

## APPENDIX: A SELECTIVE CHRONOLOGY

- 1565-1856 A.D. Thanjavur under the Marathas becomes a centre of Hindu culture in South India, a focus of courtly and temple patronage of the arts, including sadir.
- 1856 Thanjavur is annexed by the British; the decline of feudal power begins as the treasury is emptied by tributes and taxes.
- 1868 Missionary campaigns against sac begin.
- 1893 The official anti-nautch movement is launched with a public meeting in Madras, presided over by William Miller.
- 1906-1907 With the signing of the International Convention for the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Children the government in Madras considers legislation against the custom of dedication.
- 1910 The Mysore Government prohibits dedication of girls to temples by a government order.
- 1912 Three members of the Imperial Legislative Council bring Bills to suppress dedication; with the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the Bills are dropped.
- 1915 Annie Besant launches the Home Rule **Movement**.
- 1920 The non-brahmin Justice Party formed in 1916 comes to power in the elections in Madras. The next year they issue a Communal G.O. to increase the proportion of posts for non brahmins in government offices.
- 1922 Dr. H.S. Gour moves a resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council, recommending the banning of nautch and the tightening up of the provisions in the Indian Penal Cod against the adoption of minors.
- 1924 The first Act (XVII of 1924) is passed by the central administration to suppress dedication, along with amendments to sections "2 and 373 of the IPC.
- 1926 Pe. Var is disillusioned with the Congress, breaks away to lay the foundations of the Suva Mariyathai Iyakkam or Self Respect **Movement**.

1927

- 1) **Katherine Mayo's** book Mother India is published.
- 2) **Periyar's** Self Respect Movement takes off.
- 3) The Madras Legislative Council passes a resolution recommending that the Madras Government intervene to prevent dedication. After V.R.Pantulu is told by the central Legislature that the devadasi issue was a regional one, Muthulakshmi Reddi renews the Madras campaign against it; she helps convene and addresses several conferences by members of the devadasi community to debate the issue. The Motion Regarding the Dedication of Girls to Temples is put by Reddi in the Madras Legislative Council.
- 4) **Devadasis** from all over the South protest against it, sending a **memorandum** to the government signalling their outrage.
- 5) The first All-India Music Conference in the South is held in Madras, and passes a resolution that an Academy to standardize the practice of music and dance be set up.

1928

- 1) The Music Academy is established as an offshoot of Congress nationalism, with E. Krishna Iyer as one of its Secretaries.
- 2) A Bill for the Suppression of Brothels and Immoral Traffic is passed in the Legislative Council.
- 3) An amendment to the Hindu Religious Endowments Act of 1926 enfranchises devadasis, '**freeing**' them from service in temples, and granting the lands to them permanently.

1930

Muthulakshmi Reddi presents her draft of A Bill to Prevent the Dedication of Women to Hindu Temples in the M.L.C., making dedication punishable; by the time the Bill is circulated for comment, the session ends, and it lapses.  
The devadasi system is abolished by fiat in Travancore State.  
The Music Academy's Journal speaks of the art of '**Bharata Natyam**': this could be the first 'official' use of the new name for **sadir**.

- 1931                   The Music Academy of Madras presents a sadir performance by the Kalyani Daughters, the first of a series of programmes that marked its campaign to preserve sadir. Devadasi service is abolished, and maaniams are enfranchised, in Pudukottai State.
- 1932                   **Muthulakshmi Reddi** and **E. Krishna Iyer** have a heated debate over nautch in the Hindu. **Uday Shankar** makes a triumphant tour of India, bringing a package of 'oriental dances' that Rukmini Devi sees.
- 1935                   Rukmini Devi launches the International Academy of Arts which will become Kalakshetra the next year.
- 1937                   **C.Rajagopalachari's** Congress government is voted to power; the devadasi question is shelved for a while.
- 1939                   The debate on the Devadasi Bill is revived. The South India Devadasi Association renews its appeals to the government, asking to be let alone, in a memorandum.
- 1946                   Rukmini Devi produces Thirukutrala Kuravanji, her first dance-drama.
- 1947                   The Madras Devadasis (Prevention of Dedication) Bill is made into an **Act** by the first **post-independence** Legislative Assembly in Madras. **Kamala**, a young brahmin girl, makes waves by dancing to **Subramania Bharati's** patriotic songs in the AVM film Nam Iruvar. an event that also signals the almost complete taking over of the sadir form by brahmin girls.