

# *Chapter – I*

## ***INTRODUCTION***

## 1. THE PROBLEM

Change is the law of nature and every social system with appended institutions and structures is exposed to change. Change indicates progress, which is evolutionary, induced by inbuilt elements and activated by external agencies. The focus of the dissertation is on agrarian change and its impact on economy, society, polity and cultural traits of Tanjore region, acclaimed as the granary of Tamilnadu. This relatively fertile region developed an agrarian economy favoured by natural advantage. A rich rice culture evolved in the region from the ancient past. Technological innovations and adaptations enriched the process of rice cultivation. Royal patronage, conditioned by rajadharma and revenue requirements, promoted agriculture through protective and promotional schemes. The various stages in the mode of production created groupings of the peasants, which evolved into rigid class structure. A nexus between caste and class was formed and the power distribution was adjusted to suit the caste-class articulation.

Traditional agriculture was labour intensive and subsistence-based, purported to serve the regional and local demands. Rice cultivation was limited to the old lowlands, irrigated with river-fed channels and small streams. Dry land agriculture was always risky due to the precarious nature of rainfall distribution. Cultivation was done with ineffective tools and conservative technology. Changes effected in the landownership pattern and the entry of feudal laws and obligations hindered the progress of agriculture. The state

appropriated the near total of re-investable surplus in the form of numerous taxes and dues. Naturally, nothing could be done substantially to improve the quality of soil and increase the crop output. As a sequence of all these constraints, agriculture, particularly rice cultivation, remained as an unprofitable and hazardous occupation.

Colonisation entered the region as a result of political developments in the national level. The political economy of the colonial government was set to serve its political requirements, maximization of revenue and increase in trade income. Since land revenue was the major source of state's income, the British Raj made attempts to accelerate the process of agricultural development through new tenancy laws, periodic settlements, improvement in irrigation and flood control, crop protection strategies, introduction of scientific agricultural techniques and new crop varieties, improvement in the road transport and communication system, etc. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and more particularly in the last decade, owing to frequent shortage of supply in the canals and field distributaries crop insurance system failed, leading to famine conditions. The Famine Commission and Royal Commission on Agriculture recommended for crop protection through insured supply of irrigation water. It made the colonial government to venture into new irrigation projects. The Cauvery-Mettur Project was one such enterprise. The project was supplemented with improvement in the existing pattern of distribution and better water management techniques and policies.

The impact of this new protective and productive irrigation systems activated change in the existing agrarian situation. Intensive and extensive cultivation increased the crop output, while insured supply enhanced the yield rate. An exportable surplus was produced, which entered the markets of British colonies, including Ceylon. Labour demand also was rising. Coolie migration and diversion of substantial portion of agrestic labour to public works, maintained the labour demand always at high level. By this time land slowly entered the market due to odd forces and it accelerated the process of redistribution of land and related resources. This in conjunction with the socio-economic legislations and activation of absentee landlordism affected the productive process, made the class system fluid and weakened the caste-class nexus. Traditional bases of power were shaken and a new type of master-client relation evolved.

Independent India was engulfed under food crisis. Large scale imports and donor search problems made the government to concentrate on increase in production to satisfy the national requirements. The Five Year Plans were devised to promote agriculture and agri-based industries. New emphasis on irrigation, introduction of new crop varieties, intensive use of fertilizer, effective pest control methods, establishment of farm research institutes, agricultural universities, model farms, etc., and mechanization of farming, were some of the measures taken to boost agrarian economy. IADP, IAAP and similar other schemes stimulated agriculture. Institutional support, by way of disbursement of various categories of loans for land improvement, adapting

modern cultivation practices and relieving the peasantry from the vicious circle of debt trap, provided a fillip to agriculture. Tanjore region was one among the few areas, where some of the intensive area development programmes relating to agriculture were experimented. These, with other protective and promotional programmes led to agricultural prosperity in the region. The direct impact of changes in agricultural production could be manifested in the form of intensive and extensive cultivation, higher yield rate and enhanced outturn of paddy.

The secondary and tertiary effects of agricultural modernization with their multiplier effect influenced the entire economic structure of the region. Agro- industries, processing units, rise of market towns, semi-urban agglomerations, retail outlets, distribution agencies, brokerage, banking and credit institutions ramified the whole region. More employment generation, occupational shift, birth of new avenues of employment outside the traditional agricultural sector and improvement in transport and communication were some of the tertiary benefits accrued out of the agrarian change. Rise of urban and semi-urban centers absorbed a substantial portion of rural folks and thereby reduced the pressure on land. New goods and services were introduced and the whole process contributed to diversification of economic activity. The general impact of these developments benefited the non-agrarian classes as well.

Agrarian change and the consequent economic development influenced the class structure, and made it fluid. With change in the class structure, caste system lost its traditional value and became much more flexible. The nexus between caste, class and power distribution also underwent remarkable changes.

Ascriptive norms, roles and values met with resistance and serious role strain and role conflict disturbed the social equilibrium. It had affected the structural and functional aspects of the social system. Social discrimination, institutional racism and ascriptive role performance system received severe setbacks. Economic affluence also affected the life style, customs and cultural practices of the region and opened the paths of modernity.

Surplus income from agriculture and related resources was invested on education. Education by its multiplier effect initiated change in the life and condition of the society. Elitism and leadership evolved, which in articulation with the democratic political setup, favoured the redistribution of political power to all sections of the regional society. The relative freedom from economic servitude encouraged the trend. Thus the agrarian change induced transformation of society and its affiliated institutions.

## **2. THE REGION**

Tanjore, the capital of the Imperial Cholas, Tanjore- Nayaks and Tanjore Marattas, came under the control of the British in 1799. It was constituted into a revenue district in 1802. The district is situated on the Coromandal coast between 9°49' and 11°25' latitude and between 78°45' and 79°54' East longitude. It was bounded in the north by Coleroon river; east by Bay of Bengal; south by Pudukkottai district and west by Pudukkottai and Trichirappalli districts. The total area of the district is 3708 square miles.<sup>1</sup>

The district is divided into nine taluks. They are Tanjore, Kumbakonam, Mayavaram, Sirkazhi, Nannilam, Nagappattinam, Mannargudi, Tiruthuraippundi and Pattukkottai, each of which is called after its head quarters. The following Table gives statistical details of population of the nine taluks in 1901.

**Table – 1**

**Statement showing taluk-wise area, population, density, etc.**

| S. No. | Taluks           | Area in square miles | Number of |          | Population | Population per square mile | Percentage of variation in population between 1891-1901 | Number of literates |
|--------|------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------|------------|----------------------------|---|---------------------|
|        |                  |                      | Towns     | Villages |            |                            |   |                     |
| 1      | Mayavaram        | 283                  | 2         | 186      | 247019     | 873                        | +0.9  | 26208               |
| 2.     | Sirkazhi         | 171                  | 1         | 96       | 116563     | 682                        | -2.7  | 10236               |
| 3.     | Kumbakonam       | 342                  | 2         | 307      | 375031     | 1097                       | -0.7  | 43256               |
| 4.     | Nagapattinam     | 240                  | 2         | 189      | 217607     | 907                        | -1.2  | 29773               |
| 5.     | Nannilam         | 293                  | 2         | 242      | 214788     | 733                        | -0.6  | 22212               |
| 6.     | Tanjore          | 689                  | 4         | 362      | 407039     | 591                        | -0.8  | 44156               |
| 7.     | Mannargudi       | 301                  | 1         | 193      | 188107     | 625                        | -0.0  | 18023               |
| 8.     | Tiruthuraippundi | 485                  | 3         | 143      | 182981     | 377                        | +1.9  | 14456               |
| 9.     | Pattukkottai     | 906                  | 2         | 792      | 295894     | 327                        | +8.9  | 18608               |

Source : Census Report of 1901 as quoted in Francis, et al., Gazetteer of South India, vol II p 138.

The etymology of Thanjavur is said to have been derived from **tanjam** (asylum) and **ur** meaning a village.<sup>2</sup> The ancient kingdom of Tanjore had always been reputed for wisdom and good governance of its sovereigns, the fertility of its soil, the industrious and pacific disposition of its inhabitants, the vastness of its commerce and the beauty of its scenery.<sup>3</sup> Physiographically there is no hill of any prominent height in the district. The even topography of the land throughout the district renders subdivision, rather difficult. However, marshy areas in the south-east consisting mainly of Vedaranyam salt swamp and Vallam table land in the mid-west can be considered as separate natural divisions.<sup>4</sup> The western and southern part of Tanjore consisting of the major areas of Tanjore, Orthanad, Pattukkottai and Peravurani constitute the upland region of the district. An approximate demarcation of the region can be made with reference to the course of Grand Anicut Canal.

The upland region includes a vast extent of dry land with red ferruginous soil. Millets, like varagu, ragi and cholam, groundnut and red gram are the provincial crops grown. The region is dotted with cashew plantations as well as palm and mango groves. In certain areas paddy is also cultivated as evidenced from the existence of irrigation tanks. The area gained prominence from the agricultural point of view because of the Grant Anicut Canal (1928) and the New Kattalai High Level Channel (1960). Provision of New Irrigation facilities have facilitated intensive paddy cultivation in the region.<sup>5</sup> No wonder Tanjore region has remained as a major food producing area in Tamilnadu.

The deltaic region is constituted by the northern and eastern parts of the district. In the region are included Sirkali, Mayavaram, Kumbakonam, Papanasam, Nagapattinam and Nannilam and portion of Tanjore, Mannargudi and Thiruthuraippundi taluks. The region is blessed with a wide distribution of alluvial and black cotton soil and numerous rivers and arterial channels, feeding rich paddy fields. It is also interspersed with green groves of mango, coconut and other trees. G.H. Jackson, the special settlement officer had made the following observation about the grandeur of the delta region.

*“There is no land like it. Throughout the land, the roads along which the ears are drawn are planted with avenues of coconuts, There are rows of fine houses with temples, mantepams, agraharams and well-built pandels such as must be seen to be imagined. Moreover, every village has one or two canals always breast-deep with water from Cauvery. Not 10 feet of ground is untilled the whole country is cultivated. It is level throughout and its water-channels are as the lines on a man's hand.”<sup>6</sup>*

The soil of the delta is entirely alluvial but varies greatly in quality. It is difficult to generalize on the subject as very marked differences may often be noticed between belts of land separated only by a single river. Even in the same belt, land adjacent to the river is usually richer than land a short way from it. The best soil is found in the western part of the district and the quality slowly deteriorates in the further east. Black soil is found in the east, which is less fertile and sometimes waterlogged. There is a fairly extensive area of really bad saline land in Thiruthuraipoondi and Nagapattinam taluks, where

drainage is notoriously defective. This is the worst land in the delta. But the rich lands are found near Tiruvadi, now called Thiruvaiyaru, land of five rivers, forming the “breast of Tanjore”.

Along the banks of the bigger rivers in Tanjore, Kumbakonam and Papanasam taluks there is a strip of very rich *padugai*<sup>7</sup> lands which, though not directly irrigated, are frequently more valuable than the adjoining wet lands. In the upland region, soil mainly consists of red laterite, but towards the west there are a few out-crops of gritty sand stones, the most conspicuous of which forms the vallam ridge. Towards the coast in the Pattukkottai and Arantangi taluks, the soil is of marine deposit and differs strikingly in appearance from the red-laterite plateau.<sup>8</sup> So Tanjore as a whole cannot be regarded as a delta because there are many areas which have no access to rivers. Moreover, one finds different types of soil in the district and methods of cultivation and cropping pattern are adjusted to suit the soil condition.

The region is rich with water resources. Ancient literary works called the region as “Punalnadu” meaning the land of floods.<sup>9</sup> The annual rainfall in the district as a whole reaches the comparatively high average of over 44 inches. It is lowest in Arantangi.<sup>10</sup> (35 inches) and highest in Nagapattinam (54 inches). Tanjore itself receives only 36 inches on an average. Most of the rainfalls occur during the north-east monsoon, which strikes directly on the more northerly of the coastal taluks. Hence the rainfall here is higher than in the inland region. The south-west monsoon also reaches this district and

occasionally rains received from it are heavier than those received from the north-east current.<sup>11</sup>

The climate of the district is generally hot and relaxing in the delta. As the latter widens, the increased breadth of the irrigated land causes more rapid evaporation of the water with which it is covered. Hence the country is cooler towards the sea. The delta is naturally well drained, and does not therefore suffer in point of climate as much as might be expected from the wide extension of irrigation within it. The mean temperature at Nagapattinam on the coast of deltaic tract is 83. The neighbourhood of Vallam, though dry, is the healthiest and the coolest part of the district.<sup>12</sup>

In the industrial scene, Tanjore district lags behind the state's average, representing only four per cent of the factories in the state. In the small scale industries sector also Tanjore lags behind. There are 1512 registered units distributed over four industrial estates in the district. Only a few are effectively functioning. They are distributed as follows: 12 units in Tanjore, 10 units in Pillayarpatti, 16 units in Thirubuvanam and four units at Nagapattinam. Small scale industries are generally concentrated in Tanjore, Kumbakonam, Nagapattinam, Mailaduthurai and Mannargudi blocks. Handloom weaving is popular in Tanjore, Mailaduthurai, Thiruthuraipoondi and Nagapattinam blocks. Salt-based industries, marine fishing, prawn culture and tobacco cultivation provide ample employment opportunities in Vedaranyam block.<sup>13</sup> The District is the largest producer of marine fish in the state followed by Kanniyakumari, Ramanathapuram and Thirunelveli.<sup>14</sup> Bell metal unit and

Kuthuvilakku manufacturing at Nachiarkoil, icon manufacturing at Swamimalai in Kumbakonam block, art plates and musical instruments of Thanjavur, and handloom weaving center at Thirubuvanam attract people from all parts of Tamilnadu as well as other states.<sup>15</sup>

Tanjore district is also noted for native jewellery, pith toys, lace-work, embroidery and flower garlands works. The class of workmen at Tanjore, who stand out prominently, are brick masons. The arched buildings, which have sprung up of late in the town of Tanjore, as also the innumerable bridges, tunnels and sluices which dot the whole delta of the cauvery, bear testimony to their skill of architecture.<sup>16</sup> Tanjore, Kumbakonam, Gangaikondacholapurm, Darasuram, Thiruvaiyaru, etc., remain as exhibits of their architectural skill.

Language of the region is Tamil. Gunasegara in his commentary to Yapperunkalam of Amirthasagara (eighth sutram of the third part Olipiyal) gives the limits of Chen-Tamil Nadu or the province, where pure Tamil was spoken as “North of Vaigai river, south of the Madura river, east of Karuvur and west of Maruvur”. This region would include approximately, the northern half of the modern district of Madurai and the Tanjore and Trichirappalli districts.<sup>17</sup> After the arrival of Nayaks and Marathas, Telugu and Marathi languages gained influence in Tanjore. But still Tamil did not loose its status and Chen-Tamil is the language of the majority of Tanjoreans.

Tanjore is a center of music. The musical Trinity of South India were born in the district of Tanjore. They composed soulful keerthanas. To the divinely inspired Vaggeyakaras, music was an artistic means of spiritual

realization. It is the spiritual approach to the art that has given vitality to the classical music of India.<sup>18</sup>

The ethnology of Tanjore differs very little from that of the other parts of Southern India. The races, which inhabit the district may be broadly classified into Pre-Aryan, Aryan and cross-breed.<sup>19</sup> Agriculture is the basic occupation of the people called Vellalas. There is a considerable number of Brahmins in the district. Originally priestly class, it later emerged as a land-owning class. Their concentration is more in the fertile areas like Kumbakonam, Thiruvaiyaru, Mayavaram, etc. In the upland region they are sparsely populated. Kallar, Maravar and Agamudayar constitute the Mukkulathor; subdivided into sub-castes like, Thevar, Vandayar, Kandiyar, etc. They are mostly settled in the areas of north-west delta and southern and south-west upland region of Tanjore. Muslim settlements are found in Ayyampet, Pabanasam, Muthupet, Adirampattinam, Mallipattinam and Nagapattinam. They were traders and money lenders, who later became land-owners. Christians spread throughout the district. Marathas and Sowrastras live in a few places in the district.<sup>20</sup> There was probably no district in India that more faithfully represented Hindu life before the inroads of the Afghan Mohammedans, than the quiet villages of Tanjore around Kumbakonam and Mannargudi.<sup>21</sup> Pallan and Paraiyan are largely agricultural labourers. Pallans always claim superiority over the paraiyans. Their settlements are located mostly near the Brahmin and Vellala habitations. The Paraiyas are numerous found in the upland region. Artisan classes like weavers Kammalas, and

potters and service classes like washer-men and barbers are spread throughout the district.

### **3. POLITICAL SETTING**

From the inscriptions, monuments, archaeological discoveries and literary evidences the early history of Tanjore could be reconstructed. Most of the early records reveal that prior to the advent of the Cholas, the country was occupied by the wild Naga race, the savages from whom the present Kallans, Maravans and Agamudaiyans trace their descent. The Cholas were the body of non-Aryan invaders from lower Bengal, who descended upon Tanjore.<sup>22</sup> The Cheras and the Pandiyas were the contemporaries of the Cholas and they disputed the chola supremacy of the South for many hundred years. Among the early Chola Kings, Karikala (C.A. D. 190), stands out pre-eminent. One of his early achievements was the victory in the great battle at Venni, modern Kovilvenni, 15 miles east of Tanjore. He defeated Cheras, Pandiyas and eleven chieftains. It marked a turning point in the career of Karikala. He is also credited with a victory over Ceylon. With the help of prisoners of war taken from Ceylon, Karikala promoted the reclamation and settlement of forest land and added to the prosperity of the country by multiplying its irrigation system.<sup>23</sup> Pathupattu, gives a vivid account of the state of industry and commerce at his time.

The early Cholas disappeared from the pages of Tamil history almost completely on the arrival of Kalabhras. During the Kalabhra interregnum,

Mutharayas, who were chieftains under the Kalabhras ruled Tanjore region with their head quarters at Chendalai or Niyamum. One of the inscriptions of Sendalai states that Maran was the king of Tanjai (i.e. Tanjore).<sup>24</sup> Two other stanzas on the same pillar inscription mention him as the lord of Vallam, which is located seven miles south-west of Tanjore. Thus Tanjore and Vallam appear to have been places of importance in the dominion of the Kalabhras.

The battle of Thirupurambiyam near Kumbakonam proved to be a turning point in the history of South India. Vijayalaya regained and founded the Imperial Chola power in Tanjore. Aditya I (871-907 A.D) put an end to the Pallava power and extended the Chola domain. His son and successor, Parantaka (907-955 A.D), ruled for forty-eight years. The last vestige of Pallava power disappeared and the kingdom of Parantaka extended upto Nellore in the north. Rajaraja, the Great (985-1014 A.D) extended the Chola territory beyond the seas. He also organized the civil service and reorganized the army on a sound footing. He patronized art and architecture, religion and literature. In a way he laid the foundation for Chola imperialism. Rajendra (1012-1044 A.D.) was a worthy son of his father, Rajaraja I and it was he who created an extensive empire comprising the whole of the Modern Madras and Andhra and parts of Mysore and the island of Ceylon.<sup>26</sup> During his reign he shifted the capital of Cholamandalam from Tanjore to Gangaigonda Cholapuram. Tanjore never regained its political importance until the end of Chola power.<sup>27</sup>

Kulothunga I (A.D. 1070 – 1120) was the first Chalukya-Chola emperor and the last great ruler of Chola Empire. He avoided unnecessary wars and evinced keen interest in promoting the well - being of his subjects. During his reign Chola Empire lost her overseas territories. Political strength of the Cholas began to decline with the end of Kulothunga's reign.<sup>28</sup> He is credited by historians for his tariff remission policies. The title of "sungamtavirtha-cholan" indicates this fact. After the end of his rule the Chola power further deteriorated. However, Kulothunga III invaded Madura, defeated the Pandya king and demolished the coronation mandapa of the Pandyas. After ploughing its site with asses, he sowed **Kavadi** on it. Then he wore the crown of heroism, after taking the title of Chola-Pandya.<sup>29</sup>

In an act of political vengeance Maravarman Sundara Pandya burnt down Tanjore and Uraiyur. It was this invasion from the south that called for the active intervention of Hoysala king Narasimha. He placed himself between the Pandya and Chola capitals, in the region round Srirangam and for a time deterred the Pandyas from advancing further. Narasimha was succeeded in the year 1233 A.D. by his son Somesvara, who took active part in the Hoysala intervention in the south. During this time there was a civil war in Chola state between Rajaraja III and his brother Rajendra III. Hoysalas interfered in the succession issue and entered into a treaty with Rajendra III. It favoured the establishment of Hoysala power in parts of Chola state. Someswara established his capital at Kannanur, about five miles north of Srirangam, where he appears to have resided till his death.<sup>30</sup>

The Pandyas retained control over the territory until the dawn of the fourteenth century. When the war of succession took place between Veera Pandya and Sundara Pandya, Malik Kafur, the talented general of Ala-ud-din Khalji, occupied the territories in 1311. Tanjore fell within the district of Mabar, the southern most province of the Sultanate of Delhi.<sup>31</sup> In 1335, Jalal-ud-din Hasan, the governor of the province, asserted the independence of Mabar. Hasan and his successors, five in number, ruled the Pandya, Chola territories for the next four decades. In A.D. 1370 Kumarakampanna, at the command of the forces of Vijayanagar, overthrew the Mohammedan regime. These political changes were no doubt, significant, but conferred no definite improvement on the territorial status of Tanjore.<sup>32</sup>

Achuta Raya the emperor of Vijayanagar, separated Tanjore from Madurai and organized it into an independent province. Sevappa Nayak, who was appointed as the first governor, founded the Tanjore Nayak line of rulers. But, Kumbakonam inscription of Sevappa Nayak states that he obtained the Tanjore Kingdom by his own valour.<sup>33</sup> The Telugu poem Vijayavitasamu of Chemakura Venkatakavi shows that Sevappa married the sister of the queen of Vijayanagara king Achyutaraya, and got the Tanjore principality, perhaps as dowry.<sup>34</sup> However, under his successors the country enjoyed a quasi-independent status. During the thirteenth century Tanjore with most of the Chola possession, passed under the rule of the Hoysala Ballalas of Dwarasamudra and the Pandyas of Madurai. The district probably shared the general subjection of the south to the Mohammadan successors of Malik Kafur

till the close of the fourteenth century, when it became part of the Hindu Kingdom of Vijayanagar, which was then rising into power.<sup>35</sup>

By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Nayak lords of Madurai became too formidable to their counterparts in Tanjore. Consequently to overcome the situation Tanjore invoked the aid of the Marathas against her neighbours. Ekojee, the half-brother of Shivaji, re-established authority and laid the foundation for the Maratha dynasty of Tanjore.<sup>36</sup> It was from the Marattas that Tanjore passed into the political hegemony of the East India Company.

#### **4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Several scholars both Indian and foreign have done valuable researches on agrarian issues pertaining to Tanjore district. Andre Beteille's **Caste Class and Power** (Changing Pattern of Stratification in a Tanjore Village) is a valuable work, but it deals only with Sripuram village located near Thiruvaiyaru. K.C. Alexander's work on **Agrarian Tension in Tanjore** is confined to a study of two taluks, Mannarkudi and Mayvaram of Tanjore district. In **Rural Change in South East India – 1950s to 1980s**, Gough concentrates only on two villages Kumbapettai and Kirippur. Marshall Bouton's **Agrarian Radicalism in South India** is focusing on the emergence and subsistence of agrarian radicalism in the district of Tanjore from 1940 to 1972. William Hickey's, **Tanjore Maharatta Principality in South India: The Land of the Cholas; the Eden of South**, deals only with

Maharatta rule in Tanjore. Newell's **Tanjore** briefly deals about the political situation of Tanjore.

Native scholars also have given adequate importance to Tanjore region. K. Balasubramanian's **Thanjavur** deals about the monumental importance of the region. The published thesis of Karupaiyan, **Kinship and Polity** pertains to a study of the relationship between Pathinettupatti village and Valambai Muthumariamman Koil, situated in the upland region of Tanjore. Manamalar's unpublished thesis, **Administration and Social Life Under the Maharattas of Tanjore** deals only with the life history of the Maharathas. The published thesis of K. Rajayyan, **British Diplomacy in Tanjore**, explains how the British acquired political authority over Tanjore by defeating the French after Carnatic Wars. Seetha in her **Tanjore As a Seat of Music During 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries** provides enough information about the musical developments in Tanjore. The unpublished thesis of K. Kalimuthu, **Land Ownership and its impacts on the Agrarian Society of Tanjore District A.D. 1771 – 1900** covers only a part of the colonial period. Sundaresan et al's **Thanjavur District – A Socio – Economic Profile** is a techno-economic study of soil and water management of the region. **Political Change and Agrarian Tradition in South India 1600 – 1801** authored by T.K. Venkatasubramanian explains the Agrarian structure of the region during the British period. Veeraiyan's **Tamilnadu Vivasayigal Iyakkathin Veera Varalaru** is written from the angle of a labour leader. A review of the available literature on Tanjore shows that no work gives a comprehensive picture of agrarian situation

in Tanjore. Moreover, so far, the agrarians are considered as the reactors of the changes introduced either by nature or by the government. In this dissertation an attempt is made to visualize that the agrarians are not reactors but actors.

## **5. ANALYTICAL TOOLS**

### **(i) Objectives :**

The study aims at examining the process of economic development and its consequences in the agrarian society of Tanjore. The specific objectives are:

1. To trace the evolution of a rich rice culture in the region and assess the various promotional schemes implemented by the ancient royal houses;
2. To investigate the traditional agrarian structure and evaluate the role of water and other inputs in the productive process.,
3. To have a peep into the agrarian policy of the colonial government and its land system, which activated change in the traditional mode of production;
4. To give emphasis to the Cauvery-Mettur Project for its role in generating change in the existing agricultural situation;
5. To examine the post-independence agrarian policies and their economic impacts;
6. To analyse the effect of economic development on the social institutions and cultural life of the region; and
7. To draw valid conclusion.

**(ii) Hypothesis:**

Traditional societies generally undergo changes only at a slow pace. Several forces are at work in the transformation process of such societies. These factors sometimes work together and sometimes act individually to effect changes in the society. On the basis of this general rule the study proceeds with the following hypothesis.

Agricultural development activates economic growth, which in turn generates structural changes in the socio-cultural fabric of the regional society.

**(iii) Methodology :**

The topic chosen for research is interdisciplinary in character, crossing over the borders of history, economics, sociology, politics and cultural anthropology. Naturally the tools employed in the research are complex. Precisely the research methodology is a combination of analytical, historical, socio-metric and anthropological methods.

**(iv) Limitation :**

The nature of the topic imposes the obligation to survey the agrarian situation from the earliest times to the present day. It is humanly impossible to search into every detail relating to agriculture and mode of production. For the pre-colonial years only a graphic presentation of the then prevailing agrarian has been attempted. However, for the colonial and post-colonial periods a somewhat detailed study is attempted. In short, the scope of the study is limited to what has been attempted and focussed in the dissertation.

**(v). Plan of the Thesis**

The thesis is divided into seven chapters including the introduction and conclusion. The introductory chapter begins with a brief statement of the problem. Regional and political setting of the problem, objectives, hypothesis, methodology, review of literature and sources are the other aspects that are dealt in the chapter.

The second chapter gives a brief survey of pre-colonial agricultural situation. The mode of production, the basic inputs, dominant status of irrigation in the productive process, institutional control and management over agriculture are discussed in the chapter.

Chapter three discusses the colonial trend. Colonial land policy, survey and settlements, protective and productive schemes and the overall impact on the regional economic structure are the issues considered for treatment here.

In the fourth chapter the post-independence agrarian situation is researched and documented. The Five Year Plans, land reforms, tenancy laws and various protective and promotional schemes, the impact of Green Revolution, etc., are discussed here.

Chapter five analyses the effect of agrarian change in the regional economy. It also discusses the correlation between economic development and social change that affected the affiliated institutions. The findings of the discussion are enumerated in the concluding part of the thesis.

**(vi). Sources**

Sources, both primary and secondary are available in plenty. The primary sources can be classified into archival sources, archaeological sources, literary sources and published Central and State Government documents, including GOs relating to agriculture, irrigation, public works, etc. Fortnightly Reports, Census Reports, State and District Administration Reports, Manuals, Statistical Reports, Acts and Ordinances, Legislative Proceedings, Committee and Commission Reports, Water Dispute Agreements among the states, etc., are some of the other primary sources.

Books and periodicals provide valuable information. Published and Unpublished dissertations are much helpful for the compilation of the thesis. Articles on newspapers supplement the secondary data.

**END NOTES :**

1. Government of Madras, **Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency**, (Madras: Government Press, 1893), p. 876.
2. Ibid.
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