CHAPTER - THREE

Artistic Heritage Of Tamil And Bengali Society

India occupies a pre-eminent position in the world in the fields of fine arts like music, dance, drama, paintings, wood-cravings, sculpting and architecture etc. from long ago. The connoisseurs of arts and crafts all over the world have praised Indian artistic heritage. Indian culture reflected through various forms of arts and sculptures has acclaimed praise from different corners of the world. Valuable relics of artistic embellishes of ancient eras have been kept in museums and Asiatic Society of India as exhibits of Indian artistic heritage. Literally, these treasure troves are the symbols of thought provoking artistic designs conceived by people of ancient India. Those artistic heritages represent the eras when neither the people had the modern know-how nor there was availability of any formal technique. The researchers and surveyors of Indian Archeological Survey of India have conducted analytical studies of the remains of the ancient artistic origins discovered in the country. Their findings have provided important feedbacks in respect of the historical antecedents of the pieces of arts discovered during excavations. The efforts of the Archeological Society of India in unearthing the pieces of olden sculpture works and artifacts are praise-worthy. The history of ancient people's penchant for pursuing arts and crafts for expressing their inner thoughts and ideas would not have been come to light without the untiring efforts of Archeological Society of India. They are in the forefront in establishing the rich artistic heritage of India in ancient time.

The history of Indian arts and culture suggests that in olden times the local kings of Indian provinces evinced their interests in the collection of pieces of antique arts. The murals and paintings of yester years adorned the drawing rooms of the princes and kings. As the rich people in the past had large fortunes, they could easily turn into connoisseurs of arts and culture. The kings and princes of the ancient era patronized the culture of arts and crafts. Many important and valuable pieces of arts and sculptures found their places in the courtyards of the kings and princes. Their collections of ancient arts as pieces of antiques were prompted by their zeal for raising the status in the society.
In the course of time, however, people’s understanding about the intrinsic values of the pieces of ancient arts and sculptures has undergone change. They realized the real essence behind the creations of the artistic dispensations. The real connoisseurs of arts and sculpture made untiring efforts to go into the roots of the relics of the past to decipher creator’s artistic bend of mind.

Indian artistic origins, the ruins of which have been found in many places in India have reflected the ingenuity of the artists and sculptors and painters all over the country. A deep insight into the artistic heritage of different parts of India has revealed that in spite of different cultural and social practices of different regions of India, the different mediums of artistic activities have been able to portray the common ethos and pathos of India society at large and its value-based cultural practices that have descended the boundaries of different regions.1

Interestingly, the past traditions of following arts and sculpture have been continuing in India albeit in great measure. The medium, texture, methods, techniques have all undergone change over the years. There has been a dimensional change in the preparation and presentation of different arts and sculptures due to influence of foreign culture. Since 19th century A.D. the Indian artistic creations, be it heavy arts like sculpting and paintings or fine arts like music, dance, drama etc. have been enriched by new ideas and thoughts of the contemporary artists. The Indian artistic heritage has metamorphosed into universal art in view of the conceptual change of the creators. Modern day arts have relevance with the social and cultural reorientation of the people of the world. Modern arts and sculptures in their various forms reflect artist’s feelings and sentiments on various social and cultural issues affecting the lives of the people. Mode of presentations of artistic creations captivates the imaginations of the people. Earlier artistic embellishes have been replaced by subtle and finer presentations of modern times. Indian artistic heritage has been enriched by new generations of artists and sculptors with their modern thinking and perceptions about the formation of arts. In view of the establishment of large numbers of Institutions where arts in various forms are taught, the pursuers of the arts have the opportunity to hone their artistic skills. The number of people opting for arts as vocations has been rising in India. The followers of different arts in India are harnessing their potentials to achieve the creative distinctions with the focus on the aesthetic beauty in their creations. Thus the
The great Indian artistic heritage has a long history. Foreign rules in India at different periods have left marks of their artistic creations. The Moghul period has experienced the exquisite and marvelous works of sculpture and architecture in the constructions of Taj Mahal, Kutub Minar, Humayun’s Tomb etc. In the field of paintings, the works of frescos made by the Buddhist monks on the walls of the caves of Ajanta and Ellora bear sublime exposure of artistic knowledge of the people of India. Besides, the marvels of sculptures reflected in the construction of ‘Lion Capital’ at Sarnath during the Maurya period and other great works of architectures bear the testimony of India’s artistic heritage.

Brief narratives of artistic origins of Tamilnadu and Bengal are delineated below :-

**PAINTINGS : TAMILNADU :-**

Painting is an old form visual art pursued in India by artists for many years. Tamilnadu is no exception. In the pre-civilization era, the paintings in Tamilnadu were performed in walls of caves, stones etc. to express the artist’s thoughts. History of Tamil art and culture has revealed that in ancient times, rock-painting and cave-painting were very popular in Tamilnadu. The ideas of the artists of ancient era received praise all over the world. The traces of such rock-painting have been discovered in Mallapadi in the district of Dharampuri and in Kilavalai in South Arcot district of Tamilnadu. The colors used in the paintings were red-ochre. Tamil paintings became widely known as ‘Chitram’ after many years.

Tamil artists of ancient times mainly concentrated their piece of works in painting different poses and postures of religious deities. Those comprised postures like seated, standing, lying etc. Each posture or position had different names to mark the pieces of arts with distinction. In Tamil vernacular the names of postures and positions were given as ‘Nirrat’, ‘Iruttal’, ‘Kitattal’ and ‘Iyankutal’ etc. Among the early Tamil paintings that were discovered and projected in Tamil texts of painting as artistic presentations, the one that shows a lady standing with an empty bowl has reflected the creative persona of the
contemporary painter. A close look at the early paintings of Tamilnadu would reveal the touch of Muslim tradition. Prior to 19th century A.D. Tamil paintings did not receive the support from the connoisseurs of the art for development of the same. As a result early Tamil painters could not come out of the shackles of conventional paintings of nature and its elements in its crude forms. The works of Tamil paintings in early periods failed to capture the imaginations of the people through their works.3

It is gathered from the history of Tamil art and culture that in the 19th century A.D. the local rulers of Tamil land came forward to patronize the art of painting in Tamilnadu. Those local rulers engaged painters known as ‘Moochys’ to do the art of paintings of their choice with the purpose of holding those pieces of painting to adorn the walls of their palaces. This was nothing but mockery of their love for the game of arts. Those show pieces in their houses raised a kind of false notions in the minds of the visiting dignitaries about their tastes for fine arts. In the past, the painting as a form of art was mainly confined to the district of Thanjavur in Tamilnadu. The local artists mainly concentrated their works in drawing and painting the images of Hindu gods and goddesses. Those paintings had reflected the object with big face, large eyes and heavy physical built-up. Thus the paintings of the above nature had reflected the perceptions of the people of the material time about the physical forms of the deities. However, those painting failed the test of subtlety and precision works of the creative genius. Nevertheless, the forms and contents of those paintings had achieved the desired hardness and the balance of the objects. Those principles were guiding forces behind the creative art of Tamil paintings in ancient times. The paintings of the images of gods and goddesses had no doubt captivated the religious sentiments of the people of that time.4

Early Tamil paintings were classified as Monolithic, Paleolithic and Neolithic varieties at different periods of time having different cultures. Ancient Tamil paintings dates back to 300 B.C. and comprise depictions of horn-bulls, horses and human beings.5

The cultural invasion following the English rule in India had a far-reaching effect on the artisans and painters of late eighteenth century A.D. in Tamilnadu. The alien trend imbibed by the native painters vastly colluded their works of art. The native painters of Tamilnadu came under tremendous pressure due to suppressive attitude of the colonial rulers. Therefore, the native artisans per force had to introduce the European style of painting even at the cost of native skills. The local kings and zamindars of Tamilnadu suddenly became
the followers of European style of paintings, disregarding the native artisans' skills. Their sole intention was to come close to the British executives for making personal gains through flattery and nothing else. In a bid to satisfy their masters they readily became the connoisseurs of European style of paintings and replaced the old native paintings from their houses and courtyards to prove their loyalty to the foreign rulers. Accordingly, to subserve their selfish interests they started to discourage the native mode of paintings. Thus the attitude of the local kings and zamindars was directed to undermine the good works of native painters of Tamilnadu. Further, the native paintings of Tamilnadu faced serious threats from the machine-made art. Although efforts were made to keep alive the local art of paintings through opening of art schools in Tamilnadu, nothing could stop the irrevocable damage suffered by the native paintings due to negligence and apathy of the local rulers and owing to large-scale introduction of new technology in this field. The exotic culture brought in a sharp decline in the traditional system of pursuing the art of painting. In addition, the introduction of photography and the use of the same in this line of art had driven the last nail on the coffin of the traditional method of paintings followed by artisans of Tamilnadu.6

Even as the lovers and followers of the native paintings suffered a backlash from the new methodology in this field of art for a certain period of time, nevertheless, they realized the efficacy of the new technology and the importance of its application in pursuing the art of painting for future survival. The new generations of Tamil painters accepted the new technology as a vehicle to express their thoughts and ideas. Paintings in Tamilnadu came off age with further refinement in this form of art.7

**BENGAL PAINTINGS :**

The origin of real Bengali paintings as major form of fine arts can be found out from 'Pat Chitra' of olden times. 'Pat Chitra' or scroll painting had its origin in villages of Bengal in the 17th century A.D. It became specimen of facsimile reproduction of object of art in scroll of papers or clothes. The paintings on the clothes or papers were called 'Pats' and the performers of arts were known as 'Patuas', This form of art was mainly concentrated in the districts of Murshidabad, Birbhum and Burdwan respectively in undivided Bengal. Patuas
or the performers of scroll paintings earned reputation for their contributions to this form of art all over the state. The Pat Chitras of Kalighat in Calcutta are still acknowledged as great artistic representations. Earlier Pat Chitras depicted mythological events with painted images of Lord Krishna, Lord Rama, Lord Shiva, Sri Gouranga, Devi Parvati besides other gods and goddesses. The important feature of the Pat Chitras lies in the verbal narration of mythological events. The rendition of the stories depicted in the scroll paintings is an important aspect of 'Pat Chitra'. People from far flung villages used to assemble to the places to listen the oral rendition of the stories embodied in ‘Pat Chitras’. The presentations of the narrators could spell bound the assembled public with awesome wonders.8
Paintings in Bengal graduated from scroll painting or ‘Pat Chitra’ to the portrayal of realistic pictures of life. The paintings in Bengal came off age in the 20th century A.D. with the arrival of great artists in the field of performing arts. The most noted among them was late Jamini Roy, who was the disciple of late Abanindra Nath Tagore. The illustrious painters and artists of Bengal brought in a new genre of the art by way of infusing neo-classical ideas into the old traditional paintings. Paintings in Bengal during the 20th century A.D. were miles apart in respect of form, contents and visual presentation from the earlier works.
Painting as a visual art has undergone dimensional reform in respect of color, texture, character, philosophy and sensual appeal in the hands of renowned artists like late Abanindra Nath Tagore, late Jamini Roy, late Rabindra Nath Tagore, Paritosh Sen and others during 19th and 20th centuries A.D. Bengal paintings achieved sublime character in the hands of the great exponents of this art during the above two centuries. 9

TAMILNADU: SCULPTURE

The sculpting as a form of art had its origin in Tamilnadu in ancient time. The works of sculpture of olden times discovered in Tamilnadu had no parallel in other parts of India. The sculptors of earlier years in Tamil land had exhibited their knowledge and skill with such geometrical dispensations and precision in their creations without any technical background that the modern day sculptors would shudder to think of such great pieces of sculptures without technical help.10
The art of Tamil sculpture has all along been developed with some idealistic concepts. Before 17th century A.D. the so-called sculptors of Tamilnadu tried their hands in formalizing and designing the works of sculpting on the walls of temples. The sculptors of that time used components like clay, wood, stone, plaster etc. in the formation of the art of sculpture. However, due to the frail nature of the components used in depicting the art, those creations could not withstand the vagaries of weather and as such perished in due course of time. Learning from the past experience, the next generations of Tamil sculptors started to use clay, wood, lime stock, plaster and stone in their works of sculpting. The use of stone as a component in making the structural designs gave the pieces of arts permanent life. The structural works of Mahabalipuram and Tanjore in Tamilnadu are classic examples of art of sculptures that withstood the wrath of weather for many centuries.

Tamil art of sculpting in early ages were mainly confined to curving out images of gods and goddesses. This clearly indicated the people’s intense faith in religious virtues. The images of Lord Vishnu, Sri Kali and Sri Durga were some of the examples of works of sculptures still found in the houses of the noted sculptors of yester years. It may not be out of context to mention here that religious beliefs had firmly rooted in the minds of the people of Tamilnadu since ancient times and the reflections of the same had been observed in creations of artistic embellishes and designs.

In the works of later generations the earlier passions have been reflected but with a tinge of difference. There has been a modification with regard to conceptualization of the objects of the art of sculpting and in their forms and textures. In the early nineteenth century A.D. following the introduction of new technology and innovations of numerous materials as components the artisans in this field succeeded in harnessing their inherent skills. Unlike in the past, the sculptors of nineteenth century A.D. successfully synchronized their creations with people’s choice and satisfaction. The incisive modernization in this field of art has rendered the earlier method of creations redundant. In view of the cultural invasion and evolution of newer methods and techniques, the followers of old indigenous traditions found themselves out of the reckoning. Their inability to adopt the new methodology in the art of sculpting rendered them jobless.

Further, with the emergence of Public Works Department (PWD) at government level during the British rule, the works of sculptures on Government establishments and Institutions followed the European method. Accordingly, the demand for native works of
Sculptures seriously receded beyond reclamation. In the aftermath of the thorough refinement in the art of sculptural designs, the old models of sculptures had no place in the corridors of Tamil arts and cultures. All the invaluable pieces of earlier art of sculpting lost their distinct identity in the thick of new trend. The immortal pieces of great indigenous work of sculpture have found their places in the museums of Tamilnadu.

**SCULPTURE IN BENGAL:**

The history of Bengal’s art and sculpture has confirmed the fact that its sculptural arts flourished in the 17th century A.D. due to patronage and help of local rulers, kings, urban elites and rich followers of the art. The 17th century A.D. relics of the art of sculpture of Bengal asserted the truth of existence of talents in that period who could introduce new styles and designs in their creations which had universal appeal. The manifestation of this art in earlier periods was mainly found in the construction of Hindu temples and Muslim mosques in Bengal. However, in view of the expensive nature of this art of sculpture, the artists had to lean on the patronage of influential and rich people of Bengal for fruition of their artistic genius. Incidentally, this great form of art in ancient Bengal was mainly depicted on the outer structure of the temples. Muslim rule in Bengal encouraged this art of sculpture to foster and develop. The existence of many mosques in Bengal has been the testimony of artists’ creative genius. In this connection, it would not be out of the context to note that during the Muslim rule in Bengal, the art of sculpture produced by other communities could not flourish.

There was no major development in creation of the art of sculpture in Bengal’s own style during the initial period of British rule. Interestingly, there was no let-up in the introduction of European model in this field of art. The sculptural designs embodied in the construction of ‘Victoria Memorial Hall’ and ‘St. Paul’s cathedral in Calcutta bear the testimony of the European style of sculptural works. Added to these were many pieces of sculptural works mainly, stone images of British rulers and Knights adorned the main thoroughfare of Calcutta in the 20th Century A.D. Those busts and statues with exquisite stone craving reflected the European style of sculptural designs. As those pieces of arts were
conceptualized in England they did not find place in Bengal’s own treasure trove of artistic heritage.  

During the 19th century A.D. there had been a radical change in the concept of structural designs of sculpture in Bengal. The artisans of Bengal designed new blueprints of the construction of temples with different form of sculptural content. As a result a new set of temples known as ‘Dālān temples’ was constructed. Those Dālān temples had reflected the art of sculpture followed by the sculptors of the material time. The creation of sculpture works embodied on Dālān temples was different from the ones noticed in earlier ‘rekhā temples’. Bengal artisans developed different sculptural dispensations with the creations of this art on ‘Do Chālā’, ‘Chār Chālā’ and ‘Āt-Chālā’, ‘Jore Bāṅglā’ and other various classes of ‘Ratna’ temples in the 19th century A.D. The relics of many such sculptural art form could still be found in many parts of Bengal even today. The famous sculptural works on the temple of Kalighat and Shiva temples of Dakshineswar are examples of such delightful exhibitions of Bengal’s own art of sculpture. These famous pieces of the sculptural embellishes have the terracotta designs of Bengal’s own. It is very much relevant to mention here that the terracotta designs reflecting the fine art of sculpture produced by local artisans came into existence long ago. It would be observed from the terracotta designs on the temple structures that the artisans expressed their religious sentiments through display of mythological stories of the Puranas, the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhāratha. The inherent art of sculpture in those temples reflected the artisans’ skill and precision works.  

Another important aspect of Bengal sculptural works was the creation of erotic art in nineteenth century A.D. The emergence of erotic art was a complete departure from the traditional creation through this mode of art.  

The art of sculpting in Bengal made a dimensional change in the 20th century A.D. The great artists of 20th century brought a change in the traditional theme mostly found in temple cravings. The artists of 20th century A.D. contributed new thoughts and ideas on contemporary social life in their artistic presentations.
The works of architecture in Tamilnadu could be traced back to 600 A.D. The people of Tamilnadu developed the art of architecture for almost a period of two millennia. However, the old architectural works in Tamilnadu during Cankam period could not survive due to perishable nature of the components used for the architectural formations. In ancient times the architectural structures were built with the perishable and destructive articles like bricks, mortars and similar other materials that were prone to fire, seismic tremors etc. The long period of existence also caused damages and decays of the architectural monuments and other various architectural foundations with intrinsic artistic values. Tamil architectural designs in bygone era were confined to constructions of temples. People’s religious sentiments have been reflected through such architectural designs. Tamil history in general has unfolded the existence of residential buildings owned by commoners and those resided by royal families in early ages. In Tamil language those houses were called as oral and kōvil respectively. The people of Tamilnadu in ancient times believed that their gods and goddesses live in temples. Accordingly, they called the temples in the name of kōvil in Tamil language. The old temples in Tamilnadu were built with special thrust on proper plan and the available technology. The skills involved in the execution of plan with the available technology could be compared with the professional skills of the craftsmen and carpenters of later times. However, those structures faced with the problems of longer survival due to inherent lack of strength in the foundations. In course of time, those pieces of architectural wonders perished due to perishable nature of materials used in their constructions. But architectural works carried out in the construction of temples during Pallava dynasty withstood against all destructive forces and savages of times. In this connection, it will be worthwhile to mention that the main component of those structures was stone and the base materials used for architectural designs thereon derived from the models of brick, mortar and wooden articles of earlier periods. Important works of stone architecture of the Pallava era could be seen in Mammallapuram Rathas and in Shore Temple of Mahabalipuram. Nevertheless, the architectural skills reflected in those stone works were adapted from the pre-Pallavanan architectural designs. The principles of architectural designs have been followed in Tamilnadu since third century A.D.
Tamil native art of architectural designs followed in the construction of public and private buildings and monuments etc. has been gradually replaced by European model of architecture. The skills of local artisans reflected in wood cravings with numerous artistic designs and in fashioning the stone pillars with some kinds of architectural designs were no longer acceptable following the Government's decision to promote European style of architectural designs in the construction of public and private buildings. The European style of architecture made a dent in the artistic designs followed by local artisans. This policy of cultural invasion by British Government rendered the master builders and artisans jobless. The old style became extinct in the face of European culture. 

In the nineteenth century the deliberate policy decision of the British Government ignored and rejected the indigenous skill with regard to architectural designs with the avowed objective of introducing European style to firmly impose their own culture on the people of Tamilnadu. Public Works Department of British Government introduced different styles in architectural designs, namely, Indo-Saracenic style, the English-Gothic style, Italian style etc. in the constructions of civil courts, public bungalows, military and civil hospitals, posts & telegraphs, educational institutions, other departmental buildings etc. Many other important buildings worthy of mention in this regard were Lawrence Asylum at Lovedale (Ooty), the Presidency College, Madras, the Senate House, Madras, the Cheepuk Place and many more; the constructions of which were done on the above models. The style of Saracenic architecture allowed the spacious buildings to have big and small domes. This was the characteristic of Saracenic style of architecture followed in Tamilnadu.

The works of architecture followed in Tamilnadu prior to introduction of European style have mainly represented the religious sentiments of the people of that time. Notwithstanding this, important architectural heritages of ancient Tamil land, namely, Mahal in Madurai, Forts of Cenci and Velūr etc. have depicted entirely different cultural aspects with aesthetic value. The constructions if towers, bridges, dams, harbors etc. in the later period have demonstrated the engineering skills and knowledge of the Tamil who took architectural constructions and designs as their professions. Architectural skills of Tamil artisans have been amply demonstrated in the construction of Mahabalipuram and Big Temple at Tanjore. Those structures withstood the rigors and savages of changing weather for more than a millennium. With the advent of new technology and concept Tamil
architectural works have undergone veritable changes right from the contents to designs and forms.  

ARCHITECTURE IN BENGAL:

Bengal’s architectural works in Seventeenth century A.D. mostly confined to constructions of temples and mosques. Prior to 17th Century A.D. Bengal’s artisans were mainly engaged in the art of paintings. The people in the past did not conceive the art of architecture. Nevertheless, the local masons and artisans expressed their talents through the constructions of temples and mosques during the 17th century A.D. The real art of architecture began in the 18th century A.D. due to liberal patronage of the rich and influential people of Bengali society. Those patrons had love for the artistic elements. They were always after the creative things. Accordingly, they did not shy away from encouraging the masons and artists for constructions of beautiful pieces of architectural embellishes. The structural designs of the architectural works produced by the artists were of the high orders. Although the artisans and masons had no engineering and technical knowledge in earlier eras, their creations had reflected their inborn ability and urge for production of new and beautiful models of architectural designs. Their creative passions motivated them to conceive new ideas and thoughts in the construction and designing of architectural structures. The old remains of architectural designs conceived by the creators in the 18th century A.D. could be traced from the Kali temple at Vishnupur in Bankura District, West Bengal. The Navāratna shrine at Vishnupur, known as nava-ratna as Sridhara temple display the architectural skills of the artisans of Bengal in the 18th century A.D. The Ratna temple at Sonamukhi in Bankura District reveals the architectural designs conceived and applied by the artisans of West Bengal in the 19th century A.D.  

It is needless to add that the influence of European style following the English rule in India has left its mark on the architectural designs of many temples in Bengal. The trail of British architectural designs can be located even now in many places of Bengal, particularly in Calcutta from the existing old houses and bungalows. The architectural designs of those dwelling places and pleasure houses in Calcutta were of Gothic style of Greece. Magnificent architectural constructions of western style lined up in the city of Calcutta

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since the days of British Raj. Traces of western architectural designs could be found out from Governor’s House, Howrah Bridge, Victoria Memorial Hall, Post Master’s Office, Fort William etc. in Calcutta. All these constructions epitomize the vast engineering skill of the English architects. Most of the architectural designs in and around Calcutta have exhibited the aesthetic beauty and universal appeal through introduction of contemporary ideas. Thus the art of architectural designs in Bengal have evinced interests of the lovers and connoisseurs of art all over the world. 19

Tamil Music:

Tamil music has earned a special position in Indian Artistic Heritage. Tamil music has its own special characteristic to draw the music lovers all over the world. Tamil music has a long history since very early times. Tamil people’s natural penchant for music since ancient times has made it a most precious form of fine art in Tamil land. Tamil people’s love for music is a well accepted fact. A deep insight into the origin of Tamil music will establish the truth that people’s devotion to gods from early civilization led them to compose music in praise of the gods. That was the beginning of the Tamil music. In view of the religious bend of mind of the people Tamil music has all along been on devotional line. Tamil music has its origin at least three centuries ago. If cultural history of Tamilnadu is of any significance, Tamil music has been nursed and developed with the evolution of Carnatic music. In fact, Carnatic music was adopted in Tamil land to give a separate character to it.20 It is observed from the history that Vijaynagar was the place in Karnataka where music was first practiced. The local rulers of Vijaynagar encouraged the potential musicians of the place to groom their talents and skills in music through monetary help. Those local rulers were very much responsible for the spread of this fine art. Following the Vijaynagar’s downfall due to outside aggression, the musical base had to be shifted to Thanjavur in Tamilnadu. In Thanjavūr the local rulers supported the musical flair to flourish all over the Tamil land through their sponsoring. They took music to the heart and vowed to enrich the music of the land with their financial help. In fact, Tamil music could develop and left a mark beyond its territory due to liberal patronage of the rich of people of Tamilnadu and untiring efforts of the connoisseurs of the music. Thanjavūr was the seat of Tamil music in
the early period. Without the help of the local rulers of Thāṅāḷavūr, and the wholehearted support of the people Tamil music would not have developed. Even the change in the ruling dispensations could not stop the flow of Tamil music. It marched forward clutching the hands of the descendants of local rulers. Tamil administration at the material time also supported the cause of Tamil music in Thāṅāḷavūr. The local rulers of Thāṅāḷavūr had demonstrated their love for music by way of gifting villages for the sole purpose of promoting and developing Tamil music.

Many great scholars like Raghunātha Chemakara, Venkataratju, Yagnanārayana Dīxita, Rāja Chūdāmāni Dīkshita and Venkatamakh̄adorned the Tamil music showcase with their lyrical verses and compositions. Those noted lyricists and musicians innovated many new ragas like Jayantacena and Tālas to name a few. Their contributions to enrich Tamil musical base were immense. In fact, those scholars invented special compositions for Tamil people. 21

The history of Tamil art and culture unveils the nature of high-pitched compositions of Tamil music that were followed by the learned musicians of Tamilnadu from the very beginning. The Chamber music of Tamilnadu followed by great musicians of yesteryears had the elements of high notes of musical texts. The nuances of high-pitched Tamil music of ancient times were not meant for ordinary and untrained ears. The lovers and exponents of classical music only followed such high-pitched music with great elan.

During the time of Čañkam age, Tamil music in certain respects raised erotic passion among the listeners. The intellectuals and puritans were against the trend of such cultural dilution. They feared of degradation of the divine spirit of Tamil music in the event of following erotic compositions. The learned musicians of Tamilnadu raised their campaigns against such erotic compositions after Čañkam age.

Tamilnadu produced many noted lyricists and poets who were thoroughly conversant with the culture of the society. They introduced classical base in their lyrical compositions to satisfy the lovers of music. They believed from their hearts that Tamil music would thrive on classical base for many centuries.

The intricacies of Tamil classical music and its various grammatical connotations have been elaborately narrated in the textbooks on music. Tamil celebrity lyricists and vocalists were greatly benefited from the textbooks on Tamil music. Both vocal and instrumental
music have been very popular in Tamilnadu from early age. Tamil music is traditionally based on seven ‘Svaras’. Svara or Icai is the soul of Tamil music. The conventional ragas or panas in Tamil music, especially for vocal music are required to be sung in a particular time of a day. Generally, marutam is sung in the early morning, palai at noon, neytal after sun-set, cewali in the evening and kuriṇci at midnight etc.

Tamil instrumental music has attained a high level of perfection over the ages. The numbers of instrument used in ancient time were few and far between. The major instruments played in the past were iyam and kulal (flute) respectively. Of all the earlier musical instruments played in Tamilnadu the most pleasant and popular were kulal and yāl, a kind of harp.

There has been a great transformation in the compositions of Tamil musical instruments. The use of percussion instrument is the recent addition in Tamil instrumental world. With the passage of time and innovations of different musical formats for both the versions of music necessitated the introductions of new instruments. It is observed from Tamil history that in ancient times the wandering tribes or minstrels of Tamil land practiced singing. They also made singing their professions.

South Indian music was greatly enriched during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries A.D. by noted exponents and lyricists like Tyyaraja, Muthuswāmy Dīkshitar and Syamā Sāstrī. They were regarded as Trinity of South Indian Musical World. Those distinguished celebrities in Tamil music applied their skills and ingenuity to discover new styles and ragas in connection with the composition, rendition and performance that were inimical to Tamil musical world.

Although Karnatic style was the foundation of Tamil music, the musicians of Tamilnadu had accepted Hindustani ragas like Asavari and Jogi in the composition of their own music. The rulers of Thānjavūr also liked the flavour of western music. The new generations of musicians were inspired by the western style musical compositions. They made a fusion of both western style and their own Tamil gharana to produce new genre of music. As Tamilnadu was the meeting place of various cultures like, Western, Hindustani and other during the Maharatta rule, the influence of those cultures was very much prominent in Tamil music.

Tamil music has undergone many changes during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries A.D. Many musical schools have been opened in major cities and towns in Tamilnadu to
teach music. As we know that no particular cultural tradition can survive permanently and changes are inevitable for the development of the culture, Tamil music was no exception to that. Modern Tamil music, be it vocal or instrumental has come off age due to continuous process of research and analysis of the music. Modern Tamil musicians, notably among them being none other than late M.S. Subhalaxmi redefined the Tamil music to make it universally acceptable. 

MUSIC IN BENGAL:

Bengal’s music has a long history. From ancient times music has been the second love of the people of Bengal. During Hindu period people of Bengal had shown their flair for music while reciting poems from the texts of ‘Charjyapadas’, the origin of Bengali language. Thus in ancient times, the songs rendered by village folks were nothing but recitation from ‘Charjyapada’ with rhythmic tunes. Early Bengali literature on the cultural affairs mentioned about slokas that were sung like songs in temples. The real musical compositions were developed on the life and anecdotes of Lord Krishna known as ‘Krishna’s Leela’.

The ragas that were used in music during early periods were known to be ‘Patamanjari’, ‘Mallari’, ‘Kāmode’, ‘Bhairabi’, ‘Malsee’ etc. as described in ‘Charjyapadas’. Those ragas enabled the masters of Bengali music composers of ancient times to create immortal musical compositions. The characteristic and qualities of tunes of the early centuries were used very successfully in compositions of Bengali music like ‘Kirtan’, ‘Baul’ and ‘Ramprasadi’ in the 19th century A.D. The passion for music was so intense in the minds of music lovers of Bengal that they used to keep themselves abreast and conversant with the musical trends discovered elsewhere in the country. It is known from the available documents that music in those earlier times had religious overtones. The music of the olden times was composed to offer prayers people’s devotion and regard to the gods and goddesses. Devotional songs of early Bengal were mainly composed to express religious sentiments of the people of Bengal.

Many poet-cum-lyricists of Bengal in early periods created many immortal verses. The writing of the ‘Geetgovinda’ was one such amazing creation. The ‘Geetgovida’ was lyrical
expression of the writer's intense religious sentiments. The verses of 'Geetgovinda' were composed with different ragas like 'Karnā', 'Gurjari', 'Mālava' and others for the purpose of rendition.

It is evident from history of Bengali literature of earlier periods that the people who pursued music as profession in life were thoroughly conversant with the contemporary 'ragas' and tunes that were in use in those periods. Those music were composed keeping in tune with the desire and wishes of the people of the same periods. 24

Bengal's musical culture groomed and developed within the framework of religious obeisance to Lord Krishna and Sri Radha. As they were regarded as god and gods in Bengali society, the musical compositions of that time had been loaded with devotional fervor for paying respect and tribute to Lord Krishna and Sri Radha. During Muslim period in Bengal, the noted poet and composer Sri Jaydev composed lyrics in praise of Lord Krishna and Sri Radha. Those songs were known as 'Krishnas Leela'. Later on, poet Jaydev developed the verses on Krishna Leela and composed lyrics based on new theme of Krishna Leela. Bengali music during that period reincarnated with a complete new version of Krishna Leela. The new model of music adopted to pay tribute to Lord Krishna and His companion Sri Radha was known as 'Padāvāli Kirtan'. 'Padāvāli Kirtan' created a rave in the minds of music lover of Bengal in 17th century A.D. The composition of Kirtan was Bengal's own creation with devotional attributes. 'Padāvāli Kirtan' was regarded as a life force in the musical system of Bengal for its rich language and devotional proprieties. In fact, 'Padāvāli Kirtan enriched the Bengal's musical storehouse for its lyrical composition up to 19th century A.D.

During the 19th and 20th centuries A.D. Bengali folk songs, especially, the 'Baul' music brought in new style in the composition and art of rendition. The 'Baul' songs added a new flavor to Bengal's traditional music. Besides 'Bāul' songs the village folks also produced many lyrical compositions based on local culture, tradition and relationship among people. The songs written and music composed thereof were mainly related to people's notion towards nature like river, wind, trees etc. and also about people's faith in religious matters. Deprivation, discrimination, social alienation and other injustices were also the main contents of Bengal's musical compositions. Bengal's main folk songs were categorized as 'Palli Geeti', 'Vawai' and 'Lok Geeti' etc.
Bengal was the pioneer in creating devotional songs in India. In 19th century A.D. a completely new set of devotional music were composed to offer prayers to goddess Kali or Syama. Those musical compositions were known as ‘Syama Sangeet’. The language of ‘Syama Sangeet’ was very simple to be understood even by the unlettered village people. The tenet of this particular brand of music heralded a new kind of knowledge about metaphysical reality. This particular kind of music infused in men and women an urge for unification with the creator of the Universe. Both illiterates and educated people of Bengal loved ‘Syama Sangeet’ with great respect for the underlying messages of the compositions.

At one point of time Doggerel verses or ‘Panchalis’ were very popular during 18th and 19th centuries A.D. in Bengal. The Doggerels dealt with the tales of gods and goddesses of Hindu scriptures. Those Doggerels were written in rhymed verses and sung with the accompanying music. The main charm of Doggerel verses lied with their skilful presentation along with the play of musical instruments.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries A.D. Bengal had witnessed a new type of folk music, namely, ‘Kavigan’ (light songs in the form of question and answer). In a ‘Kavigan’ a verbal duel between two groups of singer-contesters used to take place form of questions and answers with the medium of rendition of verses. The ‘Kavigan’ used to be performed in open air and along with the play of musical instruments. There were different forms of ‘Kavigāns’, namely, ‘Mālsās’, ‘Sakhi Sambād’, ‘Birha’ and ‘Kheur’. The great Bengal awakening in the cultural field in 19th century A.D. enriched its music too. Calcutta became the principal city for the revival of Indian Classical music. Many creative musicians from different regions in the country settled in Calcutta and contributed in a big way for development of Indian music. The creative genius of Bengali music made an impact on Indian mainstream musical base. During cultural Renaissance in Bengal, the music lovers and connoisseurs developed the classical base in Bengali music. The classical music like Dhrupad, Kheyal and Tappa were placed in high order in Bengal’s musical hierarchy. The study and practice of classical music continued unabated since 19th century A.D. The noted exponents of Dhrupad, Kheyāl and Tappā were Vishnu Charan Chakraborty, Ganga Narayan Chatterjee, Ramdas Goswami (in the field of Dhrupad), Mahesh Chandra Mukherjee (in the field of Tappa) and Gopal Chandra Mukherjee and also Laxmi Narayan Banerjee (in all the three fields of Dhrupad, Kheyal and Tappa).
Bengal’s music culture extended from compositions and renditions of classical music to organizing seminars and discussions on music. As a result of constant research and study the standard of Bengal’s music has been vastly improved to compete with other regions. There has been a rapid change in the use and play of instrumental music in Bengal since 19th century A.D. with the influence of European culture.

In ancient times, the principal instruments that were played with the devotional songs composed of: Tata, Sudhir (flute etc.), Anaddha and Bitata (drums etc.) and Ghana (metal instruments etc.). During nineteenth and twentieth centuries A.D. many instruments like Piano, Organ, Trumpet, Harmonium etc. were introduced in Bengali music system in line with European culture. Nevertheless, Bengal’s own native musical instruments like Khol, Kartal, Tabla etc., never ever abandoned by Bengal’s music composers and followers in the composition of music.

During the twentieth century A.D. Bengali music transformed from its prototype classical and devotional songs to a complete new concept of music. The main characteristics of the new trend of music were the richness of the language of verses and introduction of new style of notations for composition. The pioneer of the new trend was none other than the great poet and Nobel Laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore. The poet innovated a new genre of compositions for his own lyrical poems. He never intended to copy the famous ragas created by many noted lyricists of Bengal in the past. The poet created a new format of notations known in Bengali vernacular as ‘Swaralipi’ in his own inimitable style and used those notations in the compositions of musical songs for his own poems and dance dramas. Tagore brought refinements in the texture and quality in Bengali music. In his attempt to recreate Bengali music in complete departure from earlier established style of rag-based compositions, he invoked the European style in his compositions. However, he never blindly followed the European style. He never sacrificed Bengali cultural sentiments and ethos in his pursuit for introducing a new model. His creative genius has been overtly manifested through a new style of composition known as ‘Rabindra Sangeet’ in Bengali language. He has composed all his poems and verses based on his own notations. Indian music has rediscovered itself through the medium of ‘Rabindra Sangeet’.

Bengal’s music in both the editions (vocal and instrumental) has set in a new trend and attained maturity in the hands of Tagore.
Tamil dance has its origin in ancient time. In the past, it was convention and practice that Tamil dance would exhibit physical gestures with the accompanying music. In Tamil Nadu both men and women have been performing the art of dancing since time immemorial. Tamil dances regardless of the time have always been accompanied with drama. Mixing dance with drama is still the culture of Tamil’s performing art.

Tamil Nadu has acquired a distinctive position in the field of Indian art and culture by its impressive contribution to the art of dancing.

In Tamil vernacular dance is called ‘Natyam’ or ‘Natam’, while drama is called ‘Naṭakam’. Thus from the words ‘Natyam’ or ‘Naṭakam’, one could easily understand the close relationship between the two forms of fine arts (dance and drama). In ancient times, both men and women took up dancing as a medium of entertainment. The ancient people of Tamil Nadu used to demonstrate their dancing prowess by ascending on bamboo pole. This delicate form of dancing was known as kalaikkuttu in Tamil language. The artists performed such dances were called Cānfiikkuttu in Tamil language. The artists of this particular dance form used to captivate the village folks through their performance. The village rustics became spell bound to witness the highly adventurous poses on bamboo poles. In ancient times, even the artistic poses demonstrated through dance varities in Tamil Nadu achieved sublime characteristics.

The traditional Bharat Natyam dance of Tamil Nadu came into existence after research and study of the nuances of different classical expositions of ancient dances. In fact, Bharat Natyam may be regarded as redefined form of various ancient classical dances. The followers of this dance have added aesthetic value to it by introducing many new formats in it in the course of constant culture and research.

In Tamil field of dancing, two forms of dancing, namely, heavy dance drama and lighter ballet have been developed on the sideline of the traditional Bharat Natyam to add variety to the performing arts. Nevertheless, both the varieties have adopted in them the techniques of Bharat Nartyam.
Tīrītanārāyanana Yōgi was the architect of heavy dance drama that was known as Bhagavata Mela. He composed a number of heavy dance dramas. His application of the technique of Bharat Natyam in heavy dance drama reflected his creative genius.

The lighter form of ballet dance known as Kuravaṭci with all its characteristics of Bharat Nātya ruled Tamil land dance with its during the eighteenth century A.D.

Tamil folk dance had a wide range of appreciation in olden times. Even today, Tamil folk dance attract people for its redefinition and subtle presentation attract people. Tamil folk dance represents real life experiences of joy, sorrow, despair of the people in the society. People of all segments in Tamil society can identify their hopes, aspirations and despair. In fact, Tamil folk dance is the mirror image of the society.

The religious dance in Tamilnadu has its origin in ancient times. This dance is still followed and enjoyed by the village people. Kāvati is a religious dance performed by Tamils over the centuries. This religious dance is performed in honor of Lord Maruga. This dance is an act of art followed while carrying wooden bar on the shoulder by the performer decorated with silk clothes and beads.

Pallu is another variety of folk dance performed in Tamilnadu since ages. This dance represents social divisions between two groups in regard to their respective aims and aspirations. Some of the noted Pallus, namely, Kurukkōr Pallu, Vatakarai Pallu, Tirumalai Murukan Pallu Tillaip Pallu, Vijayapuri Pallu Mukkutam Pallu Tiruvārūr Pallu have portrayed real Tamil culture.

**DANCE IN BENGAL:**

Bengal does not boast of having followed a particular format of classical dance in ancient times. In fact, the social and cultural history of Bengal has revealed that the dance as a performing art was never accepted in Bengali society in the distant past. The trails of dances, if at all, have been documented in the history of Bengal during the 17th and 18th centuries A.D. as items of pleasure evoking sources performed in the houses of rich and wealthy people of Bengal during any social occasion. Those dances were performed purely for fun and pleasure during celebration of different festivals. It may however, be noted that those dances never reflected any cultural wisdom of Bengali society.
Bengal has witnessed some elements of folk dances in the 18th and 19th centuries A.D. in the villages and urban areas in the districts of Bankura, Purulia, and Burdwan etc. conceived and performed by the local performers. The ‘Chou’ dance of Purulia in Bengal needs a special mention in this regard. In Bankura, Birbhum and Burdwan districts of Bengal, the tribal communities, namely, Santhals have been traditionally following a particular dance form of their own over many ages. All those dances have underscored religious sentiments of the people of that community.

Bengal has undergone a transformation in the style and content of dancing during the 19th and 20th centuries A.D. The cultural revolution of the 19th century A.D. brought refinements in the thoughts and ideas of the creators of this performing art. The spread of education and influence of European culture inculcated a deep sense in the conception, formation and presentation of dance items in Bengal. The followers of this performing art largely devoted themselves to reinvent different ‘mudras’, ‘forms’, ‘postures’ and ‘expressions’ etc. with a view to infusing aesthetic quality in dances, keeping in view the changing tastes of the connoisseurs of this great performing art. There has been a paradigm shift from the crude and pleasure evoking performance to presentation of creative of art through the medium of dancing.

The cultural re-orientation of Bengal in the 20th century A.D. has completely changed the concept and character of Bengali dances to make them more meaningful to the connoisseurs and followers of this great performing art. Bengal dances relived in the hands of great exponents of this performing art like Uday Shankar and others. They have in fact lifted the art of dancing in Bengal to the sublime level. It is noteworthy to mention that dance as a performing art has been overhauled in the hands of great masters of this art. Those great masters changed the character and composition of dances as performing art to make them acceptable all over the world. Accordingly, the new form of dance invented by great master like Uday Shankar crossed the boundary of Bengal to make its presence felt everywhere. The dance of Bengal created a universal appeal during the 20th century A.D. It is equally important to note that the performers and creators of the new style of dances did not sacrifice the cultural tradition of Bengal in their efforts to recreate this performing art with new cultural values. Value addition was the hallmark of dance as a performing art in Bengal in the 20th century A.D. Many cultural institutions and academies have been established in Bengal during the 20th century A.D. to raise the level of awareness among
the performers and followers about the efficacy of the art to portray many vital aspects of
the lives of the people, mainly, their expectations and aspirations from the society and their
inter-personal relations. People realized that instead of pleasure invoking source, the dance
could be the object of art for expressing values of life.

Bengal dances have been further molded in the hands of Nobel Laureate Rabindra Nath
Tagore. He conceived new forms of dances, away from the highly enriched classical
formats that were in place at that time. He innovated completely a new genre of this
performing art to take it close to the hearts of every segments of Bengali society. The great
poet unshackled the art from the preserve of the great connoisseurs and followers of
classical exposures. His new creations of this art were loved and accepted by all in the
society. The poet composed new pattern of dances to suit the requirements of his own
scripted dance-dramas like ‘Gorā’, ‘Chitrangādā’, ‘Syamā’ etc. to name a few. Those
dance-dramas, have relevance even today. They captivate the imagination of the people of
all hues, colors, languages and regions. They have transgressed all the social boundaries by
virtue of their presentations and themes. It is needless that the enthusiasm generated by the
great poet among the people of Bengal through his creations, the dance as a performing art
has established its foothold in Bengal.31

TAMIL FOLK ARTS:

The origin of Tamil folk arts could be traced back to sixteenth century A.D. The traditional
folk art was the brainchild of rural folks of Tamil Nadu. They used byproducts of natural
elements to make small items of arts and crafts to satisfy their creative abilities. The
traditional folk art is sill being continued in Tamil society with many refinements in its
contents and presentations. Tamil folk arts mainly consist of folk music, folk dance,
paintings, clay modeling, wood works, doll making etc. Tamil artifacts produced in rural
areas in earlier times were in crude forms. In the absence of awareness about people’s
tastes and likings, the creative artifacts of rural people failed to generate interests in the
masses. However, with the passage of time the rural folk arts introduced technical know
how along with new ideas and concepts to make refinements in the production of artifacts.
Gradually, a synergy with the demand and choice of the people of towns and cities was
developed with the support of the administrations to popularize the small handicrafts and artifacts of rural artisans of Tamilnadu. In this connection, it would not be a misplaced notion to state that rural folks of Tamilnadu were more comfortable in expressing joys, happiness, sorrows etc. of their lives through the mediums of folk songs and folk dances. In this connection, as Tamil rural people were very religious minded traditionally, their folk songs and music basically were composed to offer their submissions before the God for His blessings to help them get rid of their pains and miseries of lives. The Tamil folks found solace in such devotional songs. Tamil folk dances were similarly designed to please the God.³²

Tamil folk music and folk dances have the relevance even in modern times in rural areas. People of villages still get hold of the old traditions of folk music and folk dancing to reflect their real life accounts which no other source could depict those stories so vividly and in authentic manner.

Tamil folk songs are rendered in certain occasions like childbirth, sowing, harvesting of new crops, funeral rites etc. Tamil folk songs also explain the pitiable conditions of women in the society, particularly widows. These songs express the deep lamentation of women for their distressed conditions.³³

Tamil folk dance also reveals the hopes and aspirations of the village masses and their achievements. In conceptualizing folk dances, the great folk artists of Tamilnadu never sacrificed their creative values. Their creativity is competitive at any rate with the urban elite art. Karakattam, Kāvāṭi, Pallu are some of the folk dances conceptualized by rural folks of Tamilnadu. All these dances reflect the religious bend of mind of the people and also their real life situations.³⁴

FOLK ART IN BENGAL:

Bengal folk-arts in ancient times, comprised of light music, live doggerels, kavigans, jatras (dramas in their earlier avatars) etc. For over two centuries, folk songs of different kinds were popular in Bengal. The ‘Jātrās’ (dramas) were performed in a theatrical gesture in open stage to portray the mythological stories and historical events. Those performances were interspersed with musical performances. The songs in the ‘Jātrās’ were meant to
express particular emotions of the characters in a given situation of the drama. In the past, 'Jatras' as folk art of Bengal used to be performed on occasions of festivals like Durga Puja, Syama Puja and during other social occasions. The songs in 'Jatras' were integral part of the performance. They were mostly composed of tunes with religious sentiments at the core.

Doggerels, Kavigāns etc. were popular folk songs in rural Bengal in ancient time. The characteristic of those folk songs lied in their performance in open stage surrounded by audience. Doggerels and Kavigāns were entirely different kinds of folk songs. But inherent objective of both the folk songs was to entertain the public with excellent delivery of words with the accompaniment of sweet music.

The folk songs of Bengal during the 18th and 19th centuries A.D. however could not produce the rich literary standard due to lack in creation of good literature. The earlier folk songs of Bengal had religious intonations and as such were devoid of the reflection of the real situation of Bengali society of the relevant period.

Folk dance of Bengal had its origin two centuries ago. The folk dance of Bengal has reflected the social system, culture, customs and practice of different communities in Bengal. Folk dances were being performed to mark the occasions like child-birth, marriages etc. Modern day folk dances in Bengal have been modified so as to express the contemporary issues through presentation of physical postures and mudras. Bengal folk arts have attuned to the changes in the tastes and cultures of the people. 35

EDUCATION - TAMILNADU:

From ancient times, Tamilnadu has been an important center of learning in the country. In early days, the system of ‘Gurukul’ ruled the land of Tamilnadu for providing education to students in lines with the system followed elsewhere in the country. However, Gurukul system was meant for selected number of pupils whose parents had the financial ability to leave their sons in the house of the tutor like a modern day boarding house. However, for the general people, Tamilnadu had established schools for infants known as ‘Pial’ schools in the 17th century A.D. Pial schools offered education at a very preliminary level. Tamilnadu carved out a place of its own in education the country during the English rule. 36
The ancient pial schools in Tamilnadu could not survive for long due to want of funds and proper administration. During the time of East India Company, the prospect of vast trade through the sea route in Cochin coast encouraged local rulers of Tamilnadu to enter into agreement and charters with the East India Company executives to fill in their coffers. The Company managers were also interested to flourish their Managing Agency business. The combined interests of local rulers and the East India Company to earn money through trade and business turned a blind eye to the native education system.

Accordingly, the education system at primary level in Tamilnadu was the worst sufferer during the seventeenth century A.D. The primary schools delivered the education to their pupils by way of storytelling from great epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The primary intention of the schools was to inculcate a sense of religious beliefs in the minds of the students. Most of the native schools in Tamilnadu were under private controls. Their survival was dependent on the mercy of their patrons. The native schools in Tamilnadu in early ages suffered very badly due to large dropouts. The parents generally withdrew their wards within four years from their admissions with a view to gainfully employing them in field works. According to the historians of Tamilnadu, very few people could continue study beyond four years. This insensitive attitude of the people of rural areas did not however cloud the minds of the people in the cities. In cities like Kañchī, Madurai and Thānjavur the schools even at primary level succeeded in holding back students to complete syllabi for higher standard. The schools in cities included curriculum on Vedas, Upanishadas, Logic, Philosophy and Hindu epic poems, dramas and Hindu laws. The medium of study was Sanskrit.

During the English rule the Christian Missionaries evinced interests in the spread and development of education in Tamilnadu. Following the efforts made by the Christian Missionaries the native education system in Tamilnadu improved during the eighteenth century A.D. Two Danish Missionaries, namely, Zigenberg and Plutarch were the pioneers in establishing first boarding school in Tamilnadu in 1706.

In more than one way the Missionary run schools in Tamilnadu were in complete departure from the outmoded education system of the native schools.

The system of education in Tamilnadu during the English rule got revamped under the leadership of the then Governor of Madras Presidency, Sir Thomas Munro. Sir Munro stressed the need for the development of the native schools. He was instrumental for raising
the economic standard of the teachers who taught in the native schools. He realized that unless the living standard of the teachers was improved, the quality of teaching could not be raised to the desired level. His recommendations included among others the measures for improving the financial conditions of the teachers to enable them to give their best for the improvement of the teaching standard. The Government accepted the recommendations of Sir Munro in toe-toe.

In villages, Tahsildar and Collectorate schools were formed in 1826 to spread the native educations due to efforts made by Sir Munro. The medium of studies in those schools was vernacular and the studies were confined to reading, writing and arithmetic works. However, the scheme ended in a failure due to lack of supervision and administration. Although the scheme was very attractive, people’s response was very poor. The abject poverty of the rural people was considered to be the principal cause for the failure of Tehsildar and Collectorate schools in Tamilnadu. The British policy to introduce English medium of studies was also responsible for the collapse of Tehsildar and Collectorate schools in Tamilnadu.

In this connection, a Committee set up by the Government of Madras in 1836 to suggest measures to improve the standard of native education, had recommended for introduction of model English schools in the native system. The Government of Madras did not approve the suggestion for fear of a backlash from the supporters of native schools. Incidentally, many natives in Madras city felt that English education, if pursued, would enable their offspring to secure jobs at Government offices. The Governor of Madras Presidency, Lord Elphinston had also shown inclination towards the spread of English education. The knowledgeable circle in Madras city acknowledged the fact that the studies in English medium need to be kept reserved for higher education to start with. They sincerely believed that the method of learning and its benefit would go down the level at native schools in due course of time. Taking into account this view, the then Governor General of India Lord Auckland recommended for establishment of a Central Collegiate Institution or University. In line with the above proposal the Madras University was established in 1841. In 1853 the whole system of education in Madras was reviewed. Following the review of the education system the resolution was adopted in 1854 with assertion in no uncertain terms that the interests of the natives for primary education should be the responsibility of the Government. However, as against this proposal the Government’s thrust area remained the
secondary education. Elementary education system continued to be backed by private agencies.\textsuperscript{39}

Primary education did not receive the desired extent of attention it needed in the wake of the twentieth century A.D. As a result a large chunk of population in villages and other places remained out of bounce of elementary education. In 1920 the Government of Madras passed the Elementary Education Act, making elementary education compulsory for boys and girls between the age 6 and 10 years. The Corporation of Madras introduced the scheme of elementary education in 1924 after initial hesitation due to attending costs.

The secondary education in Tamilnadu in the past did not grow up to satisfactory level. The scheme of secondary education was devised without reckoning the vocational content making the scheme suffer from lack of originality. The British Government however, realizing the potential for secondary education provided liberal aid to kick-start the secondary education system in Madras.

The process of secondary education in Madras after Independence was rapid. The successive governments in Madras made laudable efforts for the growth of secondary education. The people of Tamilnadu were known by their penchant for higher studies. In Madras city, higher education was being imparted through the medium of English from long ago. The higher education in Madras got a boost with the emergence of Madras University. Following the amendments of University Act in 1923 and 1929 Madras University was revamped to offer greater facilities for higher education and research.\textsuperscript{40}

Higher education on different languages including Tamil vernacular and other subjects made rapid progress after Independence. Tamilnadu produced many great scholars who have earned great adoration and respect for their contributions in the field of education in Tamilnadu from the world over.

The growth of technical education started after Independence following spurt in industrial activities. The big step initiated by the Government of India for industrial development with the introduction of Five Year Plans, had pushed Tamilnadu to make inroads in communication, engineering, mining, metallurgy, agriculture and highway engineering etc.

The medical education in Tamilnadu made a beginning under the leadership of Dr. A.L. Mudaliar, the doyen in the field of medical education. The medical education made a great stride in Madras with the opening of Stanley Medical College, Madras in 1938 and Christian Medical College, Vellore in 1942.
As regards female education, the Tamilnadu did not have any definite policy. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries A.D. the number of educated women in Tamilnadu was few and far between. The strong social prejudice was the stumbling block for female education in the country and Tamilnadu was no exception. The Christian Missionaries established education center for Hindu girls in Madras. The first such school was established in 1868. Female education further progressed albeit at slow pace with the establishment of Model Primary School at important centers. Madras University was one of the earliest institutions to arrange for special courses for women in Tamilnadu. Female education in Madras flourished only after Independence.  

**EDUCATION IN BENGAL:**

The system of education in Bengal was in a most deplorable state until the arrival of European Missionaries. There was virtually no permanent system for imparting formal education to people of Bengal prior to 17th century A.D. Whatever little scope made available to the willing students was through ‘Chatuspātis’ an impoverish native school. Subjects taught in ‘Chatuspātis’ comprised religious texts like ‘Upanishads’, ‘Vedas’ etc. and mythological epics like ‘Rāmāyana’ and ‘Māhābhārata’. The medium of teaching was Sanskrit. The teachers generally came from high caste Brahmin families. Those ‘Chatuspātis’ were run by donations and help from local rich people and zamindars. As most of the people of villages in ancient times were outside the scope of education due to abject poverty and social apathy towards education a large chunk of village community remain unlettered. The little system that was in force in ancient times had been ruined following Muslim occupation of Bengal. The Muslim Rules in Bengal inclined to impose their own system of education in Bengal in place of the Hindu system. In fulfilling their objectives, the Muslim rulers offered better payments to Hindu teachers for teaching Arabic, Persian and other languages. In such a situation the Hindu method of teaching suffered a serious setback in Bengal. History of Bengal’s cultural and social system suggests that proper education system in Bengal actually took off only during the English rule. In the matter of spreading education in Bengal, the English Christian Missionaries played significant roles. The Christian Missionaries themselves learned native language in order to
make them conversant with the traditional nature of learning process for better conveyance. The Christian Missionaries realized that the purpose of teaching was to build a connection between the teachers and the students and that the success of better education system would depend on such understanding. The Missionaries took care to ensure that Bengal’s own native schools i.e. ‘Pathsalas’ continue to run parallel to English system of education. The noted educationist Sir William Carey made untiring efforts for the spread of education in Bengal. Sir William Carey and other Christian Missionaries made endeavor to establish schools in the districts of Bengal. Modern methods were applied to teach History, Geography, Science and other subjects in those schools.

In most of the Missionaries’ schools in Bengal the teaching was done in Bengali medium. In some of the schools English textbook was also taught at a later time. Bengal’s primitive schools, namely, the ‘Tols’ and ‘Chatuspātis’ catered to the educational needs of very poorer sections of the society. The students of those native primitive schools learned lessons from narrative stories. The method of teaching adopted by the Christian Missionaries was entirely different from that followed in native schools in earlier times. The teachers of Missionaries’ schools aimed at creating an atmosphere whereby students learned the wisdom and truth from their lessons. They tried their hands in harnessing the power to discern in the students through dissemination of right kind of information and knowledge.

People in cities and urban areas of Bengal gradually leaned on the education system adopted by the Christian Missionaries. Their preference for English medium of education paved the way for the establishment of School Book Society and Hindu College in 1817. The Society functioned with the generous help from English men and Bengalis.

In this connection, Calcutta School Society was formed in 1818 for revamping the ‘Pathsalas’ (native schools) in Calcutta and elsewhere. The main objective of the Society was to tone up the system of education imparted to children of the poor natives. Accordingly, the Society published textbooks on History, Geography, Science and Ethics etc. for distribution at Primary Schools at free of cost.

The education on Science, English and other subjects got a tremendous fillip as a result of the opening of Hindu College. The Hindu College made a great contribution towards providing meaningful education to the students. It helped in a big way to raise social awakening of Bengal in the 19th century A.D. through the support of education.
The efforts of British Government in India to reform and reorganize the existing structure of education system of Bengal were not liked by many conservative families in the society. They felt that through introduction of British-modeled schools, the Government wanted to build-up an in-cadre group known as clerks to help in running the administration of the Government. However, this view was far from truth.42

It would be pertinent to mention here that education system of Bengal had developed during the English rule. The British Government in India was very much in favor of continuing education in Primary and Secondary levels through the medium of Bengali. However, they were very much interested in imparting higher education in college levels through the medium of English. In Bengal, the spread of education for all practical purposes had been very wide in the middle of the 19th century A.D. due to opening of large number of schools. The establishment of Presidency College in the 19th century A.D. marked the beginning of a new chapter in the history of education and its progress in Bengal. The Presidency College became the premier institution that provided teachings on Law, Engineering and General Science. There is no doubt, that during 19th and 20th centuries A.D. people of Bengal, especially in cities opted for English medium of education with a hope to secure decent jobs in Government establishments and in Mercantile firms.

However, there has been a rapid progress in the field of education during the 19th and 20th centuries A.D. in Bengal due to rise in awareness level of the general people of Bengal about the importance and utility of a good education system. There is no denying the role of British Government of Bengal to push forward the basic education system in villages for access by all.

The establishment of Calcutta University reinforced the fact that people of Bengal were inclined to pursue higher studies under British model. The English education system all over the world made an impact in the minds and thoughts of the knowledgeable sections of the society. The archaic philosophy about education was replaced by modern method and technique of education professed by great educationists of British Empire in India. As a result, a new system of education both formal and technical was introduced in Bengal by the Government in the 19th century A.D. Bengal was regarded as a hub for education in the country during 19th and 20th centuries A.D. Bengal produced many great scholars in different disciplines of education during the above two centuries.43

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The notables among them were Bankim Chandra Chattopadhaya, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Madhusudan Dutta, Keshab Chandra Sen, Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose, Dr. Satyen Bose, Sri Prafulla Chandra Ray, Rabindra Nath Tagore etc. Those great scholars left their individual stamp of talents in their respective fields of professions. The nation has been greatly benefited by their contributions.

Formal education in Bengal was taken off due to pioneering efforts of the Christian Missionaries. In the eighteenth century A.D. female education in Bengal was considered as a social taboo. The conservative sections of the society opposed to launch of female education system on flimsy ground. They argued that the Hindu religious texts did not sanction for female education, as that was an unholy practice. Despite stiff oppositions from the conservatives of the society female education in Bengal made a beginning with the establishment of a school sponsored by Mr. J.E. Bethune, a legal member of Supreme Council in Calcutta in 1849. Thereafter, people of Bengal in association with the learned scholars like Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Keshab Chandra Sen, Sib Nath Sastri, Bijay Krishna Goswami and many others took active part in the growth and progress of female education in Bengal.

After Independence the female education in Bengal made a rapid progress. All the disciplines of education so long preserved for male dominated society were opened for the women of Bengal. The female education in Bengal during 19th and 20th centuries A.D. helped the women of Bengal to become self-dependent.⁴⁴
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