

**TAMIL** legacy in  
**LONDON**

**E. V. SINGHAN**

By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.



Lord Nataraja.  
Bronze. From Tamilnadu. Chola dynasty, 11th Century A.D.

## EDITORIAL NOTE

"A man who is tired of London is tired of life."—*Dr. Johnson.*

London alone offers material to fill a library. Whichever way we turn, London is so vast and varied, so rich in what is interesting, one could wander day after day in its streets and among its treasures. There is not a little difficulty in deciding where to begin, and there is even greater difficulty in knowing where to end.

As our life in this world is a short one it will be difficult for us to go into the different aspects of other cultures and civilisations.

I hope this booklet, which is a result of many years of hard labour will help Tamilians and others who come and go out of London to learn or improve their knowledge of Tamil Culture through the sources of information, material and services available here.

It is an envy and a pride to see some of the "masterpieces" and books preserved in a foreign country, whereas it has been neglected in the countries of its origin or in other states where the Tamilians have made greater contributions, it has been removed from museums and libraries, when political power moved from one hand to another.

Today popular words like rice, curry, papadam, mulligatawny, mango, in the English language are all of Tamil origin.

In order for you to try the food prepared by native chefs, I have given the names and addresses of some of the restaurants.

The most reliable sources of information available at the time of going to press have been consulted in the compilation of this booklet but neither the editor nor the publisher undertakes any responsibility for the accuracy of all the statements herein contained. The editor welcomes communications indicating any errors in the booklet or suggesting improvements in either form or content. Correspondence should be addressed to the editor at 46 Beechfield Road, London S.E.6.

I wish to express my gratitude and sincere thanks to all those who in one way or another have contributed to the success of this booklet.

**விழி**  
VANAKKAM

1.5.1969

E. V. Singhan

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## லண்டன் தமிழ்ச் சங்கம்

London Tamil Sangam

The first Tamil Sangam was founded in 1923. Since then, many other associations were formed, but the London Tamil Sangam was registered under the provisions provided by the Company Law Act of 1948 as a cultural association.

### Objects

- To propagate and to foster interest in Tamil Culture and to encourage the study of the Tamil language and literature.
- To propagate the Tamil conception of universal brotherhood.
- To diffuse amongst its members by lectures, discussions, books, correspondence, and other information on all matters pertaining to the Tamil arts, culture and literature.
- To serve as a meeting place for the Tamils from various countries living in Great Britain and to foster social contacts among them.

- (e) To celebrate Tamil festivals and such other functions as may be decided from time to time.
- (f) To render into Tamil, books of knowledge relating to science, philosophy and the humanities.

### Membership

Open to all Tamilians by subscription.

### Executive

Sixteen members—President, Vice-President, General Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer and eleven committee members.

### Election

Annually.

### Books

There is a good collection of books on Tamil Literature, History, Music, General and Thevaram records presented by Annamalai University with the Sangam.

### Building Fund

The office of the Sangam moves with the office bearers. A permanent building is in great need. Any contribution will be greatly appreciated by the Association.

Donations should be sent to:

London Tamil Sangam Ltd. (account)  
The National Provincial Bank Ltd.,  
6 Fitzroy Square,  
London, W.1.

## SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES University of London, Thornhaugh Street, London W.C.1

**Underground:** Russell Square, Goodge Street or Euston Square.

**Courses of Study:** For lectures, tuitions, classes in Tamil language, literature, leading to the School's Certificate or Diplomas—Inquiries at the above school.

**Degrees:** B.A.(General), B.A.(Hons) in Tamil. Details in the school's annual calendar, obtainable at the office of the Registrar.

**Library:** Possesses over 1,600 Tamil books covering the whole range of classical and modern literature, philosophy, history novels, periodicals and other general subjects.

**Membership:** For students of the school. The Librarian may admit (under rule 4) other persons as ordinary members of the library on production of satisfactory reference—the members admitted will be required to pay a deposit of two pounds.

The main Library and the Reading Room are normally open at the following times:

Monday-Friday during Term	9.30 a.m.-7 p.m.
Monday-Friday during Vacation	10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Saturdays	10 a.m.-3.30 p.m.

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"Whatever foreign languages a man meddles with," said John Locke, "that which he should critically study and labour to get a facility of clearness and elegance to express himself in, should be his own".

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Tamil is not an easy language. It takes much effort to gain even a moderate working knowledge of it. As the Tamil saying goes, "The harvest called learning needs the rain called tears."

## BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Bush House,  
Strand, London W.C.2

I acknowledge with gratitude all help rendered to me by the B.B.C. Tamil Programme Organiser, Mr. D. J. Barlow and Mr. S. Shankaramurthi.

In my interview with Mr. Shankaramurthi the following questions were answered.

- Q. 1** Are the public allowed to participate in the programmes?  
**A. 1** All "Tamil knowing" persons can participate in "Tamizhosai", the only thing being that they have to appear for an audition.
- Q. 2** Are they allowed into the studios?  
**A. 2** When the programme is on the air no-one is allowed to enter the studios, but visitors may come to the studios before the transmission starts and can listen and see silently.
- Q. 3** Can they watch the transmission programmes?  
**A. 3** Yes, they can watch the transmission programmes.
- Q. 4** Is it possible to listen to the programme in London?  
**A. 4** Yes. Listeners in London can hear "Tamizhosai" relayed on the 25 metre band (short wave) between 4.45 and 5.15 p.m. BST.
- Q. 5** What are the days and times of the transmissions?  
**A. 5** B.B.C. broadcasts "Tamizhosai" twice a week, on Sundays and Thursdays, between 10.30 and 11.30 a.m. From June 1969 onwards we are having an additional 30-minute programme on Mondays also. So "Tamizhosai" can be heard from June 1969 on Sunday, Monday and Thursday, three times a week.
- Q. 6** Is it possible to get the programme of broadcasting?  
**A. 6** There is no specific programme journal for "Tamizhosai" but you can get information about future programmes from B.B.C. Tamil Service, London W.C.2.
- Q. 7** To what countries is it broadcast?  
**A. 7** The programme is mainly broadcast to India, Ceylon, Malaysia and Singapore.
- Q. 8** Why is there a Tamil Section in London?  
**A. 8** As there is a large Tamil-speaking population in India and Ceylon, our aim is to project the British way of life and to provide listeners with up-to-date news of happenings in Britain and to establish better relations and good will through the media of broadcasting.

## INDIA OFFICE LIBRARY

197 Blackfriars Road,  
London S.E.1

**Transport:** The building can be reached by underground to Waterloo on the Northern and Bakerloo Lines or by bus (nos. 17, 45, 63, 109, 155, 177, 185 pass the building).

**Hours of opening:** The Library and the Record Office are open from 9.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday, and 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays.

**Manuscripts:** The Tamil manuscripts include a copy of the Christian epic poem Tembavani by the Italian Jesuit Missionary and Tamil Scholar Constantius Beschi (1680-1746) written in the author's own hand.

The library is in a new building. It has the finest collection of Tamil books in London. It comprises more than 15,500 Tamil books covering a wide field of subjects—arts, religion, philosophy, science, literature history, novels and some current periodicals.

**Membership:** Formal recommendation. Non-members may use the library, but only members may borrow books.

*By the same author*

*Why Tamil? (in preparation)*

Contents include: Map of Tamil Empire, Important dates in Tamil history, Why foreigners studied Tamil and their comments, etc.

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**LONDON PUBLIC LIBRARIES**  
**Kensington Central Library,**  
**Phillimore Walk, London W.8**

**Underground:** High Street Kensington.

In the unified Public Library System in London, each Borough specialises on a subject. Kensington Central Library specialises in languages. In the Tamil collection there are a few books on Tamil grammar, dictionaries and a complete set of Tamil Lexicon (Volumes I-VI).

**Membership:** Non-members may use the library, but only members may borrow books.

**Do you know?**

Through any of the Public Libraries in London, you can borrow Tamil books by filling a request card.

The information required:

1. Title
2. Author
3. Publisher
4. Publication date
5. Price
6. Source of information

**THE HIGH COMMISSIONER OF INDIA**  
**India House,**  
**Aldwych, London W.C.2**

**Underground:** Nearest Holborn, Central Line.

For all services listed below please write to: Information Service of India.

**Films:** Catalogue on request; films lent free of charge (Tamil interests available). Documentary films screened at the above—India House—at 2.30 p.m. Monday to Friday. Admission Free.

**Reading Room:** The Hindu, The Mail and other Indian papers available.

**Library:** In the reference and lending section there are limited stocks of books written in English, about Tamil history, literature, religion, etc.

**Membership:** Non-members may use the library, but only members may borrow books.

**Publications:** Regular and ad hoc publications available for purchase: India News, weekly, 5d.

**Visual Aids:** Photographs covering various aspects of Indian life available on loan.

**National Music:** Records and tapes available free of charge to study groups and for private non-profit-making meetings.

**Tourism:** Booklets, maps and other information about Tamil Nadu can be obtained free from:

The Tourist Information Office,  
21 New Bond Street, London S.W.1.

**COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE**  
**Kensington High Street,**  
**London W.8**

**Underground:** Kensington High Street. Buses (nos. 9, 27, 28, 33, 49, 73, and 207a).

ADMISSION FREE

**Exhibition Galleries** which are open to the visitors without charge, are permanent exhibitions which illustrate the scenery and resources of the countries of the Commonwealth and the life and occupations of their peoples—sketches of Tamil way of life in these countries can be seen here.

**Cinema:** Documentary films about the commonwealth are shown free (details obtainable on request).

**Library:** Good collection of books on Commonwealth. In the Indian Section there is a copy of Tirukkural translated into English by A. Chakravati.

**Membership:** Non-members may use the library, but only members may borrow books.

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**George Uglow Pope** (1820-1908) was a Tamil Scholar and missionary. He translated many of the Tamil classics into English. He died at Oxford and is buried in St. Sepulchre's Cemetery.

His friends and pupils in India, the majority Hindus, placed, by subscription, a monument on his grave and founded a memorial prize for Tamil studies in the University of Madras.

**BRITISH MUSEUM**  
**Great Russell Street,**  
**London W.C.1**

**Transport:** The nearest underground stations are Holborn (Kingsway), Russell Square and Tottenham Court Road.

ADMISSION FREE

**Hours of opening:** Weekdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sundays 2.30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

**Special Interest:** In the Indian Section, with other collections there are bronzes from Tamilnadu of the Pallave and Chola periods.

**Lectures:** Now and then free lectures are delivered e.g. Indian Antiquities. Programmes at the "inquiry".

**British Museum Library:** The department has more than 15,000 books in Tamil. The catalogue covers a wide field of books on arts, science, literature, drama, education, history, philosophy, theology, poetry, novels, etc. The books cannot be borrowed. But the public are allowed to go there and read them.

**Manuscripts:** They are mainly religious works written by early missionaries. The Department of Oriental Printed Books and Manuscripts has 66 grants on copper plates (some in Tamil).

**VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM**  
**South Kensington,**  
**London S.W.7**

**Underground:** South Kensington (bus routes to South Kensington station, nos. 207, 45 and 49) or Brompton Oratory (14, 30 and 74).

ADMISSION FREE

**Hours of opening:** Weekdays, including Saturdays and Bank Holidays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sundays 2.30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

**Special Interest:** INDIAN SECTION (Room 47B). In the Golden Age of the Tamil Empire, sculpture and bronze made an important contribution. A selection of the bronze of the Pallava, Chola, Pandaya and Vijayagnayar period can be seen here.

**Books:** Indian Art—a Brief Guide, published by the Museum. Five Shillings net.

**Visual Aid:** A tape recorded guide to the Indian Section could be hired at the counter. Cost 2s. 6d.

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"Bronzes of the Chola Period, those splendid and amazing sculptures belonging to the best creation of humanity."

Dr. K. Zuelebil

**DO YOU KNOW?**

**Tamil Race**

"South India was probably the cradle of the human race. Investigations in relation to race show it to be possible that Southern India was once the passage ground by which the ancient progenitors of Northern and Mediterranean races proceeded to the part of the globe which they inhabit."

*Sir John Evans, Presidential address to the British Association*

"Tamils, the Sanskrit generic appellation for the South Indian peoples, and their languages which passed various stages—Dravida, Dramida, Dramaila, Damila—Dr. Caldwell explains this in his comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages" (2nd ed. 1875 p.10 seq).

"The punch marked coins of an early era point to connections that Ceylon may have had with Mohenjodaro and the Indus Valley Civilisation. Tamil poetry composed in Ceylon has been included in the earliest Tamil Anthologies, and the Tamil spoken in Ceylon represents a pre-Pallava period with its ancient morphological and grammatical forms and its repertoire of words considered obsolete for centuries on the neighbouring continent."

*Xavier S. Thani Nayagam*

**Tamil Language**

"The Tamil language is extraordinary in its subtlety and sense of logic. It is one of the most copious, refined and polished languages spoken by man."

*Dr. Slater*

"Tamil is to be respected as having been the adopted tongue of Beschi, Ziegenbalg, Schwart and Fabricius. It was the first of the languages of India studied by Protestant Missionaries and is that with which the Jesuit propagandists have been mostly exercised, and Europeans have probably spoken and written more in it than in any other Eastern languages."

*E. R. Robinson*

**Tamil Literature:**

"The Kural is the master-piece of Tamil Literature—one of the highest and purest expressions of human thought."

*Mr. Ariel*

"There hardly exists in the literature of the world a book which contains such lofty maxims."

*Dr. Albert Schweitzer*



## Religion

"Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy is the choicest product of the Dravidian intellect. The Saiva Siddhanta is the most elaborate, influential and undoubtedly the most intrinsically valuable of all the religions of India."

*Dr. G. U. Pope*

"The Tamil area in India is a centre of traditional Hinduism."

*R. Radhakrishnan*

## Art

"Indian art and culture was a joint creation of the Dravidian and Aryan genius, a welding together of symbolic and representative, abstract and explicit, language and thought."

*Dr. A. Coomaraswamy*

## Architecture

"The Pallava period (600-850) is that of sculptured rocks, the early Chola period (850-1100) that of grand Vimanas, the late Chola period (1100-1350) that of most beautiful Gopuras, the Vijayanagar period (1350-1600) that of Mandapas and the modern period after 1600 that of Corridors."

*Professor J. Dubreuis*

## Tamil Empire

"The tiger was the emblem of the great Chola Kings of South India and it is fitting that the tiger should be Malayan's emblem today."

*Sir Roland Braddell*

"The Cholas were great builders, building not only cities and temples, but also of useful irrigation works."

*Vincent Smith*

"The Tamils have a long history of achievement; sea travel, city life and commerce seem to have developed early. Tamil trade with Greeks and Romans is verified by literary, linguistic and archaeological evidence."

*M. B. Singer*

The following High Commission Offices may provide some assistance. A list of these offices and of the services provided is contained in the following section.

## CEYLON

OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR CEYLON,  
13 Hyde Park Gardens, London W.2

For services listed below please write to Information Officer.

*Films:* Catalogue available on request. Films lent free of charge.

*Library:* Reference only.

## INDIA

(See page 9).

## MALAYSIA

OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR MALAYSIA,  
45 Belgrave Square, London, S.W.1

For all services listed below write to Information Department.

*Films:* Catalogue available and films lent free of charge.

*Library:* Reference only.

## MAURITIUS

THE MAURITIUS HIGH COMMISSIONER  
Mezzanine Suite, Grand Buildings, Trafalgar Square, London W.C.2

*Films:* Can be made available on free loan.

*Library:* Reference only.

## SINGAPORE

OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE REPUBLIC OF  
SINGAPORE,  
2 Wilton Crescent, London S.W.1

For services please write to Information Officer.

*Films:* Can be loaned free of charge subject to availability.

*Library:* Reference only.

*Publication:* Tourist literature and information brochures free on request (Tamil enjoys a unique position in Singapore).

## The India Club

143 Strand, London, W.C.2.

Telephone: Temple Bar 0650

### Underground: Aldwych

Vegetarian and non-vegetarian: Rice, Curry, Rasam, Bhajias, Uppuma, Masala Dosai, Mango sweets, etc.

Speciality: Idly & Dahi Vada available on Fridays.

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### THE PLOUGH AND THE STARS

Short Stories by K. Swaminathan et al (25s.) A collection of contemporary Tamil stories in English translation. Some of the greatest writers are represented.

### LANDSCAPE AND POETRY

by Xavier S. Thani Nayagam (20s.) A Study of Nature in Classical Tamil Poetry. "... deep erudition in the Classics and English and his comparison with Virgil are of particular interest. ..." *Bull. of School of Oriental & African Studies.*

### READINGS IN TAMIL CULTURE AND CIVILISATION

by Xavier S. Thani Nayagam Forthcoming.

### KANCHIPURAM IN EARLY SOUTH INDIAN HISTORY

by T. V. Mahalingam (60s.) An authoritative history of the Pallavas and their contributions to South Indian Culture (6th & 7th century A.D.).

### SANGAM POLITY

by N. Subrahmanian (50s.) The Administration and Social Life of the Sangam Tamils. "Can be recommended to all those interested in Ancient Indian culture". *British Book News.*

### CHRONICLES OF KEDARAM

A Novel by K. Nagarajan (18s.) The memorable adventures that hit a small district headquarters town when its motley crowd of characters come into conflict with each other.

## Books on Tamil Culture

**ASIA  
Publishing  
HOUSE  
447 Strand  
London WC2**

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