus.

### LEMURIA

Very long before the Himalayas and the Gangetic plains came into being, there was a very big continent existing to the south of the Vindhya. The polar region of the South pole, Australia, South

Africa and India had been connected as one by land. This is as per the writings of Prof. Kalanidhi. The lands of Java and Sumitra which are now islands were also parts of the above land.

This vast stretch of land was called Lemuria or Gonwana. In the very ancient times of the past, or many a millennia before, most of this very large extent of land got submerged into sea due to the deluges that frequently came upon the earth from time to time. The Indian Ocean was born out of one such deluge. The huge rocks underneath the sea exploded and caused great upheavals of land. The continents got separated from one another. A vast stretch of sea was created in between. These are the changes that must have taken place during the great 5th deluge, as per Prof. Wesner. It must have taken millions of years for these changes to have taken place in slow steps. Geologists attribute the following periods as the time when the deluges could have occurred.

1. The first of the deluges was before a million years ago. (1000000 B.C). It was this deluge which separated this vast continent from Australia and Africa and shrank in size. This was the global happening which gave rise to the Indian Ocean.
2. The second of the deluges was before 800000 years ago around (800000 B.C.). During this time, the land area shrank further and the ocean expanded in size.
3. The third of the deluges occurred about 300,000 years ago.
4. The fourth of them all took place about 80,000 years ago.

There is no reference about this continent of Lemuria in our Puranas or literature. But the geologists and sages affirm that such a big continent did exist.

"Lemuria, the big continent in the southern hemisphere of this globe had extended throughout the area now occupied by the Indian Ocean and had also spread upto the South Pole, Africa in the west and Australia in the east. This became rather extinct due to natural changes caused by the third deluge" (Madam Kelina Vilavathsky). She and the great German saint, Urudolf Sreena gave a volume of data about this continent which got submerged. Prof. Scot Elliot explained graphically also about Lemuria and Aitland. Elliot says that the people who escaped the nature's fury of deluge ran for life by migrating into India, East Indies and Africa.

Even after these deluges, there was a big country that stretched from Himalayas and extended upto the South Pole. There are quite a few references about this continent in our literature and Puranas. One could divide this land into five parts.

1. The land between Himalayas and Vindhya.
2. South India – starting from Vindhya, this stretched upto the Kumari hills. This hill was in the equatorial region. The present-day Srilanka was part of this land.
3. Kumarinad – This portion of the land lay stretched between Kumari river and Pahruli river (a distance of 700 kaatham). This was the place where the primal Sangam, the earliest of its type existed. This was also called Eelam. Aez, Elu, Eelam and Ceylon were all the names that were born from this generic term Eelam. Merumalai was the name the hill that lay to the south of the river Kumariaru. It was close to the

south of the equator. In his famous work on Astronomy Bhaskarachariar says that the equator passed through the old Srilanka.

**The land of Vanavars was in the south  
like Idakalai,  
Srilanka was in the north like Pinkalai,  
The Meru hills was to the west of Kumari river  
and to the north of Srilanka  
and at the centre of all lay like Suzumunai**

There is a very good reference about this Kumarinad in *Mirugendra Agamam*. The reference runs like this: " There were seven big islands. The central one among them was 100,000 yojanas wide. This was called the Navalanthivu, at the centre of which was the Meru Hills. The land around this hill was called Ilavirutham. The Bharatha kadam consisted of 9 kandas or islands within itself. They were called the Indra island, Kacheru island, Tamiraparani island, Sumathi island, Maga island, Chaandrama island, Kaantharuva island, Vaaguna island and Kumari island. Of all these the Kumari island alone was the best. The remaining were places where Milechars lived.

Adiyaarkku Nallar, who wrote commentary for the great epic *Silappathikaram*, writing on this Kumari island said:

The ancient people called the Kumari Kadam as Naavalanthivu. There were many rivers and hills in this land. Meru and Mahendra were the hills that existed in this land. The famous saint Manikavaasakaperuman said that the Almighty gave unto this world the great Agamas only in the precincts of the Meru Hills.

**May our king be blessed,  
The great Muthukudumi Peruvazuthi  
The one who gave out in charity very large measure  
of Gold and ornaments,  
The one who took delight in performing the festivals  
on the sea,  
May he live as long many years  
like the countless grains of sand in Pakruliyaar**

**4. Peruvalanaadu:** The land that stretched from Pakruliyaaru upto the Tropic of Capricorn was called as Peruvalanaadu. Among the various hills of this land, Manimalai was one.

**5. Olinaadu:** This stretched from the Tropic of Capricorn upto the South Pole and was called Olinaadu.

The Pandiya king Nilaththaruthiruvir Pandiyan the First and his decendants ruled over Pandinaad, Kumarinad and Peruvalanaad during the period 30,000 B.C. - 16,500 B.C. This was the middle of the Stone-age period. From time to time, it was the Nrithur forces which conquered places upto Pothiyam, as per Puraanas. Those kings who were ruling North India helped the Pandia kings. Around 14,000 B.C. Olinaadu and Peruvalanaadu became extinct. The language Tamil had its birth in Peruvalanaadu, grew up in Kumarinadu, and spread throughout India and the Mediterranean Sea lands. 'One can see for oneself its timeless glory, classical supremacy and that it is a language that has no parallel in the human history. It was the most primal among the languages of the world, unique and a bewildering greatness. These are the words of the wise and the learned in the world when they write about the Tamil language.

The history of Tamils hence starts from the days of Kumari nad and was at the peak of its glory. This was evidently much earlier to the period of the Primal Sangam and the Medieval Sangam. The boundaries of Tamilnad are defined in the following verse as they existed during the period of the Medieval Sangam.

**“Kanyakumari in the south  
Himalayas in the north,  
The Eastern sea on the east,  
The Western sea on the west,  
marked the boundaries on the four sides  
of Tamilnad.”**

In the above verse, Himalayas are referred as the Northern boundary. What is referred to as Kumari is not the Cape Comorin of the present-day. It means the Kumari hills to the south of the equator or the Kumari river. In the later days to come, the Greek philosophers Ptolemy and Pilius referred Tamilnad as Ili Murike or Thimurike. This obviously reminds one of the ancient Lemuria. Pilius and Bharatham refer to three different places which were called by the same name, viz. Madurai. The period of the Medieval Sangam was earlier to Kaliyuga and the Mahabharatha war.

## CHAPTER V THE INDUS VALLEY CIVILISATION - WE ARE TAMILS

The Archaeological researchers excavated at many places in the Sind plains and brought out many big towns which had remained buried for many a century. Mohanjadaro, Harappa, Chaankutharo, Logunchotharo, Sagapuryaanisiyaal, Avimuraad, Paandivaagi, Amarikotla, Nigaangan and Arangpur were some of those cities which were excavated. These places tell us about the way the people in the North Western region of India lived and their civilisation.

We shall briefly describe here some details which the Archaeologists give us about the civilisation which is known as the Indus Valley civilisation.

**The Town Planning and Houses:** Mohanjadaro was a city on the banks of a river. The streets run East - West and North-South. The big streets are cut by smaller streets at right angles only. The big streets are about 33 feet wide. The smaller streets have widths ranging from a minimum of 12 feet to a maximum of 18 feet. All

the streets are linked. Immaculate planning and meticulous construction are immediate impressions one gets when one happens to look at the houses.

There is not a single road which does not have a water canal. The canals have been made of bricks. The houses have been duly constructed with drainage channels to drain the sewerage water out. The water channels running in the roads have been covered by bricks. All these channels have been provided with syphons to filter garbages that might get into the channels. Big channels have been provided with smaller tanks in between. Archaeologist John Marshall is greatly surprised to find that he has neither heard nor seen by excavation such an advanced way of road and house constructions in any other part of world obtaining in ancient times.

There are a variety of buildings found in the cities. There are different houses for the poor and the rich. Some of them are markedly for kings. The houses have been constructed with bricks of both the varieties – the naturally dried variety and the other got by heating in a big oven by burning fuel. The walls, floor and the roofs have all been made primarily by clay, which after due reinforcement by mats made of a kind of tall grown grass are covered again by thick clay. One could find windows and doors in houses. The doors are not that very big by height. It is an evidence to prove that the people who lived there were short like the Caucasian groups which entered India later. Toilets have been constructed a little far away from houses. Kitchens, bath-rooms and exclusive rooms for ladies are all definedly constructed. There are common wells, quite nearby, which must have been giving water from natural springs.

There were quite a few interesting things excavated along with the rest – beautiful potteries (some of them painted and some of them plain). There were vessels which had been polished, vessels with handles, ink-pots, a buffer made of fibre-yarn to carry pots on heads, rat-traps, ceramic utensils, stone crushers, stone-machines, various type of lamps, plates made of gold, silver, lead and copper, ornaments made of copper, pots, bangles made of blue glass and playthings for children. Some of the playthings for children were made of sea-shells, ivory, tiles and bones. Some of the playthings were the figures of birds, man and woman, toy utensils of kitchen, toys of buffaloes shaking their heads, toys of girls waving their hands, beautiful looking clay carts and tokens used for gambling games.

**Industries and trade:** Mohanjadaro was a city constructed on the banks of a river and over a fertile area. The people cultivated paddy, wheat, barley, mustard and cotton on the land. Irrespective of the period in history, Agriculture has always been the basis of Indian civilisation throughout. Since the Stone-age civilisation, paddy has been cultivated in India. The Agriculture industry was running vibrantly strong in the Indus valley also. The *Tholkappiam* period in the history of the South and the time-period of Indus valley civilisation in the North were one and the same. We shall see presently about the prominence of the Agriculture industry during the period of *Tholkappiam*. The Sind river must have been serving as the water base for the Agriculture industry. People wore cotton dress during summers and woollen clothes during winter. During excavation, the archaeologists came across 'spindles'. These are evidences to prove that the people were involved in the weaving industry. People took to meat-eating. They fished in the river waters. Important among the food items

were rice, wheat, barley, dates, fish, meat and eggs. One can see many evidences to prove that the people were involved in many handicrafts. They were, masonry, pottery, stone-carving, carpentry, goldsmithy, working on precious stones, chipping, working on sea-shells, cart driving, fishing, hair-cutting, scavenging, ship building, ship running, tailory and embroidery, work on ivory, working on pearls, weaving mats and sculpture making and painting.

The Sangam literature describes about the cities that were there in Tamilnad during the later days. One could find that these cities and Mahenjadaro were similar to each other. The Indus valley civilisation belonged to the New Stone-age civilisation where the working on and with metals had gained prominence. Ornaments, machines and things had been made of metals. The metals used were, gold, silver, copper, copper mixed with lead, nickel mixed with copper, sand mixed in copper and bronze. There were no materials made of tin, lead or iron as found in excavations. One could understand about the kind of animals and birds that lived during those times from the fossils that were excavated. They were elephants, dogs, cats, pigs, sheep, donkeys, deers, buffaloes, bulls, camels, rabbits and tortoises.

Agriculture alone could not have been the sole industry for the rich wealth which Mohanjadaro produced. It appears that Mohanjadaro was also a big trade-centre. The materials that were excavated show that the people who lived here were involved in trade with the rest of India and beyond the country too. For instance they should have got copper from Rajputan and central provinces of India, deer horns from Kashmir, diamond and tin from Afghanistan, high quality green coloured precious stones

from Burma and Mysore, Amazon stones from Nilgiris, gold from Kolar and Ananthapur of Madras province, pearls and sea-shells from Pandianaad in South India, Kathiawar in the North-western area, Sind-Punjab zones, the Northern part of Gangetic plains and Rajputan were the Indian once which were flourishing in trade and rich in wealth as per Dhikshithar, one of the greatest historians.

The people of Sind valley were good in foreign trade. This fact is borne out from the writings, stamps and paintings, machines and other things that were found on excavation at the place. Aelam, Sumeria, Mesapatomia, Iraq and Egypt are some of the places with which they had trade. It was this contact by trade which gave birth to subjects like the Indus valley civilisation and Sumerian civilisation. Indians went and settled in countries in Western Asia. And vice-versa the people from Western Asia might have also come and settled in the Indus valley purely with the view of trading. In those ancient times, only the Dravidians were the foremost amongst the seafaring populace and foreign trade. The Sangam literature abounds in details of the trade that the Tamils had in those times. One could find enormous similarities in the kind of trade that existed in both the above periods. During both the periods it was Thiraiyar and Paaniyar the Dravidian community people who were big seafarers and involved in the foreign trade. H.R. Gole, the historian says that the trade links were quite strong between the countries of Sumeria and South India or the Indus valley. Later these links extended upto Babilonia, Egypt and Africa.

**Dresses and ornaments:** One could reasonably guess about the kind of dresses and ornaments worn by the people of Indus valley, taking cues from the artefacts, stamps and arts which were

obtained on excavations. There is no doubt about that the people wore cotton dresses as borne out by the weaving machines that were excavated and that they had grown cotton on the lands. They wore woollen blankets during winter. The wealthy and the rich wore cotton dresses which were richly embroidered and artistically finished. The poor wore clothes made of fibre of natural plant or jute. They wore shirts and neck-bands.

The girls' skirts had been made of beads strung together. Some of the ornaments that were found on excavation were bangles, a variety of pearl chains, the hair-pins, ear-rings, the hip-rounds ('ottiyaanam'), the rounds worn around forehead, the nose-rings, rings, buttons, hair bands, hair beautifiers and such like. One is struck by the similarity that these ornaments have in common with those worn by the TAMILIAN ladies of those times. Besides, women used eye-dye and face-powder.

**Art and literature:** The tribals who had entered India were illiterate. Those tribals borrowed scripts from the language spoken and written by our ancestors. We shall discuss later about the Tamil scripts obtained during periods earlier to *Tholkappiyam*. In the various stamps and artefacts excavated in the Indus valley, one finds a lot of pictographs. As per Rev. Father Keres, these were nothing but the scripts used by the Dravidians and that the Dravidian civilisation and the Indus valley civilisation were none but one and the same. The learned historians say that the Brahmi script and the various South Indian scripts were born out of the above pictographs only. Art, sculpture, painting, music, dance, mathematics, medicine, astronomy, physical exercises and yoga were some of the arts that had been developed by the Indus valley people.

**Religion:** It is one's religion that bears evidence of discipline, culture and civilisation of any sect of people. It is this discipline that enhances the society. It is clear that the Indus Valley people were Saivites and by the same reason the religion of Saivism must have been earlier to the period of the Indus valley civilisation, as per John Marshall, the great historian. The Saiva Siddhaantham was a unique religious concept of South India. That was prevalent even in the prehistoric times in Tamilnad and was widely followed by the Tamilians.

"Just like Saivism, Yoga was practised by people who existed before the Aryans. The Yogi with Siva's head was at once the head not merely for the people but for animals too. It is this fact that is symbolically represented by four animals standing around the figure of Siva. It is these facts that are borne out from the stamps excavated in the Indus Valley", as per John Marshall.

People in the Indus Valley worshipped Goddesses also. This is at once an example of the Dravidian culture again. This is what later evolved into the Sakthi worship or worship of different Goddesses. During those ancient times, this Siva worship, the Linga worship and worship of the Sun God were the practices that were widely prevalent in the Mediterranean Sea countries.

**Praise the Siva of South  
Praise God of all countries**

We have now with us scores of evidences to prove that the Indus valley people worshipped rivers and Siva. The lingams that were found on excavation indicate that the people worshipped Sivalingams. Sculptures of Lord Nataraja in the famous dancing pose have also been found. Figures of various saints and sages in the usual meditating pose have been excavated. It appears that

the people had worshipped Lord Krishna also. The worship of Lord Krishna seems to have been in vogue since the New Stone-age civilisation. Rig Veda says that Krishna was the king of Dasus who were in war with the Aryans. The people had also worshipped the God of Death (Lord Yama) sitting on the back of a buffalo and worshipped the Sun God also. There are evidences to prove that they worshipped snakes, Goddesses in the form of trees, Eagles and some other Goddesses also. This is what precisely describes the life of 'We, the Tamils' of those days who lived in the Indus Valley.

There are a lot of books that have come out describing the Indus Valley civilisation. Westerners and researchers in particular are amazed at this civilisation that even by wild stretch of imagination one could not have imagined to exist during those times so ancient as we could see. Just fantastic! Who were after all these people? There is absolutely no doubt about that that this civilisation belonged to the ancient Dravidians only.

1. Certainly this could not have been the culture of those nomadic tribals who had come into India from Central Asia and Iran. The folk songs depicting religious percepts of these migrators reveal that this culture belonged to Dasus who were consistently in war with them. "Dasus had tubby noses. Black in colour. Their religious practices were different. They had a peculiar language of their own. They were wealthy, rich and lived in cities and forts. They had a great love for wars. They never performed any Yagna. They reared cattle." This is what their folk songs tell us. It is these Dasus only who were then the people of the Indus Valley. We shall now see briefly as to what kind of people, the ones

from Caucasia and Iran who entered India around 2000 B.C. were. They were tall in stature; white in complexion. They had long noses. They were big warriors. They were good in horse - riding. They were uncivilised and babarians. They were nomads and never stayed in a particular place for long. They knew the use of the iron metal. They used to perform big Yagnas, bringing up fire. They worshipped fire as God and other forces of Nature also. They shunned idol worship. In fact these are the people who must have ruined the Indus Valley civilisation.

2. There are some researchers who would call the Indus Valley civilisation as the Sumerian civilisation. There are but quite a good amount of similarities between the two. We have already seen the reason behind such similarities.
3. The Caucasian group of people were illiterate. According to the great historian, Rev. Father Keres, the pictographs of the Indus Valley people were nothing but the script of the ancient Dravidians.
4. In some of the governmental deeds of the Indus Valley civilisation one comes across Tamil words, such as, 'Vel', 'Velalan' and 'Uur', besides words like 'Naai', 'Veluur' and the like.
5. Amongst those excavations were found certain human figures with three faces, sitting in meditations with four animals standing around. These are nothing but the Pasupathy, God of Dravidians or the figure of Lord Nataraja.
6. There were quite a few Sivalingams found on excavation.



7. There were also found figures of fish made of stone. Fish was but the national symbol of the Pandia kings.
8. The ornaments that were found are very similar to the ones worn by the Tamil ladies even today.

We can safely conclude that the Indus Valley civilisation was nothing but the ancient Dravidian civilisation. It was our civilisation, namely the civilisation of Tamils. It reminds us of the fact that we had lived and ruled over the entire region of India. The works that we could get by archaeological excavations were ones written during the Last Sangam period. The period of the Last Sangam is around 2000 years ago. During the period thrice as old as this (ie about 4000 B.C.) there need be no doubt in concluding, that the people who had lived in the North India were none but Tamils or the Dravidans. Born in Peruvalanad and grown in Kumarinad, the language Tamil had spread into the Indus Valley also around the year 4000 B.C. The language of Tamil had its birth during the days of the earliest of the Sangams, grew like a bud of a flower during the days of the Medieval Sangam and blossomed during the days of the Last of the Sangams. We proudly proclaim unto this world that it is we the Tamils, being what we are, are the proudest community that has produced one of the richest languages in the world, namely Tamil.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE EARLIEST OF THE SANGAMS AND THE MEDIEVAL ONE

The language of Tamil was developed by the organisation known as Sangams during the various periods. These Sangams were in fact many in number that existed from time to time but the most important among them were only three viz., the earliest, the medieval and the last Sangams. The works written during the days of the earliest of this organisation and those other than *Tholkappiyam* have been lost. We have now in our midst only a few of those produced during the last of the Sangams. The commentators who contributed during the period of this Last Sangam have given us some details about these Sangams. There are quite a few references about them in our legends and literature.

"Nilantharu thiruvinnediyone was a king  
great who was always to be found in  
the midst of erudite scholars." (Madurai Kanchi)

"May not those great poets like Maangudi Maruthanaar  
write about me and my land.

With the bugles blowing tunes of victory

Tamil was reigning supreme in all the three frontiers of  
Tamilnadu:

O the king of Kudal Nagar, my salutations to thee!

It was Lord Siva who gave unto Tharumi the poet poor

The golden bowl full of gold coins.

Wherever didst thou go and hide yourself

O the great Tamil!

Was it in the great literary lore or the Music  
wherever didst thou go?

It is our misfortune that there are a lot of inconsistencies found in these data. That is most presumably due to the fact that the time when these commentators lived and produced their works was about 3000 years since the existence of the earliest and the medieval Sangams. Facts might have been rather exaggerated while the commentators re-presented. Besides, the time period when these commentators lived was one when Sanskrit, Pouranika religions and Puranas were in the ascent in the South and had already acquired a large following. There were a lot of interpolations wilfully done by these commentators. Their own imagination played a free part. The ancient Tamil works were written in old palmyrah leaves. While they were re-written from time to time with the idea of preserving the original, it was rather customary that the authors did the corrections themselves to the extent of their own perceptions of the original concepts, and unfortunately interpolated their own ideas also. It is wrong to even roughly estimate the date of the production of the original, which had by then become rather corrupt by the above

interpolations and inconsistencies. One should take into consideration only the main ideas presented therein, the religious principles, the life - style, the circumstances and events when one goes into the serious work of trying to estimate the time - period of the original production.

One cannot say, for instance, that the script that was obtaining in those days was just the same as you and I are using now. During the days of *Tholkappiyam* or even earlier, there were four different types of scripts that were in vogue. One could find references about these scripts in the Sangam literature.

'Four types of scripts' means the letters were formed by drawing small figures. A similar practice seems to have been followed in the ancient Egypt and China. The scripts were like hieroglyphic characters.

The graphic characters formed for use in the language were like the richest art depicting the beauty of reality as Nature showed it to man.

Symbols were used to denote names. Such a practice seems to have been followed in China also. A different kind of representation was done for representing the character, the degree of expression or the power of the adjective. The third one indicated the verb ending of a sentence. The type of script that was in vogue perhaps was like the pictographs obtained in the Indus Valley excavations. Scholars have the opinion and conclude that the Brahmi script that came up later and the scripts of other South Indian languages must have originated from the pictographs of the Indus Valley civilisation. The script that was formed with dots during the period of *Tholkappiyam* became extinct even before the period of the Last Sangam. The Brahmi script and the Tamil script must have

originated from one and the same root. It is from these ancient scripts, Grantham, Vattezuththu, Kannezuththu and the Malayalam script originated. The book called, *Sama Vaayanganasuddha* describes that there were 18 different types of scripts that were available. This work dates back to the First Century B.C. One finds reference amongst them to a script called 'Thaamini' (most presumably Thamizi), and Brahmi. Quite recently for the purpose of ease in printing it was Veeramaa Munivar who brought about certain changes in the Tamil script.

#### **Sangam at Pervalanaad :**

We shall now see briefly certain references about Sangams in our literature.

**The Tamil Sangam was having its days of glory  
With poets who had gathered round in that  
great assembly of fame,  
who sang in loud praise of thee,  
O the Goddess of Tamil,  
Thou were the queen of the Tamilnad  
who was reigning supreme.**

Peraaru and Manimalai were important places in Peruvalanad. As per Ippo, there was one Tamil Sangam that existed here. This was around the period of 14000 B.C. the time when Sengone was ruling over Pandiyanadu. Moothoor Agasthiyar lived during this period only. It was he who constructed the bridge across the river Pakruliyaar. He was living in a small village called Moothoor. The President of this Sangam was one Chakkaran. Thaniyur Chendan, Muththoor Agathiyan, Peraartru Nedunthuraiyan, Idai kazhichengodan were some of the poets who owed their allegiance to the above Sangam. Thaniyur Chendan produced

the work called, *Chengone Tharaich Chelavu* essentially to praise the king of the land, viz. Chengone, his conquests and acquisitions. The entire work was presented in the poetic style known as '*Tharaappulippaa*'. It was officially presented before Chakkaran and Moothoor Agasthiyar wrote a 'Paayiram' for the same.

**The great poet by name Thaniyur Chendan  
wrote in a verse form called Tharaappulippaa,  
the time-renown work called, '*Chengone Tharaich Chelavu*'**

Amongst other works produced in Peruvalanad, were the Sangam works on grammar '*Nedunthuraiyil Perunuul* and *Idaichuzi Chengoden Iyal Nuul*. There were a few other Sangams also in Peruvalanaad like -

- a. The Thenmadurai Sangam in Pakruliyaaru
- b. Pothiamalai Sangam
- c. Mahendramalai Sangam
- d. Manimalai Sangam
- e. Kundram Eriththa Kumaravel Sangam.

#### **Primal & Medieval Sangam :**

The earliest Sangam existed for over 4449 years. The earliest of the Pandiyan kings was Ireeyino Kaaychina Vazuthi and the last was Kadukkone. There were about 89 kings one after the other in succession. There were 549 members in the Sangam. Of them, Agasthiyar, Sivapiraan, Kumaravel, Nithiyin Kizavan, Muranjiyur Mudinaagaraayar were a few to mention. The total number of poets in the Sangam were 4449. The Agasthiyar belonging to the earliest Sangam was Vaadaapi Agasthiyar. He wrote the famous work on grammar called *Agasthiyam*. Some of the other works produced during the same period were:

- Literature - *Muthunaarai, Muthukurugu, Purapporul*  
 Grammar - *Agasthiyam*  
 Music - *Muruval, Sayantham, Kunanuul, Seyirriyam*  
 Drama - *Paripaadal, Kalariyaavirai, Kaakkai*  
*Paadiniyam, Abhinayam, Natrantham and*  
*Vaamanam*

Kadunkone was the First Nilantharu Thiruvir Paandiyan – (it appears that the epithet 'Nilantharu Thiru' was a title). The earliest Sangam was situated in Old Madurai or Then Madurai. During the last days of this Sangam, Kumarinad and Then Madurai disappeared into the sea.

The Medieval Sangam existed for about 3700 years. It started during the period of the king whose name was Iriyinoor Vendoor Chezian and lasted upto the period of the king whose name was Mudaththirumaaran. They were 59 kings in total. The total number of poets recognised during this period was 3700. There were 59 members permanently in the Sangam. Among these, Agasthiyar, Tholkaappiyar, Irunthaiyurkkodungkoozhi, Mosi, Velluurk kaappiyar, Chiru Pandaarangan, Thiraiyan, Maran, Kiranthai were some of the recognised poets. The works produced during the period of this Medieval Sangam were:

- Literature - *Kali, Kuru, Vendaali, Viyaazamaalai, Maapuraanam*  
 Grammar - *Agasthiyam and Tholkappiyam* (There was a work called 'Aiyndiram')  
 Music - *Isai Nunukkam, Puuthapuraanam, Akavul*

Kapaatapuram was the place where the Sangam was situated. This place also got submerged into sea.

The commentary done by Iraiyanar and called *Iraiyanar Akapporulurai* gives vivid details of the periods when the Sangam existed, in terms of the number of years. The above poet lived in Eighth century A.D. *Tholkappiyam* was the work done earlier to the time when Vedavyasa compiled the Vedas. This is according to the famous commentator Nachinaarkkiniyaar. He lived during the 14th century A.D.

There are a lot of references about the kings who lived during the earliest Sangam and the Medieval Sangam and the places that were lost into the sea, in the various works produced during the Last Sangam period.

**"And at the sea he hurled his spear  
 which rose and engulfed in the fury  
 The land of Kumari hills, and Pakruli river  
 Turning North he marched upto the Ganges  
 And the Himalayas, ever victorious;  
 May his life be long and glorious; (Silappadikaram)**

**The rising waves that devoured his land,  
 the land of the Pandian king,  
 did not turn him desolate  
 but made him rise up with arms against his  
 rival kings, waged wars against them,  
 won them over and planted his flag  
 with the symbol of fish over their  
 fortresses;  
 The Pandian was a king whose fame  
 remained unsullied for ages to come.**

Spoke of the Dharmic path and gave warning  
 "This island that is famous for the trees  
 Bearing sweet jamoon, will, in seven days  
 be struck by a quake shaking everyone  
 Oh king! Then the four hundred Yoajanas  
 of Naga land will sink into the deep and  
 Will be destroyed completely. Give up  
 This place and go elsewhere."

– Manimekalai

"O jewel among women who carry  
 The vessel praised by many, your town  
 the sea has entered. Listen to the cause." – Manimekalai

Some argue that the word, 'Sangam' is from Sanskrit, and it is only Jains who first instituted the Tamilsangam and all the references about the Sangams were after all built up stories after the influx of Jains in Tamilnad. It is but true that the word, 'Sangam' does not find a place in old works of Tamil. But during those times, people might have used such Tamil terms as Thogai, Mandram, Avai, Ambalam, Kuzaam and Pothiyil and the commentators who came later might have used the word 'Sangam' in place of the above. For instance, the word, 'Jannal' that we use nowadays is from Portuguese. Is it then correct to say that windows never existed in Tamilnad households before the influence of the Portuguese who came into India? You could find references about Sangams in the famous divine prayer *Thevaram*. It is a tragedy that the great Tamil scholars of our own times should say that there is falsehood in the verses sung by our own poets in praise of Gods and the rich prayers they wrote.

There are some who argue that the references about Sangams cannot be relied upon. When one comes across details such as 4449 years and 89 kings, it would be reasonable to conclude that every king must have ruled for at least 50 years. By the same argument, every king must have ruled for at least 64 years during the period of the Medieval Sangam period. But history does not corroborate this statement as it appears that every king did not rule for more than about 20 years each. It would be sheer madness to argue that by the above reasoning Sangams never existed. There might be two reasons behind this inconsistency.

1. The commentators of later periods might have given exaggerated details about the Sangams. If one were to go by the figure of 20 years as the average period of a king's rule, the earliest Sangam must have been in existence for a period of 1780 years and the Medieval Sangam for 1180 years.
2. It might be that these Sangams never existed for an uninterrupted duration of the period mentioned. The Sangam might have been convened from time to time for the purpose of giving official recognition to new works. This latter explanation seems to be quite probable and reasonable.

### THE PERIODS OF PRIMAL & THE MEDIEVAL SANGAMS

From amongst the works produced during the period of the earliest Sangam, we have not been able to trace any work other than *Tholkappiyam*. Hence, in order to estimate the time period of the Sangams, one should know the time when *Tholkappiyam*

was produced. Besides, it is said that the period of existence of the Last Sangam is said to be over 1950 years. There are evidences to prove that the last of the Sangams became extinct by the third Century A.D. Researchers agree that the last of the Sangams must have been inaugurated around the beginning of 1715 B.C. and the same must have become extinct by 235 A.D. Hence by this reckoning the Medieval Sangam must have become extinct before 1715 B.C.

There are widely divergent opinions prevalent about the period of Tholkappiyar. Some argue that the work dates quite after the period of the Last Sangam and should have been written in 5th Century A.D. There is also an opinion that Tholkappiyar was a Jain saint and that *Tholkappiyam* is nothing but the work called '*Janendram*' done by Ainthiram Pathrabhaagu. These are absolutely baseless guesses. There are also some authors who say that Tholkappiyar belonged to the period of the earliest of Tamil Sangams. But as per the traditional information, he belonged to the later period of the Medieval Sangam. If one finds in certain work some principles of ethics and discipline have been elaborated, then one takes it to be a work on Jainism. Works like *Tholkappiyam*, *Thirukural* and *Silappadikaram* are examples to show that they are essentially devoted to inculcate discipline and culture among the people. Were there not found among the ancient people of Tamilnad a sense of discipline and culture? Did the northerners and Brahmins teach discipline to Tamils?

Most of the Tamil scholars held the view that Tholkappiyar lived during the 6th Century B.C. Prof. Ramanathan Chettiar says, "*Tholkappiyam* is one of the oldest works done about 2500 years

from now." There are again certain basic misconceptions behind such a conclusion.

- (1) According to some scholars, Sanskrit was a language that was spoken and written earlier to Tamil and that Tamil branched out of Sanskrit only. They also took it that most of the Tamil literature and grammar were translations from Sanskrit. If that were true, the Tamil literature and grammar should have come only later to Sanskrit. This is nothing but the false propaganda of the Brahmins. The present-day researches undertaken by the Western scholars indicate that India was one and the people who lived there were Dravidians and they spoke in Dravidian languages only.
- (2) As they find some of the religious principles and conventions enunciated in Sanskrit of later days appear in *Tholkappiyam* also, some argue that *Tholkappiyam* must have come only later or contemporary. We have already seen that Hinduism was basically a Dravidian religion. The small and splinter groups of Caucasian people who came into India later started following the Dravidian religion and culture and became civilised. We find in *Tholkappiyam* the rudimentary principles of Saivism only explained. There is no doubt about the fact that Saivism was nothing but the Dravidian religion.
- (3) Some people took the *Aiyindiram* presented in *Paayiram* to be Baanini's grammar. There are some who say that *Aiyindiram* was a work on grammar written by Indira in Sanskrit during the period of Baani. Does one need knowledge of Sanskrit grammar in order to write and present grammar in Tamil? Besides, there is no connection

between Baanini's grammar and *Tholkappiyam*. They were both works on literature and grammar even before the times of the *Tholkappiyam*.

- (4) There is a (made up) story according to which Tholkappiyar was a student of Agasthiyar.

**O the king of everlasting fame,  
Agasthiar, the greatest scholar of all times,  
hailed from Pothigai the famous hills in the South,  
was the one from whom Tholkappiar followed  
by twelve more of scholars  
learnt the great principles of Tamil grammar.**

This is a verse in *Purapporulmaalai*. They took Agasthiyar to be a saint from the North. The Ariyans stepped into India during the period of 7th or 8th Century B.C. Hence, Tholkappiar, supposedly the student of Agasthiyar could not have lived earlier than 6th Century B.C. The word, Agasthiyar is a Tamil one. There were many scholars known as Agasthiyars who lived both in the North and Tamilnad and in different periods also. Even today, one could find two or three persons having same names in any village of Tamilnad. There was no connection between Agasthiyar and Tholkappiyar. If there was one, one would have found a mention about it in *Paayiram* or any other work.

- (5) Tholkappiyar does make a reference to Sanskrit. Therefore *Tholkappiyam* should have been written only after Sanskrit had spread.

**"Even if these terms of 'vadasol' witness forms  
altered in adaptation to Tamil  
They are not excluded when they fit in with usage."**

There were quite a few languages spoken in the North during the period of Tholkappiyar. The 'Vadamozhi' referred by Tholkaappiyar as above was not Sanskrit.

- (6) 'Orai' is a word in Greek. Some argued that *Tholkappiyam* should have been written after the Greek had entered India as this word appears in *Tholkappiyam*. Does it mean that the Indians got the work on Astrology from the Greek? Besides, there was connection between the Dravidians and the Greek since time immemorial.

(7) They took the Anthanars, Aiyar and Paarppanar referred by *Tholkappiyam* to mean the Aryan Brahmins. All these basically belonged to the Dravidian community only and were not Aryan Brahmins. All arguments which try to prove that Tholkappiyar lived during the 6th Century B.C. are all false. In whatever way you look at this problem of fixing his date, Tholkappiyar belonged to a period earlier to Kaliyuga (ie 3102 B.C.).

- a. The place Kapatapuram where the Medieval Sangam existed and was functioning from was located between Tamiraparaniyaaru and Kumariyaaru. Ramayana tells us that Kapatapuram was the capital of Pandiyas. But during the times when *Mahabharatha* was written it was the capital of Manalur Pandiyan. Kapatapuram was submerged into sea long before the *Mahabharatha* was written. Hence, the time when the Medieval Sangam existed should have been between the periods when *Ramayana* and *Mahabharatha* were written.
- b. There are some writers who say that the period of Tholkappiyar should have been the time when the second

deluge occurred and that of the *Mahabharatha* was during the third deluge.

- c. There is a legend which says that Kapatapuram was destroyed by Kannan.
- d. *Paayiram* tells us about the boundaries of Tamilnad during the period of *Tholkappiyam*.

**Venkata hills in the North and  
Kanyakumari in the South were the  
boundaries of Tamilnad.**

**It goes well with Prayer to God  
free from Kodinilai, Kanthazi and Valli (the three  
different kinds of blemishes in poetry that should be  
avoided.)**

The Thenkumari referred here is not the Cape Comorin of the present days. The boundaries referred here are hills. The name 'Kumari' stands for the hill that was there near the equator in those days. If that were true, Srilanka must have been a part of the entire area where Tamil was the spoken language. As on date, the southernmost tip of Srilanka is at a place 6 degrees North of the equator. The land in between this point and the equator must have submerged into the sea in one of those deluges. One such deluge must have occurred around 3105 B.C., i.e. just before Kaliyuga as per Tennant, a famous authority on the Srilankan history. May be in those days some of the western parts of Srilanka might have become extinct. Old Buddhist literatures tell us that the present-day Srilanka was after all one twelfth of the size of the ancient Srilanka. Once upon a time, Srilanka had extended upto Maldives.

- e. According to Tholkappiar, there is a reference like 'the 12 different lands associated with the classical Tamil' in one of his works. All the commentators are able to refer to these 12 different lands individually. They are Pongarnadu, Olinaadu, Thenpaandiya nadu, Kutta naadu, Kuda naadu, Karkaa naadu, Panrinaadu, Aruuvanaadu, Aruvaa vadathalai, Cheethanaadu, Puuzinaadu, and Malaadu. The Tamilnad of the Tholkaappiyar times had in its fold beyond the present Tamilnad, Kerala, Karnataka, Goa and a few parts of Mumbai region. The land where Telugu had been spoken got separate even before the period of Tholkappiar.
- f. People knew the usage of the metal iron during the days of Thiruvalluvar. Tholkappiar lived before the period of the usage of the above metal.
- g. Quite a few changes had taken place in the Tamil language, religion and the life-style of Tamils during the intervening period between the times of Tholkappiyar and the last of the Sangams.
  - i. The characters formed by dots which are referred in *Tholkappiyam* were not used during the period of the Last Sangam. The kind of word usages and new style of expressions are found in the Sangam literature and *Tirukkural*.
  - ii. During the times when the Last Sangam existed, cities had expanded and so did commerce and trade too. We shall see further about the life of Tamils during the period of Tholkappiyar in the subsequent chapter. The kind of 'Naanila' type of individual life must have been quite a few centuries earlier to the period of the Last Sangam.



- iii. 'As per *Tholkappiyam*, the religion of Saivism seems to have been at its rudimentary stages. One could see that Tholkaappiyar was a Saivite and the principles of Saivism can be read in the beginning chapters of *Tholkappiyam*.' So does Maraimalai Adigal write about Tholkappiyar.

**\_, \_ And valli, are the three modes of spotless composition structured into the invocatory of the metric verse"**

If one were to go by the religious practices obtaining in Tamilnad during those times, *Tholkappiyam* must date quite a few centuries before the period of the Last Sangam. Along with Siva, the Sun and the Moon were also worshipped during the period of Tholkappiyar. But during the period the Last Sangam, various religions and religious principles had taken deeper roots.

- h. The Tamil month of Avani was the first month of the year during the period of Tholkappiyar. Astrologers and Astronomers say that this practice dates back to about 5000 years from now. In whatever way one looks at it, *Tholkappiyam* must have been written about 5000 years ago. That was the time when Man was living along with animals in forests and caves. Even before 5000 years, Tamil was a fully evolved language, very rich in grammar and advanced in literature, style of presentation and expression.

"It is the *Tholkappiyam* that is the richest among all the works in Tamil, legendary by name and fame, timeless by age and known for its depth and expense of human wisdom. Everyone knows that this was written during the earliest of the Sangams, the primal one." – These are the words of Pandithamani M. Kathiresan Chettiar.

The last of the Sangams lasted for a span of 1950 years. The earliest of the Pandiya kings who was associated with the Sangam was Irirenore Mudathiruman being the first and the earliest of those kings and Ukkira Peruvazuthi was the last to come. They were about 49 kings in total who had ruled the Pandianad during this time. The number of poets who were given official recognition during this period is 49. Chiru Methaaviar, Chenthampuuthanaar, Arivudaiyaranaar, Perunguntruurkkizaar, Ilanthirumaaran, Maduraiaasiriyar, Nallanthuvanaar, Maruthanila Naaganaar, Kanakkaayanaar's son Nakkeeran, were some amongst those poets. This Sangam also could have been convened as and when necessary for the purpose of giving official recognition (Arangetram) to some of the famous poems written by poets. They were read for the first time in an assembly of the Sangam and given official recognition.

There are concrete evidences to prove the existence of the last of the Sangams and its activities. *Silappadikaram* and *Manimekalai* were the works done during the last days of the last of the Sangams. Even today, reckoning the years by Valluvar Aandu is a Tamil practice and still in vogue. Today as per the Christian era it is 1978 and 2009 as per the Valluvar Aandu. The latter started by 31 B.C. Hence, *Thirukkural* must have been written by 1st Century B.C. Fortunately there is no room for guesses in estimating the period of Thiruvalluvar. *Silappathikaram* and *Manimekalai* were contemporary works. Historians have compared with the history of Srilanka and said that these works must have been produced during 2nd Century A.D. The rest of the works accredited by the last of the Sangams must have been done earlier to 2nd Century A.D. only. The king Kalappirar

conquered Pandianaad during the 3rd Century A.D. and the last of the Sangams also became extinct by then.

There is a mention about Kapatapuram as the capital of the Pandiyas as per *Ramayana*. There is no reference about Kumarinaad and Thenmadurai in *Ramayana*. Hence these places must have got submerged into sea before the period of *Ramayana* which is taken as 6000 B.C. It cannot be questioned whether the Pandias ruled for all these 10000 years and more. Even since the prehistoric days (ie from 30000 B.C) and ending upto 19th Century the Pandiyas continued their rule. There could be no doubt about it. In the later days they had grown weaker in stature and strength and become smaller kings. There were 154 Pandiya kings who ruled over Tamilnad for a total period of 6431 years, as per the famous traveller Megasthenes. The total number of years during which the Medieval Sangam and the last of the Sangams were in existence was 5650 years.

The time-periods when the Sangams were in existence, as per A. Chidambaranatha were –

The earliest of the Sangams 14004 B.C. to 9564 B.C

The Medieval Sangam 6805 B.C. to 3104 B.C.

The last of the Sangams 1715 B.C. to 235 A.D.

This agrees favourably well with the periods given in this book. There are certain historians who are of the view that Kapatapuram got submerged into the sea by 2000 B.C. and the period of the earliest of the Sangams was 1780 years and again the period of the last of the Sangams was 1180 years. If one were to re-write the time-table, it becomes –

The earliest of the Sangams 4060 B.C. to 3180 B.C.

The Medieval Sangam 3180 B.C. to 2000 B.C.

The last of the Sangams 1715 B.C. to 235 A.D.

If one were to go by the above, Tholkappiyar must have been a poet during the earliest of the Sangams. But this time-table does not seem to be agreeable.

## CHAPTER VII

### DURING THE THOLKAPPIYAR PERIOD WE TAMILS

"In the virtuous Tamil speaking land,  
 That extends from  
 Venkatam in the North and Kumari in the South,  
 He has treated units of sound and word  
 And semantic content as well.  
 Rooted as he remained  
 In traditions of common speech and literary idiom,  
 Conversant he was of his predecessors' works  
 That were in vogue and use on the soil.  
 Which marked the cultivated idiom of the Tamil language  
 He examined them in order  
 And has made a well wrought work;  
 He presented this classic  
 In the Assembly of Nilantarutiruvu Pandian  
 Where at the head was Atankottacan

Endowed with a tongue of virtuous words  
 And in the wisdom of the four vedas rooted;  
 He expounded in terms irreproachable  
 The structure unambiguous of the language and thereby  
 The sage of the man that he was  
 And of renown exceeding marked,  
 Established in the sea-girt world,  
 His name Tholkappiyar,  
 Versed in the treatise Ainthiram"

The above reads certain stanzas from the Chirappu Paayiram sung in praise of Tholkappiyar and is supposed to have been written by Panampaaraanaar, a fellow student of Tholkappiyar as per legends.

*Tholkappiyam*, consists of 3 major segments (adhikarams) and 27 chapters. In total it has about 610 verses.

Adhikaram	Verses
On letters	483
On words	462
On wealth	665
Total	1610

The sub-segments of the Porulathikaram are:

Name of the segment	Verses
Akaththinai	55
Puraththinai	36
Kalaviyal	50
Karpiyal	53

Poruliyal	54
Meyppaattiyal	27
Uvamaviyal	37
Seyyuliyal	243
Marabiyal	110
<b>Total</b>	<b>665</b>

Though *Tholkappiyam* is by and large a work purely on grammar, one can read about the greatness of the life-style of the ancient Tamils – both on self discipline and also how they expressed themselves in public. One could find on comparison with similar literatures in the rest of the world, the writers giving prominence and importance to words, structure, grammar and dialogues. Other than Tamils can you find any one laying stress on individual discipline or an ethical life-style? *Tholkappiyam* stands as a singular example for the high culture of the Tamils and their civilisation obtaining during those times.

What concerns human life mainly are the three aspects viz. ethics, wealth and happiness. Poets of later days added. A life without ethics is not a fruitful living.

**“Examined rightly,**

**The union of love between a man and a woman**

**Which embraces the fivefold love behaviour mutually realized.**

– *Tholkappiyam*

Poets of later days like those belonging to the Last Sangam including Thiruvalluvar lay stress on the same points.

**“No greater gain than virtue can cause,**

**No greater loss than life oblivious of her laws”**

**“What from virtue floweth, yieldeth dear delight;  
All else extern, is void of glory’s light.”**

– *Thirukkural*

**“If love and virtue in the household reign,  
This is of life, perfect grace and gain”**

**“The life domestic rightly bears true virtue’s name  
That other too, if blamelss found, due praise may claim.”**

– *Thirukkural*

The word, ‘Aram’ in Tamil means goodness in thought, word and deed.

The word, ‘Agam’ stands for one’s inward discipline in life and the word ‘Puram’ stands for how one behaves towards others and society in general. They are the two important segments of one’s life. The stress on both is due to that one cannot be disciplined just externally without being disciplined within himself/herself. Life is not going to be a success without being balanced in both. One can understand the greatness and seriousness behind the stress laid upon such a way of life and appreciated even during those days by the Tamils who lived in the Tholkappiyar era. Tholkappiar dwells at great length on both the above. The ‘Agam’ segment is deeply expounded by Tholkappiyar as applied to a normal life of any human being who marries the girl whom he loves dearly and who too loves him in return ardently, their love ultimately blossoming into their marriage with the fullest knowledge of their parents. Tholkappiyar’s presentation of the normal sequences in life of various happenings and in particular life’s joys and sorrows is so vivid, moving, touching and leaves a lasting impression. Especially his

presentation of love in its fullest manifestation, the tragedies and triumphs in meeting, the trauma of separation, the pleasures of trivial bickerings and the ultimate union – are all so panoramic that one should get amazed at such depths obtained in literature and life of the Tamils millennia ago. What can sustain a romantic life and a life of inseparableness and joy – are all presented duly in the 'Puram' segment meaning that such things relate to the world beyond Man's inner self.

Do you think for a moment that principles behind a disciplined life were just the pigments of a poet's imagination? What a serious connection must have been there between the actual lives of the Tamils who lived then and these literature? Basically it is the life when led in a principled way that germinates ideals. One can reasonably conclude that the moral standards as practised in the life of an average individual were quite high. Might be that some of the ideals were aimed at but not fully achieved. The underlying principle of Tholkappiyar's work was a pragmatic philosophy.

We shall now see briefly the 'Agam' segment as expounded by Tholkappiyar. Love is the basis that is at the root of all human lives. The word, 'Kaamam' is also used by the then poets but with the meaning of 'pure love'. So was the word, happiness meant to convey unalloyed, acceptable and a pure enjoyment continually sought for and appreciated. The words, 'Perinbam' and 'Chitrinbam' came into vogue later. Happiness is something universally common to all the species.

**" The joy of union between the sexes  
That every living being accomplishes  
As it unites in passion with its loving mate"**

The basic aim of life should be to earn your livelihood in an ethical way, by your own efforts, toil and struggle and enjoy happiness. Both men and women of the Tholkappiyar times chose their own spouses. There were no such disgusting practices of Middlemen, Sridhanam, donations and religious rites during those times. The kind of secret connections that existed between the lovers have been explained in 'Kalaviyal' and their relations after marriage which were quite open have been explained in 'Karpiyal'. One can appreciate the greatness of such a society from the high regard it gave to the legitimate aspirations of boys and girls.

**"If woman might of chastity retain  
What choicer treasure doth the world contain?"**

**"The house's 'blessing' men pronounce the house-wife  
excellent;  
The gain of blessed children is its goodly ornament."**

*– Thirukkural*

Thiruvalluvar expounded the same principles alike in his famous work. Tholkappiyar elaborating, on the principle of disciplined life enunciated seven ways of discipline.

**"Primarily, the Akam love behaviour  
comprises seven stands  
From Kaikilai through Perunthinai,  
So it has been held."**

Of these, Kaikilai and Perunthinai are things that should be avoided. The remaining 5 were in vogue. Of all, the chastity of a woman was considered a supreme virtue.

**"The wedded course is  
The hero, who comes from a worthy lineage,**

**Taking the hand in marriage  
of the heroine.**

**As she is offered by those of a line worthy and compatible,  
With the rites and ceremonies attendant thereon.**

Tholkappiyar dwells on certain other disciplines also.

**“ Even as the heroine’s kin do not consent to their union  
There does occasion wedding solemnized  
With the two taking elopment”**

There were no such marriage ceremonies in those days. There were no pundits to perform marriages. Yet during the same days and times, this religious practice started slowly gaining ground.

**“Sage men there conceived solemnized wedding  
When falsity and breach of trust cropped up.  
So it has been said.”**

Later such religious practices became universal.

**“The ceremonies and rites  
Attendant on the three superior social classes  
(Kings, Brahmins and trading folk)  
Came to mark the marriage  
Among those down the ladder in the course of time.”**

The married life of a man and a woman was called ‘Karpu’. The cultured family life of a woman is explained under ‘Karpiyal’.

**“Bringing home to the hero  
In a manner winning and efficacious  
The attributes lofty of the heroine  
Her steadfast fidelity, affection for the hero,**

Her virtuous demeanour, forbearance borne of tenderness  
innate,

**Her fortitude, her hospitality unailing,  
Attending to the needs of the kinfolk. “**

The greatness behind the family life of the Tamils is explained in two hundred verses by Thiruvalluvar. A true and a well defined family life is the greatest of all virtues. Tholkappiyar also explains how after living the family life fully, a Tamil chose to live the life of enlightenment. This has nothing to do with the life of Sanyasam or total renunciation which some started following in the later days.

**“Having relished the felicities of the passion of love  
It is for the hero and heroine in conjugal union -  
To savour the protective presence of their children,  
And seek to live on things sublime,  
With virtuous kinsfolk around,  
Which makes for the fruits the wedded course entailed.**

Even from very ancient times, a sense of religionism was well rooted in the Tamils.

They believed in one Supreme Almighty, the one that had no beginning nor end, the one who had no distinction nor any specific character but one who was an embodiment of pure love. They had realised and appreciated that life and God were different – the famous threesome principle of philosophy. They stressed on values of life to get embodied at once in Thought, Word and Deed for every individual.

**“Primary or original works  
Are those compositions**

**By men of sage wisdom  
Whose consummate faculties stand unsullied  
By the mire of turpitude."**

**"Meiyodinaiyinum one line  
Vowels' nature no variation finds  
Even as they with consonants blend. .**

The people of those times worshipped God as one in form and also as one that was formless. They worshipped God in the form of Sivan, Mayon, Seyon and Kathiravan. The practices of Siva worship, Sakthi worship, Linga worship and Sun worship and Moon worship – all of them were in vogue.

Tholkappiyar mentions the name of a particular God associated with a particular type of land.

**"The forest tract which Mayon tends  
The hilly trace which Seyon tends,  
The fertile cultivable trace which Ventan tends  
And the littoral trace which Varunan tends  
Are known to be  
Mullai, Kurinchi, Marutam and Neythal respectively."**

This world is nothing but a combination of the five great elements of this universe (land, water, air, sky and fire)

**"A structured blend of  
Earth, fire, water, air and space  
As the world is  
The use, words are made of  
Must be undistorted"**

Tholkappiyar also, like many of the writers of those times, describes the growth and development of the species in steps.

**"Single sense organisms have the sense of touch,  
Two-sense organisms are endowed with touch and taste,  
Touch, taste and smell go with three-sense organisms,  
Four-sense organisms have sight added to the three;  
Five sense organisms are gifted with hearing in addition,  
Mind's faculty is the sixth sense known,  
Thus goes the classification by discerning men."**

People believed in the theory of many successive lives for an individual. Like what you do in one life so do you become in the next. One can find this theory being expounded in *Tholkappiyam*. Erecting a tombstone for the dead and writing an epitaph were customary in those days.

**'Naduval' included erecting a statue for the dead,  
bathing the dead, offering in memory and eulogising them**

We shall now see briefly the kind of life which people were leading as part of their public life or their social life. The Puraththinaiyiyal of *Tholkappiyam* deals exhaustively with the Government, different kinds of warfare, different life-styles, forts, fortresses, war implements, penance, poetical works, small boats, dance and sports. It also deals with different kind of disciplines that must be observed in public like vetchi, karanthai, vanji, kaanji, nochchi, uzinjai, thumbai and vaagai. They are also dealt exhaustively in the Purapporul. There appears to be no evidence to prove that big cities existed during the period of *Tholkappiyam* like what one comes across when reading the Indus Valley civilisation or the period of the Last Sangam. Only like a proverbial

trio, the three kings of Pandianad, Cheranad and Cholanad ruled over the entire Tamilnad. But the tragedy was that the actual powers were vested in smaller kings who were young in stature and experience. There were incessant wars amongst those kings. Smaller towns were by and large not connected by roads nor communication facilities existed between them. The general life-style obtaining was called the 'Naanila' life-style.

The Tamils had a scholastic outlook. People were quite knowledgeable and proficient in the fields of Astronomy, Geology, Agriculture, Biology, Physiology, Psychology, Maths, Sculpture and Painting. Might be there were recognised volumes written on each of the above subject. The measures used for numerical counting were Thamarai, Kuvalai, Sangam, Vellam and Aambal. Those that were used for weighing were Kazanju, Seeragam, Thodi, Palam, Nirai, Maa, Varai, Atrai, Umbi and Kaa. And for measuring volumes, they used measures like Kalam, Saadi, Thuuthai, Paanai, Thaazi, Mandai, Vattil, Akal, Uzhakku, Thuuni, Pathakku and Uri.

All that are needed for a decent living like wealth, industrial development and trade were all very much in a flourishing status during the times of *Tholkappiyam*. *Tholkappiyam* wrote even on the basic discipline/ethics that should govern a trade or industry.

**"The process, the doer, the object.  
The place, the time, the instrument  
The recipient and the effect"**

The three major different kinds of industry were Agriculture, Handicraft and general Trade. Since time immemorial, Agriculture was the one basic industry of the people. One can find quite a few references about agriculture in *Tholkappiyam*.

**"The vellalar class take to no occupation  
But farming and cultivation"**

It gives all information about 8 different kinds of food.

**"Variant behaviour there is seen too,  
when the preceeding words are eru and ceru,  
Followed by the intervening empty morpheme am."**

The various grains that were cultivated were paddy, Bengalgram, Peanuts, Beans, ... and mustard. Weaving was another important industry in which the Tamils had engaged themselves deeply and seriously. Some of the other industries which *Tholkappiyam* makes mention about are – Tailoring, Carpentry, Smithy, (Iron, brass, copper and Bronze), making mud pots of different sizes, making ornaments, making things in glass, making building utensils and ship building.

The Tamils of the ancient days since time immemorial were good in sea-trade. They were the earliest of the trading communities in the entire world. *Tholkappiyam* makes a mention about the internal trade and the external one also.

**A merchant belonging to the community of trade  
lives the life of a merchant.**

**The sea-faring traders when they went on ships  
to distant lands for trade,  
were not used to take their wives along.**

Even in those days there were trade-links between India, Egypt and West Asian countries. Things as produced from South India like those made of teak-wood, Malmal clothes and a variety of



sands used for building have been found on excavation in the places where the Egyptian towers stood.

One can reasonably assess a country's wealth from the kind of ornaments worn by the women of the country. Even during the times of *Tholkappiyam*, Tamil women wore ornaments made of gold and studded with pearls and precious stones. Both men and women wore garlands made of flowers. They smeared their bodies with Sandal and vermillion paste. They painted their eye-lashes with black dye meant for the purpose. They painted their nails with coloured polishes and lips with lipstick pastes in colours. They had different types of powders for different purposes like smearing on the face, sandal paste, powder to be used while bathing, hair oils and the like. They used to burn natural solidified materials like 'Saambraani' for drying their hair after taking bath and a kind of oil that was applied on their dresses.

One could only point mainly four different types of cultures that were in existence during the period of Tholkappiyar. They were the Egyptian civilisation, the Dravida civilisation, the Chinese civilisation and the Sumerian civilisation. They had inter-connections amongst themselves. Barring these civilisations, people in the rest of the world lived a life of barbarians in the forests, staying in hill-tops and tree-tops, or inside the caves. They were inseparable from the animals that lived around them, the only difference was that their main food source was the animals. There was no other language in the world, like our Tamil, that had evolved to such a pinnacle of its growth even in those primitive times of human history. The Prose, Music and Drama being essentially the three branches of Tamil literature had attained their fullest growth even during those times. *Tholkappiyam*, in fact, was at once a comprehensive work on grammar that defined all

the three branches of literature. One finds a volume of references to different types of musical instruments and dances in *Tholkappiyam*.

*Tholkappiyam* is a veritable mirror that reflects the entire history of the Tamils of those times. It is unparalleled in its nature as you cannot find the like of it having been produced during the same time in the timeless age of human culture. It reflects at once the culture and discipline of the Tamils who lived in those times. Our beginnings have been so great right from a period which is 5000 years now, as we lived a life of respect for god, love, ethics, culture and valour, in short, imbibing a deep sense of human values.

Tamil is a unique language which is great at once by its age and depth. It is the most primal amongst the world languages. It is a highly evolved one embracing all that is constructive and creative in human thinking. It has left no shades of any human sentiments from being properly expressed and helped to be developed. Hence, no wonder it has the rich background of a great culture that has in turn helped to develop it too further. A language is a powerful tool of expression and helps people to express themselves clearly and in great depths. Language develops human knowledge. Language takes you to domains that are higher and higher. Language is the tool for development.

Tamil had attained a fully evolved status even before 14000 B.C. when it was in speaking vogue in and around the country of Peruvalanaad. We are Tamils and our language is Tamil. We had such a glorious beginning of a rich culture backed by industry and wealth. Probably others find it rather difficult to believe. One might take my words to be a little boastful but it is nonetheless true. What makes others not to believe the greatness of our own past is the deep misery which we are now in.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PERIOD OF THE LAST SANGAM - WE TAMILS

Now we enter the period of recorded history. We have now with us various works produced during the period of the Last Sangam. We understand exhaustively from these about the life and culture of the Tamils of this period. We also understand from the travelogues of famous travellers like Ptolemy, Pilini and Periplus, about the life and culture of the Tamils during the period of the last Tamil Sangam.

The second annexure of this books gives you the list of poets who lived and the various works produced during this period. These poets lived during the 2nd Century A.D. We have not been able to get those works written by the poets who lived from 18th Century B.C. upto the beginning of the Christian era. Most presumably the works written by these poets might have been added to a major volume. What we have in our midst today were obtained, thanks to the painstaking efforts taken by great scholars

like U.V.Swaminatha Iyer and Thamodaram Pillai who lived during the 19th and 20th Centuries. If only these had not been obtained, even the voluminous data that we have with us describing the Tamils' life and culture during the period of the Last Sangam would have been ridiculed as pure imagination. We have already lost thousands of literary volumes in Tamil. Some of them have been given in Annexure II.

During the period of the Last Sangam, Tamils were known for erudition and a scholastic outlook. There were quite a few women poets also there in the Sangam. Out of those who wrote the 'Ettuthogai' there were at least 30 women poets. Kaakkaipaadiniyar, Nachchinniyar, Ponmudiyaar, Puuthapaandianthevi, Perungoppendu, Aathimanthiriyaar, Vennikkuyaththiyar, Paarimagalir, Auvaiyaar, Anjiyaththaimagal, Naagaiyaar, Okkuur Maasaaththiyaar and Kaavarpendu were some of those women poets. There were quite a few poets who belonged to the Nagar community. There were quite a few volumes written on technical subjects. There were books on Medicine, Arithmetic, Astrology, Palmistry, Horses, Painting, Architecture and scores of other subjects. After all, education was one common thing that ran through the entire generations of the Tamils!

The span of 1950 years (starting from 1715 B.C. and ending with 235 A.D.) was the period of the Last Sangam. The boundaries of Tamilnad became shrunk during this period. Ilangovaligal makes a mention about this in his work

**The Kumari in the South, Venkatam in the North  
The eastern and the western seas were the  
boundaries of Tamilnad.**

During the period of the Primal Sangam the Tamilnad had extended from Himalayas in the North and Peruvalanaadu in the South. During the period that elapsed in between this earliest Sangam and the last, the Dravidian people who lived in the North India mixed with the Chinese, Sidhiya and Caucasian groups of people who had come into India. There was a big change in their language and culture. Many a language was born by this mixture. The languages of Kannada and Telugu had become separate even before the Last Sangam. Malayalam was yet to be born. The period of the Last Sangam is often described as the Golden period of Tamils. But one should say that the entire period of the Sangam was the Golden period of Tamils.

The Sangam literature is able to tell us exhaustively both about the social life of the Tamils and their personal lives. The life of the Tamils who lived during that period must have obviously been the basis for the Sangam literature. The entire literature is not just imaginations. In both *Tholkappiyam* and the literature written during the Last Sangam period one finds a specific reference about the different kinds of land like Kurinji, Mullai, Marutham, Neythal and Paalai and the life-style of people who were living in those lands. People adapted themselves and their life-styles according to the nature of these lands. The kind of people who were living in the Kurinji lands were called Kuravar, Kundravar, Kaanavar and Vettuvavar. They were involved in bee keeping and harvesting honey, cultivating and growing grains and hunting animals as their professions. They took honey, grain flour and meat for food. Lord Murugan was their God.

The people who lived in Mullai lands were called Aayar, Idaiyar, Kovalar and Pothuvar. They were interested in rearing

sheep and cows. They were involved in agriculture too by growing grains. They ate the grains along with cow's milk and curd. The people belonging to Marutham land were called Velir, Uzavar, Kalamar and Kadaiyar. Agriculture was their main occupation. Most of the people lived in this kind of land only, viz. the Marutham land. They grew paddy, plantain and sugarcane. The agricultural methods to bring up these are detailed in the Sangam literature. The people who had occupied the Neythal land were called Parathavar, Paravar, Paaniyar, Thimilavar, Thiraiyar and Nuzaiyar. Fishing, producing salt and trading were their main occupations. There were no deserts in Tamilnad. Lands which had become dry due to want of rains were called 'Paalai'. The people who had occupied such 'Paalai' lands were called, Eiyinar and Maravars. They were known for their valour and were great warriors. But sometimes they plundered the wealth of the people of other types of lands and lived on their booty.

People were called differently according to the kind of profession that they followed. Anthanar, Aiyar, Paarppanar, Arasar, Vanikar, Velaalar, Adiyar, Vinaivalar, Kollar, Porkollar, Thachchar, Kuyavar, Pulaiththiyar, Paraiyar, Thudiyar, Paanar, Kadambar, Kuuththar and Poranar. There were many castes born in Tamilnad even before the Sangam period. The Sangam literature refer to four different communities.

#### **There were no communities beyond**

#### **Thudiyars, Paanan, Paraiyan and Kadamban**

Yet, there was nothing like 'low' and 'high' amongst these communities or castes. During the period of the Sangam the differences that were found among the Tamils were purely on the basis of the kind of lands in which they were living as we

have seen already. Generally we take the Velir civilisation to represent the general Tamil civilisation.

There were quite a few thousands of smaller towns and bigger towns, cities and ports in Tamilnad. Among the ports that need special mention were, Kaverippoombattinam, Korkai, Musiri and Maanthai. The kind of life as obtained in those smaller towns and bigger towns as well are described in most of the works of the Sangam literature.

We shall now see briefly the different scenario that obtained in smaller towns.

1. There is grass everywhere on the land. There is a fence that surrounds the town on all sides. Sporadically and in between the fence lengths, there are some huts. Just outside the hut you find cotton plants and creepers of ridgegourd. Close to the hut you find a heap of debris and garbages. You find some hens grazing over the heap. People rear pigs and pigeons. There is a common well at the centre of the town which is used by the public. People spend their time on recreation by watching two goats fighting or two hens fighting with each other.
2. You find huts made of dried grain plant leaves. A goatskin is spread inside. A few sheep are found tied to trees or poles planted around.
3. A small house is surrounded by a hedge naturally made of trees. Close to it is an enclosure made by weaving with the dry leaves of a plant. You find a cradle beside. You also find some ploughs and carts lying there. The house is made up with a covering of the dry leaves of the 'Varagu' plant.

4. You find a few huts of the Barathavars along the sea-shore. There are small boats found in front of the huts, which are used for fishing. Creepers of vegetable plants are found hanging with vegetables over the huts.
5. A house is made up of dried coconut tree leaves. Close by a few plants have been grown.
6. Huts of Paravars: Low walled huts have been made by spreading bamboo and tied with fibre and also using dried tall grown grass leaves. You find some pigs and they stray in an open veranda inside the huts.
7. The Kuravars of Nannan land take toddy mixed with honey and toddy mixed with cooked rice. They mix grain flour with tamarind and cook to eat.
8. The places where Anthanars live are quite clean and tidy. The homes are well washed and smeared with cow-dung. Calves are found tied to poles in a naturally made up veranda by weaving the leaves of the coconut tree. You do not find any dogs or hens in their houses.

You cannot say that there was no poverty during the times of the Sangam period. There were poor people in all kinds of towns, small or big. Certain poets wrote about the wretchedness of poverty also. You could find people wearing clothes that were torn. There is a stray mention of a lady who took the green leaves grown on the garbage heap, cleaned and boiled it without salt and took it within the closed doors of home. Hunters took an inferior type of rice with a small mix of salt. But their greatness lay in that they lived a cultured life despite the wretchedness of poverty that had overcome. The purpose of this chapter is only to

explain this greatness from the heights of which they never came down.

Having seen the scenario that obtained in smaller or bigger towns, one could see further the situation that obtained in cities. The king along with his ministers, commanders, tradesmen, the wealthy and workers in different professions were found living in cities. There were certain foreigners among them too.

**"Near the water front further interior  
Had settled the Greek sailors  
Who by sea had commerce  
Whose exotic ways were a local wonder"**

Life in cities are exhaustively explained in works like *Silappadikaram*, *Manimekalai*, *Pattinappaalai*, *Porunar Aatruppadaai*, *Madurai Kaanchi* and *Nedunalvaadaai*. There were quite a few wealthy people living like kings in large and palacial buildings. There were certain houses which were like flats and in between in those flats, people lived. There were bedrooms in the houses built to suit the different seasons. They were called, 'Venirpalli' or 'Uthirippalli'.

**The buildings palacial they were and tall  
That the fleeting clouds in the sky touched and drifted**

**In the place where there only residences**

**It looked as though they were unique  
Formed a lovely skyline**

**The buildings were designed so comfortably  
That free air found its way  
everywhere inside  
through large windows**

That is the scenario of the life of wealthy ladies.

"In Poompuhar one could buy in streets colour pastes made of white or colour powders, the natural 'stones' giving out pleasant fumes on burning like 'Sambiraani', seeds and flowers and perfumes to be used over the hair while taking bath. They wore ornaments made of gold and studded with pearls.

Yet one finds a reference about the discipline in personal and family-life of individuals. During the period of the Last Sangam there were cultural exchanges and trade relations among the people living in different kinds of lands. The kings of all the three Tamil kingdoms looked after the popular welfare fully. They had laid roads and made protective arrangements in narrow roadways. Soldiers armed with bows and arrows protected the merchants using highways in Thondainaad ruled by Thiraiyan. One finds a reference to this fact in *Perumpaanaatru padaai*.

**There were designated roads for donkeys to carry loads.  
There were roads where the merchants crowd found their way,  
roads to carry people to reach the customs and pay their fees  
and roads where the security personnel stood guard against  
thieves who posed threats to the business community.**

The women living in certain lands made butter out of curd and sold it to people in Marutham lands and got in exchange what they wanted. There were similar exchanges of goods between the people living in Neithal lands and Marutham lands respectively. Honey and roots were sold in other lands. A romantic picture of such barter trade is beautifully drawn in one of the Sangam verses.

They got in exchange ghee, honey and roots  
 For fish and pepper;  
 They gave sugarcane and got in return pressed rice  
 Dried deer flesh in return for liquor.  
 Bharathavar were known to sing and dance  
 In praise of their Kurinji land,  
 Kuravar did alike in Neithal  
 Gaanavar went to ecstasy by dancing  
 In their Marutham land.  
 Those who awakened the king from bed  
 Used to sing the Mullai verses of tradition

The Tamil lands of Chera, Chola, Pandian, Kurumban and Erumai had spread far upto the banks of Thungabadhra river. People like Konkans, Kalingas and Rashtrakuts who were not civilised lived to the north of Tamilnad. Further in the north were places like Bengal, Bihar, Sind, Kashmir and Bhutan. The Dravidians who lived in those places had got already mixed with the races of Siddhians, Caucasians and Chinese and their culture had adequately changed in language and civilisation.

#### AGRICULTURE DURING THE LAST SANGAM PERIOD

During the period of the Last Sangam, agriculture was still the basic industry. There was no dearth of food in Tamilnad which was rich in rainfall and flourishing with fertile lands. During the Mahabharatha war, there was one Pandian who had arranged for food for both the warring factions. All the three kings in co-operation with smaller kings had provided for adequate amount of water for irrigation and drinking as well by digging wells, building dams and constructing large tanks. During the period of the Medieval Sangam, the Chola king by name Kanthaman diverted

Cauveri to flow into Cholanaad. Thiruvalluvar dwells on agriculture and its greatness rather elaborately in 10 verses. From the commentaries written by Parimelalagar one reads -

The vellalas had no other occupation except cultivation

"Howe'er they roam, the world must follow still the  
 plougher's team;

Though toilsome, culture of the ground as noblest toil  
 esteem;"

"Who ploughing eat their food, they truly live;  
 The rest to others bend subservient, eating what they give;"

"To cast manure is better than to plough;  
 Weed well; to guard is more than watering now."

"The earth, that kindly dame, will laugh to see  
 Man seated idle pleading poverty."

– Thirukkural

As the field bounds rose, the level of  
 water went high

As the water level rose, so did the paddy grow

As the paddy grew well, so did the people grow richer

As they grew richer, so did the government become mightier

As the government became mightier, the king grew in stature

A major portion of all agricultural lands belonged to the king. One sixth of the lands and one sixth of the land proceeds should go to the king or the Government. Sangam literature tells us that the king freely distributed lands to the Commanders and Poets. They got some more free benefits also from the king. They had to

discharge certain responsibilities assigned to them. They were like the feudal lords of the Medieval Europe. Jews had come into India during the First Century A.D. There is one Copper plate (deed) which tells us that a Tamil king had given Anjuvalanaadu freely to one such European leader by name Joseph Robbian. The declaration goes, 'We (in a lordly expression), hereby declare that we give Anjuvalanaadu in full and rights to collect money and things as taxes, the entire income from Anjuvalanaadu, the road, spreads, the palanquin, the royal umbrella, the official band, the bugles, the lordly shoes, the royal arches and confer upon Joseph Robbian such other paraphernalia consisting in total 72 special privileges'

We exempt him from paying the land tax and the water tax. He is also exempted from payment of any tax which foreigners are obliged to do. But he will get all the awards and benefits which any foreigner is entitled to. We thus maketh this decree to confer upon this friend all such rights which this Government deems fit to do."

### 3. HANDICRAFTS

There were quite a large number of handicrafts industries flourishing in Tamilnad during the periods of Sangam literature in small, large or big town. One reads the scenario as below that obtained in the famous city of Poompuhar from Ilangovaligal's *Silappadikaram*.

Stateley homes with patios for lovers  
Art collections in the middle chambers;  
And casements like the eyes of deer  
Lined with approach to the City of Pukar  
Near the waterfront further interior

Had settled Greek Sailors  
who by sea had commerce  
whose exotic ways were a local wonder.  
Passing these were well laid out streets,  
Where flowers, myrrh and incense,  
Fragrant and cool *unguents*,  
Pastes and powders of all kinds  
Were for sale; next came piles  
Of silks, cotton and woollen goods,  
Cakes and ale, fish and salt,  
Meat and betel leaves, oils and utensils,  
Paints, dolls and statues in clay  
Wood works and iron articles,  
These in turn were followed by residences  
Of diamond settlers, tailors, tanners,  
Makers of musical instruments, singers  
And professional composers, domestic servants,  
And manual labourers and generally  
Classes filled one half of the city.  
First was the royal boulevard  
The street of temple car with flag followed,  
Next a street of shops intervened;  
Then the road to rich merchants homes;  
The houses of priests, of beloved farmers,  
Medical scholars, astrologers and others  
Workers in precious stones, had their big houses.

Two kinds of eulogists, frenzied men  
Possessed by Vedaala, as well as men  
Who calculated time, public entertainers,

Courtesans, dancers servants – men and women  
Percussion artists and other instrumental masters,  
And clowns had their houses in separate streets.

Racing drivers, elephant mahouts,  
Charioteers round the forts  
Those who lived in big residences – all of them  
Were filled with music in Pattinappakkam

Another scene in Katchi city which describes the various industries  
that were doing very well during those times.

Who guarded the other city limits;  
The street where lived fish-vendors, the settlers  
Of white salt, saleswomen of wine, pedlars  
Of cakes and rice pudding, sheep's meat hawkers  
Sellers of betel leaves and sweet spices;  
Streets filled with potters, coppersmiths, bronzesmiths,  
Goldsmiths and metal workers, carpenters  
Of wood, masons with building expertise,  
Painters who create divine formations  
That assure us of grace, shoe-makers and tailors,  
Garland-makers, astronomers, also  
Musicians recreating through human  
Voice and flute, the three reaches in terms of  
Enjoyable tunes and their melodies;  
The streets with cutters of conch-shell bangles  
And proficient stringers of gleaming pearls  
The street of dancing women containing  
Adepts in subjective and public dance  
The bazaar street with hillocks of grains

of eight varieties, the street of minstrels.  
Rhapsodists and specialists in rhythm;  
The streets of courtesans who give pleasure;  
The streets of weavers who work capably  
With thin threads that cannot be seen by eyes;  
The streets with grand homes of touchstone experts;  
The streets with sellers of gem varieties;  
The streets of Brahmins intent on their work;  
The street of officials and ministers;  
The street where top administrators live;  
Public halls, assemblies, street junctions, squares;  
The street with trainers of new elephants  
And horses decorated with gold beads;

And so one finds a similar scene at Madurai from Ilangovaligal.

**Weaving.** During the period of the Last Sangam, Tamilnad was famous for the weaving industry. The dresses made in Uraiyur were much too liked by the Roman kings and in return, the Tamilnad got the price in the form of large amount of gold. This fact is borne by the Roman history. One finds a lot of references in the Tamil literature about the quality of the clothes that were woven in Tamilnad.

Cotton, woollen and silk fabrics were in piles  
In convenient lengths also they were kept folded  
In shops contiguously situated.

Bamboo or a snakeskin, and then he laid himself down on a soft bed while his loyal women hagged him from behind, her curving waist adorned with elegant ornaments.

“You should clothe me then in a broad garment  
with folds like petals of a newly blossoming Pakantrai flowers



that have sprung open their buds  
you should give away wealth without holding back"

— *Puranaanuru*

**The different kinds of dressing material that were woven:**

Here is a big list of the kind of the cloth materials that were woven in Tamilnad and the wide variety just makes the reading romantic and amazing. Kochikam, Peethakam, Pachilai, Araththam, Nundugil, Chunnam, Vadakam, Panju, Irattu, Paadagam, Kongalar, Kopam, Chithirakkambi, Kuruthi, Kariyal, Pedagam, Pariyattak Kaasu, Vedangam, Pungarkkaazagam, Chilligai, Thuuriyam, Pangam, Thaththiyam, Vannadai, Kavatrumadi, Nuulyaappu, Thirukku, Thevaangu, Ponnezuththu, Kuccari, Thevgiri, Kaaththuulam, Irainji, Venpothi, Sembothi and Manipoth were the variety of the woven materials.

**Ornaments:** One can reasonably assess the extent of a country's wealth from the kind of ornaments the womenfolk of the country wear on their person and on their dresses. Also the variety of domestic utensils which they use in their homes speaks about the country's economy. Before the period of the Last Sangam, the archaeological excavations bring out the kind of playthings which the children of those days were using. During the Sangam periods, our children drove chariots along the roads as playthings. One can read in the *Kadalaadukkaathai* about the ornaments which Maadhavi wore. They can be compared to the present-day jewels which women wore. One can read from *Silappadikaram* about the jewels sold in the jewellery shops of Madurai. Diamonds of four different colours, pearls and other precious stones were all studded in the jewels which womenfolk of those days wore.

Other things which were sold in Madurai Market for use by womenfolk:

1. Akil - Arumanavan, Thakkoli, Kidaaravan and Kaaragil.
2. String - Malaiyaaram, Theemuran, Pachai, Kizaan Pachai, Pachai Vettai, Arichchandanam and Verchchukkodi.
3. Pleasant smell - Ambar, Echcham, Kasthuri, Javvadu, Saandu, Kumkumam, Rosewater, Punugu, Thakkolam, Nagappuu, Illavangam, Saathikkai, Vasuvaagi, Thiriyaasam and other oils.
4. Camphor - Malisarakku, Marapatth, Varos, Sudan, Chenasudan.

**Architecture:** Tamils were known for their skill in the field of Architecture also. They made sculptures and big buildings. One could find easily the Tamil style of architecture everywhere. Both in the North and South India, one could easily see the Tamils' prowess as the biggest architects of those times. They built huge palaces, buildings, cities, forts, big walls and protective enclosures. They were all exclusively done by the Dravidians only. A full description of all such walls and protective enclosures is found in all the Sangam literature. Thiruvalluvar describes about the fortresses in one of his Athikarams of 10 verses. After the Sangam period also, it is only the Dravidians who built the big temples and towers in the South. It is only the Dravidians again who extensively did the sculpture with their skilful hands. One can read about the various palacial structures like 'mazainoy' and 'mukilthoy' in any book of history.

"Near the water front further interior  
Had settled Greek sailors  
Who by sea had commerce  
Whose exotic ways were a local wonder"

One can read from *Thivakaram* the raw materials to make sculptures.

**'Black granite and brick, wood and sand,  
The mortar and ivory, wax and jaggery  
The metal and paint were the ten ingredients  
For sculpture making.'**

There were quite a few foreigners amongst the workmen who lived in Tamilnad. They were also engaged extensively.

The ancient Tamils were essentially lovers of both the sea and the land. Their culture had obviously spread to other lands through the high seas. The importance they gave to agriculture and industry on the land was given to the sea-trade and their marine pursuits equally. Like the British who came later to India, the Tamils had a total control over the seas and distant lands. They had a big naval force. There were a lot of industries connected with the sea and the materials one got from the sea. They fished and produced common salt; they were engaged in pearl-diving; made decorative articles from out of sea-shells and pearls; made bangles from sea-shells, etc. They had built small boats for working on the sea near the shore and large boats for deep sea fishing done by going farther into the sea.

We understand that there were quite a few volumes written on different technologies and subjects, during the period of the Sangam like, on medicine, architecture, war implements, handlooms, ornaments, fine arts, music, dance, etc. It appears that the Tamils followed the same approach like 'the guild' in Tamilnad also for the advancement of industries.

#### 4. FOREIGN TRADE

"Travel far and wide over the seas even in search of wealth" is an old adage that is in vogue in Tamilnad. Since ancient times, the Tamils have been engaged in world trade and especially in the marine trade. There were quite a few Dravidian races which had travelled far and wide over the seas and had extensive trading activities. The Iberians of North Europe, the Pascans of Spain, the Aedlasgarner of Italy, the Cartesians who had settled in South Europe, North Africa and East Asian countries, Sumerians, Aelamis, Thirayam people, the Paravars and the Sind valley people of India were all Dravidians only. These people had gone abroad for trading but settled there in due course of time in places right from Aitland in West and Pacific Ocean in the East.

During the period of 1000 B.C. the marine trade was flourishing between South India and Hebrews when king Solomon was ruling the land. Once in three years, the Hebrew ships came to India and carried the goods. The Tamil kings sent their ambassadors to Rome. They had trade links with the Romans and Greeks. There were a large number of Yavanars living in Tamilnad. A large number of the golden coins belonging to Rome were found on excavation by our archaeologists.

**The yavanars came by ships that were  
technologically superior carrying gold;  
which they gave and carried back pepper in return  
Musiri was one great port on the east  
For the Tamils that did extensive trading.**

**Traders arriving from various countries  
Proficient in several languages**

As they travel and trade in several countries  
 Traders each mingle with affection sociable,  
 Among themselves and live happily  
 Even if one get the Pattinam so glorious and great.

– Pattinappaalai

Cauverippoompattinam was a great city  
 with people from varied lands mixing there  
 and living in mirth. They never knew  
 what poverty was.

Countries like Egypt had trade contacts with South India over the seas like the Red sea. The Greeks, Yawans, Koshiers and Finnicians were engaged in such trade. During the 6th Century B.C. this trade was flourishing when the king Napoenidas was ruling. You get a reference about such trading activities from the writings of Palini who lived during the 1st Century B.C. excerpts of which are given below.

“The ships which left the Port of Oasis in Egypt used to reach the Musiri Port of South India after forty days with the help of the South-west monsoon winds. There used to be pirates in and around the Port of Musiri who were dreaded. They used to live in places like Nithriyaan. As the place where the ships used to get anchored was quite too distant from Musiri, the goods had to be brought to the shore in small boats. Musiri in South India and Parrys of Park Neocinti are popular ports. The king of this land called Paandian is headquartered in a city called Madurai. From Kottanaara ships carrying huge pepper loads reach Parrys.”

One can read from the travelogues of the great traveller Periplus that Musiri was a great port flourishing in wealth and ships from Egypt used to frequent this port. We also understand from his

writings that the Tamils used boats and ships of different capacities for the purpose of the marine-trade.

During the period of the Last Sangam the following goods were exported from Tamilnad and they were rice, cardamum, lavang, ginger, pepper, betel nut leaves, variety of clothes, pearls and other precious stones, silver, ivory, diamonds, tortoise-shells, teak, black wood, sandalwood, monkeys and peacocks. The terms, ‘kapim’ and ‘thugim’ used in Bible to denote monkeys and peacocks are Tamil words.

The imported items were gold, golden coins, liquour of high quality, horses, mirrors, brass, lead, tin, jars and grapes-essence.

The Tamils of the Sangam period had trade-links with Burma, Malaya, Jawa, Sumetra and China and other Eastern countries. In those days, the trading activities continued between the East and the West only through Tamilnad. The Tamils started settling down in places like Jawa and Sumetra, after going there for trade. They had conquered these places and ruled over, during later times. There is a reference in the great epic *Manimekalai*, about two Tamil kings who were ruling in Nagapuram of Savaga islands. The Chinese ships were called, ‘Sang’s. They were much larger in capacity than ships of other countries. The goods they brought to India were Chinese crockery, silk, lead, copper, tortoise shells and wooden wax etc. They carried from India things like pearls, pepper, seeds, blue and glass utensils and betel nut.

There were quite a few ports both in the East and the West. Tintis, Musiri, Nelkintra and Kumari were the ports in the west. Cauverippoompattinam, Naagappattinam, Korkai, Puthuchcheri, Marakkanam, Thasaark were the ports in the East. In those days,

the ports of Musiri and Korkai were quite famous. Sangam literature gives a broad description of the kind of trade that was popular in these ports and a large number of ships that used to get anchored near these ports.

**In the boarder of city so fertile and prosperous  
As the amaranth of flawless fame guard  
Horses of gait upright from foreign lands  
Arrived in ships by the waterway  
Bundles of black pepper,  
Brought by carts from inland,  
Emerald and gold.  
That did originate at the northern mountain,  
Sandal and incense found in the western ghats  
The pearls of the sea down south,  
The corals of the eastern sea.  
The bounteous products grown in Gangetic plains,  
The variety of yield from Kaviri basin as well  
Food arrived from Eelam  
Various consumer goods from Kalakam (Burma) as well  
And various articles, big and rare to acquire.**

If the Tamils were not living in Eelam, who was it that sent the foodgrains from Eelam? Very long before they had attained the status of exporting the foodgrains, they should have settled for centuries in this land. Is it not correct?

"Close to the places where the Barathavars were living which contained broad streets, there used to be big godowns duly protected by the governmental forces. There were heaps of the goods stocked inside the godowns which were meant for export

and also those which had come by import, waiting to be cleared by the Customs authorities. The Customs office was always crowded with the importers and exporters."

Apart from the foreign trade, the inland trade also was flourishing during the days of the Sangam period. There was hectic economic activity throughout Tamilnad. People from Kurinji and Mullai lands sold their goods in Marutham lands and got paddy in return. People from the Neithal land sold the common salt, carrying it in bullock carts. In big cities and large towns, both the inland and the goods were sold. Solid currencies were exchanged. Both lending and borrowing of money were a normal practice.

Big merchants used to live in cities. According to the status of their wealth, they were differently called like, Irappar, Kalippar and Perungudi. Merchants who were really doing very well in trade were honoured by the king with the title of "Etti". The foreign trade was usually conducted by trading groups. These groups spent a part of their income on social and religious activities. They built temples. The kings recognised and supported the religious activities and the spreading of the Tamil civilisation abroad, which were done by these groups. *Silappadikaram* describes the high status which these groups were enjoying. They were living in big cities.

**"It was a city of rare distinction,  
Where riches served culture and function;  
Whatever the sea - girt world could desire  
Was to be had at its fabulous fair,  
That made the mariners rich beyond compare.**

By land and sea came these varied wares,  
 To swell the noble merchants' coffers;  
 Of these notables the most eminent  
 As the polestar in the firmament.

The Sangam literature elaborates on the great culture maintained by this business community.

Of the ploughmen who love their land and its tilling  
 Fearing the odium of dishonesty to their community  
 Speaking but truth at all times,  
 Treating equally the goods of theirs and others,  
 Not receiving more from others  
 Than what they have given,  
 And not giving less to others  
 Than what they have received,  
 Announcing quite openly  
 The various goods they deal in  
 And the earnings they get thereof as well,  
 The traders do live in colonies close.

Having gone to many countries,  
 having mingled with people of several kinds,  
 having acquired knowledge sound and varied,  
 As such people assemble at an ancient place  
 Where a festival is celebrated. (Pattinappalai)

*Thivakaram*, another collection of verses written later, also describes the culture of the business community.

To be disappassionate,  
 To shun anger  
 To conduct oneself to situations  
 To conduct oneself to the time of the day  
 To know beforehand things that might occur  
 To remain cool against losses  
 To earn and equitably distribute  
 Are the virtues of any tradesman.

## CHAPTER IX THE PERIOD OF THE LAST SANGAM

(CONTINUED)

**"Tamils – a valorous community."**

**"Tamils were a valorous community**

**Of those that went to Srilanka**

**And to Pushpaka and Java,**

**And many other islands too,**

**And settled as dwellers there**

**Planting their countries' flags,**

**Blazoned with the tiger and the fish,**

**And made them stand supreme,**

**This is the motherland. "**

**"The fame spread far and wide**

**Among the Chinese and the Egyptians,**

**And in the Greek and Arab homelands,**

**And in other lands as well,**

**Of their arts and mystic wisdom.**

**And technics of war and trade.**

**For these were nurtured well indeed**

**In our Tamil-land."**

– *Bharathiar*

Even during the pre-historic days, the Tamils had travelled in all directions and settled in distant lands leaving their homeland Lemuria. The Cherans had established control in the West upto Himalayas, upto the Central parts of India during the period of Chola kings' rule and Himalayas in the north and finally upto Olinad during the period of Pandiyas. The rule by the three kings – the trio — of the South continued to exist even very long before the *Tholkappiyam* times.

The foremost among the great emperors which the Sangam literature eulogised was Nediyan. Other names by which this king was called were Nalantharuthiruvir Paandian, Sayamakirthi and Vadivalambanintra Paandian. He was also sometimes called Aathimanuvu. The Thenmadurai standing on the banks of Pakruliyaaru was his capital. Pakruliyaaru and Thenmadurai got submerged into the sea in the later years. But later, it was this king who went conquering lands and kingdoms upto Himalayas and established his supremacy.

**The Thennavan of South**

**Won over and annexed to his kingdom**

**The Gangetic plains in the North and**

**The Himalayas after the Pakruliyaar**

**And the Kumari hills with several hillocks around**

**Got submerged in the sea.**

He established his control over lands beyond by crossing over the seas. He was honoured with the title "Munneer Vizavin Nediyan"

**He brought under his control  
The huge expanse of the land with sea around;  
A mighty big warrior was he  
To establish his fame and supremacy**

That was sung by the poet Kudapulaviyanaar

**It was he the great Pandian  
Who offered gold and silver to Kuuththar  
And celebrated the great festival of the  
Three holy waters and the great river  
Pakruliyaaru flows with the holy water  
Sanctified by his victories.**

That was sung by the poet Nettimaiyaar.

**"O the great king, were it not you  
Who crossed beyond the sea  
And delimited the boundaries;  
You won over the land known for rich paddy fields  
And you took over Saliyur too into your fold."**

That was written by the poet Maangudi Maruthanaar. The place called Salliyur in Sumatra was the same as Uyarnellin. There are scores of evidences to prove that there were Tamilian kingdom spread over the entire Java, Sumatra and Malaya and the language Tamil too had spread far and wide in these places. The kingdom of Imayavaramban is said to have extended upto Himalayas. Amongst the Chola Kings, kings like Suriya Cholan, Muchukunthan and Manuneethikanda Cholan were time honoured and famous. There are quite a few volumes of the Sangam literature which expound the greatness of these kings.

During the period of the Last Sangam, the Sangam literature describes the great history of triumphs that these kings had during their rule. They planted their national flags on the Himalayas.

**Right on the Himalayas  
wherein had been implanted the symbol of fish;  
The Cholas and Cherans went  
and implanted the symbols of bow and arrow and  
the Tiger.**

**He pounded on the 'Aryans' lands  
with force and made them flee in fear  
And planted the flag of bow and arrow  
To symbolize his victory over those  
kings mighty and fierce in anger.**

The Chola king Ilanchetchenni conquered the great Maurya king Asoka. It was he who checked Asoka's march into the South and foiled. During the period of the Last Sangam, the name of the king who was able to establish the Tamil supremacy on the northern Himalayas is said to be Imayavaramban Neduncheralathan.

**The land around Himalayas  
known for the powerful Aryans  
And Kumari in South,  
Were all in praise for his valour.**

During the later days when *Silappadikaram* was written, the saint Ilangovadigal described as in the following verse - lines the great victories which Cheran Chenguttvan was able to score in the North.

Justice itself contrives Punishment for Men of Eminence if they err in politics; The great ones also hold chaste woman in reverence; The sins of one life are paid for in the next existence. I shall fashion out this ancient story, *Silappathikaram*, as an epic of music and poetry.

Cheran Chenguttuvan conducted a big function in which he erected a statue for Kannagi.

During the period of the Last Sangam, the Pandian king who won over kingdoms in the North was Ariyappadai kadantha Nedunchezian.

Karikaalan the Second was the Chola king who had similar victories over the northern kingdoms and established his supremacy by winning them all. Their kingdoms had spread upto Himalayas.

History tells us that during the period of the Last Sangam, every citizen of the Tamil population, be it a boy, a girl or a man or a woman – he/she was first characterised by his/her valour and sense of patriotism. He/she was always prepared to go for a war if the king or the country wanted. If sons/daughters died of disease, or children were still born, they cut their bodies into two (with the idea and prayer) so that they might reach the heavens where the victorious warriors had gone and then they buried. They erected tombstones where the warriors were buried and, wrote their epitaphs. Tholkappiyar himself had written the way the tombstones should be erected in worshipping the memory of the dead. We find at various stanzas the mention about the kings' forces and palaces and fortresses in the Sangam literature. The kings had a variety of regiments under their command. There were regiments with elephants, horses, chariots, infantry – bow

and arrow forces, etc. Thiruvalluvar explains the different kinds of regiments in 20 *Kural* verses.

**"The heroes counting up their days, set down as vain  
Each day when they no glorious wound sustain."**

**"Fearless they rush where'er 'the tide of battle rolls';  
The king's reproof damps not the ardour of their eager souls."**

One can read in both *Thirukkural* and *Silappadikaram*, the way the forts and fortresses had been constructed. They were invincible.

**"A fort must need but slight defence, yet ample be,  
Defying all the foeman's energy."**

**"Height, breadth, strength, difficult access;  
Science declares a fort must these possess."**

— *Thirukkural*

And *Silappadikaram* reads -

**"Bow that shot arrows automatically,  
Black-fingered mechanical monkeys,  
Copper-melting plants, iron smithies,  
Catapults, shooting structures,  
Boiling oil, piles of rocks, spears  
Chains, giant hooks, squeezers,  
Sharp nails, sparrow heads,  
Ovens shaped like human heads,  
Traps with boars' heads, projectiles,  
Heavy logs, pushing rods and missiles.  
They crossed the main gate that flies**



**The flag of every kingdom overcome,  
And at last they reached Matari's home."**

The land of the Tamils was a veritable abode of great heroines. To symbolize their heroic attitude, men and women made strings studded with tiger's teeth. Even the sacred thread that men tied around the neck of the bride had the tiger's teeth at the centre. It was a customary honour done to great citizens by presenting to them a shawl made of Tiger's skin.

**The Tiger being a ferocious animal  
was killed and its tooth was extracted  
to be strung in the lady's jewel -  
A symbol of victory and valour**

The young girls who wanted to get married, were after boys who were really heroic in character. They did not go after boys who were just employed as you find in our present-day world.

**She was a queen in character  
That Goddess Lakshmi blessed her with  
She would not even look at one  
Who was not heroic**

No woman belonging to the community of people who by profession were rearing cows and buffaloes would like to marry an youngster who did not have the mettle of fighting the oxen and buffaloes and bring them to control.

**The one who is afraid and withdraws  
Against a bull charging towards him  
Will never be married by the Aychi lady  
Either in this life or in the next even.**

**No big wealth would go to satisfy her  
If only she heard others praise her  
Husband was courageous enough  
To kill the most ferocious animal on earth.**

Ponmudiyaar, a woman poet, explains in her verse what the duties of a heroic woman are.

**Thus spake that lady, a valourous woman she was  
It is my duty to beget a son and bring him up  
It is his father's duty to educate him,  
The Blacksmith it is to make a spear and give him  
The king shall teach him character  
And for my son it will be his duty to fight against an elephant  
and control**

There is a rare verse which reads like...

**The greatest duty that shall be rendered to the king  
by my son is, when he fights to his last  
and be killed even At the battlefield.  
That is the character of a valorous son.**

On the first day of the war, a woman lost her brother; and on the second she lost her husband. Yet, she sent her very young boy, her only issue to the war-field and cried, "O son! go and return victorious! Thou shalt fight to win and come back."

**May her will be broken! What she has decided on is so cruel  
but yet it is fitting for a woman descended from an ancient time!  
Her father, the day before yesterday in battle, brought down  
an elephant and then fell dead on the field; Yesterday  
her husband drove back a long rank of warriors and then  
was cut down in the fight; and today she heard the sound**

of the war drum and she was overwhelmed with desire!  
 Her mind whirling she put a spear into the hand of her  
 only son and she wound a white garment around his body  
 and smeared oil upon the dry topknot of his hair,  
 and having nothing but him yet she said "Go now"  
 she sends him off into the battle!

When someone asked her (another woman) as to where his  
 son had gone, her reply was ....

**You grasp the fine pillar that holds up my small house  
 and ask me "Where is your son?" I do not know  
 where my son may be. Like a cave of rock that a tiger inhabited  
 and then abandoned is this womb which gave birth to him!  
 You will find him out there somewhere on the battlefield!**

There is a touching verse known for its depth and intensity,  
 which tells about a mother's breasts which started brimming with  
 overflowing milk when she saw her son dead in the battle field  
 after a heroic deed – she was overjoyed.

**missiles fell men, cleaving into the oncoming army,  
 cutting open space advance until he dies between that two hosts  
 that worries mother; with her inflexible will,  
 was overcome with love then. Again her withered  
 breasts flooded milk!**

And then came another woman who became angry when she  
 was told that her son had unabashedly withdrawn himself from  
 the battlefield.

"Her son was afraid of the enemy army and he showed them  
 his back and ran." Thus she heard of her son, then rage overcame  
 her and she said, "If he fled the furious battle, I'll cut off the  
 breast at which he sucked" and she snatched up a sword and she  
 turned over every body lying there on the blood - soaked field and  
 when she found her son who was scattered into pieces, she felt  
 happier than the day she bore him!

The Tamils had remained valorous throughout the period of their  
 history. We shall read about the kings of the three regions of the  
 Tamilnadu in the next chapter. Whatever has happened to the  
 Tamils today? Lo! it is a tragedy, the times have changed.

**The time is like a kite  
 It flies aloft for a moment in the air  
 Only to dive down in the next  
 And it goes again into the sky**

Our history has ended as a tragic story like the fate of the  
 Srilankan king.

**He was not an ordinary being  
 He was one with large frame and big shoulders  
 Mighty with valour, ferocious and fierce to look  
 He had Sceptre given by Sankara,  
 But lo! he had to retreat against Rama  
 With hands bare leaving the arms at the battlefield  
 Heads bowed down, defeated and shrunk to shame  
 Went back home to Srilanka.**

### THE GOVERNMENT THAT WE HAD INSTITUTED

**"Kingship, in virtue failing not, all vice restrains,  
In courage failing not, it honour's grace maintains."**

**"Who guards the realm and justice strict maintains,  
That king as God o'er subject peoples reigns."**

– *Thirukkural*

A government is an organisation which is at once an enunciator of laws and controls and also closely enforces the rule of law. A government can function only with the people's participation and co-operation. Rousseau says that it is a social contract. Harold Laski, the famous political commentator says that a Government is an institution by which the people get help to look after their social good to the best and a high degree. These thinkers are of the opinion that a Government is an agency instituted by the public for their mutual benefit.

Some more writers of the west writing on the institution of government say:

**"It is the government's policy to satisfy the public needs to a possible and a high degree."**

**"Defence, finance and social good' are the three important duties of a government"** – Bertrand Russel

**"Government is a tool to reach the highest and the best of human thinking"** – Kiegel.

**"People look upon government as an institution which runs by law and looks after the rule of law. It is for the common good of the people that any government is functioning."**

The Marxists are of the opinion that any government is a tool in the hands of the rich and it exploits the people. Unless this system dies, people cannot be free. The works of Chanakya and Machiavalli also stress the same point.

The Westerners interpreted the meaning of the word, 'government' on the basis of economic and political power. But the interpretation of the Tamils is based "on doing the highest good' to the people. A government that falters can never be called a government. One can find this interpretation both in *Thirukkural* and in quite a few verses of the Sangam literature.

**"The Sceptre that upholds righteousness"**

**"The aim of the Sceptre is to uphold righteousness"**

**"A king who was praised by the noble  
and the learned,  
A king considerate he was  
who stuck to rule by justice"**

**"There can be nothing more important  
than righteousness and sense of justice  
that shall crown a king with victory"**

There is no questions of 'majority' 'minority', caste, religion, community, 'my family', or 'your family' etc. in the eyes of law. Justice is one and the same for one and all.

The Tamils looked upon the king as one equal to God as he was the saviour of the entire world and population and he always saw to it that justice was rendered.

**"When I met the king, nay,  
I met God himself"**

**"It is not the paddy that will protect  
It is not even water that will protect  
It is the king's Sceptre, the symbol of justice  
and righteousness,  
That will protect all for ever"**

**"Who guards the realm and justice strict maintains,  
That king as God o'er subject peoples reigns."**

They called the king as the 'Protector'. The meaning of the word 'Protector' is explained clearly by Chekkizaar in *Thiruththondarpuraanam*.

**"The king, a great protector of this land  
Shall guard the people under him  
without any let or hindrance  
Shall prevent criminals from doing harm  
To the public  
Shall with might suppress any injury to the citizens  
Shall with serious attention maintain  
the law and order."**

When the king swerved from the path of his duties, it is not merely the king but his entire country would be ruined. We read from history about the various empires which came down to ruin when they denied justice to their people and also indulged in doing atrocities. The story of *Silappadikaram* is nothing but a volume of advices to any king as to how to govern his country.

**"Justice itself contrives punishment for men of eminence,  
The great ones also hold chaste women in reverence;  
The sins of one's life are paid in the next existence."**

**I shall fashion out this anklet story,  
As an epic of music and poetry."**

The same idea is being emphasised by Thiruvalluvar also.

**"His people's tears of sorrow past endurance, are not they  
Sharp instruments to wear the Monarch's wealth away?"**

**"Where king from right deflecting, makes unrighteous gain,  
The seasons change, the clouds pour down no rain."**

**"Where guardian guardeth not, udder of kine grows dry,  
And Brahman's sacred lore will all forgotten lie."**

The story of Manu Needhi Cholan speaks eloquently of a king's duty in maintaining justice with a sense of dispassion. He listened to the complaint of a cow, a dumb animal and on finding that the complaint was legitimate, killed his own son as he found justice in doing so.

**He didn't pause to consider  
That his only son was to succeed him to his throne  
Nothing could deter him from pursuing the path  
of righteousness,  
And that he took as his duty by government he headed  
He ordered his chariot to run over his son**

And such was the great Manu Vandan What shall we call it, the wonder government or the rarest of rare government.

Kamban, the great poet who came later, explains in very clear terms the general ethos of the Tamils in the matter of dispensation of justice. According to the poet, a king embodies in one both the life and the body of the people.

He is one decorated with jewels with shining stones precious  
 Like a lion he is one with indomitable strength  
 He looks upon everyone like himself and protects them all  
 There is none in his kingdom who commits any crime or sin  
 He is an embodiment of them all  
 A single soul to represent them all  
 He represents them all in life and body  
 A single soul so noble and great.

Kamban goes on to define the ideal disposition of a king in general.

He must be like a mother  
 who claims no returns for her love,  
 He must be religious  
 in matter of dispensing good to the people;  
 He must be like medicine to cure a disease  
 He must be one highly learned by studies  
 And listening to the learned and great  
 And equally good to one and all.

Whether it is a government by the people or by the king, the one that swerves from the path of values should be labelled as heinous. If you compare the conduct of a government to rice, its constitution should be called the fodder. We, the people of the present-day as we are, have lost the 'rice' content totally but are fighting for the fodder.

It has become a convention nowadays to talk laudably about democracy. But we do not take cognizance of incharitable attitude, injustices, suppressions, controls, exploitations that are widely prevalent and a self-seeking attitude that is unabashedly practised in public life. Is it charitable to recognise 10 votes as greater against

9? Will injustice become justice by that difference of a single vote? Whatever be the form of a government, values and justice should be given the highest priorities.

The ruling of the three popular kingdoms started even before the period of Tholkappiyar and continued during the period of the Sangam. They were emperors each. They were called by terms, 'Perungo' or 'Maavendar'. The kings of the three kingdoms who were ruling during the 1st - 2nd Centuries B.C. were as follows:

**Cherar:** Imayavaramban Neduncherallaathan, Cheran Chenguttuvan and Mantharancheral Irumborai.

**Cholar:** Karikalan I. Karikalan II, Ilanchetchenni, Nalangkilli, Nedunkilli, Killivalavan, Kopperunchozan and Perunarkilli.

**Pandiyar:** Muthukudumbi Peruvazuthi, Aariyappadai kadantha Nedunchezian, Vetriverchezian, Thalayalan Kaanaththu Cheruventra Nedunchezian.

There were smaller kings under emperors. There were kings of still lower cadre under these smaller kings. The smaller kings were called, 'Mannars'. During the Sangam period and after, the poets were mostly dependant on these smaller kings. The Sangam literature makes quite a few references about such smaller kings. Velir, Mokur, Pazaiyan, Moran, Nannan, Venmaan, Villavan, Kothai, Oymaanadan, Nalliyakkodan, Nithiyan, Vel, Aay, Velbegan, Velevvi, Velpaari, Nannan and Velmaan were some of the Velir kings who were considered second in the hierarchy. Besides, kings like Kochar, Eiynar, Kattiyar, Karunaadar had also kingdoms of smaller area under their control.

There were a council of advisers consisting of five members (known for their political acumen and administrative capacity) to

advise the emperor on official matters. The council consisted of Minister, Purohit, Army Commander, Ambassador, Spying officer, Nagar Maanthar, Chief of Elephant forces and Ivulimaravar.

In fact, the actual powers were vested with the smaller kings and the City Corporations and Town Panchayats. The emperor had direct control of everything beyond the boundaries of the City. The kings in the second line paid tax to the emperor. The Chairman of their assembly was always selected by the people. The Sangam literature explains the qualifications that were expected of those who could contest the elections and the election procedures. The idea of the governmental powers to be ultimately distributed right upto the level of Village Panchayats had been fully implemented during the Sangam period. But lo! such an idea still remains as a dream and has not been implemented at all in our times. There was at no time in Tamilnad of those days, a system which had allowed unlimited powers to be centralised in the hands of a few, as you find today.

The kind of the system of government obtaining in Tamilnad of those days – right upto the period of the English rule – was feudal in character like what was in vogue in Europe during the medieval days. There were three big emperors in Tamilnad. They were Cherars, Cholas and Pandiyas. The first of the empires in the North was that of Magada. There were quite a few thousands of kings under them, second in the hierarchy. The latter kings paid tax to the emperors. It was a crude equation of power by which when the emperor became politically weak, the lower in the hierarchy refused to pay the tax. There were quite a number of wars between them. If one lower in the order was won over, he was obliged to pay tax to the emperor. The wars were fought

invariably for the rights to get tax. If an emperor had conquered another, those smaller kings under the latter were obliged to pay the tax to the former. But the people's condition was never affected by such wars. Whoever won in the war, the administration was still in the hands of the kings lower in the hierarchy or the City Councils. They were ruling as per the conventions in vogue. After the period of the Last Sangam, it became usual that the smaller kings became emperors and vice-versa. Yet such things did not practically cause any serious change in the administration.

There were courts to enquire into public cases and render justice.

**The Cholas' kingdom in Uraiyur  
is known for establishing  
Justice and righteousness  
And so does your fame  
Remain unsullied for ages and ages**

Writes a poet from Uraiyur that righteousness and justice always prevailed in the kingdom of Chola.

### 3. EDUCATION AND CULTURE

**Tamilnadu, a temple of education  
The place where the great Kamban was born,  
Rich with varied thoughts of elders  
An epitome of education and culture,  
That has spread unto the entire world  
Its gloried ethos and great culture."**

This was not a flattery. It was true indeed. We have been always an educated group of people both during those times and

continuing till date. We might have lost many things over the millennia but have not stopped from becoming educated. You do not need statistics to prove this point. Knowledge and wisdom are not functions of education alone. Family traits and traditional discipline are the basic factors behind a healthy civilisation.

There were quite a few women-poets during the period of the Last Sangam. Both men and women were equally educated and famous in their own fields. We have never looked upon power or wealth as more important than education. We have considered education as the supreme.

**Learn, and learn, O my people  
It augurs well to learn and be learning  
Learn if you have to beg for learning even  
Do learn as it will do good in the long run.**

The Tamil kings patronised education in a large measure.

**Help with all what you can  
If it becomes necessary;  
Offer your wealth  
If it becomes necessary;  
But make sure  
That you learn and be informed  
With no respite or anger.**

– Those were the words of one Pandiyan king and they convey the depth and sincerity of the importance he gave to education.

**There might be many in a family  
The king will not choose all and sundry  
But go with the one who is learned  
And informed  
To guide him in matters of public interest**

That was one of the Sangam verses bringing forth the importance given to education.

**“Learning is excellence of wealth that none destroy;  
To man nought else affords reality of joy.”**

**“The man who store of learning gains,  
In one, through seven worlds, bliss attains.”**

**“Learning’s irradiating grace who gain  
Others excel, as men the bestial train.”**

**“The wise is rich, with ev’ry blessing blest;  
The fool is poor, of everything possessed.”**

– *Thirukkural*

The names of the poets who lived in those days, their communities, the names of the towns they lived and their races reveal that they lived equally distributed in both the towns and cities. Most of them belonged to the Nagar community. The field of education was quite widespread and was of a high order.

Wealth and power apart, it is the civilisation that mattered for a decent living of the people.

**“The world abides; for ‘worthy’ men its weight sustain.”**

**“They drink with smiling grace, though poison interfused they  
see,**

**Who seek the praise of all-esteemed courtesy.”**

– *Thirukkural*

The supremacy in a hierarchy is a function of basic discipline. The Tamils lived a life of great culture symbolized by love, righteousness and a charitable disposition.

Every city is your city  
 Everyone is your kin  
 Failure and Prosperity do not come to you  
 Because others have sent them  
 Nor do the suffering and the end of suffering  
 There is nothing new in death.  
 Thinking that living is sweet  
 We do not rejoice in it.  
 Even less do we say if something unwanted happens  
 that to live in miserable:  
 Through the vision of those who have understood  
 we know that a life, with its hardship,  
 makes its way like a raft,  
 riding the water of huge and powerful river  
 roaring without pause as it breaks against  
 rocks because the clouds crowded with bolts of lightning  
 pour down their cold drops of the rain,  
 and we are not amazed  
 at those who are great and even less do we  
 despise the weak:

The idea of socialism is not new to Tamilnad. There are verses written by Sangam poets.

Irum Peruvazhuthi was the name of this poet who unfortunately got drowned in the sea.

Not stopping with being cultured in public life, the Tamils were personally disciplined, righteous and believed in inner grace as something more important which was expressed as culture to the outside world. They looked upon life as a means to earn in

the most righteous way and be of great help not merely to oneself but to others as well and live happily.

**Wealth and happiness in life**  
**get exemplified with the culture of righteousness**

**Happiness, wealth and righteousness**  
**When qualified with love**  
**Become the exemplary and defined**  
**Virtue of 'Ainthinai' (five fold virtues)**

They called the family life as 'Illaram' and held it as supreme in the scale of values.

"The life domestic rightly bears true virtue's name;  
 That other too, if blameless found, due praise may claim."  
 "If love and virtue in the household reign,  
 This is of life the perfect grace and gain."

– *Thirukkural*

Thiruvalluvar explains the greatness of the Illaram in as many as 240 verses of *Thirukkural*.

The character of womenfolk in a particular society is a reflection of the society's general cultural disposition.

"The house's 'blessing' men pronounce the house-wife excellent;  
 The gain of blessed children is its goodly ornament. "

"As doth the house beseem, she shows her wifely dignity;  
 As doth her husband's wealth befit, she spends; helpmate is she;"

"If woman might of chastity retain,  
 What choicer treasure doth the world contain?"



**"Between this: maid and me the friendship kind  
Is as the bonds that soul and body bind."**

**And the expectations about women's disposition were--**

**"Women are characterised by bashfulness  
Timidity, shyness and being coy"**

**"Women are unique for their  
Abundant wisdom, faithfulness  
Culture in spoken word,  
Knowledge and rare virtues"**

A sense of hospitality was looked upon as the prime duty of a family and the same has been stressed in quite a few verses.

**"All household cares and course of daily life have this in view,  
Guests to receive with courtesy, and kindly acts to do."**

Kannagi describes her plight and sorrows when she suffered serious depravation due to separation from her husband;

She could not do her duties to religious spritual heads and guests.

The Tamils considered their children as darlings.

**"Than God's ambrosia sweeter far the food before men laid,  
In which the little hands of children of their own have play'd."**

**"The pipe is sweet, the lute is sweet, by them it will be averred,  
Who music of their infants' lisping lips have never heard."**

– Pandiyan Arivudai Nambi

The purpose of wealth is exemplified by distribution. The Sangam poets eulogised the kings for their sense of charity. They

depricated in equal terms the attitude to beg others for help. Charity, in those days was a unilateral virtue and looked upon as a duty of every human being, unlike the present days where everything is done or given purely with the idea of something in return in kind or help. It is like merchandising on charity.

The Tamils aspired for a universal happiness. Wrote a Sangam poet, declaring in loud terms that he could never bear the sight of a single person who went without food even for a day or even once.

The same idea was repeated by our bard Bharathiyar in his verse—

**"A new law will we make  
And ever keep;  
If a single man goes without food  
All earth this outrage shall make good  
Or fall in one full sweep".**

#### 4. THE RELIGION OF TAMILS

We have already read about the religious life of the Tamils during the period of Tholkappiyar and the Indus Valley civilisation. The sense of religionism was something too natural for the Tamilians and the same has continued until today since ages. There is one God. He is without name, place and character. He is beyond our bodies and mind. He loves us all. There is re-birth for human beings. The great saint Maraimalai Adigal says that righteous attitude and vegetarianism are the practices that the Tamils have been following since the days of Tholkappiyar. One can find these basic principles widely covered in the Sangam

literature. Collection of verses under the titles like *Thevaaram*, *Thiruvachagam*, *Thirumanthiram* and *Saiva Siddhaantham* explain the same principles in clear terms. "The *Saiva Siddhaantham* is a religious philosophy so unique for South India and the South Indians. This is the religion that has been practised devoutly by the Tamils even from the prehistoric times." (Sir John Marshal)

It is doubtful whether all the Tamils followed the above religion during the Tholkappiyar's times and the period of the Last Sangam. It was a multi-racial society who were given to practice of varied kinds of religions. The religious practices of one and the same religion also varied from one kind of land to another. During the Sangam period, people started worshipping many gods and at times they worshipped small deities also. Ilangovalikal who wrote the famous epic *Silappadikaram*, describes about such temples in detail.

At the temple of the eternal Lord Siva  
Of the beautiful Six-faced Murugan  
Of the white complexioned Baladeva  
Of the blue skinned Thirumal  
And of Indra whose parasol  
Was decked with strings of pearls,  
Vedic rites by Brahman prescribed  
Were without a flaw observed  
To the four orders of heavenly spirits,  
The eighteen kinds of aerial spirits,  
And the numerous indigenous deities,  
Were offered special ceremonies of worship.  
Discourses of spiritual or ethical matters"

He refers to the temples in Madurai under the 'Uurkaankathai'.

Besides the Siva and Vishnu temples, there were quite a few 'circles' named appropriately like 'Amarar Kottam', 'Pala Thevar Kottam', 'Venyaanai Kottam', 'Suriyan Kottam', 'Nilaak Kottam', 'Uurkkottam', 'Velkottam' and 'Saththan Kottam'. There were special religious practices uniquely followed in the famous land divisions namely Kurnji, Mullai and Neithal.

The Gods whom the Tamils worshipped during the Sangam period were Sivan, Vishnu, Murugan, Inthiran, Baladevan and Brahma.

The smaller deities whom they worshipped were – Devi, Kotravai, Kaali, Krishnan, Varunan, Lakshmi, Neerththeivam, Njaayiru, Thingal and Pathinen kanaththevarkal. They worshipped snakes also and erected tombstones for the dead warriors, conducted a suitable religious function during the burial of such dead warriors and saluted them. In all places and countries where the Dravidians had lived, worshipping goddesses was a universal practice even from the pre-historic times. People worshipped goddesses in different names. During the Sangam period worshipping Kotravai was a practice which was widely prevalent among the Maravars. Maravars did animal sacrifice to propitiate the goddess and worshipped her.

With the jingling anklets in her ankle  
The sword that proclaimed victory  
glittering in her hand  
O the Goddess Kotravai!

The different religious practices that were followed by the people in Kurnji lands were Velan Veriyattu, Kuravai and Nunangu.

The Sangam literature abounds in describing the varied kinds of conventions and religious practices that were obtaining in those days. Observing restrictions based on castes, the practice of looking for auspicious 'timings' and avoiding inauspicious 'timings', believing in omens, believing in astrological practices, giving sacrifices, eating meat, drinking toddy, gambling, living with prostitutes – such practices were not there generally but they were seen prevalent in certain communities. One must also say that the practice of the living wife of a dead husband sacrificing her life by falling into the burning pyre of her dead husband, usually known as 'Sathi' was also prevalent.

The practice of performing Yagams and such other religious practices which were prevalent in the North found their way into Tamilnad also.

Countless were the number of times  
(even the numbers became shy)  
They gave offerings to the God of fire  
And they spread their fame  
Like the endless stretch of sand  
In the river

The Brahmins whose duties were sixfold  
Performed Yagnas and gave offerings to the God of fire  
That signified pure righteousness in life.

Brahminism and puranic stories started gaining ground. One could find Buddhism and Jainism taking deeper and deeper roots in Tamilnad. Quite a few books on Buddhism and Jainism started appearing during the Sangam period and after. Seethalai

Saththananar's *Manimekalai* was one of the famous works based on Buddhism. Idol worship was practised all over.

Saththananar gives a detailed account of the various religious practices that were followed in Tamilnad during those times. Saivism, Brahmaism, Vaishnavism, Vedic practices, Sankya principles, and scores of such philosophical school of thoughts had gained adequate following for each. But at any time – whether it was those times or the present days – the Tamils accepted with an open mind any school of thought and started following it whichever gave them conviction. Famous books on Buddhism written in Tamil started gaining popularity during the Sangam period. Later it was the same case with the Christian and Mohammadan literatures also when rendered in Tamil.

## 5. THIRUKKURAL AND VALLUVAR

When talking about the period of the Last Sangam, one can hardly forget the masterpiece of literature, namely *Thirukkural*. This was written during the period of the Last Sangam or the 1st Century A.D. There are a lot of stories about Thiruvalluvar. All of them are unbelievable. They are just pigments of imagination. *Thirukkural* stands supreme and foremost among all the Tamil literary works. The greatest point about *Thirukkural* is that it is a non-sectarian piece of literature belonging to all and not based on any particular community or group of people. It is beyond caste, colour or creed. It is called by such varied names as *Pothumarai*, *Tamilmarai* or *Poyyaamozhi* or *Theivanuul*. It has been translated in almost all the important languages of the world. *Thirukkural* has won great appreciation from world religious leaders like Pope.

*Thiruvachagam* another great Tamil work on religious philosophy also has won the appreciation from Western world.

"You cannot find in any language of the world an anthology of excellent knowledge as *Thirukkural*."

- Albert Schweitzer

One can look upon *Thirukkural* as a veritable guide from varied angles like politics, economics, general life, discipline, sociology, family life and true wisdom. There is no shade of human thought on principles governing human life which has not found expression in *Thirukkural*.

**It has everything contained in it;**

**A world of truth enshrined in couplets;**

**There is nothing that has not been said in it;**

**Of what avail are the verses *others*;**

***Thirukkural* is the one unique book of wisdom  
to guide the entire world;**

If one were to take only what has been said in *Thirukkural* on politics, one could compare it with Chanakya's *Arthasasthra* or Karold Laksie's philosophy and appreciate its greatness. One could compare it with Manu's philosophy when one chooses to look upon *Thirukkural* from the angle of administering, rendering and maintaining justice.

*Thirukkural* dwells elaborately on the topics of Virtue, Wealth and Love. It explains the human conduct under every circumstance on the basis of righteousness and values. It has 133 sub-headings and 1330 verses in all.

<b>1. Virtue (Araththuppaal)</b>	<b>Sub-chapters</b>	<b>Verses</b>
	Introduction	40
	Domestic virtue	200
	Ascetic virtue	130
	Fate	10
<b>2. Wealth (Porutpaal)</b>		
	Politics	250
	State	320
	Beyond the text	130
<b>3. Love (Kamathuppaal)</b>		
	Secret relations - beginning	70
	Open relations	180
		1330

It starts with a prayer under 'Introduction' chapter.

**"A , as its first of letters, every speech maintains;**

**The 'Primal deity' is first through all the world's domains. "**

Tharumar, Madakkudavar, Thaamaththar, Nachchar, Parimelalagar, Parithi, Thirumalaiyar, Mallar, Kaalingar and Paripperumal were the poets - who wrote commentary for *Thirukkural* in the later days.

It is not my idea to explain the inner meanings of every verse. Most of the Tamilians must have read *Thirukkural* in depth. I shall just refer a few of the verses written by many poets in appreciation of these world famous couplets.

**"It gave Valluvar the great**

**For all the world to have;**

**And the fame rose sky high;**

- Bharathiar

"The indescribable brevity of *Thirukkural* is like trying to fill into a tiny sped of mustard all the seven oceans. Brevity could not have gone farther."

*Thirukkural* the great work of Thiruvalluvar,  
The king among poets, shall remain unsullied  
for ages to come. It shall remain for ever  
like an eternal flower full of the sweetness of honey  
like the divine flower of Karpagam tree  
Lasting for ever and ever.

The great Thirumal God conferred his blessings

On this world and people,  
when he walked the entire globe  
with the benign graces of the touch of his feet.  
Alike, Thiruvalluvar embraced the minds of  
entire humanity, understood their feelings  
and put them into exquisite verse of his,  
the glorious couplets of Thiruvalluvar.

Wisdom gathered from rare works of the learned  
Wisdom gathered from Vedas, he preserved them  
as jealous possession and put them all in one great  
masterpiece that was *Thirukkural*  
There is none in this world to match the inimitably supreme  
Thiruvalluvar.

Thiruvalluvar has given unto this world  
By his masterly exposition of the human wisdom  
The great *Thirukkural*, loved by every heart

and soothing to every soul, sweet by its metre to the ears  
and sheer melody it sounds when you spell every word of it  
*Thirukkural* a great redeemer to humanity from every evil.

Just as lotus reigns supreme among flowers,  
Sambunatham amongst the golden metals  
*Thirukkural* is the greatest amongst the Venbas  
That were ever sung.

Like the three hills of Kollimalai, Nerimalai  
and Pothiamalai, the three countries of Kudalnaadu,  
Punalnaadu and Thennaadu

The three rivers of Porunai, Cauveri and Vaigai,  
The three cities of Karuvur, Thuraiyur and Madurai,

The three drum-beats to declare Auspiciousness, Victory and Kodai  
The three branches of literature like Prose, Poetry and Drama  
The three flags of Fish, Bow and Arrow and Tiger,  
Marking the lands of the three kings of Pandiya, Chera and Chola  
and the gloried couplets of human wisdom *Thirukkural*  
adorns their crowns at once like a holy string with its  
inimitable content expounding Wealth, Righteousness and  
Happiness.

Brahman hid himself and came unto this world  
As Thiruvalluvar and gave unto this world  
the meaning and wisdom of the four Vedas,  
The gloried principles of Righteousness, Wealth and  
Happiness.

May I be praising this *Thirukkural* for ever,  
May the heart be for ever full of its joy  
May the ears be constantly tuned to its glory.

**O Pandian the great!**

**We have heard all that we had not heard before**

We have understood many things  
that we had not come across in life.

We understood the potency of every word

Thiruvalluvar has written.

We have come to know the meaning of life and the finale of every  
human life to reach from the abode of love.

## CHAPTER X

### THE HISTORY OF THE TAMILS AFTER THE LAST SANGAM

It is a dark period in the history of the Tamils. The rule by the famous trio (Chera, Chola and Pandian) kings who were governing Tamilnad since ages came to an end. The Chera Dynasty disappeared completely. The Pandiyas and Cholas were there for quite some time but for name sake. They were quite too smaller in political stature, significance and importance. The Tamilnad successively came to be under the rule of various dynasties which came from North like Pallavas, Kalappirar, Chalukyas, Gangar, Kadambar, Kochar and Rashtrakuts. They were after all not from far off lands but kings who were ruling in the northern portion of the South India and were Dravidians only. They conquered the Tamil kings and got control of their kingdoms.

Tamil was not their mother-tongue. They spoke in Kannada, Telugu, Maratti or Kalingam. It was in their lands that Sanskrit acquired great dominance. Hence, these kings patronised Sanskrit to a great level. The language of Tamil lost its pristine glory and

was unseated from the pedestal of the government. Sanskrit spread far and wide into Tamilnad and became popular. Brahminism mixed freely with other Tamil religions and the cults Saivism and Vaishnavism as you observe today were born. Most of the princes who had embraced Buddhism earlier became converts and chose to follow these cults. During the later days, these cults disappeared and only Saivism and Vaishnavism stood the ground. These kings no doubt spoke in languages that was different from Tamil but there was no difference otherwise with the Tamils in the religion they followed, their culture and the Arts they practised. After living for sometime in Tamilnad, they got freely mixed with the Tamils and became one. They patronised Tamil also. One could find a great advancement in the field of religion during the rule of these kings. The Bhakthi cult had its birth in Tamilnad and spread throughout India. Big temples were built in Tamilnad during this period only. The arts of Music, Sculpture and Painting attained greater and greater development.

There are a lot of books available today, which dwell on the period of the Last Sangam. My intention is to just touch upon the changes that took place in Tamilnad during this period.

I would like to divide the period into two segments viz. (1) from 3rd Century A.D. to 14th Century A.D. and (2) from the 14th Century onwards.

### 3RD CENTURY A.D. TO 14TH CENTURY

**Kalappirar:** Also called Kalavar was the community who lived in the northern parts of Thondainadu. Their mother tongue was Tamil. But they were not as much civilised or cultured. These people conquered all the three kings, viz. Chera, Chola and Pandias and also the Pallavas, and expanded their kingdom.

Certain historians say that the Last Sangam fell following these people's conquest over Tamilnad. Be that as it might be, the period of their rule was characterised by riots and confusion. There was no sign of peace in society. People were not living in peace. The language Tamil had an unprecedented fall. There were just a handful of books that came out during this period. They ruled over Tamilnad for a period of 200 years commencing from 300 A.D. upto 500 A.D. There was no significant improvement in any sphere during their rule.

**Pallavar:** There is difference of opinion on the origin of these people. According to Rajanayaga Mudaliar, these people belonged to the Royal family of Manipallavam (Eelam). But there appears to be no basis for such an assumption. In the land where the Krishna river and Thenpennai are flowing, these Pallavars are said to have been ruling a small portion of the land and under the control of Sathavahana kings. When the latter fell, these Pallavars became independent. They conquered Chola kingdom later and made Kanchi as their headquarters. They spread their kingdom slowly and in steps to occupy the entire Tamilnad during the course of time. For quite a length of centuries the Pandian kingdom also was under their rule. During the 7th Century A.D., it was the rule of Pallavas that had spread over the entire Tamilnad. Narasimhan the First, a Pallava king, conquered Chera, Chola, Pandia, Kalappirar and Rashtrakuts and expanded his kingdom, right upto Vadaapi and controlled. He won over Eelam also. By the end of the 9th Century the Pallava Dynasty fell and their rule came to an end.

There are quite a few evidences to prove that the Pallavas were Telugu kings who were living to the North of Chola Nadu.

- (a) The names of the kings.
- (b) The fact that Sanskrit was the official language of the Pallava governments.
- (c) It was during their rule in the South the Arya-Dravida-Brahminism and Sanskrit started taking deeper roots.
- (d) The Pallavas patronized Buddhism. During their days, Kanchi was the headquarters for Buddhists.
- (e) The Pallava kings made marital alliances mostly with the families of Telugu kings of Chalukya Dynasty.
- (f) There was absolutely no connection between Pallavas and the trio-kings of Tamilnad. Kadambar kings belonged to Karnataka. They won over Pallavas and Gangars and extended their kingdoms. The Melaigangars belonged to the dynasty of the Mysore kings. They patronised Jainism. They helped Sanskrit and Kannada to grow. They won over the Chola kings and the Rashtrakuts to spread their kingdoms deep South. The Melai Chaalukyar belonged to the dynasty of the ancient Mahratti kings who had ruled Bijapur.

The big length of 200 years following the fall of the Last Sangam it was a dark period in the history of Tamilnad. But during the period of the Pallavas our language went through a period of renaissance. Many books were published in Tamil. One can find a long list of such literature written during this period in a book written by Prof. K.P. Rathinam. Some of the most important ones are listed below:

1. *Thiruvachagam* and *Thirukovaiyaar* written by Manivasaga Peruman.

2. *Kongu Velir* - a long story.
3. *Thirumanthiram* - Thirumoolar.
4. *Thevaram* - written by Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar
5. *Purapporul Venbaa Maalai* - written by Aiyanaarithanaar
6. *Barathavenbaa* - Perunthevanaar
7. *Nanthi Kalambagam*
8. The *Kizkanakku* volumes other than *Thirukkural*

The volumes written in the latter days mostly were religious in character. There is an opinion that the works relating to the Sangam period were rather rated in a higher level of literature. But there is no readership for the Sangam literature today. The religious works given above are read and widely followed in our days. For instance, you do not find a parrallel one in any language for that matter which can equal *Thiruvachagam* in literary stature. *Thiruvachagam* and *Thirukkural* are some of the best works ever produced in Tamil. Though during these days Sanskrit mixed freely with Tamil, there was no degradation of Tamil; instead it started growing further due to absorption.

The Bhakthi cult started growing and found wider following. Jainism and Buddhism moved away from Tamilnad. Big temples in South India were built during the times when the Pallava kings ruled. There was renaissance in the field of Art.

## THE CHOLA AND PANDIYA KINGDOMS

During the period of the Cholas, the Tamilnad again came under the rule of the Tamils. The official language was Tamil again.



Saivism and Tamil started growing again. You could find almost a renaissance of the Tamils and their valour, wealth, education and fame came to the fore.

During the period of the 9th Century A.D. the Cholas dynasty was ruling Uraiyur but as kings they were rated lower in the hierarchy. After the Sangam period, the Cholas' prominence fell for a length of 7 centuries. During the latter half of the 9th Century the Pallava dyansty too fell. The Chola King by name Adithyan won over the Pallavas during the year 890 A.D. and conquered Thondaimandalam. He later conquered the Kongainaad and the Melaingar's capital. It was he who conquered Srilanka also.

Paranthagan the First. (907-953 A.D.): He became the king after Adithyan. He ruled for over 46 years. It is he who won over Banars, Gangars, Pallavas and Pandiya kings and expanded his empire upto Cape Comorin. He appointed his representatives to look after the administration of Madurai. Between 934 A.D. and 944 A.D. he conquered Sri Lanka many times and established his headquarters at Polanaruwa.

**The Chola king who ruled from Uraiyur  
had conquered the Pandian kingdom and Eelam too,  
was valourous and victorious and known for  
Righteousness in his rule.**

Ottakkuuththar praises Paranthagan's victory over Eelam in his 'Moovarulaa'.

Rajarajan the First (985 A.D. to 1014 A.D): The Chola empire rose further in its supremacy during his period. Quite a few works in the Tamil literature describe in vivid terms the innumerable victories that he had and the developments that took place. The first war that he fought was the War of Kanthalur. He conquered

the Chera king in the war and took over his kingdom. Then he conquered the Pandiyan's kingdom. He went to North after these victories. He then acquired the lands of Kudagu, Gangaipaadi, Nulambapaadi and Thadikaipaadi. He waged a war with Srilanka during the year 991 A.D. and took the cities of Anuradhapura, Polanaruwa and Maanthottai cities. One could find the indications to the effect that once upon a time the places were under the control of the Chola kings. Later he conquered the Chalukyas. He took Cheetpulinaad, Vengainaad and Kalingam in the North and brought them under his control. In the last he took Maldives also in the west. You can read in the verse given below the victories that he had.

**He was in Kaanthalurchaalai  
He had conquered Vengai naadu, Gangaipaadi,  
Thadigaipaadi, Nulambaadi, Kudamalainaadu,  
Kollam, Kalingam, Eeza mandalam of Sinhalese,  
Irattaiippaadi, Ezavai ilakkam and many islands  
in the sea.**

Rajendran the Second : When he took over during the year 1014 A.D. the entire Tamilnad, the present-day Andhra, Kerala and most of places of Karnataka and almost the entire Srilanka were under the control of the Chola empire. It is this king who made his empire as one of the biggest in the world. He won over many lands right from Cape Comorin upto Himalayas. The poet Méykeerthi gives a laudable description of his many victories. Here is a list of the countries he won over:

- a. Idaitthurainaad. This is the land in between the rivers, Krishna and Thungabadhra. This is Raichur town now in Karnataka State.

- b. Vanavaasi Panneeraayiram. This is the north-eastern part of Mysore and also embraces the northern part viz. Goa.
- c. Mannaikkadakkam. This was the capital of the Rashtrakut empire.
- d. Eelam. Most of the Chola kings and Pandia kings won over the north and north-eastern parts of Srilanka. Their kingdoms never expanded upto the central and southern parts. But it was Rajendran the Second who won over the entire Srilanka.
- e. Chakkarakkottam. Now this is a city in the Central Province.
- f. Ottar desam. This is Orissa.
- g. Kochalam. This was an ancient city on the banks of Ganges.
- h. Thandabuddhi. This is the Midunapuri district of Bengal.
- i. Bengal
- j. Thakkanalaadam. This is the southern part of Gujarat.
- k. Uththaralaadam. This is the northern part of Gujarat.

Both Rajendran the Second and the kings who ruled later won over and took possession of Andamaan, Nicobaar, Maldives, Burma, Malaysia and Sumatra (East Asian countries) made them part of the Chola empire. The places which were conquered by Rajendran the Second and which were spread over the seas.

- a. Seer Vijayam. This was the capital of the Kadaram empire. (Kadaram was nothing but Sumatra of our times). Both during the Sangam period and earlier, it was the Tamil kings who had ruled over Sumatra. The kings' dynasty of Seer Vijayam was one of the ancient dynasties like that of Chera, Chola or Pandias.

- b. Malaiyur - This was part of Sumathra
- c. Pannai - This was also part of Sumathra known as Kilakkarai.
- d. Mayuridingam - This is a part of the present-day Malaysia.
- e. Ilangasokam - This was a city and a part of Kilakkarai of Malaysia.
- f. Mamappanaram - This was the northern part of Malaysia.
- g. Thalaiththakkoonam - This was Malaysia's western part.
- h. Thamaralingam - This was also a part of Kilakkarai in Malaysia.
- i. Ilaamuri - This was Malaysia's northern part.
- j. Burma
- k. Magakkavaram - Nicobar islands
- l. Andaman islands
- m. Maldives
- n. Santhima islands - This was an island in the Arabic sea.

When one compared other kingdoms referred in the history with that of Chola king, one could see how vast an empire the Chola's was. He had control over both the lands and the sea. The Chola empire was in the ascent and at its peak during both the days of Rajendran the Second and Veera Rajendran. Every Tamilian should go through the historical works on such a great empire, without fail.

There were a lot of confusions during the period of Kulothungan the First. The government started to crumble. Yet the same king (Kulothungan) won the Kalinga war twice.

## THE PANDIANS

Pandians too were powerful kings since time immemorial. Their dynasty belonged to the kings' families of Peruvalanad. It is these kings who had instituted the famous Sangams. They patronised Tamil language in a big way. It is Pandianad and the land of Pandians deserve the praise of being called by the name Chenthamizhnadu. The Kalappirar conquered the Pandians and ruled for over 200 years during the 3rd Century A.D. Again during the 6th Century, the Pandians returned with force, vigour and power. They won over Kalappirar. Under this condition, Raja Simhan, the Pandian king took under his control Kudal, Vanchi and Kozi. They were the capitals of Cholas, Cherans and Pandians respectively.

Thiruvallavan, the Pandian king who came to power in 815 A.D., annexed other kingdoms upto Eelam by victory in war. He challenged Gangars, Pallavas, Cholas, Kalingas and Makadars in a place called Kudamuku. He won over the Chera king in a place called Villinam. There are the details inscribed in a shield of copper plate found on archaeological excavation in Chinnamathur. Pandians were lower in the hierarchy of kings when the Cholas had an empire. The Chola king had appointed his deputies to rule over Madurai.

It was a period of renaissance that started showing up during 1187 A.D. during the time of the Pandia king Vikraman in 1187 A.D. Its growth continued during 1190 A.D. after the king Kulasekaran came to power also. The period 1216 A.D. to 1238 A.D. is considered as the Golden period in the history of the Pandias. Sundara Pandian won over Cholanad and burnt Uraiyur and Tanjore and reduced them to ashes. During the period of

Sadaaviraman, the Pandians annexed by war Travancore, Koysalas lands, certain lands belonging to Cholas and Eelam also. It was during this period the rule by the descendants of Arya Chakravarthi began in the northern Srilanka. Virapaandian, the pandian king sought the help of Muslim kings in the year 1310 A.D. The Muslim kings who came for help took Madurai in their control and ruled for a span of 50 years. The Vijayanagaram king took Pandianad from Muslim kings by war. The entry by the English and other Westerners followed the above period.

Though the extent of the Pandian empire was always smaller than those of Chola empire, it was nonetheless powerful by wealth and influence. It was this abundance of wealth in Tamilnad that attracted the Westerners and Muslims to converge to Tamilnadu. They were the Portugese, Dutch, the French and the British who started concentrating on the lands in South East Asia.

The rule by the famous trio - kings came to an end totally. The Tamils who were free since pre-historic days became slaves.

Tamil and Saivam were in ascent when the Tamilnadu was in the control of the Chola empire. There is lot of connection between political independence and the growth of any language, culture and civilisation. Some historians point out a lot of deficiencies in the literature that was written after the Sangam period. They were:

1. The works were mostly of the nature of *Prabhandams*. There are as many as 36 *Prabhandams* like *Kovai*, *Ulaa*, *Irattai*, *Manimalai*, *Kalambagam* and *Parani*.
2. Such works were primarily religion based.
3. Sanskrit got mixed with Tamil in a large proportion.
4. The Brahminical theories started gaining greater influence.
5. The works were mainly translations from Sanskrit.

One cannot say that it was a sign of deficiency in Tamil. Every work must be adjudged from the style of expressions of language and the meanings they conveyed.

### 10th CENTURY

1. *Valaiyaapathy*
2. *Kundalakesi* - Naatha Kuththanaar
3. *Chinthamani* - Thiruththakkathevar
4. *Yapparungakalam*
5. *Yaaparungkalakkaarikai* - Amithasaagarar.
6. *Pattinaththadigal paadalkal*

### 11th CENTURY

7. *Udayana Kumaara Kaviyam*
8. *Yasodara Kaviyam*
9. *Naagakumara Kaviyam*
10. *Virasozium* - Puththamiththaranaar
11. *Thandiyalankaaram* - Thandi
12. *Kalingaththu Parani* - Jayangkondaar

### 12th CENTURY

13. *Kandappuranam* - Kachiappa Sivaachaariar.
14. *Periapuranam* - Chekkizaar
15. *Ramayanam* - Kambar
16. *Moovarula*
17. *Kuloththungan Pillaitthamizh* - Ottakkooththar
18. Auvaiyar's works like *Aaththichoodi*
19. *Thiruvunthiyur thiruviyaluur uyya vantha* Thevanaayanaar
20. *Nalavenba* - Pugalenti Pulavar
21. *Nanool* - Pavananthi Munivar

### 13th CENTURY

22. *Sivagnana Botham* - Pugalenti Pulavar
23. *Sivagnana Sithhiyar* - Arunanthi Sivachariar

### 14th CENTURY BEGINNING

There are a lot of books in history concerning this most recent period. It is not my intention to write about us 'We Tamils' who lived in the 14th Century. Despite kingdoms and empires had been established and fell in the sands of time, the history was one singular story of the great culture and civilisation of the one single

race – the Tamils. Wars were many and frequent but the chaos of the warfield never changed the culture and civilisation of the people. Since time immemorial the Chinese, the Sithians and the Caucasians who came into India got mixed with the local population in large measure and became one. It was from out of this mixture were born the Indian languages, a neo culture and civilisations and new religions. We have already seen that the terms, Dravidian and Aryan stood to denote the directions and not races. The North Indian languages were born by mixing of the Dravidian languages with those of the other races who migrated into India. Sanskrit was the language born and grown in central India in the later days to come, was an artificial lingua. *Kanchipuranam* says that Sanskrit and Tamil were related to each other.

From 14th Century onwards, foreigners who were talking in different languages, and had different customs, practices, culture and civilisation started coming into India. They entered in the name of trade but betrayed their colours by settling down in different parts and looting our wealth. Until the British settled down here and started ruling, there were riots, lootings and turmoil everywhere all over the country. Along with the foreigners their religions also found their way into our country. Religious feuds and wars and large scale conversions became the order of the day. India, the mighty big country, who could never manage to be one single indivisible nation, fell (including Tamilnad). Hinduism, the Indian culture and civilisation – all suffered a major setback. The country which was wealthy once became steeped in poverty. Agriculture and trade had a serve set back. Trade went into the hands of the immigrants totally.

South India was ruled by Muslim kings and Vijayanagaram kings. There were incessant wars among them. During the beginnings of the 14th Century these kings of Vijayanagaram were ruling small portions of land which were on the bank of Tungabhadhra river. In due course of time and step by step these kings who were smaller in political significance and stature became big by successively winning many other kingdoms and equalled the Chola empire. There are quite a few historical works written on the Vijayanagaram empire. But we shall now restrict ourselves to dwell upon the changes that took place in Tamilnad during this period.

- a. The Vijayanagaram kings patronised Sanskrit and Telugu.
- b. Telugu speaking people came in large number into Tamilnad and settled down. There were quite a few battalions of Telugu Army and the Canarese Army posted at various points all over Tamilnad. Agriculturists and labourers in large number came into Tamilnad and settled down. There were quite a few Naicker kings who started ruling parts of Tamilnad in place of Tamil kings. Lands were given only to Telugu speaking people. These people grew to become government, Landlords or big Pannaiyaars in due course of time. They took hold of not merely the government but trade also. The Tamils became poorer still. They suffered untold miseries in the hands of Muslims on one side and the Telugus on the other.
- c. Telugu speaking Brahmins also came into Tamilnad. Brahminism spread more widely. Caste differences became more accentuated and unworthy principles and practices in the name of religion started influencing the society more.

The Brahmins played between the Saivites and Vaishnavites and incited religious wars and fanned hatred and jealousy.

- d. Yet the Vijayanagaram kings protected the religion and those with religious sentiments. Had it not been for these emperors, Hinduism would have died in South India.

There was no significant growth in the literary sphere. Many of the works written during this period related to religious orthodoxy. The Tamil people who had lost their freedom lost their sense of values and lofty ideals for which they had stood once. They wrote petty works on frivolous matters. One could read their slavish attitude revealed in these works. One could easily count by fingers the number of works written during this period and which could hardly be rated as anything significant.

1. *Bharatham* - Villipuththuraazwar
2. *Thiruppugaz* - Arunagirinaathar
3. *Seeraappuraanam* - Umaru Pulavar
6. *Thembaavani* - Veeramaamunivar
7. *Thaayumaanavar paadalgal*
8. *Ramalingamswamy paadalgal*
9. *Thamizhvidu thuuthu* - Amirtham Pillai

The British people also landed in our country in the guise of doing business or trade only. During the period when the East India Company was ruling this part of the country, there were widespread wars, murders and confusion. Injustice was the order of the day. The British rulers exploited our entire country, plundered and became the wealthiest of the empires. There is enough substance to make the above statement. Yet after the British parliament assumed power, the political situation became better. Britain brought the entire country under single umbrella. They

established peace by putting down riots, wars and coming heavily upon those committing disorderly situations. They were good in administration of justice. They gave equal opportunities to all. They advanced the cause of education and it started taking deeper roots. During the period of 20th Century, the Tamil language, vibrant with its never sagging life spirit enjoyed renaissance. Various books were published on various subjects.

English as a language was never standing in the way of development of Tamil. The Tamils progressed further in trade and commerce. They went to many countries ruled by the British and settled there.

## CHAPTER XI

### WE, THE TAMILS AND EELAM

The entire Srilanka was veritably a land of people who were living in the Tamil culture, spoke in Tamils, and Srilanka was the land of Tamils. This was the situation before Buddhism having originated in the North India came to Srilanka and started gaining ground and the language of Sinhala was born. In fact, the northern parts of Srilanka was more ancient than the regular Tamilnad itself and exuded the rich flavour of Tamil in those days. Those people who were living in the Northern parts of Srilanka and the people of Eelam were not Tamils who had come to Srilanka and settled there. They were much more ancient in stature and the most original inhabitants of Srilanka than the Sinhalese themselves. Those are the words written by Pulavar K. Appadurai. "The Dravidian race had spread throughout this country and it was this race which was the architect behind the Indus Valley civilisation. The corpses which were found on excavation in Hyderabad and the vessels used for burial, the vessels made of clay which were found in Tinnevely on excavation, the

inscriptions on stone found inside the Kekal caves speak in loud terms about the hoary past of the Dravidian culture and civilisation," as per Rev. Father Keres' writings. As per the writings of Poet C.S.Navarathinam, it was the South Indians who were the most original inhabitants of and migrants into Srilanka, and long before the King Vijayan set his foot into Srilanka, Dravidam and Dravidian civilisation had spread throughout Srilanka.

Sinhalam in fact is a Dravidian language. After taking its roots from Tamill it borrowed heavily from Pali and Sanskrit. Yet with all these Sinhalam is fundamentally an offshoot of its parental language Tamil. Its structure and grammar reveal that it has been parented by Tamil. So says Gunavardana Mudaliar in his writings on Sinhalam.

Some call the land of the Pandians as Senthamilnadu. There are some who call the Chola land as Senthamilnaadu. But we shall now see that it was the northern part of Srilanka which was the real Senthamilnadu. Eelam was the birthplace of Saivism and the ancient Tamil. When one reflects on Eelam...

**"This is our motherland, Bharat!**

**It is here our parents dear loved and lived**

**In joyous wedlock pure,**

**Our forebears too in ages past,**

**Had lived for centuries, ere they died.**

**A myriad noble thoughts they had**

**To enrich the land and make it great**

**Shan't I enthrone you in my heart,**

**While my grateful tongue does sing thy praise,**

**'Salutations to thee, O Mother! Salutations to thee'**

We are today in the last segment of the twentieth century. It is an age of scientific advancement. We are progressing. Yet through the history of Srilanka, we stumble upon a Puranic story. The *Mahavamsa* is nothing but the story of the dynasty of the kings who were ruling Anuradhapura. It was these kings who were patronizing both Buddhism and the Tamil Sangam. The Buddhist monks wrote verses in praise of the glory of these kings. The purpose of this book is nothing but to establish the fact of the Sangam's supremacy, influence and power. The Puranas were undoubtedly classical in structure and expression. The Buddhist monks were nonetheless superior to Brahmins in the art of writing Puranas.

In the ancient days, there were thousands of very small kingdoms under the control of innumerable kings who were rather politically insignificant. Veritably every community ruled after itself. Time after time, empires started coming up. The Chera, Chola and Pandian empires ruled for a very long time in the South. Yet there were days when these kings were just too small to be reckoned with. The kings who were weaker paid taxes to the stronger. And when the latter came down in strength, the former refused to pay the taxes. Incessant wars became inevitable. There were similar and smaller kingdoms in Srilanka. The one in Anuradhapuram was one such. Was it that the king in Anuradhapuram commanded a big empire? If so, what were the periods when he was holding such an empire? The Puranam that eulogises the king of Anuradhapuram can never be taken to represent the entire Srilanka. There are hundreds if not thousands of Puranams in India speaking about such small kings alone. Srilanka too abounds in similar literature. The *Mahavamsam* and *Chulavamsam* are examples of these. And works in Tamil like

*Yaalpana Vaibavamaalai*, *Vanniarapuraanam*, *Koneswarapuraanam* and *Mattakkilappu Mahaathmiam* are a few examples of such Puranic writings on the Srilankan history.

The Sinhalese have got a made-up story to say that they are the descendants of Aryans. We saw in the second chapter of this book the definitions of the word 'Aryan'. We do not know how the Sinhalese claim descendancy from Aryans – is it on the basis of race? Or is it that they are the descendants of Caucasian or Iranian groups of migrants who came into India? Before Vijayan set his foot into Srilanka, the entire group of historians would agree, that it was Nagars, Iyakkars and Mundars who were living in Srilanka.

These communities have not yet become extinct. A vast majority of the people now in Srilanka, whether they are Tamils or Sinhalese, are none but the descendants of these communities only. Nagars were living in the western parts of Srilanka. Therefore, Tamils by and large belonged to this community only. Iyakkars and Mundars lived in the central parts and Eastern parts of Srilanka. We have already seen that these were essentially the members of the Dravidian race. If anyone had any doubt on what I write here, he could look at his own image in a mirror and get clarified.

There were no restrictions on entry of foreigners into any land like Passport or Visa. Hence since time immemorial there were continual influx of multifarious groups of people from Tamilnad or South India entering Srilanka. They mixed freely with the Nagars, Mundars and Iyakkars living there and became one. Thousands who had thus gone into Srilanka and settled in the northern parts were mostly the Tamils who migrated from Cholanad and Pandianad. The Sinhalese claim themselves to be the descendants



of the king Vijayan. *Mahavamsam* the Puranic lore which elaborates on the history of Anuradhapuram itself says that the Vijayan dynasty fell and became extinct after its 5th generation ended its power. Even taking that Sinhalese were the descendant of the king Vijayan not all of them could claim it en-masse. If only they came to know that Vijayan too was after all a Dravidian, they would start abusing him also. Vijayan was banished from Kalinga along with some of his Kavali friends. Kalingam was once upon a time a part of Andhra. It is in Deccan. Whether it was those ancient times or these days the people living there are none but Dravidians by race and originality. Vijayan was a Dravidian. He was a Hindu. If anyone entertains some doubts on these facts, he could go to Kalinga once and get clarified.

The Sinhalese of later days after all came to know of the above facts, started coining a new story that Vijayan's original place was Bengal – in order to establish that they really belonged to the Aryan race. Even taking that to be correct, the Sinhalese seem to forget that the people of Bengal were none but the Mongol-Dravidians. Yet another group of people argue that Kalingam was a place in Malaysia and that Vijayan hailed from there. There again, no one can dispute the fact that the original inhabitant of Malaysia were Mongol-Naagars and belonged to Dravidian race only.

There is yet another new story now. The Sinhalese are described as the descendants from those who were employed in the Army of the great king Alexander. They might take their motherland right upto where the North pole stands. Yet they must understand that the Eskimos living there were also from the Dravidian race only and stop further arguments. When one builds up a story,

one has to build up further stories endlessly in order to substantiate the derivative facts. To substantiate their arguments they could search Puranas or build imaginative stories, or manufacture a bundle of lies. But in Vains. Those Srilankan Sinhalese and the Tamils, by and large were only the descendants of the Nagars, Iyakkars, Mundars, Lambakarnas, Kapooyiyars, Misirars, Moriyar, Pulaiyars, Murithisars, Vain, Tamils, Traders and Brahmins.

The Sinhalese were by and large decendants of the ethnic mixture of Iyakkars, Nagars, Mundars and Laingas. In the later days to come there were many communities which came into Srilanka and settled.

- a. The soldiers in the Chola and Chera armies – mostly they were Maravars – settled down in the regions where the Sinhalese were residing, mixed with them and became full-fledged Sinhalese as on date.
- b. Vanniars also came to Srilanka and settled there like Maravars who were part of the Chola army. There are quite a few works on the history of Vanniars. Essentially they hailed from Thondainad. They belonged to the community of Kadavar. There were the inhabitants of Mullai lands known for dense forests. They were famous and known for their valour and warrior qualities. They were almost equal to Maravars in all such fields. Most of them were serving as Army Commanders for the kings in the South. Vanniars were in majority in Chola King's army. Most of the Vanniars who were stationed in Srilanka representing the Chola army became Sinhalese in due course of time. Other communities like Villithuraiyar, Vaagaiyar, Ottar and Malayalees who had accompanied the Vanniars became Singhalese in due course of time by the

ethnic mixing. They are the majority population in North Central parts of Srilanka and also the North Western parts of Srilanka. They talk in Sinhala and hence they are Sinhalese. After the 10th Century A.D. principally three communities by name Karavar, Salaragamar and Thuvar came to Srilanka and settled. They had come from the western parts of India, close to Arabian sea. You could take the portion lying between Mumbai and Kerala as their motherland. These people also might have had Puranas written about themselves. Whatever be the origin of the Sinhalese, they were essentially Dravidians. Their language was, after all, one among the Dravidian languages. The language of the ancient Sri Lankans was Eezhu or Elu. The language of Pinpali became Sinhalam due to its mixing with Sanskrit. With the advent of the Christian Era, the language Sinhalam started growing with literature, structure and grammar. In the northern parts of Srilanka, the language Eezhu became Tamil by virtue of its mixing with Tamil.

The Sinhalese and the Tamils living in this land belong to one and the same race – Dravidians. They are different by language and religion. As the races are nowadays defined on the basis of languages, you could call them as having originated from two different races. Since time immemorial this land belongs to both the Tamils and the Sinhalese. It is a common phenomenon to see nowadays people of two or three different races living together in amity, culture and civilisation in one and the same country. Two or three different languages are spoken. How come that in Srilanka alone there are aggression, riots and injustice? Socialists say that it is possible only in Socialist societies for people belonging to two different races to live in brotherhood and enjoying equal

benefits. Is it true? It is the responsibility of the Srilankan Government to answer these questions. But how can anyone help a situation when the hedge itself overpowers the plants grown inside?

We shall now briefly dwell upon our own status as Tamils living in Srilanka. Ever since the prehistoric days, our land had extended upto North of Kumarinad and South of Tamiraparani river and it was a portion of the continent Lemuria. This area was contiguous with India upto the period of *Ramayana*. It has extended upto Maldives in the west. Mundars and Iyakkars were the Dravidian races who were the inhabitants of this vast stretch of land during those times. *Mirugendra Puranam* calls them as Milechars. Mudinaagaraayar belonging to Muranjiyur (where the Primal Sangam was headquartered) is considered to be one of the Nagars of Eelam. According to Rajanaayaka Mudaliar, the historian, Tholkappiyar belonged to the 'Caappiar' community of Eelam. Bhoothanthevanaar was one among those poets who lived during the period of the Last Sangam. The famous 'Seven verses' written by him are found amongst others in the Sangam literature. Be that as they may, there is absolutely no doubt about that Eelam was part and parcel of Tamilnad.

During the period of *Ramayanam*, Ravana who belonged to Iyakkar community was the king of the Srilankan empire. Long before this time, Srilanka got separated due to sea erosion from India. Ravana had conquered a few portions of South India and was ruling over there also.

The Iyakkar kings who followed Ravana were not as powerful as Ravana and their prominence, power and supremacy had a fall. There was a 'Judas' in the Iyakkar community who ruined

his own community in the guise of chanting Vedas. There are quite a few amongst us today behaving alike with money-power in their background and causing our ruination. Nagars followed the Iyakkars and their kingdoms started attaining supremacy again. Might be there was a sprinkling of Iyakkar kings sporadically ruling smaller areas here and there. Mandothari, Ravana's wife was living in Mathottai and hailed from a royal family. Rajanayaka Mudaliar, the historian gives us a lot of details about the Nagars and their kingdoms. He also talks about the status of Yazhpannam of those days in his works. What he wrote should not be construed as Puranams just as *Mahavamsam*, *Chulavamsam* and *Yazppana Vaibavamalai*. It was all history written after elaborate research – a proven and authentic record of real happenings, wars and victories and the like.

“The city of Yazhpannam was in ancient days – thousands of years before Christ – in the form two distinct islands. One was bigger than the other. The bigger one was the collection of places by names Maninagadeepam, Manipuram, Nagadeepam and Manipallavam and they were all in the west. In the east, the places were called Erumai Mullaith theevu and Erumaitheevu. They were smaller. Earthquakes and sea-quakes continually plagued the area and the western area which was one island became many like Karaiththeevu, Velanai, Mandaitheevu, Pungudutheevu, Analaitheevu, Nayinaartheevu and Neduntheevu. Valigamam was also a part of it. Similarly, the island in the east became divided into many like Vadamaratchi, Thenmaratchi and Pachilai Palli. Pannaikkadal, Puunakarikkadal, Yanaiyiravukkadal, Elungkalappukkadal were all the different seas which had become one with Bay of Bengal. They were very large in area and deep too. They formed the sea routes for ships to travel to both Eastern

and Western countries. They also served to help the ships get anchored without movement during the monsoon and stormy seasons.

The kings of Marunagar dynasty who were not Oviyars were ruling from Kantharodai, Erumai Mullaiththeevu and Kudiraimalai. We understand from Tamil literature that Alli Arasaani, Ezuni, Pittangkotravan and Kumanan were ruling from Kudiramalai. Aanthai, Athanazici, Nallikkodan and Villianthan were ruling from Manthai. Erumaiyuran was controlling from Erumai Mullaiththeevu.

Since very long time in the past, Finicians who were essentially Arabs were having marine trade contacts with both India and Srilanka. There is a reference in the Holy Bible to the effect that from a land called Ovir Desam, gold, silver, Ivory and other materials used to be imported. The Ovir Desam was nothing other than Manthai where the Nagars were ruling. Those Nagars were Oviyars.

### THE BIG TANKS IN NORTHERN SRILANKA

Vavanikkulam and Paavarkulam were built before the arrival of Vijayan at Srilanka. Periakulam, Mamadu, Olumadu, Kanakaraayan Kulam and Pandaarakulam were built by the Tamils during the 1st and 2nd Centuries B.C. The Kanthalaikkulam in Trincomalee was also built before the period of Vijayan. One finds a few references about Nagatheevu, Nagarkoil and Manthottai in *Kurunthogai*.

Before the advent of Buddhism, the people in Eelam were Hindus only. One's race can never change just because one has changed his religion.

"There were five famous Sivalayas (Siva temples) existing in Srilanka since or even very long before Vijayan set his foot in Srilanka. Thiruketheeswaram, Munishwaram, Thandeswaram, Thirukoneswaram and Naguleswaram were the names of these Siva temples." – Bris, the historian. The Sinhalese now try to take away all these temples.

There are quite a few works which give us details about the Koneswarar temple in Trincomalee. They are *Thakshina Kailasa Puranam*, Konesar inscriptions and *Thirukonachala Vaibhavam*. The inscriptions in particular tell us explicitly about the days when the temple was first installed.

**Two years after the 501st year since birth of Kaliyuga  
on the 25th of Rishaba month, and on Monday**

That means, it was in the year 2590 B.C.

One need not give serious credence to the kind of story (which is a built up one) which says that Kulakkottan was a Chola king. Even a pedestrian gets exalted to a kingly pedestal by the Puranas. Vijayan was after all a banished person. Did not *Mahavamsam* picture him as the prince from Kalinga and that he was born of a lion?

Trincomalee was a famous Sivasthalam even in those days for the Tamils. During the times when Trincomalee was under the control of the Chola empire, it was the king's representatives who directly controlled the administration. There were a few kings lower in the hierarchy who were controlling Trincomalee for some time independantly. For some time they paid taxes to the king of Sinhalam. But most of the time they were under the control of the big Yazhpaanam empire. Quite a few poets have sung in

worship of the God installed in this famous temple at Trincomalee.

**The God that was worshipped in the temple  
of Kokarnam, He was shining supreme as  
the subtlest expression of Brahma  
as expounded in the Vedas.**

**Kokarnam was a temple famous  
where men and women thronged in large number,  
worshipped the God offering flowers at the Lord's feet  
where the bees hovering round a feast of flowers  
were humming like a musical melody**

There is a book called *Namboththa* in Sinhalam which calls Northern Srilanka as Tamizhpattinam and describes Trincomalee as one among the group of towns around. There is also a reference about this place and temple in the travelogues of a Portuguese (Christian) priest Kuwairose. And it runs as follows :

"It is the Rome of the East for the non-Christians. People thronged this temple in large numbers. This temple was given greater religious importance than most of the others in India itself like Rameswaram, Conjeevaram, Tirupathi, Tirumalai, Jagannath and Vijanthi.

Even before 1000 B.C. Tamils from South India came to Northern Srilanka and started settling down. They got mixed with the local population very soon. Before Vijayan set his foot on Srilanka, Rameswaram was ruled by one king by name Chuulotharan, as per *Mahavamsam*. This shows the close relation which South India had with Northern parts of Srilanka.

By the beginning of the 6th Century A.D. the Srilankans and Tamils had cultural, political, social and marital relations with each other. By the 2nd Century B.C. and earlier part of 1st Century B.C. it was a Tamil dynasty who were ruling Srilanka. In between 6th Century B.C. and 1st Century A.D. , there was practically no difference in matters of citizenship of those in Pandianad and those in Srilanka. Both of them were considered to be citizens of one and the same kingdom. In real life also, they were so united and one. There is no doubt about this fact.

*Mahavamsam* says that Vijayan came to Srilanka by 543 B.C. We do not know how far this is true. Vijayan is said to have been the prince of Kalinga desam. If that were true, then Vijayan was a Dravidian and must have been a Telugu speaking person. He must have been a Saivite. *Vaibhavamalai* describes the relations that Vijayan's forefathers had with the king of Srilanka. *Mahavamsam* goes on to place on record that Vijayan married one of the daughters of a Pandian king and by this time, Srilanka had driven away Maathugueni from Srilanka. The latter belonged to lyakkar community. This is an unadulterated falsehood. Vijayan took in marriage a girl from the royal family of Nagars who were ruling Yaazhpanam. Besides, the mother of Devanambiyatheesan and wife of Mooththasivan was another member of Nagar's family. All the Tamil victories referred in *Mahavamsam* are attributed to 'the forces that came from India'. In the later days to come, it was but true that the Pandias, Cholas and Pallavas had entered Srilanka and conquered them. But in the beginning days of Anuradhapuram kingdom, it was a Tamil king who had conquered it and was ruling. You find specific references to one Suppan, who was a security guard, one Senan

who was a merchant trading on horses, Elelasingan, one of the Maravar leaders – all these people were Tamils who lived in the northern parts of Srilanka. You can find these details in the writings of H.W.Kodirangan, a historian.

"If there were no help forthcoming from the local Tamils who had been living there for long, Elelasingan could not have ruled Anuradhapuram where the Sinhalese were always in majority, for such a long period as 43 years. There was a continuous influx of Tamils from South India and thus the northern Srilanka was veritably a part of Tamilnad. It is significant to note that you cannot find or hear any Sinhalese names nor symbols at any point in the Mannar district." It was the Portuguese who destroyed Mannar.

Right from the days of Karikalan, the Chera, Chola and Pandian kings fought many battles with Srilanka and conquered. These are referred in the pages of Indian history also. But, strangely, not many of these find a place in *Mahavamsam*. That was presumably because these wars were fought with the king who was ruling the northern parts of Srilanka. *Mahavamsam* did not take a serious note of the wars, presumably because those were the wars in which the Sinhalese kings were not affected. It must be noted without fail that all those dynasties who ruled Srilanka were the ones from South India only. These were Kalingas, Pandians and Mishrars who were an ethnic mix of Kalingas and Nagars. The one who ruled Kandy in the later days, was from Kerala. Might be, the king who was ruling Kottai by name Alagakkonar was also from Kerala. Like the royal families of the Medieval Europe, these dynasties had close relations and marital connections also amongst each other.

The Sinhalese of today manage to tell a very big lie when they say that there was at no time in the history of Srilanka an

independent kingdom worth mentioning and ruling over the northern Srilanka. We have already seen about the Nagars who were there before the arrival of Vijayan. These kingdoms continued to exist even after the arrival of Vijayan. There was a close relation amongst the smaller kings of Anuradhapuram and their counterparts in northern Srilanka. It was only during that period of few Tamil kings waged a war with the one in Anuradhapuram, conquered and ruled for some time. There were duly appointed principal advisers to give counsels on matters relating to the Tamils, in the king's assembly of Anuradhapuram.

The Sinhalese rule in North Srilanka started with Ukkirasingh in the year 785 A.D. and ended with Sangili in the year 1620 A.D. They were ruling at a stretch for 800 years one after the other in succession with their Sinhalese names like Pararasa Sekaran, Jagarajasekaran, etc. Parakkiramabagu the First belonged to the 'Aryan race'. In the year 1215 A.D. the king by name Kalingamahan expanded the Sinhalese Aryan kingdom. He won over Polanaruwa and became the head of the empire of Srilanka. He was then given the title of Chakravarthi.

When the Portugese landed in Srilanka the Sinhalese kings had powerful armies and equally a powerful Navy. J.R. Chinnathamby, writing on the extent of the lands in control by the Sinhalese kings and their Tamil counterparts, gives the area of each in detail in his book titled, "The boundaries of Tamilnadu and Eelam."

The rest of them were under the control of Vannimais who were like the smaller kings who owned allegiance to emperors. They paid tax to the latter. The area ruled by these kings lower in the hierarchy were Mulliavalai Vannimai, Kottiaatruppatru Vannimai, Pazugam Vannimai, Panamai Vannimai, Panangama

Vannimai, Karaiththurai Vannimai, Karaivaguppatru Vannimai and Karpitti Vannimai.

Kumanai, Ukanthai, Pothuvil and Amparai were the areas under Panamai Vannimai. Mattakkalappu (Batticaloa) had in its western boundary Mahavaligangai and Verugal river as its northern boundary. The Pazugama Vannimai had Ukanai and Omunai. Cheruvila, Muthur, Thambalakamam, Thiriconamalai (Trincomalee), Kanthalai, Pathaviyakkulam, Pankulam, Thirappanai, Kutcheveli and Nilaveli were contained in Kottiaatruppatru Vannimai. Mullaitheevu and Vavunia regions were in Mulliyavalai Vannimai. The Mannar area was in Panangama Vannimai. Starting from Mayoya and ending upto Musali and other areas like Karaithuraippatru were in Karpitti Vannimai.

When the Portugese conquered Sangili, they could not take the entire portion of whatever were in the control of the Arya kings. The Vanni regions that were lying to the south east of the gulf country and Mullivalai Vannimai refused to accept the suzerainty of the Portugese. Yet they did not seek the help of the king of Kandy. They remained independent. The Vannimai regions of Kottiaatruppatru, Pazhuggamam and Panamai sought the support of the kings of Kandy and accepted their suzerainty. Yet these areas remained as independent Tamil areas. It was from this time, the Sinhalese started coming in and settling down in these areas.

Either the Sinhalese king was afraid of the Arya Chakravarthis or did not want to pay tax, they shifted their capital from Anuradhapuram to Polanaruwa and then later to Kurunakalai, Thambathenia and Gambalai in succession. Ibanbathootha, the

famous Muslim traveller, who visited Srilanka in 1344 B.C. writing on the Arya Chkravarthi who was ruling then, gave the following report:

"The name of this king is Arya Chakravarthi. He has a powerful navy. When I stayed for some time in Kerala, I could see for myself that he had as much as hundred ships both big and small anchored off the coast and that was by itself a panoramic view. He is a kind hearted person known for his sense of hospitality. He is well versed in Persian. He talked to me in Persian only. He was lavish in offering gifts to me. He gave me pearls which his own men had brought from the seas. He also helped me to visit the Adam hills on pilgrimage."

The rights to do pearl-diving rightly belonged to the Aryan king only. In the year 1278 B.C. after the victory of the Arya Chakravarthi over Yappaguava, a major portion of the North Central province was under the control of the Yazhppanam king. Annexure III gives the names of the various Arya Chakravarthis - commencing from Ukkirasingan and ending upto Sangili.

The Portugese and the Arya Chakravarthis were fighting with each other from 1519 B.C. upto 1620 B.C. for a period of over 100 years. In the end, the Portugese started their direct ruling by the year 1620 B.C. Sangili was beheaded. The dynasty of the Singai Aryans fell and was ruined completely. The Tamils in Eelam became slaves. A lot of wars of independence failed. The Portugese ruled for hardly a period of 19 years. But their atrocities of murders and marauds contined for a very long period —140 years.

Hollanders ruled this country from the beginning of 1638 A.D. upto 1796 A.D. They could not however take the Kandy kingdom and the Vanni regions ruled by Vannian. The Westerners of those

days who wrote the history of these areas have clearly mentioned about the areas where the Tamils lived in Eelam.

Robert Nox, an Englishman who was taken prisoner by the Kandy soldiers in Trincomalee, escaped in the year 1679 A.D. and took the route of escape through Anuradhapuram. He says that there were nobody in Anuradhapuram who spoke Sinhalese but all those whom he met, spoke only in Tamil. He refers to the independent rule which Kailayavanniyan was having. Reyland, another visitor / traveller who came to Srilanka at the end of the 17th Century writes...

"Most of the areas of this island are inhabited by the Tamils. This area (Vanni) is being ruled by Kailayavanniyan and is called by his name. These people are not under the Sinhalese rule, nor our Hollanders' rule. Those who are living along the coast talk in Tamil.

"Sinhalam is spoken by the people along the coastal area stretching right from Neercolumbu (Negombo) upto Thevendramunai in South."

Schweitzer who visited Srilanka in 1700 A.D. writes, "The Tamils of this island are living in Galle, Mattakkalappu, Trincomalee, Mannar, Yaazhppanam, Arippe, Katpitty and Neerkolumbu. All the Tamils excepting those in Vanninad are in the control of Hollanders rule. The Tamils in the Vanninad have their own king and government."

Hollanders divided the entire region into two defined parts – one of the Sinhalese and the other of Tamils. Hollanders divided the country into six political divisions but for the purpose of judiciary made the country into three divisions only. The political

divisions were Colombo, Puththalam, Katpitty, Yazhppanam, Trincomalee, Mattkkalappu and Galle. The judiciary divisions were Yazhppanam, Colombo and Galle.

The British ruled the country from 1795 A.D. upto 1948 A.D. making it 153 years. In the year 1815 A.D. they conquered Kandy also. Tamil was the official language of Kandy. They brought the entire country of Srilanka under one umbrella. Yet until 1829 A.D. – the year when Colebrook plan was implemented – they ruled the Tamil areas and Sinhalese as two different regions. We can now see some of the references that the British historians gave us.

Here are certain remarks which Clarkone, the historian made. "Since very long time, Srilanka was in possession of two distinct national races occupying two distinct regions. The area controlled by the Sinhalese was the Central region, Southern Region and the Western area right from Valavai river upto Silapam (Chilaw). The North eastern region was controlled by the Tamils." Since 200 years from now the Sinhalese and Tamils were looked upon two races of the single nation. Today they use the phrases used in the dictatorial world like Majority and Minority. What a great refinement in our political outlook? You find below a reference from the writings of Alexander Jhonson.

"Some of the civil laws – which are in vogue and — about which I could gather details are applied in everyday life in four provinces like Yaazhppanam, Trincomalee, Mattakkalappu (Batticaloa) and Puththalam."

The same reference goes further to say : "Starting from Putalam in the North east the area upto the South east was occupied by the Tamils. Starting from Chilaw river and ending with Kumanai

river in the south east, the area in under the control of the Sinhalese." Though the British landed in Srilanka essentially with the idea of exploitation, the country witnessed some progress. There was peace everywhere. The uncivilised and the marauders were suppressed. Law and justice were restored. People lived without fear. There were no police atrocities. We, the Tamils advanced both in education and economy."

The Northern Srilanka was the proper "Chenthamiznaadu" in the strictest sense of the term. The original place of Tamil was the Tamilnadu of very ancient times. Despite under the foreign rule, the traditions and culture of the Tamils never showed any decay at any point of time.

**Had not Arumuganavalar of Nallainagar been born  
Could you have had the language of Tamil with all its sweetness  
Could you have had the melodies of its countless verses  
Could you have had the Puranic lore, the great lectures  
and more so, the boundless knowledge, wisdom of the ages?**

The Navalar dynasty ruled for very long. The Arya Chakravarthis established two Tamils Sangams. Important works like *Raghuvamsam* were written in Tamil during this period only. As the saying goes, the Northern Srilanka was the veritable home for Tamil that is chaste, that abounds in beauty of classicism, that is sweet and that is pure.



## CHAPTER XII

## TAMIL IS OUR LANGUAGE

**W**e have already said at the beginning pages of this book that the meaning of the term, 'Tamil' is 'sweetness', 'purity' and 'love'. Tamil remains unparralleled by its sweetness and purity. Poets have gone into ecstasy when captivated by its charm and they have sung loudly in praise of the language. They have described it as –

**"Sweeter than honey,  
It has a taste that never tires you  
It is rich in grammar  
Known for its felicity in expression  
It is incomparable and towers supreme  
amongst all languages;  
Unique for its style and glory  
Time honoured  
Chaste and rich  
Known for depths of classical expressions"**

**He looked so sweet as Tamil itself  
O the melodies of Tamil, the language sweet  
Are you all emanating from Lotus?  
Art thou so sweet as you rise from Lotus?**

**Agasthiyar, the great Tamil poet,  
famous he did become  
by the grace of Tamil the language sweet  
and eternal as the mother of all languages**

**'Sweetness' and 'Culture' are the pseudonyms  
of Tamil, the language sweet.**

Further, the meaning of the syllable 'Tami' is 'unparalleled'. We call the almighty as 'Thamian'. It is fit in the circumstances that the language Tamil is adored alike by the same term as we use to worship God. It has no beginning nor end. It is an embodiment of love, benign grace, sweetness and carries the blessings of Lord Kanthan.

**You can't compare this great language  
That Lord Siva developed along with a host of  
The learned members of the Sangam,  
with the rest that has no structured grammar  
It can't be rated with the rest  
that are commonplace  
And that would be wrong.  
Tamil reigns supreme**

**"O my child! Go thou to sleep, my darling  
Thou shalt become the foremost amongst the bards  
the illustrious members of the great Sangam  
O my child! Go thou to sleep"**

“Lord Siva was sent as an emissary  
 The one who ate the crocodile was destroyed  
 The bony figure was seen in feminine form  
 The door that had remained closed was opened  
 Were all this done by Tamil or any other language?  
 Tell me, my dear. ”

“In the earliest days  
 It was Lord Siva who taught the great poet Agasthiar  
 Tamil, that has remained eternal.”

Since very ancient times, the Tamils are known for their love of God. There can be no other language more suitable than Tamil to express their love for God. Tamil has been blessed with such expressive powers to invoke God's blessing, the kind of which is not seen in any other languages. Most of the Tamil literature are religious works. They are devotional verses. Nayanmars and Nammazhwars went into ecstasy by singing on the Lord's glory and manifestations. They found that the language and devotion merged in music and verse. Gnanasambandar loved to call himself as "Natramiz Gnanasambandar". Thirunavukkarasar says that the rich music of the Tamil verses can never leave his mind. His mind brims always with the joy of singing them in praise of God'. Sundarar compares God with Tamil.

We have never looked down upon any other religion. All religions have been accepted into our society. Every religion has its own Bible written in Tamil. There was not one which has not worshipped God in Tamil verses.

**Saivam:** *Panniru Thirumurai, Pathinaanku Siddhantha Saaththirangal, Pattinaththar Padalgal* which came later,

Arunagirinaathar's verses, Thaayumaanavar's songs and Ramalingam Swamigal's verses.

**Vaishnavism:** *Naalayira Prabhandam, Bhagavatham.*

**Buddhism:** *Manimekalai, Virachozium, Thiruppathikam, Siththantha thogai, Buddha Jarthaka Kathaigal.*

**Jainsim:** *Naladiyar and Pathinenkeezkanakku Noolkal.*

**Christianity:** *Thembaavani, Ratchaniya Yathrigam.*

**Islam:** *Seerapuranam.*

The major divisions of the entire language are Prose, Poetry and Drama. It was Tholkappiyar who first framed the rules, grammar and structure for poetry. That means that there must have been works on poetry even earlier. *Silappadikaram* is a classical example embodying in itself all the three branches of Prose, Poetry and Drama. Both *Silappadikaram* and other Sangam works carry different kinds of poetry and verse. The examples are: *Aatruvari, Santhuvari, Chaayalvari, Nilaivari, Murivar, Thinainilaivari, Ammanaivari, Uusalvari, Mukavari, Mukamilavari and Vallaippaattu.*

*Naalaayiram* and *Thivyaprabhandam* belong to the case of poetry rich for musical styles. *“Keerththanam, Chinthu, Themmaangu, Pallavi, Paavaiyar Pattu and Oppari* were to come later only. The saint Bharathar and Sarangadevar who framed the rules for musical renderings in Sanskrit owed in great measure to Tamil language from which they borrowed heavily.

There are quite a few dance-styles described in Sangam literature.

Agakkooththu, Purakkooththu, Veththiyai, Pothuviyal, Vasaikkooththu, Pugazkuththu, Santhikkooththu, Iyalbukkuththu, Ariyakkooththu, Tamizkkooththu, Vinothakkooththu and Thesiyak kooththu are some of the different styles of dancing described. Most of the works on drama have become extinct. Agathiyam, Bharatham, Gunanoolkal, Kooththanool, Santham, Jayantham, Seyanmunai, Seyitriyum, Mathivaanar Nataka Thamiz Nool, Muruval, Poombuliyoor Nadakam and Vilakkaththaar Kooththu are some of the works written to describe the Dramatic Art.

There are quite a few works on the Prose Tamil like Kappiyams, Veerakaaviyams, Puraanangal, Prabhandas, Sthothras and Vedantha Siddhaantha Sastras.

**KAPPIYAMS (EPICS) :** There are five major works under this category like *Chinthamani*, *Silappadikaram*, *Manimekalai*, *Valiyapathi* and *Kundalakesi*. Those which came later were *Kambar Ramayanam*, *Villipputhur Aazwar*, *Mahabharatham*, *Sekkizaar Peria Puranam*, *Kachiappa Sivachchariyaar Kandappuranam*, *Viramamunivar Thempaavani*, *Umarupulavar* and *Seeraappuranam*.

The Five minor Kappiams are: *Chuulamani*, *Neelakesi*, *Yasodara Kaviyam*, *Naagakumaara Kaaviyam* and *Perungathai*. Those written with the background of adventure were: *Purananuuru*, *Silappadikaram*, *Madurai Kanchi*, *Muththollaayiram*, *Nanthikkalambakam*, *Kalingathupparani*, *Moovarulaa*, *Kuloththungan Pillai Thamizh*, *Bharathi Paadalgal* and *Bharathithasan Paadalgal*.

Those which were written for the purpose of teaching ethics, good character were: *Tirukkural*, *Naaladiyar* and *Pathinenkizkanakku Nuul* and *Auvaiyar's* verses. Those written

for grammar were *Purunuul Iyal Nool*, *Kumaram*, *Agaththiyam*, *Ainthiram*, *Tholkaappiyam*, *Nannool*, *Virachozhiyum*, *Thandiyalankaaram*, *Yapparungalakkarikai*, *Urichchol Ningadu* and *Ilakkana Kothu*.

In addition to all these, there are a lot of Puranas, Arut Padalkal, Prabhandams and Prose works.

How touching the words are! These are the most jealous possessions of Tamil literature. Tamil is one of those foremost languages in the world known for its richness and depth of grammar.

Wincilo, the great scholar said, "Tamil is a language that is deeper and fuller than Greek. It has a much wider vocabulary than Latin. Purely in terms of its power of expression and fulness Tamil is comparable with English and German. We have already said in many places of this book, that in terms of its ancientness and classicism, power of expression, literary grandeur and grammatical structures and discipline, knowledgeability, sweetness, clarity, culture and sheer greatness Tamil is incomparable. In a world of languages, Tamil is occupying a unique place and a pedestal of supremacy. We shall now see a verse written on the greatness of Tamil.

"When was our mother born?

Who can hazard a guess?

Not even the learned that discern

What happened in the days of yore." ... Bharathiar

"Of all the languages that I know,

Tamil stands supreme by its sweetness

The one without a second,

But lo! we now stand as lowly, poor and like animals  
Grown recreant to our ancient trust,  
Our treasures in a heap have gone to rust,  
Tamil's mellifluous sounds,  
Must reach the world's utmost bounds,  
If we are to raise our heads again  
Intead of wasting our time in vain."

"Of all the bards I have read  
None in the world sounds *richer than Kamban*  
Valluvar and Ilankovan,  
Immortal trinity - - our own  
This is the truth unvarnished, plain and  
Free from all vain glorious strain." - *Bharathi*

"The other name for the language Tamil is Nectar,  
It is our life and soul, dearest to our heart  
and the sweetest of all,  
Tamil is like our mother's lap  
the enviable abode of our lives  
ordained by the destiny." - *Bharathidasan*

"Trumpet, Oh conch,  
That our life and our wealth,  
Is glorious Tamil  
Our enemies have vanished out of sight  
On seeing the Tamils here as one united. "  
"Whate'er men think, ev'n as they think, may men obtain,  
If those who think can steadfastness of will retain."

\* \* \*

TABLE 1  
CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

30000 B.C.	- Cheran Imayavaramban alias Vaanavaramban, Suirya Chozan, Mathiyan alias Sundarapaandian
30000 B.C. - 29,920 B.C.	- Nediyan Maakeerthi alias Nilantharu Thiruvir Pandiyan the First.
30000 B.C. - 16,500 B.C.	- Tamil Sangam of Pakruliyaaru
16000 B.C.	- Pothiamalai Agasthiyar and Pothiyamalai Tamil Sangam
16000 B.C. - 14,550 B.C.	- Mahendramalai Tamil Sangam
14550 B.C. - 14,470 B.C.	- Manimalai Tamil Sangam
14,550 B.C.	- Muththoor Agasthiyar
14,490 B.C.	- The first deluge in Tamilnad. Agasthiyar of Vadapi
14,038 B.C. - 14004 B.C.	- Kundramerintha Kumaravel Tamil Sangam
14004 B.C. - 9594 B.C.	- The Primal Sangam
14004 B.C. - 9594 B.C.	- The Primal Sangam
14004 B.C.	- Nalantharu Thiruvir Pandian the Second
9594 B.C.	- The second deluge that overcame Tamilnad
9000 B.C.	- The entry of Siddhis and Caucasian groups into India
7500 B.C.- 6700 B.C.	- Tamil Sangam during the period of Palyagasalai Muthukudumi Peruvazhuthi

6805 B.C. - 3105 B.C.	- The Medieval Sangam
6805 B.C. - 6730 B.C.	- Vendor Chezian alias Nermaaran Pandian
6000 B.C. - 5925 B.C.	- Nalantharu Thiruvir Pandian the Third.
3145 B.C. - 3105 B.C.	- Perunchotru Uthiyan Cheralathan
3105 B.C.	- The deluge again
3105 B.C.	- The beginning of Kaliyuga
2450 B.C.	- Enoibias (the deluge)
2387 B.C.	- The deluge (History of Srilanka - Tennent)
2341 B.C.	- (Urohur) The deluge
2344 B.C.	- The deluge (Old Bible)
2300 B.C.	- Arya Saptha Prammanam (The deluge)
2150 B.C.	- Hebrews History (The deluge)
2000 B.C.	- The Babylonian History (The deluge)
1730 - 1695 B.C.	- Moontram Mudathirumaaran alias Pandian
1715 B.C.	- The deluge
1715 - 235 B.C.	- The Last of the Sangams
120 - 90 B.C.	- Karikalan the First
50-37 B.C.	- Karikalan the Second
31 B.C.	- Beginning of Valluvar Era
85 A.D - 160 A.D.	- Ilangovadigal
235 A.D.	- Beginning of Kalappirar's rule in Tamilnadu - Fall of the Last Sangam.

**TABLE 2**  
**SOME OF THE POETS AND THEIR WORKS**  
(During the period of the Last Sangam)

1. Kaazaanthalai	
2. Uruthirak kannanaar	- <i>Perumpanaatrappadai, Pattinappaalai</i>
3. Kapilar	- <i>Paarppanar nuul, Perungurinji, Inna Naarpathu, Ainguru Nuril Nuuru paadalkal, some verses in Pathitru paththu</i>
4. Nakkeerar	- <i>Thirumurugaatrappadai, Nedunalvaadai, Some of his verses are available in the Purananooru etc.</i>
5. Kallaadanaar	- It is said that he wrote a commentary for <i>Tholkapiyam</i> but the same appears lost.
6. Mamoolanaar	- Some of his verses are available in <i>Aganaanooru, Kurunthogai</i> and <i>Natrinai</i>
7. Maangudi Maruthanaar	- <i>Mathurai Kanchi</i> . Some of his verses can be seen in <i>Purananooru</i>
8. Thiruvalluvar	- <i>Thirukkural</i>
9. Kovoorkizaar	- Most of his verses are in <i>Purananooru</i>

10. Paranaar - A unique set of verses.
11. Mudaththamak kannanar - *Perunaratrappadai*
12. Irayanaar - *Agapporul*
13. Perungkausikanaar - *Malaipadukadaam*
14. Auvaiyaar - Her verses are found both in *Aganaanooru* as well as *Puranaanooru*
15. Idaikkadanaar - *Uusimuri*
16. Ilangovadigal - *Silappadikaram*
17. Seethalai Saththanaar - *Manimekalai*
18. Arasil Kizaar - His verses are found in *Thakaduur Yaaththirai*
19. Ponmudiyaar - Her verses are found in *Pathitruppaththu*

There were some more poets who lived and produced monumental works during the period of the Last Sangam. One can find a more exhaustive list in the book, "*Nootraandugalil Tamizh*" written by K.P. Rathinam.

The works done during the period of the Last Sangam are: *Ettuththogai*, *Paththuppaattu*, *Pathinenkeezkanakku*, *Silappadikaram* and *Manimekalai*.

Those which are classified under '*Ettuththogai*' are: *Natrinaai*, *Kurunthogai*, *Aingurunooru*, *Pathitruppaththu*, *Paripaadal*, *Kaliththogai*, *Aganaanooru* and *Puranaanooru*. These are the collection of verses which have been written by various poets stressing the values of both inward discipline and values of life in the external world.

Those classified under '*Paththuppaattu*' are :

1. *Thirumurugatrappadai* - Nakkeerar
2. *Perunaraatrappadai* - Mudaththaamak Kanniar
3. *Siru Panaatrappadai* - Idaiakazi Nattu Nalloor Naththaththanaar
4. *Perum Panaatrappadai* - Kadiyalur Ruthirang Kannanaar
5. *Mullaippaattu* - Namboodanaar, son of Ponvaaniganaar
6. *Maduraik Kaanji* - Maangudi Maruthanaar
7. *Nedunalvaadai* - Nakkeerar
8. *Kurinji paattu* - Kapilar
9. *Pattinappaalai* - Kadiyaluur, Ruthirakkannanaar
10. *Malaipadugadaam* - Iraniyamutratriup Perunguntroor Perung-Kowsikanaar

Those classified under '*Pathinenkeezhkanakku*' works are :

1. *Thirukkural* - Thiruvalluvar
2. *Naaladiyar* - Jain saints
3. *Naanmanik kadigai* - Vilambinaaganaar
4. *Iniyavai Naarpathu* - Poothanchethanaar
5. *Inna Naarpathu* - Kapilar
6. *Kaar Naarpathu* - Mathurai Kannang Kuutranaar
7. *Kalavazi Naarpathu* - Poygaiyaar
8. *Ainthinai Aimbathu* - Maran Poraiyanaar
9. *Ainthinai Ezhupathu* - Moovaathiyar
10. *Thinaimozhi Aimbathu* - Kannanj Chenthanar, son of Saththaththaiyar
11. *Thinaimozhi Nootraimbathu* - Kanimethaiyar
12. *Thirikadukam* - Nallaathanaar
13. *Aachaarakkovai* - Peruvaayin Mulliyaar
14. *Pazhamozhi* - Moontruraiyaar

15. *Sirupanchamoolam* - Kaariyaasaan  
 16. *Kainnilai* - Pullangkaadanaar  
 17. *Muthumozhik Kaanji* - Mathurai Koodalur Kizaar  
 18. *Elaathi* - Kanimmethaiyar

Some of the above were written after the period of the Last Sangam. Some of those produced during the Last Sangam and the number of stanzas that we could recover are:

Work	Stanzas
<i>Thirukkural</i>	2660
<i>Manimekalai</i>	4857
<i>Silappadikaram</i>	4957
<i>Kaliththogai</i>	4304
<i>Inna Naarpathu</i>	160
<i>Perungkurinji</i>	261
<i>Kurinji</i> (those which Kapilar wrote under	
<i>Aingkurunuru</i> )	101
<i>Thirumurugaatrappadai</i>	317
<i>Nedunalvaadai</i>	188
<i>Perunaratrappadai</i>	248
<i>Perumpanatrappadai</i>	248
<i>Pattinappalai</i>	201
<i>Mathuraikkaanji</i>	701
<i>Malaipadukadaam</i>	583
<i>Pathitruppaththu</i>	600
<i>Puranaanooru Aganaanooru,</i>	
<i>Kurunthogai</i>	
<i>Natrinai</i> and other	
<i>Thanippaadalgal</i>	4000
Total	24,386

Obviously we do not have possession of many of the old Tamil works. They have all been lost. Some of those lost works are: *Maapuraanam, Isai Nunukkam, Bhoothapuraanam, Kali, Kuru, Vendaali, Viyaazamalai Agavul Adinool, Aniyiyal Avinayam, Aasiriyamaalai, Aanandaviyal, Inthira Kaaliyam, Ilanthirayam, Ainthiram, Ooviya nuul, Kadakandu, Kanakkiyal, Kaliyaana Kaathai, Kavimayakarai, Kavikettuththandu, Kalariyaavirai, Kanavunuul,*

*Kaakkaipadiniyam, Kaalakesi, Kunanuul, Kundalakesi, Kuuththu, Konuul, Sangayaappu, Chayantham, Charachapuda Venbaa, Sathavaganam, Cintham, Sirukaakkaai Paadiniyum, Sirukurii, Urai, Sirpanuul, Citradakam, Citrisai, Ceyanmurai, Ceyirriyam, Nagaduur Yaaththirai, Thanthiravaakkiyam, Thanasamuthiram, Thaalavagai Yoththu, Thumbippaattu, Thesiyamaalai, Naakakumaar, Kaaviyam,*

*Nilakesi, Panchaparathiyam, Baratham, Parinuul, Palakaayam, Palakaappiyam, Pannirupadalam, Paattumadaai, Paavaippaattu, Punarppaavai, Puthaiyanuul, Puranasakaram, Periyapampan, Peruvallam, Perisai, Pookkiyam, Maniyaram, Mathivaanar Naadakam Thamizh Nuul, Manthiranuul, Mayechurai Yaappu, Maapuranam, Markkandeyar Kaanji, Muthukuruku, Muthunaarai,*

*Muththollaayiram, Muruval, Muuvadimuppathu, Mothirappaattu, Yasodara Kaaviyam, Vacchatrollaayiram, Vanjippaattu, Varivalaiyapathi, Vaayyppiyam, Vilkkthaarkuuththu, Akththiyam, Akaththiyar Paattiyal, Asathikkovai, Ulkayatham, Chenkonetharaic Chelavu.*

Table No. 3

**LIST OF ARYA CHAKRAVARTHIS WHO RULED AT  
YAAZHPAANAM (JAFFNA)**

(Source: *Yaazhpaana Charithiram*, written by Rajanayaka Mudaliar and *Yaazhpaana Vaibhavamalai*, written by Mayilvavana Pulavar)

1. The rule of the Arya Chkravarthis begins from 785 A.D. from Ukkirasingan. Before him, the Nagar princes were ruling in Yaazhpaanam. Ukkirasingan shifted his headquarters from Kathiraimalai to Singainagar. It was during his period the Kandaswami temple was built at Maviddapuram. There is a Puranic story about this king also just as Vijayan had one, written after him.
2. Jayathunga Pararajasekaran assumed the throne on the death of Ukkirasingan. It was during his period, a Paanan by name Yaazhpaadi got an award. The Pandiyan king by name Varaguna waged a war against him and won over him. He also won over the other Sinhala king who was ruling from Polanaruwa. Varaguna killed Jayathunga Pararajesakaran.
3. From the middle of 9 A.D. upto the 12th Century, the descendants of Jeyathunga were ruling at Yaazhpaanam but under the control of the Pandiyan kings or Chola kings. The frequent wars that erupted during this period, between the Pandiyan, Chola and Pallava kings and the names of the

victors are all found duly inscribed in the Copper plaques and other South Indian Historial records. It was during this period, the kings of Singai and the Sinhalese kings had marital relations and were close to each other.

During the year 941 - 949 A.D. the Chola king, Paranthakan conquered the king of Singai. He got estranged from the Sinhala king. During the year 995 A.D. Rajendran the First, waged a war against Sri Lankan king and drove Mahindan from Polanaruwa. In the year 1014 A.D. the Chola king Rajendradevan, jailed Mahindan and annexed the entire Srilanka with his empire. For a long span of 126 years the Northern Srilanka (944 A.D. to 1070 A.D.) was a part of the big Chola empire. The kings of Singai were under the control of the Chola king. Some of them indulged in mutiny and were killed by the Cholas.

The great poet Pugalendi made a pilgrimage to Kathirgamam during the rule of Kumarakulothungan the Second (1118 A.D. to 1146 A.D.) and he was awarded by the king as he sang in praise of the king's (Singai king) greatness. There is a historical reference that the great Sadaiaappa Vallal rushed a huge load of foodgrains when Srilanka was reeling under famine and that was a little earlier to 1154 A.D.

4. Parakkiramavaagu the First: The Chola kingdom became weaker after Kulothungan. The kings of Singai and the Sinhalam got their lands back. Maanaabaanan was the king of the Singai and he was killed in the year 1038 A.D. by Rajaraja Cholan. Thilakasundari was the daughter of Maanaabaanan. Vijayabagu the First (who was the king of Singai) married Thilakasundari. Mitrai was the sister of



Vijayabagu who was married to Maanaabaanan's son. Maanaabaanan had three sons, Kirthisrimohan, Sirivallabhavan and Maanaabaanan. The last of them married Rathinavalli. Parakkiramavaagu was their son. Parakkiramavaagu grew up in Yaazhpaanam and had his upanayanam conducted in the traditional way. He conquered Vanni and became the king of Panangaamam. Later he conquered his brother-in-law Kayavaagu who was ruling over Polanaruwa and ruled over the entire Srilanka.

5. Kalingamaagan Jegarajasekaran (1215 A.D. to 1240 A.D.): He conquered Polanaruwa and taking it as his headquarters, ruled up to 1236 A.D. He was crowned as Chakravarthi. After him all the kings of the Northern Srilanka were called the Arya Chakravarthis.

He built forts in Polanaruwa, Pulacheri, Kanthalai, Kanthuppulu, Kurunthu, Pathaviyaa, Maattukkona, Uuraaththottai, Komuthu, Meepathottai, Mandali and Mannar.

6. Pararaajasekaran the Kulasekara Singai Arya Chakravarthi (1240 A.D. to 1270 A.D.): It was during the rule of this king, the great verse *Aarurula* was sung by the poet Anthagakkavi. In 1253 A.D. the Chola forces conquered and became victorious. In 1256 A.D. the king Chandrabanu waged a war.
7. Jegaraajasekaran, the Kulothunga Singai Ariyan - (1270 A.D. to 1292 A.D.): It was from this period, the Sinhala kings paid tax to the Aryan Chakravarthis. Bhuvanekabaagu, the Sinhala king, fought with Jegaraajasekaran for wresting the rights for pearl diving from the latter. Marco Polo, the famous world traveller landed in Yaazhpaanam in the year 1284 A.D. He

has placed on record with vivid details about Yaazhpanam and the Governments of Arya Chakravarthis.

8. Vikramasingaiyaariyan - Pararaajasekaran (1292 A.D. to 1302 A.D.): During this period, Yowan, a Reverend Father Fame landed in Yaazhpaanam. He also has recorded the extensive details about Yaazhpaanam and Singai Government. He lost the war in 1296 A.D. in Yaappagu but helped Bhuvanekabaagu's son to regain his lost kingdom. The latter agreed to pay taxes to Arya Chakravarthis. Later, the Sinhala king shifted his kingdom to Kurunakal, Thambatheniya and Gampalai. This was presumably because they refused to pay taxes or that he was afraid of the king at Yaazhpanam. Just the government officers became the princes of the lands and started ruling the kingdom. This suited well with the feudalistic regimes obtaining in those times.
9. Varodaya Singai Aryan - Jegaraajasekaran (1302 A.D. to 1325 A.D.): During the year 1303 A.D., Paraakkiravaagu, who was ruling with his headquarters at Kurunaakkal, refused to pay taxes to the Singai king and shifted his kingdom to Thampathnei. It was there in his Assembly Bhojaraaja Pandit, the great astrologer, made a maiden presentation of his work on astrology called *Sarajothimalai* and the same was given the official recognition by the Assembly. During those days, Tamil was the language of the learned amongst the upper class people of the Singalese. Sundarapaandian sought the help of Varodaya Singai Aryan in order to recover his own lost kingdom. It was during this period, unable to bear the tyranny and torture of the Mohammadans of the South India, most of the upper class sought refuge in Srilanka and settled

there, particularly in the North Srilanka. Brayer Oaorick, a Reverend Father of Catholic faith, visited Srilanka during this time and has made references about this king. It was during this period when this king ruled, he instituted a Tamil Sangam in Yaazhpaanam. The references he had made about the Arya Chakravarthis have already been given by me in the earlier chapters.

10. Maarththaanda Singai Aryan - Pararaajasekaran (1325 A.D. to 1347 A.D.): During the period of this kind, Ibin Bathututhaa, the Muslim traveller visited Srilanka.
11. Gunabhushanan - Jegaraajasekaran - 1347 A.D.: In the year 1348, an emissary sent by Pope to China visited Yaazhpaanam. He has made quite a few references about Yaazhpaanam.
12. Virodya Singai Aryan - Pararaajasekaran: During his rule there were quite a few riots in the land. He controlled all riots, maintained law and order and stabilized his government. He died in the year 1380 A.D.
13. Jeyavirasingai Aryan - Jeyaraajasekaran (1380 A.D. – 1410 A.D.): He was the most famous amongst the Arya Chakravarthis. He minted coins with the figures of buffaloes and crescent. During the year 1340 A.D. the rule of Alagakkonar started with the same fort as the official headquarters. This king belonged to the Malaiya community of Vanji City. He was the Minister under Vikramaavahu the Third and was also the Commander of his Army. He conquered a portion of the Sinhala kingdom and established his rule. He refused to pay taxes to Aryan Chakravarthi against the obligation that was in vogue during those days. He rebelled against them. He killed the messenger who had

come as the Chakravarthi's representative asking for the taxes. War broke out between Alagakkonar and Jeyavirasingai Aryan. The Sinhala Puranaas say that Alagakkone won the war. But as per the archaeological finds around the vicinity of Kekalai, it was the Singai Aryan who had won. It was during the period of this king, the famous Medical book called *Jegaraajasekaram*, Astrological book by name *Jegaraaja Sekaramaalai* and Mathematics book by name *Kanakkaathikaaram* written by Karivaiya were published and given official recognition.

14. Gunaveera Singai Aryan - Pararaajasekaran (1410 A.D. to 1440 A.D.): He was the king who built the sanctum sanctorum of the Rameswaram temple. The famous medical work by name *Pararaajasekaram* was written during his period.
15. Kanakasuriya Aryan - Jegaraajasekaran (1440 A.D. to 1478 A.D.): One Chenbagapperumal, son of a Malayalee worker, serving in Paraakjiramavaagu Assembly and also a warrior, led a Sinhala Army and conquered Yaazhpaanam. He drove away Kanakasuriyan. He ruled in Yaazhpaanam for a period of 17 years. It is he who arranged for building the Kandaswami temple in Nallur. After the death of Parakkiramavaagu in the year 1467 A.D. he became the king of Kottai. Kanakasuriyan returned with the support of a massive army and conquered Yazhpaanam.
16. Singai Pararaajasekaran (1478 A.D.): It is this king who instituted the Second Tamil Sangam. It was in this Sangam, his brother - in - law Arasakesari gave a maiden presentation of *Raghuvamsam* and the same was given the official recognition. But the tragedy was that from the period of this

king's rule, the Singai Aryar Dynasty showed wings of decay and started crumbling. Vanniyars refused to budge in the matter of paying taxes to these kings and started becoming independent. The entire trade in Srilanka was taken over by the Muslims. The Portugese also entered Srilanka. Pararaajasekaran had four sons. Their names were, Singavaahu, Pandaaram, Paraniruupasingam and Sangili. The last of the brothers, namely, Sangili conspired and killed the other three brothers and took over the kingdom. And the Singai kings became puppets in the hands of the Portugese.

During the period of Sangili, there were frequent wars between Sangili and the Portugese. The Portugese converted Paraniruupasingam into a Christian and tried to make him the king. In the year 1565 A.D. Sangili died.

Kasi Nayanaar or Kunji Nayanaar: The Portugese put Pararaajasekaran into jail and installed some prince as the king. But when the Portugese left Yaazhpaanam, Kasi Nayanaar killed the new king and became the king of Yaazhpaanam again.

The Portugese killed Kasi Nayanaar by poisoning and installed the prince by name Peria Pillai after crowning him with a royal pseudonym of 'Jegaraajasekaran'. During the year 1582, after Peria Pillai, Puviraaja Pandaaram became the king under the name of Pararaajasekaran. Puviraajapandaaram fought many wars with the Portugese but lost in all of them. Ultimately he was killed by the Portugese. The Portugese made his son, Ethirmannasingan the king, but under their control. He got the name Pararaajasekaran in due course of time. He ruled from the year 1591 A.D. to 1616 A.D. When he died, the prince by name Sangili became the King. He also was ultimately killed by the Portugese. The direct rule by the Portugese started in the year 1620 A.D.

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and the sweetest of all,  
Tamil is like our mother's lap  
the enviable abode of our lives  
ordained by the destiny".

- Poet Bharthidhasan

We are Tamils. Tamil is our language.  
The word, 'Tamil' means 'sweetness',  
'purity' and 'love'. It is the language of  
languages, prime and supreme, towering  
high among them.



It has the sweetness of nectar and is  
ever young, expressive and vibrant with  
life. Our culture, language and religion  
had spread throughout the globe. We  
had built cities all around and people  
were happy, peaceful and prosperous.  
We were rich, strong and proud by  
wealth, industry and economy. Literally  
we had bathed in milk and always draped  
in silk. The expanse of our culture, way  
of life and economy were indirectly  
proclaiming our strength and greatness.  
Once upon a time, we were the supreme,  
no doubt.

Author