INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Women and Depressed Classes were considered as weaker sex and section of the Hindu Society respectively. Women have been suppressed by men all through the ages, and the Depressed Classes by the Caste Hindus. But both women and Depressed Classes have been the back-bone of the society from very early time. The former took care of the household affairs, the elders, husbands and children, and the latter were playing important role in food production and manufacturing goods. Though Hinduism placed women in a respectable status and even above the men, they have deteriorated to the status of slaves under the control of men. So also, the Depressed Classes, who were authentically called as the sons of the soil, were degraded as sub-human beings in all respects. In a sense, it is correct to say that both women and the Depressed Classes have been the downtrodden, since they have been facing age-long domination of men and the Caste Hindus respectively. So, it is necessary to study about these two sections and analyse what the Government had contributed for their betterment through social legislations.

Women through the Ages

Historically speaking, the Hindu women were honoured and respected by menfolk in the early Vedic period. No religious
ceremony would be performed without her presence. She was the queen of the House having all the freedom of learning music, dance and rituals. But her position declined during the later Vedic period and further deteriorated during Epic age. She was degraded to a lower status of man and was deprived of the rights of learning and property. According to Manu they were the slaves of men, object of men's pleasure and were denied rights to education and property. "A wife, daughter and a slave are declared to have no property".

Female infanticide, child marriage, polygamy, polyandry, Sati, widowhood etc., were the untold miseries of the women. These phenomenon in course of time, were recognised as the Laws of social custom and usage and religious sanction was given to them.

Sangam age which is considered as the Golden age of Tamils was famous for equal treatment of men and women. There were queens, poetesses, Ambassadresses, Diplomates and others who were honoured by the society. But a section of women were not recognised as par with that of men as well as other women of the society. They were the prostitutes of the Sangam age known


2 Manu, VIII - 416.
as Parathiya, Kondimakalir etc.³ Another section of women called Mangaladasiar or Kamakilathiyar were usually kept by kings and rich men as concubines.⁴ During the Pallava and Pandya periods these women were further degraded and forced to live in separate quarters. The Government used to collect professional taxes from the prostitutes and accepted donations to temples from the Devadasis who were dedicated to temple services.⁵ There were inscriptional evidences for the existence of prostitution and Devadasi System during Vijayanagar rule.⁶ However upto the Vijayanagar rule, degraded women were considered as citizens and taxes were collected from them. Hence there was a status for these women in the society.

Under the Muslim rule, the ignorance of womenfolk further widened and they were physically covered by 'Purdah' and forced to live in a secluded place (Zenana) even in their own houses. The king, feudal lords and wealthy persons used to marry more than one wives. The kings enrolled thousands of wives or concubines in their royal harem. So the women became a moving shuttle beyond no freedom of body and soul.

³ Madurai Kanchi, 559, 579, 582, 589.
⁴ Silappathikaram : 6 : 125.
⁵ South Indian Inscription XIV, Nos.13,18.
⁶ IPS Nos.793, 814 and 841.
The British administrators not only introduced new set of administrative methods but also Western education system. The Western education opened the flood gate of the thinking mind of the Hindu women. Hence, they began to slowly recollect their birth rights and privileges. This was further stimulated by the 'Reform Movements' started by both the Western and oriental educated persons. Among the 'Reform Movements' resulted in the formation of Brahmo Samaj (1828), Prarthana Samaj (1870), Arya Samaj (1875), Theosophical Society (1875) and Ramakrishna Maths. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Pandit Eswara Vidya Sheker, Devenrana nath Tagore, Swamy Dayenanda Seresswati, Mahadeva Govinda Ranadey, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Swamy Vivekananda were the patriotic sons of Bharatmatha, who wanted the women to be rescued from their clutches of subordinations, superstitions and from other social evils such as female infanticide, Sati, widowhood, child marriage, etc. With the help of these enlightened people, the Britishers gained the public opinion and introduced legislations against all these social evils. When Lord William Bentinck (1828-1835) introduced certain legislations such as banning female infanticide, child marriage, Sati and human sacrifice, Raja Ram Mohan Roy stood behind him. By this he had broken the non-intervention policy of the Britishers in the socio-religious matters of Indians.

When Lord Lands Down (1888-1894) was the Viceroy of India, the marriageable age of the bride was increased from ten
years to twelve years by the Age of Consent Act of 1891. But the impact of the Act was marginal. The Indian National Congress Party formed Sub-Committees at village, district and national levels and these Committees were asked to watch on the enforcement of the Age of Consent Act.\textsuperscript{7} Slowly, when the public opinion became ripe, the number of child marriages were gradually reduced.

Since the first quarter of the twentieth century, particularly from the time of Montague-Chelmsford Reforms (1919), efforts were made to abolish these social evils by the social reformers and the Government. As a result, the first victory was achieved by the passing of Child Marriage Restraint Act popularly known as the "Sarada Act of 1929". According to this Act marriageable age of bride and bridegroom was raised to fourteen and eighteen respectively.\textsuperscript{8}

As soon as the Justice Party came to power in 1920 it took keen interest in passing Resolutions and Acts relating to women. The following Resolutions and Acts were passed in the Central and State legislatures. They were Resolution of 1921 on Enfranchisement of Women; The Age of Consent (Amendment) Act, 1925; The Hindu Inheritance (Removal) of Disabilities Act and Indian Succession Act, 1928; The Sarada Act, 1929; Child Marriage

\textsuperscript{7} Swadesamitran, Madras, 21st November, 1896.

\textsuperscript{8} Sathianathaier, R., A Political and Cultural History of India, Vol. III, Modern India, Madras, 1972, pp.562-63.
Restraint Act and Hindu Inheritance (Amendment) Act, 1928; Abolition of Devadasi System 1930; The Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women Act, 1930; Madras Marumakkaltayaga Act, 1930 and Hindu Women's Right to Property Act, 1937. Among all these, the Resolution of 1921 on the Enfranchisement of Women, Abolition of Devadasi System of 1930 and the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women Act, 1930 were given all importance because these three were the vital problems faced by women.

The important Acts relating to women's problems passed during Congress rule in the Central and State Legislatures were the following. Madras Marumakkaltayaga (Amendment) Act, 1947; Devadasis Protection (Extension) Act, 1947; Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Act, 1949; Special Marriage Act, 1954; Hindu Marriage Act, 1955; Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 and Maternity Benefit Act, 1961. Among them the Women's Rights to Property (Extension to Agricultural Land) Act, 1947 and Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 were discussed in detail. Until these enactments, women were ignored in all spheres. Particularly the age-old miseries of Hindu widow came to an end by the Women's Rights to Property (Extension to Agricultural Land) Act of 1947. And also the concluding parts of Devadasi System, Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Enfranchisement of Women were completed during this period.

When D.M.K. was in power, certain Acts were passed by the Central and State Legislatures. Self-Respect Marriage Act
was passed by the D.M.K. Government that nullified the grip of religion and caste rigidity in one stroke. In 1968 the Dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Act was enforced to save the women from the clutches of Dowry. The Married Women's Property Extension Act, 1971, Maternity Benefit Act, 1973, Marriage Law (Amendment) Act and Child Marriage (Restraint) Act, 1976 introduced by Central Legislature during this period really uplifted the position and status of Hindu women and the State Government also implemented the same.

Depressed Classes through the Ages

The Untouchable Castes of Tamilnadu were degraded and despised in the Tamil Society from the very beginning. They were the representatives of the most ancient inhabitants of Tamilnadu and also its ancient culture. They were engaged in certain professions which were later considered as impure in the estimation of the orthodox Hindus.  

After Aryanisation of Tamilnadu and the introduction of Varna System on the already existing castes, the Tamil Society was divided into four Varnas. Those who could not be identified with any one of the four Varnas were called Avarnas and degraded as Untouchables and enslaved by super castes.  

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the Untouchables never raised to their original position. They had forgotten their independence and de facto position in the society. Their glorious past was also forgotten. Their claims for freedom went unnoticed and unrecognised by high Caste Hindus. During the course of time the Caste Hindus imposed on them all sorts of social disabilities such as untouchability, unapproachability, unseeability and unheardability etc. Their fundamental freedom of movement was also denied. For all these imposed disabilities, the religious sanctions were manipulated by the Caste Hindus and they passed through the ages. They said, that the birth of an Untouchable was due to the Karma of the previous Janma, and so he was born as Untouchable. Therefore, he was called Janma Chandala (Untouchable by birth).  

Historically speaking it was said that there was no castism or untouchability during Sangam age (300 B.C. - 300 A.D.). There were number of social groups engaged in different kinds of occupations. But there was no segregation and untouchability among them.

During the Post-Sangam age (300 A.D. - 600 A.D.) the notions of purity and impurity complex arose in the minds of Tamils. The influence of Buddhism and Jainism in the Tamil Society further

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11 Shersma, R.S., Sudras in Ancient India. Delhi, 1958, p.132.
12 Purananuru : 113.
deepened these notions in the minds of the people. This was well depicted in Silappadikaram and Manimekalai. The four Varna System was also cited in Tamil Society.\textsuperscript{13} During the early Medieval period (575–900 A.D.) the 'Bhakti Movement' began to flourish. As an impact of the Movement, it left behind the Alwars and Nayanmars and their literary contributions which exhibited distinctly the existence of untouchability in Tamil Society. The Medieval age, especially the period of Imperial Cholas and Vijayanagar kings became the heyday of Brahminical Hinduism. Valankai and Idankai factors (Right hand and Left hand factors) came to exist and 92 castes in each groups always spearheaded for their privileges. The Pandya and Vijayanagar periods witnessed the horrible scenes of untouchability. Dharma Sastras became the Law and Order of the Hindu Society and the Caste Hindus segregated the Untouchables outside village settlements. Thenceforth, till date they were not allowed to join with the mainstream of society. Thus the segregation became the root-cause for all their disabilities.

The term "Depressed Classes" was in practice between 1915 and 1935. In the Census Report of 1921 it was recorded that there were approximately over six million of Depressed Classes people among the Hindus. Their population was 15.5 percent

\textsuperscript{13} Manimekalai, VI, II, 5, 6.
of the Madras Presidency. The Oxford English Dictionary describes that the Depressed Classes in India were the persons of the lowest castes i.e., Untouchables.

The term 'Depressed Classes' was freely used in the Round Table Conferences and in Poona Pact (1932). The Government of India Act of 1935 prepared a list of Untouchables and appended it as a 'Schedule' and therefore those castes found in the Schedule were called as "Scheduled Castes". Totally 66 such castes were included in the Schedule. Depressed Classes, Scheduled Castes, Harijans*, Excluded Classes etc., were the synonyms of the Untouchables.

Depressed Classes were forced to live in slums and always undernourished, ill clad; eaten up with leprosy or other horrible diseases; huddled like pigs; untaught; uncared for and unpitied. Thus they were in the Hindu Society but not of the society.

16 Joint Committee on the Constitutional Reform 1933-'34, p.70.
17 Vide Appendix No.VII.

* The Depressed Classes were Christened as Harijans by Garihiji, The literal meaning of the term 'Harijan' is Children of God. Garihiji began to popularise the term Harijan in 1930.
18 G.O.Ms.Nos.1010 & 1010A, Revenue, 30th September, 1892.
Hindu religious customs tend to preserve Caste System and untouchability. Owing to this custom and usage, the Depressed Classes were treated very badly. Hence, Gandhiji called this sort of treatment as "injustice in the name of religion" and said that those distinctions were not been created by God and Harijans should have the same rights and privileges and the same opportunities of growth that others enjoy.\textsuperscript{19} Gandhiji also said, that there was no religious sanction to treat Depressed Classes as Untouchables. Even B.R. Ambedkar said, "I want religion but I do not want hypocrisy in the name of religion. I like that religion which teaches its followers to have relation with others on the basis of liberty, equality and fraternity".\textsuperscript{20}

The important Depressed Classes in the Madras Presidency were Adi-Dravidas, Pallas, Chakkilias, Cherumans, Holeyas, Madigas, Malas and Valluvas. The Adi-Dravidas (Parishes) were mostly engaged in cultivation and some of them as masons, planters and daily wage earners. The Pallas were mostly agricultural labourers. The Chakkilies were agricultural labourers, leather workers and scavengers. The Depressed Classes had no civil rights. The children of the Depressed Classes were denied the privilege of education. They were prevented from using public highways and not permitted to wear certain item of clothes, jewels

\textsuperscript{19} Gandhi,M.K., \textit{Caste Must Go}, Ahmadabad, 1964, p.49.

\textsuperscript{20} Babasaheb Ambedkar Writing and Speeches, Vol. I, Government of Maharashtra, 1979, p.34.
and chapels. They were denied to take water from public wells or tanks, enter tea shops and temples; to ride on bullock carts and to carry umbrellas. The village servants like barbers and washermen were not permitted to serve them. 

Even in the public hospitals the Depressed Class patients were given separate wards and were forced to wash the dirty clothes and clean the wounds of the other patients. In the prisons they were kept in separate cells and forced to carry the night soil and urine of other convicts. The socio-economic and educational conditions of the Depressed Classes portrayed a very gloomy picture of their life.

As a result of the Karma theory and Varna System of the Aryan phenomena and the occupational taboos of Dravidian notion, the Untouchables in Tamilnadu were put in the net of untold miseries and well met civil disabilities. Only after the arrival of British and the Christian Missionaries their clutches were removed by means of social legislations, and conversion.

During the Justice Party Government the rights and liberties of Depressed Classes and Backward Classes were constitutionalised.


22 G.O.Ms.No.37, Public, 9th January, 1925.

Their Communal representation in Government services were legalised by passing Communal G.Os. A separate department called the Labour Welfare Department was established and the Justice Party had rendered yeoman services to the Depressed Classes.  

In order to eradicate their inferiority complex the Government issued an order in 1922 which directed that the term "Adi-Dravida" in Tamil Districts and "Adi-Andhra" in Telugu Districts should be adopted in official documents in place, if the words 'Panchama' or 'Periah' or similar names.


In its second term of office from 1946 to 1967, the Congress Government enacted many social legislations to uplift the Depressed Classes. They passed Civil Disability Act, 1947, The Temple Entry Act, 1947, Revival of Communal G.O. 1951, and The Untouchability Offence Act, 1955 etc.

During the D.M.K. rule the Protection of Civil Rights Act

passed by the Central Government was vehemently enforced in the State. The members of Depressed Classes were appointed as the Trustees of Hindu temples and Archaka Bill was also introduced and passed by the D.M.K. Government.

Thus the disabilities of women and Depressed Classes which had got the sanction of religious rituals and social usage and custom were slowly removed by the legislations of popular Governments from 1920 to 1976 A.D.

In short, the Colonial Government had passed various social legislations, orders and resolutions to remove the disabilities of women and Depressed Classes, but the Britishers, owing to their non-intervention policy in the socio-religious matters of Indians, could not straightaway indulge in making legislation against them. But it was done by popular Governments. By these legislations the age-old barriers of women and Depressed Classes were removed.

Importance and Scope of Study

The liberation of women and the Depressed Classes from their socio-religious disabilities, from 1920 to 1976 A.D. is the main theme of this study. The role of State to reform the society through legislation has been a continuous processes from the time of the Justice Party rule (1920-'37) to the end of the D.M.K. rule (1967-'76). The aim of the State was to promote Communal
harmony and secularism. So it was tried through constitution means by passing a number of Acts. The State Government thus, affected various changes in women's status and upgrading the Depressed Classes.

The scope of the study includes the important social legislations passed by the Governments of Justice Party, Congress and D.M.K. and the reactions of the society.

Area of Study

Tamil region of the erstwhile Madras Presidency forms the area of the present study. Linguistic provinces were formed in 1956 at the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission and later the Madras State was renamed as Tamilnadu by C.N. Annadurai. This jurisdictional restriction has been resorted to, for want of space and to cut to size the vast materials available for the whole of the Presidency, so that, short and comprehensive study highlighting all the issues and themes pertaining to Tamilnadu could be successfully attempted.

Period of Study

This study covers a period of 56 years (1920-'76). The year 1920 has been chosen as the anchor of this study because it was the year in which the Justice Party came to power. Though the Colonial Government had passed some Acts to remove the
disabilities of women and Depressed Classes, it was the Indian as a first time that Indians took personal interest and passed certain Acts to remove the disabilities of their fellowmen (women and Depressed Classes). Among them, Women's Enfranchisement and Temple Entry Enactments were the most important charters of liberties. The study comes to an end with 1976 when the D.M.K. rule ended.

It was believed that no day was passed unnoticed the problems of women and Depressed Classes. Hence, these problems were politicalised and boosted by some pressure groups. As a challenge and response, the party Governments came forward to solve these problems on competitive spirits. This brought a row of social legislations that effected some progress in women and Depressed Classes.

Review of Literature

So far many studies on women and Depressed Classes have been attempted by some scholars. They have done separately either on women or on Depressed Classes but not both together on some particular period. The study deals with the impact of social legislations on women and Depressed Classes in Tamilnadu from 1920 to 1978 A.D., which has not been attempted so far. At the every stage of enactment there had been conflicts and controversies between State and Society but it had been compromised
and the outcome was social legislation. There were some works closely associated with the study but not exactly to its dimension.

Chandra Mudaliar in her book *State and Religious Endowments in Madras* (Madras, 1976) brought out the history of Hindu, Christian and Mohammedan Endowments in the Madras State from 1617 to 1959 A.D. It deals in detail about the administrative set up of the Hindu Religious Endowments Department. But did not spoke about the social changes and temple practices.

S.R. Venkataraman's *Temple Entry Legislation Reviewed - with Acts and Bills* (Madras, 1946) sketches, the history of Temple Entry Movements in Kerala, Madras Presidency and Andhra Pradesh upto 1946 and also on the Temple Entry Bills of the State and Centre. These works reviewed the Temple Entry Bills and Acts but not about the disabilities of the women and downtrodden.

*My Experience as a Legislator* (Madras, 1930) was an autobiography of Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddy. It describes her experiences as a Member in the Madras Legislature. She was the first Indian woman to be nominated to the Madras Legislative Council and the first to be elected as its Vice-President among the Democratic countries of the world. The prolonged discussions for and against the Bill for the abolition of Devadasi System, her sincere and continuous attempts to gain the public opinion including the Devadasi Community and particularly the orthodox
people have been depicted in this book. Her role in passing
the Immoral Traffic Act in Women and the Regulation on Women
Enfranchisement were well described.

*Why Women Want to Vote?* by Dorothy Jinarajadasa (Madras,
1921) depicts the spiritual superiority of women. It specifies
the need for enfranchisement of women.

*Note on the Pariahs of Chengleput* by Trementhere, Collector
of Chengleput, Madras (1892) was the pioneer work on socio-
economic conditions of Depressed Classes of Tamilnadu. The
degradation and pathetic condition of the Depressed Classes and
how they are depressed and cheated by the Hindus, their illiteracy,
their poverty, etc., are vividly described in this book. It
was a spot study report of the Collector of Chengleput submitted
to the Board of Revenue (G.O.Ms.Nos.1010 & 1010A).

*The Poor Pariah* by Henry S. Olcott published by the
Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras (1902) was reflects the educational
condition of the Depressed Classes in the Madras City and the
neighbouring districts. The services of Christian Missionaries
and of the Theosophists were enumerated in this book. Olcott,
was the pioneer who started *Pachama or Pariah Schools* in Madras
later known 'Olcott Free Schools' to impart education to the
Depressed Classes. The services of Mrs. Anne Beasant and other
Theosophists were also stated in this book.
Mrs. Herabei, A. Tate's *A Short Sketch of Indian Women's Franchise* (Bombay, 1920) gives the history of struggle for women's franchise. *Position of Women in Hindu Civilization* by A.S. Altekar (Delhi, 1962) gives the secondary status for property right of women in Hindu society. According to him the Hindu women were denied equality only after the rule of Delhi Sultanate.

*Selected Works of Raja Ram Mohan Roy* published by the Publication Division, Government of India, New Delhi, 1977, gives a vivid picture of the crusade against *Sati* and Hindu Law of inheritance. He concludes that the practice of *'Sati'* was not permitted by a sacred text and also he criticises Manu for his contradictory statements on *Sati* and property rights of women.


S. Saraswathi's *Minorities in Madras State: Group Interest in Madras Politics* (New Delhi, 1974) is relatively more useful than other studies. This is a study of caste groups in Madras State and so it helps to know about politicised caste groups during 70 years of Colonial period. In the Fifth Chapter of her book
The Political Role of the Fifth Varna, the role of the Depressed Classes and in their attempts to get their civil rights and temple entry have also been sketched.


M. Sundara Raj's Prostitution in Madras: A Study in Historical Perspective (Delhi,1993) gives a detailed history of Devadasi System and prevention of Immoral Traffic on Women in the Madras Presidency.


Religion and Society in Tamilnadu - Secularism and Communal Harmony (Presidential Address, Second Annual Session of Tamilnadu History Congress, Annamalai University, 26th August, 1995) by G. Thangavelu deals with religious and social problems of Tamilnadu.

David Arnold in his book Nationalism and Regional Politics in Tamilnadu 1920-'37 A.D. (New Delhi,1973) has highlighted the
efforts of the Congress to uplift the Untouchables. The author's specific issues were Temple Entry and Land Reforms.

Religion and Society in our Situation (Madras, 1975) by Kundrykudi Adigelas gives the interrelation between religion and society and the role of Alwars and Nayanmaraars for social integrity.

Eugene F. Isschick in his book Politics and Social Conflict in South India (Oxford University, Bombay, 1960) gives the role of political parties and pressure groups in Tamilnadu and the social conflict between Brahms and non-Brahms.

Methodology

The study adopts the historical, critical and analytical methods. A scientific approach has been made in the collection of materials and studying the condition of women and Depressed Classes, in Tamilnadu from 1920 to 1976 A.D. Analytical approach is made to study the various regulations made during the three period under study. A critical evaluation is made with the available statistics. To bring out the logical development, empirical method has been adopted.

Source Materials

The source materials are of two kinds namely primary and secondary. The primary sources consist of the Archival Records, Reports, Gazetteers, Manuals, Government Orders relating
to Revenue, Law (General), Public Works, Development, Social Welfare and Labour Departments and Confidential Fortnightly Reports and other Published Reports of Government; and other Printed Works in Tamil and English; constitute the secondary sources.

The Madras Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council Proceedings from 1921 to 1976, the Reports of the Hindu Religious Endowments Board, Law Commission, Census Reports, Native Newspaper Reports and the Newspapers in English and Tamil such as The Hindu, Indian Express, Justice, Kudiyarasu, Draviden and Viduthalai have also been well utilised.

The Proceedings of the Justice Party and Indian Women's Organisation, Golden Jubilee Souvenir (1968) and Platinum Jubilee Souvenir (1984) of the Justice Party. Certain pamphlets and handbills issued by Mutts, political parties and social organisations have also been used.

CHAPTERISATION

The outcome of the work on Impact of Social Legislations on Women and Depressed Classes in Tamilnadu (1920-’76 A.D.) is presented in the following chapters.
CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

This Chapter deals with the general condition of women and Depressed Classes through the ages and measures taken by the Christian Missionaries, Hindu Organisations and Colonial Government. It also gives the importance and scope of the study, area and period of study, review of literature, methodology and source materials and chapterisation.

CHAPTER II : EMANCIPATION OF HINDU WOMEN UNDER THE JUSTICE PARTY'S RULE (1920-'37)

In this Chapter, the factors contributing to the Enactment of Women's Enfranchisement, Abolition of Devadasi System, and Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women are discussed. The effects of these legislations and reactions are also dealt with.

CHAPTER III : REMOVAL OF SOCIO-RELIGIOUS DISABILITIES OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES UNDER THE JUSTICE PARTY'S RULE (1920-'37)

The attempts of the Justice Party to remove the social disabilities of Depressed Classes are discussed in this chapter. It passed Communal G.O. and certain orders that granted some basic civil rights to them. In order to remove the religious obstacles, certain Bills were introduced. These legislations reduced their disabilities to certain extent.
CHAPTER IV: THE ACHIEVEMENT OF EQUALITY OF HINDU WOMEN UNDER THE CONGRESS RULE (1937-'39 AND 1946-'67)

Congress attitude towards women's development was shown by passing Acts for women owing property and abolition of dowry and other activities of the Government contributed to their betterment, is dealt along with the concluding parts of Devadasi System, Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Enfranchisement of Women were completed during this period.

CHAPTER V: SOCIO-RELIGIOUS GUARANTEES TO DEPRESSED CLASSES UNDER THE CONGRESS RULE (1937-'39 AND 1946-'67)

The religious customs and usages that stood as obstacles to the Depressed Classes were removed by the Congress by passing Temple Entry Acts. The Parliament passed the Untouchability (Offence) Act of 1955 and it was solemnly implemented by the Congress Government in Tamilnadu. The revival of Communal G.O. was undertaken during this period.

CHAPTER VI: SOCIAL LEGISLATIONS UNDER THE DRAVIDA Munnetra Kazhagam (1967-'76)

Hindu Self-Respect Marriage Act of 1967 strengthened the institution of marriage and popularised intercaste marriages. By implementing the Civil Rights Protection Act of the Parliament, the Depressed Classes were granted and guaranted human rights
in the society. The elaborate administrative set ups made by the D.M.K. Government for the protection of civil rights has been studied in detail. Further the Government introduced the Tamilnadu Archaka Bill and it was passed successfully.

CHAPTER VII : CONCLUSION

In the concluding chapter, legislations passed during the above three parties rule have been summerised. The efforts taken by the Justice Party's Government were followed and improved by the Congress and the D.M.K. Governments and the progress was found to be in an ascending order. It is interesting to note that following their predecessors the A.I.A.D.M.K. Government had also contributed for the betterment of the women and Depressed Classes.