43. Bharathiya Janwadi Aghadi- 'India’s Saffron Surge: Renaissance or Fascism' - 1993
5. Subjectivism in Contemporary History

with special reference to Tamil Nadu

Gandhian Era:

Since Mahathma Gandhi came from South Africa he got himself actively involved in India’s freedom movement. Gopala Krishna Gokale was the mastermind who first influenced Mahathma’s thought and actions. Among the few passages Mahathma had admiration for, the Sermon on the Mount of Lord Jesus Christ, Cardinal New Man’s ‘lead kindly light; among the encircling gloom lead thou me on’ and Narasi Metha’s ‘Vaishna Janathav’.

Therefore the basic idea of passive resistance and non co-operation were brooding already in his mind. As he himself admitted Mahathma converted the concept of non-violence from an individual approach in the times of Lord Jesus Christ into a mass movement.

‘Gandhi’s Technique of mass mobilisation’ by M.M.Verma extensively describes the contribution of Mahathma to India’s upsurge to freedom.¹

The philosophical basis of Gandhi came from different sources. First of all he was influenced by the Hindu Dharma, Tolstoy’s ‘The kingdom of God is within you’ and the Holy Quran influenced him. As he was proud of Vedas, Upanishads he was equally proud of Buddhism. Gandhi believed that strength does not flow from physical capacity; it comes from an indomitable will.
Nonviolence does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil doer. But the putting of one’s soul against the will of the tyrants.

The Buddha, Mahaveer, Kabir, Sikh Gurus, Basweshwar, Rammohan Roy all influenced his thought process.

Bhagawath Gita’s internal message ‘Action alone is right; leave thou the fruit severely alone. Action is a duty; fruit is the right’. Buddha’s ultimate Truth shaped him beyond words.

In 1921 Tagore in ‘Modern Review’ rejected the non-cooperation of Mahathma Gandhi. Gandhi’s defence of such a movement in his ‘Young India’ of 13 October 1921 was highly revealing. Gandhi never stood for sectarian beliefs but universal truth which is God Himself. Though his utterances on Ram Rajya were misinterpreted what he ultimately meant was kingdom of God within. His clinging to varnashrama dharma on the poetic interpretation he provided was grossly misunderstood at the point of being dubbed. As an universalist Gandhi prevailed over his adversaries.

Thoreau, the well known American Anarchist who had refused to pay his taxes as a protest against slavery in America was a father figure for Mahathma Gandhi. His essay on civil disobedience captivated him mind. Non-cooperation was a direct result of Thoreau’s philosophy.

John Ruskin’s ‘Unto the last’ furnished him with the idea of the Survodhaya- to the lowest. He was all praise for the magic spell of ‘Unto the last’. His ideas are more close to Tolstoy than Ruskin. Tolstoy’s Non-violence is rooted in the presumption that it is a sin to impose one’s will on any creature. Rev.J.J.Doke called Gandhi a disciple of Tolstoy. It is true there is an
extraordinary similarity between doctrines of Gandhi and Tolstoy. Then comes J.S. Mill who contributed enormously on self-suffering. Then comes Emmanuel Kant, Jeremy Bentham, Karl Marx, Herald Laskei and others.

He was appreciative of Marxian ideology shorn of violence. To him Marx was not a boorish philosopher.

There are many people who have thoroughly misunderstood the basic philosophy of Mahathma Gandhi when we make an heartfelt division of mental capacity and physical prowess. We by mistake put the mental capacity on the higher rung of the ladder Mahathma Gandhi on the other hand believed in the efficacy of manual labour. His ‘Nai Thalim’ (New Education) was essentially learning to work and working to learn.

His swadeshi movement which was criticised by no less a person than Jawaharlal Nehru himself is appreciated by India’s free thinkers now. It was to break the economic hegmony of the British he insisted upon swadeshi products. Khadhi and charka were his tools; and a self-sufficient rural economy was his dream. His trusteeship which was possible only when men are good at heart were insisted upon.

There were accusations against his approach to machines; he was charged that he was conservative. But he declared ‘if I were against machines I am against my own body; because every body is a mechanism. I am not against machines but I am definitely against machines that replace workers’. Therefore his call was not for mass production but for production for the masses.

Mahathma Gandhi was not satisfied with a mere transfer of power which was misunderstood as freedom. He was for social emancipation and political
liberty. His India lived in villages. His test for a plan to be implemented was to find out whether it was beneficial to the common man.

There were dictators for whom ends justified means but Mahathma Gandhi was strikingly different in that for him just and fair means take one to just and fair ends. Therefore in the achievement of his objectives he could not make a compromise with unfair means adopted.

Gandhi’s Techniques were appreciated by the English though they were tricky. When he fasted there were pricks in their conscience. That is why they respected his self – suffering.

After having rejected his ideas lock, stock and barrel at the time when liberalisation has been enslaving the whole nation M.K.Gandhi is remembered again. Like a river that surges ahead criss-crossing the boundaries of different nations Gandhi influenced the Black Movement of Martin Luther King Jr. Mahathma Gandhi is not a light caricature to be laughed at. He has to be taken seriously. His fervent plea for labour-intensive industries instead of capital-intensive industries is a remarkable contribution in an economy, which considers workers to be only cogs in the machine. No other leader could emerge as a father figure for the whole generation of Indians despite their divisions on racial, geographical, religious and linguistic basis.

There are historians who have appreciated Mahathma’s life and mission with only admiration. Critical analysis of such a great seer is quite rare but his life is not free from flaws. His defence of Brahmins ‘as the finest flowers of humanity’ and his taking sides with C.Rajagopalachari against K. Kamaraj a popular leader and his intense appreciation of varnashrama dharma are all blunders of his life.
In Tiripura congress 'vote for Seetharamiya was vote for me' said Mahatma Gandhi. But Netaji Subash Chandra Bose could win the congress presidencial seat hands down. But Gandhi by a design ousted him.

Mahatma Gandhi was for violence in self defence. To him terrorism was headless violence since it was not chivalrous. He basically understood that no life on earth was possible without minimum violence. Such a discerning mind he could differenciate between violence and terrosism.

While political independence was the end to many of the leaders to him it was only a means to communal amity. This is why when the whole nation was steeped in celebration of the Independence Day he stood at Naokali in between the fighting groups of Hindus and Muslims.

Mahatma Gandhi purposely said 'It is not Rajaji but Nehru is my heir'. Instead of hoisting Sardar Patel a devoted Hindu to preside over the destiny of the nation he preferred Pandit Nehru who had his secular credentials. The idea was not to have a Hindu Rashtra but to have a secular republic which does not identify itself with any particular religion. Therefore he was not after any office instead he wanted to serve the people.

Only when he wanted to hoist Hindustani as the official language he was wrong since that kind of imposition of a particular language would definitely shatter the democratic fabric stalwarts had built up.

Mahathma Gandhi quite often spotted of Antharyami (inner voice) to be of God's and took decisions. This concept could not be appreciated by his co-travelers.
He was the greatest challenge to the British masters in the period of salt satyagraha. He expected himself to be arrested while he was on a march to Dhandi but expecting a public commotion the British didn't arrest him. Later he along with his followers surrounded the government Godown and the government had no other alternative but to get him arrested. Therefore in a world where people are arrested Mahathma Gandhi courted arrest. This was the new technique he brought into the politics.

He was more spiritual than religious. He was grossly misunderstood by the Hindu communalists that he supported the Muslim cause beyond a point. Though it had cost him his life itself he has an internal light that dispels darkness from the Indian mind. He was a staunch Hindu; but he was never against the visitation of other faiths. While he was rightly proud of his rich cultural heritage he was not against the scientific development which did not displace man.

Man created God and witnessed Him in the form of images and images were after all the tools of his own creation but man became a slave at the feet of these created objects. It was man who invented money but his brain-child money was able to purchase man. He was the originator of machines; but machines displaced him from the work-spots. Therefore a creature subserving the interest of creator was the fall of civilisation. This comedy of errors was fully understood by no lesser person than Mahathma Gandhi himself.

Vincent Churchill, stigmatized Gandhi as 'half naked fakir' as a shirtless representative of the impoverished, emaciated Indian peasants he was riding in the crest of glory when he fell into the assassin's bullets. Albert Einstein declared 'the world shall not believe after the passage of thousand years that such a person was treading the face of the earth in flesh and blood'. Gandhi
became a Mahathma because he was amenable to self-criticism. There was a time when he changed his train travel from the first class to the third because of the heavy cost factor but Sarojini Naidu pointed out that since 3rd class compartment is purchased as a whole for the purpose of security it was more expensive than the first class. He immediately changed his mind to first class.

When the anonymous letters criticised him that he is leaning on the breasts of two young girls he wept his lungs out to Acharya Kriplani. When the Acharya revealed that there is some shade of sin in his mind; he took a resolve unto himself that thereafter he would listen only to his inner voice. Mahathma Gandhi was the greatest exception in the Indian political scenario. E.M.S. Namboodripad and other vermilion communists who were critical of his approach to India’s problems finally came to concede that he too was the answer to India’s baffling multiplicity of problems. Nethaji Subash Chandra Bose who differed from him on account of his means ultimately called him the ‘Father of the Nation’.

Dr. Arun Gandhi who has edited a volume of leading lights in the world such as Bill Bradley, Carlsagan, Andrew Young, Asghar Ali Engineer, Raimon Panikkar, Dr. Raghavan Iyer and Hans Kung has not been critical of the life and mission of Mahathma Gandhi. This book is only a litanic vespere of glorification without room for criticism. Therefore it is a subjective study of admiration.²

It is a historian’s vision that Mahathma Gandhi’s life and work should be further scruplessly analysed with critical acumen for the benefit of younger Indians ploddering in primitive darkness. To treat such a great personality beyond critical analysis does not belong to history writing.
Nehruvian Era:

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru born in an aristocratic family was a matchless freedom fighter. He was almost a jail bird. The description of the light and darkness he could witness through a hole in Alipoor prison bring poignant memories of the freedom movement.

Mahatma Gandhi said ‘Nehru would speak my language when I am no more’. But Nehru was thoroughly different in attitude and approach from Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi employed the epithet of Lenin to describe the behaviour of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru –‘one step forward; two steps backward’.

He was a non believer and factories were his temples. It is not a sweeping generalization to say that the was the architect of the modern India. A friend of the Soviet Block he was the originator of non alignment. Though his critics were of the view that Non alignment itself was a tricky alignment, Nehru engineered this concept in the interest of international order.

He could not stand poverty. Therefore he dedicated his tenure as the first Prime Minister of India for changing the face of the economy. Mixed economy was his contribution and he was against privatization. Insisting upon scientific temper his steps towards the modernization of India was legendary. Thoroughly secular in outlook he did not identify himself with any particular religion.

Though there are volumes on his life and mission, some of them contained lavish praises. For example Mani Sankar Iyars’s encomium was not a critical analysis. But the commemorative volume that was published in 1964 immediately after his demise wherein Hiren Mukarjee, Piloo modi, Frank Moraes and many others have subjected him to critical analysis.
At the time when he was considered to be a demi-god there were critics who could find fault with him. As a planner he placed his reliance more on industrialization than on agriculture. His second five year plan was an ample testimony where does his mind travel. Before independence we were importing salt from different countries. It was Nehru who changed the scene of import and export to the permanent advantage of India.

On the object of the Congress, Gandhi while wanted to make Congress primarily an instrument of spiritual awakening of India, Nehru could clearly see the inherent conflicts in the capitalistic society. To him Indian National Congress was an instrument for socio political change.

Nehru was clear in his mind that without removing capitalist model lock stok and barrel exploitation and oppression of the poor masses could not be eliminated.

Nehru’s idea of the state ownership of the commanding heights of economy had little appeal to Gandhi. “State represents violence in a concentrated and organized form; it can never be free from violence to which it owes its very existence.”

While Gandhi did not favour the idea of state ownership in place of private property, in Nehru’s opinion private ownership was violence and it was less harmful than the violence of the state. “It was difficult for Nehru to accept this view of Gandhi. He regarded it as a wishful thinking on the part of Gandhi to convert Princes and Landlords and capitalists into trustees of their properties for the common good.”
Mahatma Gandhi was against western socialism as it involved violence and class war which were against Hinduism. But Nehru was thoroughly convinced that life was not possible without minimum violence. This view of Pandit Nehru has been given effect to in his autobiography.⁵

At Calcutta congress in December 1928 Nehru clashed with Gandhi by expressing that ‘you live in liberalism I live in revolution’. Gandhi retorted ‘My dear young man I have made revolution while others only shouted revolution. When your lungs are exhausted and when you are serious about it you will come to me and then I shall show you how a revolution is made’.⁶

Later in 1930 when Gandhi started his salt Satyagraha Nehru was reluctant. Later when Nehru could witness the massive support this passive resistant movement drew he was perplexed. While Gandhi rejected the programme of the congress socialist party in 1934 Nehru was wounded. Gandhi’s socialism was described to be a muddled humanitarianism. This has been observed by Nehru himself in his autobiography. Gandhi’s concept of socialism did not evolve out of western theocratic formulation. Unlike Nehru, Gandhi showed little interest of the scientific view of the inner contradictions of the capitalistic order. He never appreciated the basics of altering the relations of production. Commenting on Nehru’s views on socialism Gandhi said, ‘Jawaharlal does not lend his name to any socialist group. He believes in socialism because he mixes with socialists and consults them. But there is a considerable difference between their methods of work’.⁷

Nehru was a subjective socialist for whom socialism was not inevitable but could come only when majority of the people supported it. He was accused of his slow progress in the socialist path, because of his loyalties to Gandhi.
Though people did not understand this mysticism of Mahathma Gandhi he was won over by him. But Nehru’s modern ideas were not perceived by many of them.

It was political work with Nehru but constructive work with Gandhi. Therefore they divided their time between the two. Gandhi declared ‘Jawaharlal’s way is not my way. I do not accept any of his concepts’.8

Nehru a refined intellectual was captivated by Gandhi’s dynamism and perfect austerity in life. Inspite of a difference in their ultimate social ideals the plans they had drawn up for the social and economic development of India for practical purposes are identical. Their political partnership was perhaps was the most exiting relation in the history of Indian nationalism.

Nehru was enchanted by Gandhi’s towering personality and charismatic charm. And ultimately he had to concede to the towering personality of Mahathma Gandhi. Nehru’s emotional attachment to Gandhi was complete in that he could not think of India’s freedom movement without the apostle of non violence.

In the 19 years of stewardship Nehru modernized India. Though there are critics who speak against his state reorganization plan it was a salutation for the composite culture of India. He was against uniformity but ardently was in favour of unity. Unity in diversity was his aim.

As a prolific writer whether in his letters to his daughter or his autobiography he throws immense light on the unknown areas of Nehru. Nehru cannot be defined; can be described. He cannot be bottled much less labeled. To Karakha he was a ‘lotus eater from Kashmir’ he was a dreamer, a great
visionary altogether different from his contemporaries. He was head and shoulders taller than most of the contemporary pigmies. There was a child in him that resulted in a Indo china war.

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia was highly critical of the attitude and the approach of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to India’s problems but it revealed the affectation of his mind and not free from subjective elements. Among others Jayaprakash Narayan had understood the real worth of Nehru despite his dreamy sojourns. Nehru had a knack in picking up men of extraordinary capacity. As such he brought S.K.Dey from Assam for the successful implementation of community development. His last will commanding that his ashes may be dispersed on the fields of India that he may become part of the soil is not a poetical excellence but was an expression of a great patriot we had in the recent past.

Nehru as a parliamentarian was a model for all politicians. There was an occasion when he was found to have discussed something with some one nearby in the council of states. Then Dr. S. Radhakrishnan the presiding officer of Rajya Sabha pulled him and gently reprimanded him, Nehru bowed his head in all reverence and committed himself not to repeat that mistake again. After a few weeks it was he who recommended the name of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan to the presidentship of India. When we draw a parallel between the moral stance of a man like Pandit Nehru to the unruly behaviour of politicians in Parliament one is shuddered to think that such a great man had lived in India.
Spell of Emergency:

When Mrs. Indira Gandhi was unseated from the Parliament by an election petition in the Allahabad High Court from Raj Narayanan challenging her election she became furious.

Earlier her moves to abolish privy purses of Maharajas and the Nationalisation of banks were opposed by Moraji Desai, Atulya Ghosh, S.K.Patil and other members of the Syndicate. K. Kamaraj was in the forefront.

Senior Congress men who were socialists in Pandit Nehru’s period became critical of Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s moves towards socialism. Therefore there were warring principalities in Indian National Congress. With the ouster of Syndicate members who were opposed to the reforms of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Indian National Congress came to be known as Congress (I).

There were leaders trembling in fear and bending knees praised Mrs. Indira Gandhi lavishly and declared that ‘India is Indira; Indira is India’.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi took the challenge of senior congress leaders seriously as a personal threat to her political life. Therefore she declared emergency and imprisoned most of the leaders.

Lok Nayak Jaya Prakash Narayan was arrested and the Movement of Total Revolution came into being. Thousands of volunteers languishing in the prisons of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, she was tough in dealing with her political adversaries.⁹

Since the period of emergency brought forth a spell of darkness she couldn’t know exactly what happened around her.
The free press, one of the pillars of democracy was threatened to its very roots. Pre-censorship of articles was initiated and Government officials without any literary background whatsoever started editing articles from Mu.Karunanidhi, Cho. Ramasamy and the elite.

Under Internal Security Act this researcher’s ‘Justice we Demand’ a booklet criticising Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s nefarious action against Jaya Prakash Narayan was banned. An order said any one who is found in possession of this book or translates it or use passages from the same were liable to be punished under Internal Security Act.

The gazette notification, extraordinary on a Sunday declared that all who are found in possession of this banned book should immediately surrender these books to the nearby police stations.

Sanjay Gandhi, the second son of Mrs. Indira Gandhi for his part conducted Family Planning camps in several parts of the North and forcibly sterilised countless men against their will.

Even leaders in the stature of Acharya Kriplani was not spared. George Fernandez then who was active with Railway Union went underground. Thus India tasted the worst kind of a draconian law that smothered the democratic fabric of the Republic of India.

In the next election Mrs. Indira Gandhi and her coterie of men were penalised for the sins of omissions and commissions. There was jubilation throughout the country celebrating the defeat of Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

As she came into prominence Mrs. Indira Gandhi supported the cause of Mujbir Rahman in Bangladesh. Through Mukthi Vahini, Mrs. Indira Gandhi
was principally responsible in dividing Pakistan thereby creating a permanent cause for war between India and Pakistan.

Later Mrs. Indira Gandhi realised her misdeeds and apologised publicly that the spell of emergency was wrong. Mrs. Indira Gandhi who never encouraged the immediate second line leadership in States was annoyed at the emergence of fissiparous tendencies throughout the country.

She only encouraged the militant Sikh leader Binderan Wala in Punjab. Later her patronage to a political thug resulted in Blue Star Operation wherein the Golden temple at Amritsar was desecrated to the consternation of all Sikhs.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi had to face lot of challenges from terrorist groups and the demand for Khalistan was up in the air. Later she fell to the merciless bullets of the assassins and her spell of governance came to an abrupt end.

She was a remarkable leader with secular traits who led the country to prosperity. But on the day when she expired hundreds of Sikhs in and around Delhi were killed. Those widows are still expecting financial support for their families from Government of India.

In his ‘Meeting with remarkable Men’, Fritz of Capra is of the opinion that Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s intellect is one of the sharpest in the world. Though there are books of flowery encomiums on the life and mission of Mrs. Indira Gandhi objective analysis is quite wanting. Either the volumes on Mrs. Indira Gandhi are full of lavish praises or outright digs. Such a trend has to be arrested and an objective study of her life and mission should engage the attention of contemporary historians.
When the question of Tamil ethnicity was discussed in the Indian parliament she only called that it was genocide describing the infernal massacre and total conflagration against Tamils. Jayawardane perceived the steel in Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s declaration and mended his ways for a short while amidst loud protests of the Buddhist clergy. The moral support she extended to the cause of suffering Tamils drew applause for her from Tamils. Then G.Parthasarathy was her adviser and he could inform her of the course of events in the ethnic problems Tamils faced in Sri Lanka.

But there was always vested interests in Tamil province who were against the cause of Tamils in Sri Lanka. Their innate fear that once Tamil Eelam was a possibility then separatist tendencies in Tamil Nadu would rear up their heads was uppermost in their minds. But the problem is it is not because you identify yourself with the ethnic cause of Tamils in Sri Lanka but by your insensitivity not to lend a helping hand for this suffering Tamil masses you get them all estranged.

Rajiv Gandhi’s Era:

Though inexperienced Rajiv Gandhi came to power. As a Prime Minister he was concentrating on solving some of the problems in the states. His pact with Longoval on Punjab issue was a remarkable one.

But in the case of LTTE he was wavering from time to time. Therefore he wanted to contrive an agreement of settlement from LTTE supermo Prabhakaran as per his terms. This unkindest cut of all infuriated the LTTE supermo.
Rajiv Gandhi went to the extent of preventing M.G.Ramachandran from donating a purse to Prabhakaran. Later Rajiv Gandhi despatched Peace Keeping Forces to Jaffna to maintain peace and harmony.

But the Soldiers of IPKF were responsible for the desecration of Tamil women and merciless killings which echoed in the Indian Parliament. There were acrimonious attacks on his leadership. Not only Tamils were against him. Singalese also were not in favour of him. That’s why he was attacked by a soldier while he was inspecting the guard of honour in Sri Lanka.

He couldn’t bring back the IPKF and the senseless army was on rampage. The anger of Tamils crossed the limits of indignation.

Finally some discharged elements of LTTE with a design of interested powers abroad liquidated him permanently at Sriperampudur.

Though his life was snatched away unceremoniously his contribution to India’s telecommunication system and electronics is always remembered. Though there are a few books on his Prime Ministership it is full of subjective elements since his orientation towards Tamil Cause was highly biased.

It was a blunder that Rajiv Gandhi Kept LTTE out of the settlement with Sri Lankan rulers. When LTTE is in the forefront of fighting for the cause of Tamils the idea to keep them away from the settlement is notorious.

However one may justify the actions of Rajiv Gandhi in tackling the sensitive issue of ethnicity he stands condemned in the Court of history for his stoic silence on the atrocities against LTTE which were known to him.
This righteous indignation against Rajiv Gandhi on the part of Tamils is fully justified taking into account the way Tamils were marginalised in the national life of Sri Lanka. While his mother was prepared to train LTTE men in different camps in India ultimately it was Rajiv Gandhi who packed them all off the shore.

Though G. Parthasarathy was his adviser too he was forced by circumstances beyond his control not to listen to him any more. Therefore on the advice of some of those enemies of Tamil cause he came to insist upon autonomy for Tamils in Sri Lanka whether they are more powers or due powers. Provincial autonomy could have been accepted by LTTE Supermo as one of the phases for full freedom later. But a born fighter LTTE Supermo Velupillai Prabhakaran stood the ground and could not see that the movement for freedom has many phases.

In India’s independence movement congressmen who insisted upon Dominion Status were not unpatriotic. They knew that it was a step ahead in the right direction; that’s why they were keeping num.

But in the case of LTTE its supermo couldn’t concede any thing short Tamil Eelam. Now the new Prime Minister is engaged in peace initiative but Mrs. Chandrika the President of the island is against such a move though proclaims as if she is in full agreement with the Prime Minister.

The problem seems to be endless and it is highly difficult even for the mediators to convince Velupillai Prabhakaran, to come around for a phased settlement. But one should appreciate the positive efforts of the newly elected Prime Minister towards permanent settlement of Tamil ethnic issue in the island.
Chakkravathi C. Rajagopalachari:

Chakkravarthi Sri. Rajagopalachari was a colourful personality in the Indian political arena. A matchless freedom fighter quite often misunderstood for his unorthodox views against public opinion he was an enigmatic puzzle of an era.

Praised by Mahatma Gandhi as a keeper of his conscience Rajaji was head and sholders tall to most of his contemporaries. He was a Gandhian and with influence of Gandhi he had been wielding lot of influence among congressmen of Madras presidency against the popular leader K. Kamaraj.

Mahatma Gandhi called Kamaraj ‘Quisling’ only to satisfy Rajaji. Though he was a relentless battler he could not withstand the onslaught of K.Kamaraj. In a way Kamaraj in congress represented the anti Brahmin forces and Rajaji the upper caste personalities. Highly argumentative known for his logic he was sincere to his ideas.

Monica Felton’s ‘I meet Rajaji’ was one of the critical analysis that is available on Rajaji’s life and mission. Raj Mohan Gandhi’s version of Rajaji was not critical enough to be called an objective study of his personality. Dr. H.V. Hande, Me.Pa. Somu and S.S. Marisamy were the others who have been closely associated with him. But their observations were not critical enough to be objective.

Rajaji became the Governor General of India. Then because of his interest in literature he rendered Masti Venkatesa Aiyankar’s ‘Curd Woman’ into English. Since the translation was not up to the mark Masti advised him to be attentive of his Governor Generalship alone.
His translation of Tirukkural, Mahabaratha and Ramayana are expositions worthy of literary value. Rajaji could not see eye to eye with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He was highly critical of Nehru’s socialistic pattern of society. Rajaji in his ‘swarajya’ stood for free enterprise and license free raj. When Pandit Nehru criticized the formation of the ‘Swathanthra Party’ he stigmatized it as a party of ‘Turbans (ex-rulers) and Walking Sticks (retired IPS officials)’. He called it a shadow. Then Rajaji retorted saying there can be no shadow without substance. Such a sharp intellect he was! In his altercations with Mahatma Gandhi he deferred from Periyar E.V.R. on concessions to backward classes at the cost of merit. To Periyar E.V.R. merit is a dubious concept.

Rajaji committed the blunder of ‘Kula Kalvi Thittam’, which was opposed by all Dravidian leaders. His total misconception of the reverence to physical labour was misconstrued by himself as ‘Kula Kalvi Thittam’. A strong supporter for Hindi once later became a fierce opponent to Hindi imposition. In 1967 when Dravidian forces finished congress off, he was instrumental.

Though he was not popular as K.Kamaraj he was free from anti-people stance too. When as a premier of the Madras presidency government officials pointed out on the encroachment of the seashore by fishermen, Rajaji scribbled on the file that ‘we had only encroached upon their livelihood’. There are many phases of his life which were not codified.

Professor M. Rathinasamy was a close associate of Rajaji known for his erudite scholarship and intellectual vision. He told this researcher once that despite all the mental brilliance of the personality he supported Rev. Jerome D’Souza a Brahmin to the constituent assembly instead of himself. An objective study of his life and mission is yet to come.
His views on Kashmir brought his reputation down. But, he was assertive in his public opinion.

Salt Satyagraha at Vedaranyam is associated with this legendary personality. His battle against Kamaraj though was not successful he stood the ground. His mind was highly philosophical. In that he was quite misunderstood by his friends and foes.

Though he was highly critical of Pandit Nehru when he died he said, ‘Eleven years younger to me but eleven hundred times more important to the nation and eleven thousand times beloved of the people, now, Nehru is no more. Let God save the people’.

Statesmen like Rajaji though had love hate relationship with his contemporaries found something unique in them by which they could have universal appeal. Despite the differences with Rajaji Periyar E.V.Ramasamy wept bitterly when his mortal remains were reduced to ashes.

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia remarks in his ‘Guilty Men of Indian Partition’ that in the controversy between Dr. Rajagopalachari and Satyamoorthy how Mahatma Gandhi came to patronize Rajagopalachari instead of Satyamoorthy because to him the former was less radical. Rajaji was highly critical of Netaji Subash Chandra Bose. Strictly Gandhian in his approach to life’s challenging problems he was more for non-violence. He had a lot to say on every matter that concerned different countries. He condemned the Nuclear Proliferation. He went all the way to John F. Kennedy the then president of USA urging him not to play the role of world policeman.
He had been enthusiastic in containing Chinese expansionism. In Asia at the battlefields of Vietnam he was not thoroughly against the cultural erosion of the North Vietnamese because of the American pressure. But he was definitely against the expansion of Chinese. Meeting the enemy at the third door was Dulles theory popular in the American logistics; Rajaji believed in this strategy.

The simplicity with which he carried on his life is a classic example to be emulated by all in political life. In this regard he can only be compared to comrade E.M.S. Nampanthripad who was in the queue to get his quota of government medicine in front of a government office in Kerala, just three days before his death.

K. Kamaraj emerging from the last rung of the ladder came to the zenith only after many hardships. He became the president of Tamilnadu Congress Committee not out of the charity of the high command but through his strenuous work.

Though Kamaraj was a Gandhian to his core there were a few occasions when he deferred from him. He even postponed his marriage since the nation was in bondage. By the time freedom came he had passed the age of marriage. Only a few had sacrificed for the freedom movement as he had. But Rajaji though was not as popular as Kamaraj had an international stature.

Periyar E.V.Ramasamy:

Periyar E.V. Ramasamy was an ardent follower of Mahathma Gandhi to begin with. When one Johnson came to Gandhi to perceive the success of
prohibition in Tamil Nadu, Gandhi directed him to meet Periyar and his sister. Such was his unflinching faith in Gandhi’s leadership.

Periyar as one who strikes at the roots of evil instead of tapping taddy he proceeded to cut off hundreds of his coconut trees. Such was his missionary zeal. His fight was not against mosquitoes. His fight was against the backwaters themselves. It was not always the consequence; and the cause he relentlessly battled against.

In the first few lines he scribbled for his ‘Kudi Arasu’ at Erode he was of the firm opinion that since no one came forward to rescue the Dravidian stock it fell to his lot to promote them.

In consigning foreign clothes to fire, he was a forerunner to Bengali patriots. For Periyar though political freedom was the basic necessity political freedom without social emancipation was of no value.

There was an occasion when V.O. Chidambaram of Tuticorin a patriot of national repute wrote to Bal Gangangadar Thilak whether social emancipation should precede to political freedom. Thilak was of the view that political freedom should get first priority. It is all because Tilak was one who was already socially freed. But many of the patriots were twice cursed. There was a native exploiter on one shoulder; and a foreign exploiter on the other. Strangely enough both Periyar and poet Subramania Bharathi contributed equally to this view just and fair.

There was a small band of advocates of Mylapore, Madras who were of upper caste origin who ill-treated Periyar. On one occasion he was fed at the outskirts of a residence while all other upper castes were fed within the precincts
of the residence. Periyar was already a wounded Tiger fulminating with anger against the native oppressors.

As destiny would have it he as the treasurer of the Tamil Nadu Congress had to visit the Gurukulam run by V.V.S. Iyer at Ceranmadesvi, Tirunelveli District. It was there he could witness two pots, one for brahmins and another for non-brahmins.

Not convinced by the explanation of V.V.S.Iyer, Periyar shattered those two pots and created problems for funds to the Gurukulam, a social anachronism.

V.V.S. Iyer in turn complained to Mahathma Gandhi. Gandhi did say that 'Brahmins are the first flowers of humanity'. This irresponsible statement further infuriated Periyar and he parted ways with congress.

After hob-nobbing with Justice Party he understood this party itself were of the rich who had no access to the poor. He left the same to start his Dravida Kazagham. He could survive the temptation for political power and made his organisation a vanguard for fighting social evils.

When Periyar started his Self Respect Movement in the first decade of the 20th Century his party was known as 'The Party of the Untouchables'. But somehow an impression had been created in the minds of the people that Periyar stood for backward classes only and not for schedule castes and tribes.

Rettai Malai Srinivasan and a host of others who were in the vanguard of Periyar's movement were from the schedule castes; therefore his association came to be known as a party of untouchables.
This researcher has always wondered why people of scheduled caste origin have statues for Dr. Ambedkar and not for Periyar.

Had they been convinced that Periyar stood for them they would have erected memorials for him instead of Dr. Ambedkar.

In the ultimate analysis Periyar stood for scheduled castes and tribes was of the considered opinion of Gunasekaran, a senior reporter of 'Dinamani' Tamil daily, Chennai (Interview on 29th October 2001).

Thereafter on clarification from Vidudalai Rajendran, General Secretary Thanthai Periyar Dravidar Kazagam (Interview on 29th Oct 2001) confirms Periyar stood for the scheduled castes and tribes till the constitutional safeguard for their reservation came into. Then he wanted to protect backward classes who had not known any constitutional safeguards then.

Gunasekaran was of the view that Periyar without any distinction whatsoever took backward classes, schedule castes and tribes together. In Muthukulathur communal clashes Periyar condemned Devars who belong to backward classes. Periyar's movements might not have followed his social vision in action. But Periyar as long as he was alive never allowed clashes between backward classes and scheduled castes. As Gunasekaran says he was more for bringing the depressed classes under one and only umbrella as Tamils.

Therefore the assertion that Periyar stood for backward classes only was not wholly incorrect.

Bala Guru (General Secretary, Thanthai Periyar Dravida Kazagam) in his interview (30th Oct 2001) has further said that when the first amendment to the
Indian constitution became a reality Periyar in his mind had no such division as backward classes and scheduled castes and tribes.

Periyar's struggle for the depressed classes ultimately culminated in securing reservation in educational institutions for schedule castes and schedule tribes.

Therefore to say that Periyar stood for schedule castes and tribes is nothing wrong.

It was Periyar's life long struggle to make deprived classes into temple archagars (Priests) was realised by Karunanidhi in the seventies. Because of Vaishnav Matts Supreme Court finally struck the enactment down. The amendment Karunanidhi brought forth was after Anna during whose Chief Ministership legal sanction was accorded to Self-respect Marriages. Periyar's ideology was behind such moves.

This researcher's gentle complaint against Periyar was that he never reviewed his views. When he wanted to remove God, the only bank balance of the poor, the last straw in a turbulent sea without providing something substantial in the vaccum, people clung to God swiftly and ferociously. Periyar smashed the idols of Vinayaga. Here too he committed a mistake. Moses, the prophet broke the statue of the golden calf. Now it has resulted in thousands of statues in catholic churches. Periyar used to heavily criticize the puranic story of Kunthi Devi. As pers mythology Karna was born because of her association with sun god! Periyar was highly critical of such puranas.

This researcher had an occasion to explain to him that these mythologies are found in most of the religions. In Egyptian mythology for the birth of a chief
king an eagle headed angel announced to the mother of Agamemnon and then she became pregnant. Karna was born with earrings. These are all only to differentiate the birth of an object of worship from the common stock. This is the compelling need for the interpolation of mythical elements in stories. But Periyar's point was if it was only the false god why should it be perpetuated. Point is when we explained the reason for such studies devotees may not be offended.

Though from 1939 Periyar struggled against the imposition of Hindi ultimately in the sixties anti Hindi agitation uprooted Congress for another 35 years to come.

Anna was his faithful follower. When Periyar declared Independence day to be the Blackest day Anna differed from him. When Periyar met Mohammed Ali Jinnah Anna stayed back. Under the force of circumstances the parting of ways between Periyar and Aninger Anna became a social reality.

**Perunthalaivar Kamaraj:**

Dr. V.C. Kulandaisamy endorses the view of Dr. M.S. Muthuswamy that Rajaji and Kamaraj had dedicated themselves to the Congress but their approaches were diametrically opposed to each other.¹⁰

The impact of Kamaraj extended to the period of four generations. He was tactical and down to earth. He was neither a speaker nor a cine artiste. But he could attract huge crowd and he is known for his economy of words. He was against the Dravidasthan of Aringar Anna and later he was critical of state autonomy too.
Though he was not one with periyar E.V.R on social issues his concern for the backward classes was unquestionable.

It was between 1920 to 1940 kamaraj worked as a congressman in various capacities.

1. From the position of a village worker he was elevated to the Presidentship of the state congress.

2. In 1954 to 1963 it was a period of achievements as a chief minister of the state.

3. He bought forth Kamaraj plan; became the AICC president; later became the king maker after the death of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

R.Venkatraman, Murugu Dhanushkodi, M.K.T.Subramanian and Kumari Anandan were some of the few who have written on the life and mission of Kamaraj. But his fond memory had powerful sway over the writers that they could not critically asses his achievements.

As a Chief Minister, Kamaraj concentrated on education and electricity. Though his introduction of midday meals scheme in schools drew the criticism of economists Kamaraj proved right because of the successful implementation of this scheme school dropouts become less.

He was a socialist to the core and a Gandhian in his approach. Whether the implementation of certain schemes would be of help to the last man in the social ladder was his only test. This is purely a Gandhian approach. Kamaraj was against communal organizations which brought forth hatred among people. But he had to bear the brunt of Hindi agitation in New Delhi. His residence was
attacked by Jansangis and his belongings were burnt. He was the saddest man. In the long chequered history of Tamil Nadu Congress there was no one to compete with him. When C.Subramanian and O.V.Alagesan resigned their respective ministerships on their Anti-Hindi stance he prevailed over them. His word was the written law.

As the Chief minister whenever he consulted the government officials he hated the muddle they created against the common man’s Progress. He basically believed that India lived only in villages.

He who made Lal Bahathur Sasthri and later Mrs. Indira Gandhi as Prime Ministers was thrown into oblivion after Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy’s election to the presidency of India. Emergency left sorrowful memories in him. When he represented Nagercoil Constituency in the Lok sabha Mrs. Indira Gandhi who came for the inauguration of rail-line at Nagercoil didn’t exhibit any courtesy to him. He swallowed all bitterpills and stooped to conquer. Later J.P.Narayanan and other leaders were imprisoned by Mrs. Indira Gandhi Kamaraj was eagerly awaiting for the release of those National stalwarts. But in the night he came to know that Acharya Kiruplani was chained and dragged in the street and it was in the same night his end came.

Though he was highly critical of Aringar Anna and his party he wept his lungs out when Anna was affected by cancer. He was not an ordinary politician but a statesmen who comes once in several hundred years. Political differences never deterred him from his compassion to fellow beings. The greatest mark of his personality is he never identified himself with his cause of Nadars. He was the one who arrested his own nephew for illicit rice trade.
Once when he visited his aged mother at Virudhunagar he was surprised to see a fan over her head. Kamaraj enquired who provided her with a fan. She innocently said that it was C.Subramanian one of his ministers. Kamaraj immediately reprimanded her and ordered for the removal of the fan saying that there are crores of mothers who have not seen fans in their lives, 'you have to live within the funds I provide you every month'. He was such a disciplinarian. He never spent a public money for his private end.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who was once annoyed at the snoring noise of Kamaraj had to come years later to unveil the statue of Kamaraj at Chennai.

When Mrs. Indira Gandhi instructed Mu. Karunanidhi who was then the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to arrest him while Kamaraj was prepared to be arrested Mr. Karunanidhi stood the ground and declared not to arrest Kamaraj and instead he was prepared to offer his resignation despite political differences and party affiliations. Kamaraj was held in high esteem by friends and foes. With his departure a political vaccum came to settle in Tamil Nadu by the result of which congress thereafter never became a factor to be reckoned with. Though he was bitter towards the words and actions of Mahathma Gandhi he still praised him as his leader.

This may be due to his universal approach or to the inbuilt fear of the personality of Mahathma Gandhi. Since no study of an analysis of his life and mission is available nothing could be said extensively. As long as he was the Chief Minister of the state, his cabinet colleagues were corrupt free. It was he who brought forth Tamil official language Act. Though Kamaraj was not versatile enough to contribute to literature his knowledge on contemporary politics came from the forlorn and foresaken masses of this society. Though
Kamaraj was exposed to scientific inventions of the socialist shade his idea of socialism was quite practical and that has made him an immortal go between masses and ideology.

Aringnar Anna:

Anna organised a party of his own DMK in 1949. He challenged Periyar but only gently accepting his father figure. Periyar had his difficulties in containing Anna’s influence.

Anna was a matchless orator principally responsible for Tamil renaissance on stages. To say that he appealed to the base elements of the vulnerable youth is a reckless statement with political vengeance.

Anna was a plumb, genial individual. Anna masterminded the organizing of his younger brethren. By late 60’s he was a potential adversary against the congress. He was a speaker known for his flowery turns of phrases but always conscious of the fact that the truth should reach his audience.

Anna was a remarkable writer and a journalist par-excellence. He wrote for cinemas also. His plays too were all-powerful social themes. Above all he was a voracious reader. Even on the day when he assumed, the office of the chief ministership he had ‘Summing Up’ by Somerset Maugham in his hands. Such was his weakness for books.

It was his conviction that power came to his party too earlier. He felt that a blow came to strike at the roots of his rapport with his countless followers. He was an ascetic in politics.
Novelist Jayakanthan employed all vengeful diatribes against Anna. It was out of a perverted mind in the grip of sickness.

As an administrator Anna had his shady spots too. Before 1967 elections Anna was quick to announce that if his party was elected to power he would implement ‘One measure of rice for a rupee plan’. But after assuming charge of Chief Ministership economists convinced him of the impossibly of the scheme and Anna succumbed to their pressure who were far off from the pitiable conditions of the people.

Anna was under the mistaken impression that unless he stood for English, in the vaccum Hindi would sweep through. But ultimately Hindi was at bay; but English had its preimitive hold on the Tamil masses.

Aringar Anna asserted st. Thirumoolar’s dictum ‘one is the race; and one is God’ thereby he had taken a stand diamatrically opposed to Periyar’s atheism. This is where Dravidian ideology underwent a metamorphosis of change.

The negative stands of Dravidian Movement got modernised into positive postures. Anna was insistence that he has to learn from the people and start with what they have.

As a master speaker instead of deriving satisfaction from what he said he went further to get him convinced whether his utterances reached the masses.

In the mid 60s when this researcher was a student of st. Xaviers college, Palayankottai he had an occasion to listen to Anna’s election campaign explaining how much foreign loan the then government of India had got. He compared the amount of currency to the height of the tower of Nellaiyappar
temple. It is the descriptive still was prominent in him so that people might perceive a difficult economic idea.

He was appreciative of the growing talents of his immediate followers. By his masterly analysis he excelled them all. He had a considerable command over English too.

On the day when he assumed the office of the Chiefministership lot of government furnitures were transported to his bunglow. While Rani Anna his wife moved all the furniture to the interior portion of the residence Anna gently warned that she should not feel someday when they were removed. Such was his simplicity.

However, one was critical of Aringar Anna, he couldn’t raise his little finger against him. Such a spotless political life was his. His demise was a colossal loss to all Tamils. The passionate crowds that gathered on the day when his flower decked coffin managed through the streets of Madras it was an eloquent testimony to his life and mission.

Kalaignar Mu. Karunanidhi:

Born at Thiruvarur in the Tanjore District Thiru. Mu. Karunanidhi’s evolution in Tamil Politics is phenomenal.

Enticed by the ideals of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy he was a sub-editor in his ‘Kudi Arasu’ at Erode. Mu. Karunanidhi is perhaps the only example in Tamil political areana wherein a gentleman from a deprived class has come to the height of glory by sheer hard work.
This researcher has described him as ‘machine with a matchless heart’ in his ‘Varalatil Kalaignar’.\textsuperscript{11}

There are only a few people who are writers. But nature had endowed Karunanidhi with two substantial roles - a writer and on whom one can write.

In the rich Tamil tradition where poets had been rulers like St.Thayumanavar, St. Sekkizhar and St. Manikavasagar, Karunanidhi wielding his powerful pen has been a ruler.

His love and admiration for Tamil language and literature has no match. From Kallakudi struggle wherein he demanded the name Dalmiapuram, a northern one to be changed into Kallakudi his stand against the imposition of Hindi and his pivotal role in safeguarding the interests of Tamils throughout the world are legendary.

His scholarly contributions to Thirukkural are magnificent. But his wavering on the ethnic issue of Sri lankan Tamils and Tamil medium of instruction are spots in otherwise his peerless career.

After the assassination of sri Sabarethinam, he hardened his attitude towards LTTE. LTTE supremo Prabakarans’ liquidation of his own brothers who were all partakers in Tamil cause infuriated him. Though he suggests the bifurcation of Srilanka like Checkoslovakia, some of his utterances against the militant leader have been thoroughly misunderstood.

When the question of Tamil medium came up he was not steadfast. But compelling political circumstances made him drift away from his earlier stand.
Whenever he was the chief minister he was only a chief minister but when he was no more a chief minister he was always a Tamil warrior.

He is the only one who has conceptualised T.S. Elitots’ concept how to become immortal by aligning with ageless characters. His contribution to Sangam poetry and Thirukkural are masterpieces.

‘Kalaignarin Kavidaigal’ part I a research work on his Sangam poems by this researcher reveals many of his attainments in literature.\textsuperscript{12}

When DMK was organised he was no where near Anna, his mentor in the order of personalities. But by sheer hard work and unflinching loyalty to leadership he won the heart of Anna.

He too exploited cinema in the capacity of a story-dialogue writer and producer. His ‘Parasakthi’ wherein Sivaji Ganesan made an entry was epoch making in shattering superstition prevalent among Tamil masses. His plays have the under current of social reforms. He has been battling against the primitive hold of religion on the people at this ripe old age of 78.

Though Anna was the supermo he only masterminded the Anti-Hindi agitation. He was the principal force behind the establishment of a non-congress government in Tamil Nadu. While MGR was never in prison for the cause expoused Karunadhi was a jailbird known for his periodic internment. His literary diction is inimitable. He was principally responsible for taking Tamil Poetry to the Tamil masses through Kaviarrangams (Poets Meet). Though in majority of his poems he was not for composition within the parameters of grammatical strictures his free verse of Walt Witman’s origin is a significant contribution to Tamil Literature.
As a journalist no other Dravidian leader including Anna could exceed him. Murasoli was his mouthpiece through which he aired his views. He suffered heroically the hardships his socio political organ ‘Murasoli’ had to face. He loved the paper that much he has read the proof of the newspaper at times.

He had the unmistakable knack of identifying talents. It was he who nominated this researcher to the council of states in 1974 through the instrumentality of Hon’ble Murasoli Maran. He has been patronizing many poets like Vairamuthu, Abdul Rehman, Erode Tamil Anban so on and so forth. He has extended his hand of recognition criss crossing party affiliations. We can cite his admiration for Kumari Anandan basically a congress stalwart.

He was the only one chief minister who earned the admiration of pressmen. His answers to their queries were graceful altercations of rare attainments of intellectual heights.

While playing to the gallary is the normal feature of politics, some of his stances are easily misunderstandable.

His recent fulminations against Afghanistan estranged Tamil Muslims. His hob-nabbing with BJP too. But Karunanidhi having taken a stand does not normally relent. This is the basic strength of his character.

As a political leader he is more than succesful in exploring the emotions of Tamils. His deification of Tamil and glorification of the past are momentous decisions. In chistling out Valluvar Kottam and a grand statue for St. Thiruvalluvar in Kanyakumari are emotional outbursts of historical importance.
There has always been in society two sections, active minority and passive majority. In French Revolution, India's struggle for freedom and Anti-Hindi agitation it is not the passive majority of the people who acted but only the active minority. Karunanidhi is the custodian of active minority who keep the Tamil alive.

On many occasions he was not allowed to complete his 5 years term as Chief Minister. But he has always pounced back.

In his phase of Chief Ministership of 1997-2001 two of his concepts were novel and noteworthy. His 'Uzavar Santhai' (Farmer's Market) was a grand idea wherein intermediaries at both ends were removed lock, stock and barrel. Actually this is a Marxian Revolution of Dravidian brand. His experiment was successful.

In computerization of all Government offices at his native Thiruvarur District was an All India accomplishment. Tamil internet was his signal contribution to the cause of Tamil and Science.

He provided a corruption free administration in 1997-2001. But he had his temporary political waterloo at the hustings.

Many developments his administration caused in urban areas had no impact on the rural masses who at least cared to vote.

In the recently conducted civic polls he has again proved his political acumen. For DMK it is a come back.

One always understands despite problems imposed on him by his adversaries he swims through. It is one of the remarkable traits in him.
His attempts to redefine federal structure by reviewing central-state relations are materials worthy of further research. His concern to save the pluralistic character of Indian society has reflected throughout his career.

As a champion of Backward classes he has not wavered even once. On the other hand M.G.R had his tough times when he had to take different stands diametrically opposed to each other on Backward class issues.

Among the Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu Karunanidhi is an avid reader only with one exception Anna. Other Chief Ministers when participated in a book relasing ceremonies normally do not utter a word on the book released. Karunanidhi is strikingly different and in analysing the book he excels. This trait shows that he takes his participation seriously.

Karunanidhi is no Hamlet. ‘To be or not to be’ is not his problem. He is known for his quick and firm decisions.

Whether one agrees or not he is the emblem of Tamil Nadu. At world level Tamils have no other leader except Karunanidhi to identify with. He is cautious, careful and measured. It is to the credit of Karunanidhi that he has kept Periyar’s flag aloft as a chief minister.

He took steps to bring amendments to the Tamil nadu Hindu Religious endowments Act 1959 with an objective to make all castes as Archagas (Priests).\textsuperscript{13}

S.V.Rajadurai\textsuperscript{14} records that an American Professor by name Charles Rayson has recorded how some of the religious heads met Karunanidhi he then Chief Minister and petitioned to him that amendment he initiated to be reconsidered.
During emergency of Mrs. Indira Gandhi too Karunanidhi stood firmly against the onslaughts of New Delhi while AIADMK took a different stand. He was prepared to resign his Chief Ministership instead of arresting Kamaraj on the directives of New Delhi.

But it was his government which was pressured by New Delhi to proscribe this researcher’s book ‘Niyayam Ketkirom’ (Justice, We demand) under Internal Security Act. His was the second one (Vazum Kedayamam) to be banned when he was no more the Chief Minister.

For the Dravidians after Ravana, Karunanidhi was the greatest epic hero though he too is not free from flaws.

His gentle criticism of the naked vandalism of VHP and Bajrang Dal, militant Hindu outfits striking at the roots of secular democracy when evaluated by historians future would not fail to pass a harsh judgement on his attitude and approach.

His threats that his party would leave the NDA are not taken seriously since there is an accusation against him from all secular forces that for the sake of a few ministerial berths he is prepared to sacrifice his entire history of battle for just and fair causes.

As he grows in age one cannot witness the same old Karunanidhi in him and he is a much-changed man now. He is under the mistaken impression that his moves are not watched by historians. No, he is terribly wrong. The accusation that he has become like any other light-weight who nurses personal political ambition at the cost of ideals and the very mission of life. Karunanidhi
with a 'trisool' in his hand and forehead smeared with ash is a picture no one would like to see.

He is under the wrong impression that people's memory is short. Already the frame of mind has become intact and the dye is cast that he has lost the secular credentials long back in exchange to ministerial berths.

'India's Time – Essays in Honour of Muasoli Maran' edited by Vinanchi Arachi Jebamalai is a compendium of different articles on the Indian economic scenario. They are judicious in their approach. 'Murasloi Maran: An intellectual leader of the Dravidian Stock by Prof. N. Naganathan, Head. Of the Department of Economics, University of Madras, Chennai is an objective study of Murasoli Maran and what socio-political contours went into his personality.

There are references on Dr. Karunanihdhi how his immediate impact on the personality of Murasoli Maran has shaped him into an intellectual giant.\(^\text{15}\)

**Thiru M.G.Ramachandran:**

Dr. Thandavan, a contemporary historian of considerable repute in his laborious work,

'All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam – Political dynamics in Tamil Nadu' has discussed extensively on MGR's leadership and his contribution to the further metamorphosis of Dravidian Movement in chapter 5.

It is saddening some of the authors on Dravidian Movement have either slighted or ignored MGR. This is nothing short of subjectivism of the worst
Dr. Ponmudi’s comparative study of the Black and Dravidian Movements is only one example.

M.G.R. was principally responsible for popularizing Anna’s ideals which were confined to the refined through his popular media of films. Though one cannot firmly say that he was nursing political ambitions in his films from 1947 till he became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu if analysed in minute details it presents a pattern of instrumental power in realizing his socio-political ideals.

This researcher himself in his book ‘Therkku Enbathu Thisai Alla’ (south is not a direction) published in 1984 has described how Anna’s ideals were like pregnment clouds and how M.G.R. succeeded in converting them into water in mud-pots. Therefore for the popular base of DMK, MGR was cardinally responsible.

From a childhood of abject poverty and abysmal ignorance in Sri Lanka, Kerala and Kumbakonam in Tamil Nadu and finally at Chennai how MGR got himself evolved is a matter for thorough research.

He played Good Samaritan in many of his films and one has to see whether there was any cleavage between his word and deed. Though MGR filed criminal cases against this researcher in the seventies, all of a sudden he changed his course and lauded his talents. It was he who declared him to be a Member of the Legislative Council of the state in 1983 and Member of the Council of States in 1984. It was he who proposed his name to the Council of States in the capacity of a Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Though it is true that he had to play into the hands of the Income tax department of Government of India because of the force of circumstances and he
is not free from blunders. But to say Thiru Karunanidhi was principally responsible for his ouster is a historic howler.

There was a substantial contribution of MGR in making Karunanidhi the chief minister of the state. In the battle for chief ministership between Karunanidhi and V.R.Nedunchezhian, MGR threw his lots with Karunanidhi. Other anti-Karunanidhi forces were responsible in shaping MGR into a political leader. Though there were other causes, the immediate one was that MGR was overlooked in some of the decisions Karunanidhi arrived at. If one can have a peep into the situational upsurge in the personality of Mohammed Ali Jinnah, one would easily understand the strategic dig of MGR on the cult of certain leaders.

It was MGR’s situational charisma as Dr. Thandavan masterly puts it that stood him in good stead for his victory in Dindugal bye-elections in 1972; it heralds a new chapter of populat politics in the Dravidian Movement.

DMK is matchlessly organised by Anna and Karunanidhi and its band of orators are an incomparable lot in the whole of Asian continent. Despite their painting MGR blacker than he was they could not succeed. Despite this painting him down that he was a Malayali, an outsider, MGR could ride in the crest of glory. Common people who were addicted to his popular film hits, were cosmopolitan in their outlook and they could admire their hero despite his moorings. He was virtually a demi-god to his film frequenters.

Rm. Veerappan, K.A. Mathiazagan and his brother K.A. Krishnaswami and a host of others were responsible in culling out the political leader in him.
If someone thinks that he is a political lightweight he is grossly mistaken. This researcher has been a witness to his political segacity. In 1980 when MGR nominated him in Purasawalkkam Assembly Constituency against Prof. K.A. Anbalagan, DMK’s General Secretary he was of the view that if he were the candidate pitted against the all powerful General secretary of DMK, he would cancel his state tour and concentrate only on his constituency. And he was right.

In 1980 when this researcher met him after years of departure his first question was ‘what is the difference between the French Revolution and Russian Revolution’. He reprimanded the researcher for saying that the world would change. He was emphatic in saying that the world would not change on its own but should be changed. He asked for the meaning of the word ‘penitentiary’. This word was found in his diary of August 1947.

Despite failing health and facing challenges from within and without he proved himself to be a strikingly different phenomenon.

It was MGR who introduced the element of ‘religion’ in otherwise a rationalist movement. His frequent visits to Shri. Mookambika’s Temple at Kollur, Karnataka bear ample testimony to his fact.

‘Nan Yen Piranthen’ (why was I born) released first in Ananda Vikadan 1971 which was re-printed in ‘Thai’ to which this researcher was the editor his leanings towards religion came to the light of the day.16

His basic idea was Periyar E.V.Ramasamy was not successful in removing God from the minds of Tamils since in such a vaccum he had nothing to offer. God was the bank balance of the poor. God was the feeble straw when the impoverished struggle for life in a deep whirlpool.
Therefore to MGR, God was not a luxurious interloper but the basic need of the deprived. Rationalism does not mean anti-God; it may lead one to God also. He had understood the difference between religious fervour and spiritual splendour.

Two attributes of MGR’s character warrant further probe. He was the only leader perhaps in the Dravidian Movement who was prepared for self-analysis and review of his beliefs. The chasm between his word and deed was insignificantly limited.

He could appreciate talents from whichever social strata they emanate. In 1983 it was he who delegated this researcher to participate in Poet Subramania Bharathi centenary celebrations in London and other European capitals on behalf of Government of India. This researcher was hardly 39 then.

His financial helps to people, known and unknown, publicized and unpublish, has converted him into an immortal father figure. Challenges people pose to their advisories cease as they whither away. But his challenge is still alive after his death. His charismatic image is such.

Ailing as he was in U.S. Rm.Veerappan his close confident was organizing the election campaign despite internal and powerful challenges from Selvi. Jayalalithaa. The ailing Chief Minister’s clippings with the voice of this researcher was the strategy adopted by Rm. Veerappan. It was enough for his party to win the elections hands down. Such was his grip on the people.

He could contain DMK, a powerful contender at bay. The oratorical skills of DMK were of no value before MGR who was speechless due to his chronic illness.
Perhaps no other leader has been adored by womenfolk in Tamil Nadu as he was. Novelist Jayakanthan's 'Cinimavukku Pona Chittalu' was a warning how women fell prey to his charismatic personality. But the novel was a sentimental perversion. It was not lust but admiration for his qualities of head and heart that saddled him in the hearts of majority of Tamil women.

He too had ups and downs in his later political career, but undaunted the indomitable MGR stayed always upright.

He had the skilful knack of converting disadvantages into advantages.

1. His poverty was the teacher of the basic postulates of his life's philosophy.

2. His being shot by M.R. Radha stood him in good stead.

3. Despite expulsion from DMK he could explode into a mass upsurge against DMK.

4. Challenges from the trusted at the evening of his carrier too left only poignant memories in the minds of the people.

But for his weakness for women he is an enigmatic puzzle who could live in Tamil legends.

As an administrator and political leader he retained the basic qualities of an artiste. He could peep into what he saw.

A Gandhian, a fellow traveller of the Communists, later he was in the Dravidian Movement. Though he was a late comer his charismatic leadership had earned him a coveted place of honour.
He was the end product of a turbulent era in Tamil politics. He too was successful in chiselling out on era unto himself. Underestimation of his personality and contribution to Tamil politics are subjective elements, partisan and prejudicial.

Prof. R. Thandavan has contributed an indepth study on ‘Dravidian Movement’ and the impact of M.G.Ramachandran on the popularisation of Anna’s Ideals. It is a remarkable example of an objective study of men and matters.

Selvi Jayalalithaa:

Selvi Jayalalithaa came to political prominence in 1983 when Karunanidhi attempted to utilize her services to denigrate MGR’s image. He made a rapprochement with Selvi Jayalalithaa and brought her back to him.

Intemperate, broody over the past her intellectualism has only a few parallels in the whole country.

Among the various leaders of political parties of Tamilnadu AIADMK was well organized one and even a small worker in some distant villages is afraid of Amma since Amma could punish the one who is faulty.

Tamil women have lot of admiration for Amma, since enslaved as they are they pin their hopes on a heroic woman who battles against the atrocious male domination. Whatever the women could not do if some other heroic woman does they always admire.

Maravar community as a whole sees a liberator in the personality of Selvi Jayalalithaa. They always admire of her martial qualities that keep on fighting.
It is quite natural for a community known for its political prowess to be appreciative of her relentless battles. Though Mu. Karunanidhi hoisted a lot of corruption cases against her she came out of them unscathed. Her journey against the heaviest odds of her life is legendary and writ large on the face in the history of Indian women. Though she owned her political ascendancy to MGR, her mentor, to say that she was not adorned with personal virtues is wrong.

As Francis Bacon said, 'Reading maketh a ready man'. She is quick witted and known for her decision making powers.

Undaunted in spirit, courageous in disposition, versatile in knowledge the only blunder she has been periodically committing is that she creates enemies and spends her time in getting them destroyed. As she grows in age and wisdom she has become a matured personality who could cope up with a stress and strain of political life. She is known for keeping up her promises and is trustworthy.

Selvi Jayalalithaa is an able administrator with unlimited capacity to govern and lead the masses. Historical writing on her life and mission has been a kind of liturgical service dotted with flowery turns of phrases.

Selvi Jayalalithaa is a noted writer too. Though she has not written to the extent of Aringar Anna and Mu. Karunanidhi her contribution to Tamil literature is more than that of Mr. M.G. Ramachandran. Her articles in 'Tugluk' then a fortnightly is controversial. Then later this researcher only edited them and brought forth a book under the caption 'Ennangal Chila' ('A few thoughts').

Her point was whatever she had said against some of those political wizards were the reactions of her at a particular moment; therefore they should
not be deleted by way of editing. As a publisher this researcher requested her to allow him to carry on the edition successfully. She too conceded finally.

In ‘Kumutham’ weekly she was serializing a story. It seems to be biographical. Some controversy built up around the publication of the story. Therefore, the story was withheld after many weeks of publication.

When this researcher was the chief editor of ‘Thai’ weekly he published the rest of her story in the weekly which was received well. Later he published it in a book form under the caption ‘Nee Ini Naan Illai’. (I do not exist in your absence).

Then this researcher invited her to use the columns of his ‘Thai’ weekly. She serialized several articles, which were finally codified in a book form under the caption ‘Manathai Thotta Malargal’. (Flowers that touched the Heart)

There is a false accusation from the adversaries of this researcher that whatever she had written was not from her but from the researcher himself. This is unadulterated falsity. This researcher had never been a ghostwriter. Except for one article in world Tamil conference volume which appeared in the name of MGR he had not written for any other persons however highly placed they are.

Whatever that had been published in the name of Selvi Jayalalitha was her own. Every syllable belongs to her.

In the beginning when she was a political novice this researcher might have helped for a few months in shaping her speeches. Otherwise she herself was quite capable in making her speech and it is still perplexing to the researcher why she had not developed the art of speech making till now.
In her private life she was subjected to lot of atrocities by his mentor at periodic intervals. But she withstood those harmful diatribes against her patiently. Mrs. Janaki Ramachandran who was also close to this researcher had given vent to her feeling against Selvi Jayalalithaa. It was quite natural. One should remember that it was not the patronage of her political mentor that brought her to prominence. On the other hand certain independent qualities of her own which propelled her into political significance.

In the Dravidian movement MGR was strikingly different personality in that he deferred from hard-core leaders and became a devotee of Sri. Mookambika. Selvi Jayalalithaa too believes in astrological wizards and the beneficial efficacy of time. Though there are many astrologers who offer suggestions to her she takes decisions independently and further consults men who matter in this field and strictly adhere to what they say. She believes astrological predictions only on statistical meridian.

Where she has to be appreciated is she does not conceal her faith in God, Homams and Pariharas. While there are Dravidian leaders who believe astrological predictions personally but condemn them as superstitions on platforms, she does not lead a life of a coward.

Selvi Jayalalithaa’s beliefs have completely transformed the basics of the movement. It is quite natural that these developments are bound to come for a growing movement in the passage of time. Cho Ramasamy in the ‘big fight’ with this researcher on the utility of Dravidian movement was of the opinion that Dravidian Movement which was once anti God, anti north anti Brahmin and anti Hindi. Despite all anti-epithets later underwent lot of changes introduced
into the thinking process of the movement the basic foundation on which the movement had grown was not swept off.

The defence of this researcher is in the course of time when a movement finds its past ideologies were wrong and faulty there was nothing wrong in changing them and adopting new ones. Cho Ramasamy’s observation mainly came from MGR and Selvi Jayalalithaa’s unconventional approach to religious practices among the Dravidian leaders.

Recently in the communal carnage that followed a train tragedy the Karsevaks faced Selvi Jayalalithaa condemned those leaders who were critical on attacks on minorities and not on Hindu majority. This is an unorthodox view, since molestation of Muslim women preceded the setting aflame of the train. While she has the right to hold her opinion the Gujrat Government placing reliance on a meaningless manual for compensation sanctioned each of the Hindu victim Rupees two lakhs and Rs. one lakh only to non Hindus. This was tendentiously discriminatory. But Jayalalithaa who condemned the attack on the majority community was almost silent when minorities were attacked in the aftermath and the discriminatory attitude of the state government. Discrimination in providing compensation to the riot victims was not also condemned by her. Because quite often she acts on political impulses, she had to face political turbulence. If her steps were slow and measured someday she may occupy a coveted position in the national scene.

Her adroitness in tackling the demands of government employees though showed her in bad light common people supported her moves despite bus fair and electricity cost hike. While her counterpart A.K. Antony of Kerala suffered endlessly on account of his silence Selvi Jayalalithaa had faced the problem
valiantly and proved to the world that a movement could never succeed without the backing of the people. Her scheme of ‘Annadhan’ in Hindu temples has invited adverse criticism from both Muslma and Christians.

She has become enimical to Tamil Scholars since she had removed Kannagi’s statue unceremoniously. Tamil scholars who were offended by this blatant act may be few numerically. But, in every movement there is an active minority and a silent majority who are only witnesses to a historic occurance.

Though several pages have been written on French Revolution only 16 men had assembled to bring down the Bastille prison down. In India’s independence movement too not all the people participated. Only a patriotic few came forward. Next in the Anti Hindi agitation it was only a handful of few who fought for the rights. One should not minimize that the torch bearers were few in numbers. As long as the active minority remains intact a movement may gain momentum with devastating results.

Prof R. Thandavan has brought out an extensive study on Dr.J.Jayalalithaa under the caption ‘Dr.J. Jayalalitha – A Phenomenon’ from the Academy of Public Affairs, University of Madras. This volume a thorough analysis of the mission of Dr.J.Jayalalithaa is quite interesting. A certain chapter on the election manefestoes of AIADMK is revealing.¹⁹

Val-Ko:

In contemporary Tamil Political history four personalities are worthy of analysis.
The first one who comes to any researcher's mind is Vai-Ko (V.Gopalasamy). A passionate young man, idealist in the built up, dreamy but practical he is said to be free from mortal flaws.

He was an ardent follower of KalaIgnar Karunanidhi from his formative period. Later he developed some difference of opinion with DMK high command on the Slrlankan ethnic issue.

His oratorical outbursts in the council of states in support of his Tamil brethren are legendary. Of course he was true to himself.

Vai-Ko baiters in DMK are many. But they howl against a voice of reason for their immediate benefits though they have lot of admiration for this youthful leader.

He formed a party of his own MDMK and despite his active participation in many of the elections victory eludes him.

Though his party is a party of the ruling NDA with ministers at the centre he is not for office.

There is an accusation that as it was in the past DMK high command had driven E.V.K.Sampath, Poet Kannadasan and M.G.Ramachandran and finally Vai-Ko out of their fold since they would emerge as powerful contenders for power later. Though this moot point is beyond the purview of this research one has to look into this accusation dispassionately.

In his personal interview KalaIgnar Karunanidhi had denied that he didn't nurse ill-feelings against Vai-Ko, since he was a potential rival to his son, M.K.Stalin.
Vai-Ko’s complaint is when Karunanidhi believes to be a matchless leader of the Tamil race by his unstinted support to his sons he couldn’t grow beyond the role of a father.

It is up to the coming generations to take stock of the situation and come to a definite conclusion who was right.

On the other hand the interested in DMK have always accused Vai-Ko of indirectly strengthening the hands of Selvi Jayalalithaa against the political interests of Kalaingnar Karunanidhi.

Personally interviewed Vai-Ko dismisses these allegations as false and motivated. His unqualified support to LTTE Supermo V.Prabakaran is part of Tamil ethnic history.

Viduthalai K Veeramani:

‘Viduthalai’ K Veeramani still perpetuates the memory of Periyar E.V.Ramasamy.

He was periyar’s secretary for years together. An ardent atheists who fulminates and fights against all odds of social evils he has become an enigmatic puzzle since this leader of a Non-Brahmin Movement has become a devotee to Selvi Jayalalithaa.

If Cho. Ramaswamy fights against DMK high command one can understand. But K. Veeramani who is a proverbial enemy to Cho and his like too is pitted against DMK.
It is generally believed that Kalaignar Karunanidhi could have been more generous to accommodate K.Veeramani. But on the other hand Karunanidhi in his personal interviews has always said that there was no meeting ground for both of them.

Due to force of circumstances K.Veeramani has emerged as the archenemy to DMK high command.

But Karunanidhi in his ripe old age fights K.Veeramani valiantly since his martial qualities are still intact.

Dr.Ramadoss:

Dr.Ramadoss, the founder leader of PMK is a chieftain of rare qualities. His attachment to Tamil ethnicity is unquestionable.

Though vanniyas do constitute the single largest majority in Tamil Nadu they couldn’t emerge as a political power.

Persons belonging to the microscopic minorities come to lead the states’ destiny. Vanniya’s mind is exercised over this sort of political hybernation. Therefore they got themselves organised into a political force PMK.

Though fundamentally it is a party of a vanniyars there are people from depressed classes and Muslims.

In the northern parts of Tamil Nadu there are powerful pockets of vanniyars where they are powers to be reckoned with.
Though Dr. Ramdoss had a set of followers who were violent in their disposition with electoral politics lot of decorum has set in.

As an individual Dr. Ramasoss is an ardent lover of Tamil language and literature, a champion of the Backward classes and an admirer of Tamil ethnicity.

His is a fighting brigade against all social evils that keep Tamils in subjugation.

**Pazha. Nedumaran:**

Pazha. Nedumaran years back was in the camp of K. Kamaraj. After his demise he started drifting away from the Congress fold.

Once a nationalist to the core later he became a powerful patron of LTTE.

His endless mission and passionate appeal for Tamil Eelam has earned for him an eternal place in the hearts of millions of Tamils. He visited Jaffra 4 times from 1982 to 1991.

Now he has undertaken the task of organising Tamil champions throughout the world, since there is an indispensable need for such campaigner such as Pazha. Nedumaran. The awakened Tamils stand up in arms to follow him. His world Tamils awakening conference in 1984 at Trichy is a harbinger of Tamil nationalism.

By marshalling the cause of Tamils Pazha. Nedumaran has converted his life into a meaningful message.
Chaste Tamil Movement:

With the periodical sujucation of aliens Tamil inhabitants lost their identity. In Tamil Nadu itself there are parts wherein Non-Tamils are thriving. For example in the city of Madras there are more Telegus than Tamils but those Telegus have all along stood for Tamil.

Many of them adopt two language formula. Telugu in the home and Tamil for the outer world. A Muslim or a Christian who are considered to be non-Tamils in the common parlance do not employ any other language except Tamil for all practical purposes.

One should be conscious of the indispensable need for purity in language. Language essentially is a mark of identity and being. Therefore with lot of alien words if a language gets corrupted in the course of time then those people who use that language too lose their identity.

Moreover a word is a vehicle for thought; it conveys certain specific philosophy. For example the Sanskrit word ‘putra’ commonly used by Tamils is not a mere equivalent or supplement to ‘mahan’ (son) in Tamil. The word ‘putra’ cannot that one who prevents the father from falling into pandemonium. Tamils have no such scriptural idea since Tamils have always treated men and women on equal basis.

Pure Tamil movement is a sort of reaction to the brahminical corruption of Tamil. This pole has resulted in another pole; for the development and maintenance of Tamil there is a compelling need to encourage such a movement at least to keep the corrupting influences on Tamil under check.
The opinion that Sanskrit is the mother of all Indian languages is an arrogant fallacy. On the other hand Sanskrit is a conglomerate of prakrit, a north Dravidian language and other dialects. Sanskrit scholars scrupulously follow Tholkapiar’s dictum to adopt words from different languages.

‘Thulai’ (Balance) is a Tamil word, which is adopted in Sanskrit as ‘Thulam’. ‘Salam’ is a Tamil word in 2nd century A.D; in Sanskrit it has become ‘Jal’. English users too strictly follow Tholkappiyam. Kattumaram (Native boat) has been lifted by the English from Tamil but they pronounce it a ‘Katamaran’. Only Tamils have the slavish mentality that they pronounce as those words sound in different languages.

Prof. Grigg of the oxford university is of the opinion that Tamil is a highly evolved language, since it has only one alphabet which can be pronounced in 4 ways. Sanskrit on the other hand has two many letters. For example ‘ka’. These various words for variety of expressions, Sanskrit scholars wrongly believe to have placed it in a place of pride. They conveniently forget in English ‘G’ is pronounced as ‘god’ and geography’. If this economy of alphabets is the mark of development for English why do they treat Tamil differently?.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak out his passionate love for Sanskrit places, Sanskrit in 6000 B.C. Poet Perunchitraranar, one of the Tamil savants is of the view that Sanskrit can be placed to the most to 1500 B.C.

‘Thirukkural’ stood for purity of Tamil in expression. In Kamban’s Ramayana he employed pure Tamil words. For example instead of the word ‘Lakshmi’ Kamban coined a word ‘Poovi’ (one who sits on a flower). He was not even prepared to call ‘Sanaki’ as ‘Janaki’. ‘Silappathiharam’ of Ilango Adigal too was a literary surge against Aryan domination.
Rev. Caldwell in his ‘Comparitive study of Dravidian languages’,\textsuperscript{20} says

‘If English were to leave the Latin etymology it would lose its roots. But in case of Tamil it can thrive without the association of Sanskrit’ (rendered from Tamil version)

It was at the end of 17\textsuperscript{th} century one Saminatha Desikar eloquently condemned those who corrupted Tamil. Rev. Dr. Nobili, Rev. Beschi and Dr. Caldwell convinced Tamil scholars that Tamil could exist without the assistance of any other language.

Paranjothi Munivar in 16\textsuperscript{th} Century, and at the end of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century Manonmaniyan Sundaranar asserted that Tamil could exist head aloft without the assistance of other languages.

Abraham Pandithar (1859-1919) explored Tamil musical notes (puns) distinct from the corrupt Sanskritised ones.

Ayothithasa Pandithar (1845-1914) wrote one ‘Tharukanool’ (Book of logic) in Tamil and he established a newspaper under the head ‘Tamilan’. Vadalur Vallalar (1823-1874) strongly condemned the imposed supremacy of Sanskrit.

Winglo, K. Kathiraivel Pillai, Veera Mamunivar, Pandhithurai Thevar, Muharal Karthikeyan, Kanagasabai Pillai, K.S.Srinivasa Pillai, Vibulananda Adigal of Jaffna, Parithimar Kalaignar and Maraimalai Adigal contributed to chaste Tamil movement directly or indirectly. Maraimalai Adigal’s contribution to chaste Tamil Movement is legendary.
Uma Maheswaran, Thiru. Vi. Ka, K. Subramanian, P.V. Manickam, Arasan Shanmugam, Pandithamani, Selvakesva Mudaliar, Tmt. Neelambikai, N.M. Venkatsamy and K. Namasivayam were in the forefront of the movement.

Scholars like U.V. Saminatha Iyer who was principally responsible for the publication of sangam literature were all praise for the contributory role of Sanskrit.

Pavanar Perenchitr and K. Appadurai were some of the few who moved this movement forward. Pavanar's contribution in this regard is epoch-making. Now Prof. Arasendran, Prof. Valan Arasu, Prof. Ilangumaran, Prof. Aruli and Fr. Leonard (Arimavazhan) have been working for the progress of this movement.

In the literary history of Tamils this movement has not been described at all due to subjectivism.

**Antil Hindi Movement:**

India, whether one agrees or not is a confederation of different principalities. It is of a composite culture in the backdrop of a pularlistic society. Dr. Ambedkar the principal architect of Indian Constitution actually suggested for a 'union of states' in the draft constitution.

Since it was a period emotionally charged due to partition everyone stood for uniformity which stifles at the very roots of a federation and not for confederation. Uniformity is quite unnatural. In a melting pot such as India wherein different languages, religions and races uniformity is blasphemous.
In their anxiety to keep the various units falling apart in the backdrop of partition the constitution fathers thrushed Hindi on the saddle of ‘Rashtra Basha’. While imposition became a stark reality, Tamils were up in arms against the domination of Hindi.

Attitudes of Tamils have been critised by the Hindi stalwarts as detrimental to national unity. In the last half of the century if one were to closely watch the discussions in parliament one can witness how MPs from Hindi heartland had thrushed their ideas on the non-Hindi people with virtual contempt for their sub-cultures.

Though Article 51 A(f) of the Constitution speaks of ‘preserving the composite culture of India’ by way of implementation the union Government had always been insensitive to the regional aspirations of the Indian masses. They were prepared to accept the hand, but not its fingers. They were prepared to recognise a flower; but not its petals.

The fallacious arguments advanced by the Hindi zealots were shallow in content. First they tried to convince the non-Hindi speaking states that their people would get more employment opportunities. The fact is unemployment registers of the Hindi regions are the lengthiest in the nation.

Then they said that only one language could be an unifying factor. But they are silent when they are posed with certain questions. For example a Punjabi clamouring for khalistan and another Punjabi who would like to remain in the Indian union speak one and the same language Punjabi. Why was it not possible for Punjabi to iron out the differences between the two warring principalities?
In Andhra pradesh there was a demand for Telengana. But the fact is throughout the state people speak one and the same language. When economic reasons take upper hand, language is not an unifying factor. It was so in the case of Marathwada in Maharashtra.

In Tamil Nadu, D.M.K and AIADMK vie with each other for political ascendency. But does one speak Italy another one French? In Iraq and Iran people speak almost the same language, of course with dialectical variations. But why was it they were locked up in a senseless was for 7 years?

In U.S. Spanish in some states is spoken only by 5 percent of its people. But there is an active Spaniard Movement. Now many of the states in U.S. have started using Spanish as a second language. In the erstwhile Soviet Russia wherein communist ideology was ruling the roost language was a vehicle for thought. With all their scientific approach to language, Rasool Gamsothov, the poet declares “If Awar is to die tomorrow, I shall whither away today itself. Awar is his language spoken only by 5 lacs of people”.

Therefore language is the face of the people; mark of their being; voice of protest and what are they and what are they for.

This is why from the 30's of the last century there were periodic upheavals in the land of Tamils. Maraimalai Adigal was fervent in opposing the domination of Hindi. Later Periyar E.V.R. took up the banner of revolt.

Si.Pa.Adityanar who popularised his ‘Daily Thanthi’ among the Tamil masses was opposed to Hindi. Among others Navalar Somasundara Bharathiar and Raja Sir Muthia Chettiar and K.A.P. Vishwanathan were a few who battled against the domination of Hindi.
When D.M.K. entered into the political arena, Arignar Anna took up the cause against Hindi and converted it as one of his principal planks. Though almost all the Dravidian leaders sacrificed a lot against the imposition of Hindi, Dr. Karunanidhi who languished in prisons was the principal architect of this movement.

In 1965 there was a mass upsurge of Tamil students, the parallel of which world history could not have witnessed till then against the imposition of Hindi. Baktavatsalam who was then the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu triggered off the carnage wherein more than 400 students lost their lives. Many of DMK men set fire to themselves in defence of Tamil.

Though there are other insensitive people who criticised the emotional outburst of DMK’s there was no other way but to draw the attention of the union government. Then only Shastri, the Prime Minister came around and assured that ‘English would continue as long as the Non-Hindi speaking people wanted it’ repeating what Nehru once said.

Arignar Anna as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu brought forth “Two language Formula”- Tamil and English and Hindi has been shown its place. While the union government spends funds for the development of Sanskrit in the category of classical languages, Tamil more ancient than Sanskrit has not been considered for this purpose. While the Union Government is directly or indirectly imposing Hindi on the unwilling masses, Tamil Nadu is keen on reacting against this historic treachery.

Rajaji who introduced Hindi into our class rooms later converted himself to Anti-Hindi movement and stood for the ouster of Hindi. But one fact remains that the DMK’s patronage of English as a shield against Hindi onslaught has
entrenched English to the detriment of Tamil. English which was portrayed only as a vacuum-filler later struck at the roots of Tamil development. This was the folly of some DMK stalwarts.

By 1965 Sitam Jamir, the parliamentary affairs minister of Nagaland adopted English to be the official language of Nagaland. But English one of the official languages of an Indian state is not an Indian language as per the version of the constitution and its hold on the ignorant Tamil masses is perceivable.

Many of the books on Modern Indian History are subjective to the core in not enumerating the Anti-Hindi Agitation, which was a mass upsurge.²¹

Movement for Tamil medium:

The movement for independence is endless. Once political independence is attained then cultural freedom is to be sought after. Language is the basic component of culture. Therefore, a language has to be free from all fetters.

The writing of Tamil history is replete with examples how various contemporary movements, their origin, development and impact are left unattended. Subjectivism is the principal reason why these movements have been left out. One such movement is Movement for Tamil medium.

After independence three important reports on the status of education were submitted. Dr. Radhakrishnan commission, Dr. Laxmanasami Mudaliar commission and D.C. Kothari commission were the three. Though these stalwarts had English education they were one in their view that unless regional
languages became medium of instruction real development of students was not possible.

'If you have to have advanced knowledge in medical science go for Russian because they have more inventions than the English' is a sentence that is found in Dr. Radhakrishnan commission report. If one has to be proficient in guerilla warfare English cannot provide such knowledge of logistics but one has to definitely learn Chinese because they are the originators of guerilla warfare.

Therefore our too much of dependence on English comes from the colonial enslavement of the English masters. Every country that surges ahead in economic progress has learnt its science and technology through its own native medium. The point is one can learn English as a language but one should not learn science and technology through English.

Therefore there was a demand for Tamil as medium of instruction in the schools and colleges in the state from the pre independence days. Later, when DMK came to power to make Tamil as medium of instruction was one of their top priorities. But there was an accusation from the English loving elite that Tamil could not be employed as medium of instruction since there were no technical terms to express science and technology in Tamil.

As Rabinthranath Tagore pointed out, a Language can enrich itself in words only when it is used in a particular field. For example, in an English dictionary the word, 'Cosmonaut' was not found thirty years back. But now, it is in common usage. The reason is when English is used in space field automatically new words emerge. Therefore Tagore was right in insisting that one cannot say that I shall not enter into the river unless I know how to swim.
Unless one enters into river one cannot learn swimming. So a language is to be used in a specific field. So that its vocabulary may grow leaps and bounds.

The governments which paid only lip services to Tamil medium are to be blamed for the stunted growth in this arena. First of all there was no positive encouragement for the student who came forward to learn in Tamil. When there was no assurance for them in employment opportunities no one would prefer Tamil. Therefore successive governments have been insincere for the cause of Tamils.

Chief Ministers as incumbents of offices were assertive that they would implement Tamil as the medium of instruction but were afraid of the organized affluent English loving chosen few and relented shamelessly. Out of office they would always promise to make Tamil as medium of instruction. In office they would be in hibernation.

‘Thamizha Chantor Peraval’ of Tamil scholars and savants have attempted many a time to make Tamil as medium of instruction. But they could not resist the onslaught of the English lovers. Arignar N. Arunachalam one of the committed Tamil scholars whose devotion to the cause of Tamil has no match in the contemporary history has been in the forefront in this movement along with Tamilannal and others.

It is a pity such a history of liberation movement has not been recorded faithfully as a an inseparable part of the Tamil history. Accusations and counter accusations are found in Tamil history writing. Because of subjectivism the herculean task of Tamil scholars to employ Tamil as medium of instruction has not been reported or analyzed sincerely.
Mahatma Gandhi who was invited to deliver the convocation address at Pune university was impelled to tears. When asked for the reason he revealed that he was calculating how many precious educational years Indian students had wasted since they had to have access to science and technology through a foreign medium. Mahatma Gandhi, Rabinthranath Tagore and most of the architects of Modern India were for the native mediums of instructions. The aristocratic merchants of education shops have been cheating the gullible masses to their permanent advantage. Unless and until Tamil is employed as medium of instruction the political freedom would be of no use at all.

History in this area instead of being a driving force of liberation of the masses has been silently witnessing the masses languishing in ignorance. If a historian were to report on this movement faithfully then a momentum would have been created for providing Tamil a chair just and fair.

Individual efforts in this area are remarkable. One Manavai Mustafa has coined more than 50,000 technical terms in Tamil. His service to the cause of Tamils has surpassed the service of individuals and institutions. And then, Tamil words which are not in use now have to be brought forth into usage. In this regard, some of the local expressions emanating from villages also should be taken into consideration. For example for secrecy ‘kamukam’ is a word of villagers which has been shifted into Tamil usage now. Therefore such words which have fallen out of use have to be redeemed.

The expert committee on Tamil etymology under the Chairmanship of Prof. Mathivannan has been doing a yeoman service for the cause of Tamils from where Parvanar one of the greatest Tamil savants had left.
Prof. Aruli has engaged himself in the Tamil etymological studies of Tamil University at Tanjore. Now, Tamil medium schools have been established in different parts of the state. And students in abject poverty and abysmal ignorance have been taking up subjects in Tamil medium. These schools are named after ‘Thai Thamizh vazhi kalvi koodangal’. But they are run under leaky thatched roofs and with health hazards. The state government continues to be insensitive to the appalling conditions of such schools which are a compelling necessity for the development of Tamil.

Movement for Tamil music:

Before the natural holocaust in Kumari continent Tamil music texts were available. Now those ancient texts are extinct but music is one of the major divisions of Tamil. In Sangam literature and specifically the ‘Attrupadai’ literature speaks of musician, music instrument and patrons.

There are references how cattle and birds were immensely pleased and became actionless when they were filled with music. St. Thiru Gnana Sambanthar in the 7th century composed Tamil songs in Tamil musical notes. Thirumoolar was of the view that if foreign mediums were employed in liturgical services it is not good for rulers as well as the ruled. Thanjai Abraham Pandithar was one of the greatest researchers on Tamil musical notes.

Later in the progress of Tamil music Sir Raja Annamalai Chettiar and his family have contributed a lot in research and development of Tamil music. Poet Subramania Barathi condemned Tamils who were not resisting Telugu musical notes on Tamil stages. As people ‘with iron ears’ to use Bharath’s phrase, after
hundred years the same condition continues. Tamil pieces are dubbed as ‘thukadas’ (a slang for insignificant songs). Annamalai university has conducted how paddy could grow substantially well with instrumental music of Nathaswara. Kunnakudi Vaithiyathanathan, one of the prominent violinists has conducted research on the medical efficacy of various musical notes. He correlates ‘Anantha bairavi’ to cure hypertension. ‘Bilahiri’ to cleanse blood of its impurities.

What were Tamil puns once have been hijacked by aliens and rechristened as ‘ragas’ of the north. Among musical instruments Veena of the affluent few was presiding over the stages. ‘Pumbai’ and ‘Urumi’ the musical instruments of Dalits have no place proper. The cultural stagnation has not been reported in Tamil history writing. When reported it is only a compendium full of subjective invectives. One can find Aryan - Dravidian divide in the writing on this basic Tamil cultural component.

Arignar N. Arunachalam the publisher of ‘Nanthan vazhi’ fortnightly is in the forefront is safeguarding Tamil music through his Periyar Tamil Isai Mantram,. In the last one decade whatever he has executed in the interest of Tamil music is epoch-making. In a recent conference Dr. M. Karunanidhi praised him lavishly for his unstinted co-operation and patronage to Tamil musicians and instrument players. As long as the likes of Arignar N. Arunachalam thrive in this province the vision of our forefathers would not get blurred.

Thenisai Chellappa, T.K.S. Kalaivanan, and Pushpavanam Kuppusamy are some of the few who have been drawing applause for their Tamil musical notes.
from the Tamil audience who have been shaken from the churchillian stupor after very many centuries.

The ghastly incident (18 March, 2002) that took place in Mannakuzha Vinayagar Temple at Pondicherry wherein Poet Subramania Bharathi worshipped desecrating the ‘Tamil Pans’ and Tamil musical instruments show what uncivilised ditch the sanskrit patrons could stoop to.

If the Pondy Govt is a mute spectator to the vandalism of high caste temple priests against Tamil liturgy, it would be a mortal below to the composite culture of India. One should remember that St. Thirumoolar in his ‘Thirumanthiram’ curses the users of non-Tamil liturgy in Temples.

**New Poetry Movement:**

In the last decade of the 20th century young poets and new comers inspired by the social ideals came to the fore with new poetry. Subramanian Barathi and Walt Whitman were their literacy spurs for action. They had the vision of Subramania Barathi and expressive diction of poet Barathidasan.

Though condemned by a few as verbal exercises without respect to grammar this poetry movement known as ‘Vanambadi’ established that poetry was an instrument for social change. Most of the poems of this era were quotable quotes inspiring social revolution.

Sirpi, Tamizhanban, Abdul Rahman, Mu Metha, Vairamuthu, Inqulab, Elavenil, Kangaikondan, Valampuri John, Palani Barathi, Arivumathi, Kabilan,
Nirmala Suresh, Rev. Vincent Chinnadurai and a host of others have enriched this movement.

Poet Vali who is a master in composing religious histories in modern prose poems is a significant contributor. Since all of them are contemporaries their compositions are not subjected to critical analysis. Critics do not analyze their contribution since they are shamelessly divided by their communal motives.

Rev. Fr. Vincent Chinnadurai is a mastermind who excels in new poetry. His religious poems with social thrust have created record sales.

It is quiet strange that the contribution of poet Kasi Anandan of Tamil Elam and poet Ulaganathan of Malaysia and many others who are enriching from Tamil settlements throughout the world could not be critically analyzed of their contribution to Tamil literature.

Whenever a foreign edition of new poems in Tamil is brought out only a few who are known to the publisher find a place in those volumes. Even foreign researchers whenever they visit this part of the world are led by the interested to only those who are friendly to them. Therefore, a real evaluation of this movement till this minute has not been possible despite serious attempts by some scholars.

Poets of traditional schools always have a contemptuous look of the emergence of the new poetry. They are mere grammarians who are brushed aside by the new poets. Hi-Ku of Japanese origin is yet another literary genre of Japanese origin. Amurtha Barathi has excelled in this area. Sujatha patronises Hi-Ku as ‘Kurum Pa’. In a Hi-tech age Hi-Ku is the latest contribution to the new poetry movement in this province.
Tamils are always lulled into a false sense of pride. Their progeny is not exposed to the explosive knowledge in other Indian languages. Therefore, the new poets in Tamil themselves have not known their heights and are under the mistaken impression that their contribution to literature is seminal. Comparative study of the different poets with varied dictions is totally absent. By this strange trend Tamil literature has become an island with no access to foreign air and alien light.
References

5. Subjectivism in Contemporary History

with special reference to Tamil Nadu


7. Gandhi's reply to a question put to him by Anandadevi 5th May 1939 in collected works vol. 69 p.11


10. Dr. M.S. Muthuswamy, Kamarajar, Sanmuga Pathipagam, Chennai-4, 1989,p-VII

12. Valampuri John, ‘Kalaignarin Kavidaigal’


6. Components of Contemporary Socio-cultural History with special reference to Tamil Nadu

In this chapter by way of microcasmic study into the components of contemporary socio-cultural history of Tamilnadu an intensive research has been undertaken to bring out the various contours of contemporary history in furtherance of research.

1. Colonization of Christianity:

Protestant churches contained a numerically a small group of converts drawn from the lowest caste. This sort of conversion provided them with an acumen to question the local structure of the authority. The church engineered Christians to question social and civil disabilities.

With the infallibility of the foreign missionaries on the one hand Christians were slavish to them and on the other they resisted their native masters. There was a trend of bringing anything that is foreign and Christianity into this malicious trap. It was a baffling problem for Christian converts to keep their heads aloft within the church and socially free from oppression of the native masters.

In 1857 at Pragasapuram there was a Christian church of the Lord Jesus, two miles from Nazareth in Tirunelveli district. Nadars who were known as
Channaars in the 19th century were the first ones to adopt Christianity. Though they entered into a religious group, which rejects caste distinction they had to retain their caste for the purpose of identity. Then came the face of the caste churches.

One Chattampillai was a pioneer around whom the Hindu – Christian denominations revolved around. It was he who first rebelled against the western shade of Christianity.

Later Chattampillai was accused of schism because he was insistent on animal sacrifice in the liturgical services of the church. Since this practice was considered to be the mainstay of their Hindu counterpart. The journal of South Indian Studies explains this phenomenon wonderfully well.

When the Coramandal coast became the settlement of the Portuguese St. Francis Xavier came to the coastal areas and converted fisherman into Catholics. Then Catholicism thrived along with Protestantism. The impact of the colonial Christian mission on the socio-cultural life of people has not been analyzed in proper perspective. One fact remains while there was no social progress among Catholics since they were in chains, cast by Catholic clergymen, Protestants could assert themselves socially and economically since they had no authority of clergymen on them. Objective study in this area would reveal the history of Tamils in a new light. As the Protestant churches have concentrated on writing the history of their mission, Catholics have not thought of writing their own. Christians who are proud that they are once and for all liberated from the caste moorings of Hinduism fell prey to some divisions and disabilities.
But for the scheduled castes and tribes churches of this province would become empty. But there is no one who struggles sincerely for those deprived classes to treat them in par with their counterparts in Hinduism.

Castism is writ large on the face of Christianity. While conversions to Christianity itself was not able to remove the caste labels and still the Christians warrant further research.

2. Fin-Levy (Thuvik Kuthahal) agitation in Idinthakarai TN. 1964-67:

On this social input A. sivasubramaniam has written an extensive research article.¹

The coastal village of Idinthakarai is in vijayapathy panchayat of Tirunelveli district of Tamilnada. It is a seashore and a hamlet of modest moorings. Because of lashing of waves many portions of this village were swallowed by the sea. This might have been one of the reasons for the name Idinthakarai (broken coast).

One of the earliest reference on Idinthakarai dates to the 16th century. Henriques (1520 – 1600) a Jesuit priest from Portugal who did tremendous work on pearl fishery coast for over 50 years makes a passing reference to the village Idinthakarai. Jesuit records of the 17th century too makes very many references to this hamlet. In his list of 21 Parathavars villages Idinthakarai is referred to as Irinjacalu. In 1644 Idinthakarai is said to have had a population of 200 catholic parathavars and the church had Saints Peter and Paul as their patrons. People of Idinthakarai were converted en masse to the catholic church by St. Francis Xavier. Though fishing is the main occupation of this people there were
agriculturists and traders too. In Idinthakarai there was a major division among the fisher folks as madikkarars and menakkedars who were agriculturists.

For the functioning of the Catholic church the authorities were levying various kuthahais on the laity. Rev. Venancius citing an inscription of Udaya Marthanda Varma (1494-1535) remarks that these levies followed the concession granted by the Maharaja of Trivancore to the parishes in his territory. Priests were also known as Kuthahaikara Chamigal. The system of Kuthhai continued also by the French priests who came later.

Some of the Kuthahais that were imposed on the village were,

a. Tuvi kuthahai: Shark, Uluvai, Vezha and Illappa have fins which are called Thuvi in Tamil. This Thuvi is exclusively for the church.

b. Anju Meen Kuthahai: Everyday a handful of fish from the day’s catch had to be remitted to the church.

c. Therippu: Half of every Tuesday’s catch belongs to the church.

d. Mahamai Kuthahai: A levy on goods entering the village

e. Chanthai Kuthagai: A levy by the basket of traders who bought fish from the village.

Every year the Parish Priest or his agent would auction these Kuthahais and the highest bidder had the right to collect them. Those who refuse to submit themselves to this autocratic tax scheme were penalized with fine. Fisherman unless paid Kuthahai were prevented from entering into the sea. Even if they
manged to go to the see they could not sell the fish and the traders were prohibited from taking them.

Even in Portuguese’s time there were cases of resentment. Such instances have taken place in the villages of Periyathazhai, Alanthalai, Uvari and Punnaikayal. This is why the village communities of this area were divided into Chamiar Katchi and Oor Katchi. The first positive resistance against Kuthahai came from Idinthakarai in 1964. Often fins commanded a better price than the fish. Fins were shifted to the mountainous regimes of tea and coffee gardens for the purpose of soup making.

At this period Menakkadars were growing in wealth compared to the fisher folk. Madikkarars borrowed money from Menakkadars who exploited the Kuthahais. But Menakkadars paid only Rs. 6 as annum subscription but in the case of fisherman (Madikkarars) they had to pay Rs. 600 to Rs. 1000 per annum.

In this context some Madikkararas violated the levies in 1964. Madikkarars insisted that they would pay a minimum tax as Menakkadars. If this was not acceptable to the church the Menekkaders too should part with a share of their crop.

In a petition to Fr. John Singarayar Lobo the Parish Priest Madikkarars expressed their resistance. Antony Michel Fernando the village catchiest and Rt. Rev. Thomas Fernando the Bishop of Tuticorin opposed the idea of abolishing the various Kuthahai on the ground that a contribution of Rupees 25 was inadequate to meet the expenses of the church.

In 1966 some Madikkarars defied the authority of the church to part with the fins and Anju meen. Further it was openly demanded that the Thuvi Kuthhai
and the Anju meen Kuthahai for 1967 should not be auctioned. There was a rebellion among the Parathavars of Idinthakarai. Then Bishop Thomas Fernando passed on an epistle and quoted the Bible (Matthew 7:22) and insisted upon the levy. (Mt.22:21) "Give back to Cesar what belongs to Cesar and to God what belongs to God" was quoted from the Bible.

On June 17, 1967 the Bishop wrote an epistle which ran into six pages. He insisted sacraments would be restored only after outstanding dues paid. He even sent a strongly worded epistle which failed to cow down the agitated fishermen.

At this time one Chanthya Rayapper an old man died. However without the Parish Priest's permission the body was buried in the village graveyard. A few cases of criminal trespass were filed on the Madikkarars. Subsequently the aggressive church withheld permissions for marriages.

One day a catamaran from Kottapuzhi a near by village ran aground at Idinthakarai. It was customary to hand over a day's requirement of fish from the grounded catamaran to the village barber and a portion was also to be given to the church. But Madikkarars gave the barber's due and not to the church. There was some rebellion and attack on the residences of Madikkarars and a few criminal cases were filed.

The police took precaution to prevent clashes between the two classes. The police was initially impartial. But the church authorities were senseless in instigating the police to commit rape and arson against women and Madikkarars. Certain priests worked out a compromise formula. Since Madikkarars warned the bishop that they would convert themselves to Hinduism the bishop worldly wise relented. Certain agreement to appease the agitated the Madikkarars were
arrived at. But the affluent church was more interested in appeasing the Menakkadars. As usual the church never showed any interest in implementing the compromise formula.

Then the Hindu Munnani volunteers entered into the village and ultimately many of the Madikkarars converted themselves to Hinduism.

As a result, on 27 October 1967 a mass conversion to Hinduism by Parathavars took place. Dinamalar a local daily 29 October 1967 reported the matter faithfully. This conversion created great excitement in the coastal villages.

Following the Idinthakarai episod the church was forced to reconsider the question of various Kuthahais. The Bishop ordered in 1968 that;

a. Compulsory Kuthahai would to be abolished

b. Sacraments will not be refused for non payment of Kuthahais

c. Only voluntary contribution of fins will be accepted.

Then finally Thuvic Kuthahai and Anju meen kuthahai came to an end not only in Idinthakarai but also in other coastal villages.

Sivasubramanian who faithfully reported the resistance of the Madikkarars has been silent on the atrocities the church authorities engineered against the Madikkarars. There was no Christianity in Idinthakarai but only Churchianity who exploited people and stunted their social progress. This incident that took place in a far off fishermen village is a stout warning to the
church to halt exploitation of the fisher folk to the permanent advantage of the church which is not concerned with the social progress of the 'sheep'

Vinayaka’s temple as a symbolic protest against the autocratic and oppressive church still stands against the imposing structure of the church.

3. Resistance to innovations in fishing operations:

Fishing in the Tamil coast is the earliest occupation. This state has a sea shore of 400 kms long with 232 fishing villages between Pulicat Lake to Calimere in the South.

With scientific progress and technological innovations fishing operations are bound to change. But for centuries there has been commotion among the fishfolk on such innovations.

Resistance comes mainly on two accounts – one of nets and another one of boats. Kattamarans have big cavity nets and they are employed to catch only full-fledged species of prawns. The deployment of big cavity nets, in the ultimate analysis do not result in the depletion of rare species of fishes. Thereby the ecological balance of the sea is maintained.

But with introduction of bush-trawlers and mechanized boats small cavity nets were introduced. These small cavity nets caught prawns at the embryonic stages and thereby resulted in depletion of the marine sources. The introduction of mechanized boats results in economic imbalance among fishfolk, replacing the labour who are already impoverished leading to social conflicts.
Therefore Kattamaran fishermen are opposed to technological innovations in fishing operations. Under the garb of liberalization foreign bush trawlers do commit a piracy on the marine sources of fishfolk.

Social conflicts among fishfolk rear head because fishing for fishfolk is livelihood and for the mechanized boats, profits. When there is a clash of interests between livelihood earners and profit makers social tensions are bound to come.

Years of fierce resistance to the technological innovations have kept the profit makers away from most of the coastal villages. But mechanization in native boats, replacing the hard labour clandestinely has entered into fishing villages.

Uvari is a quiet village in Tirunelveli district. Here a novel innovation of ‘Surukku Madi’ has been introduced. ‘Surukku madi’ is small cavity nets and people who have ‘Surukku Madi’ are able to secure more.

A month’s earning is a day’s. Deprived of normal catch the poor fishfolk recently resorted to the High Court by way of writ petition with initial success. Police forces were deployed at the hamlet of Uvari to supervise the successful operation of the High Court’s order.

James Horrell who studied the fishing nets of Coromandel coast in 1920 wrote on the predominant place of bag nets to gill nets.

The German geographer Webster made extensive study of fishing appliances in the South of Madras districts. He was of the opinion that “90 percent of the fish catching operations are conducted with synthetic gill nets” ²
In 1886 the then fishfolk petitioned to the colonial government how the introduction of a new net in certain areas strikes at the very roots of their fishing operation.

But these nets continued their sway till the mid-twentieth century and now they are replaced by more effectively refined nets.

As Kathleen Norr explains “that there were prejudices against nylon nets,... Mainly from cotton net producers.” Nylon nets were looked down upon with suspension since many of the fisherfolk were of the opinion that this innovation make the catch bleed and in the long run it would result in depletion of marine sources.

By Eighties Kachavalai (nets manufactured out of cotton waste) came to be used since only the moneyed could purchase such nets.

Basically it was the inherent fear that fishfolk deprived of ‘Kachavalai’ would be further impoverished was for action among fishfolks. But despite innate fear of social conflict due to economic upheavals the innovations in fishing operations slowly caught the imagination of fisherfolk.

“The protest against synthatic twines in the 1960 May well have involved another cultural aspect as well. In Tamil culture (E.U. Daniel, ‘Fluid signs’: Being A Person the Tamilway’. University of Californic trees, Berkeley, 1984) the ‘hotness’ or ‘coldness’ of a substance with which a person is in contact affect his or her boldly equilibrium, causing health or illness.”

From an unresponsive era of total negation to technological innovations fishfolk were a long way in accepting and adopting those new appliances.
4. Consolidation of Christian forces:

As every religious group rallies around some political identity or other Christians too have naturally feel the indispensability of getting themselves organized.

Immediately after independence there were charges levelled against Christians as a community that they were patronizing their English masters because of their religious affiliation. Though this accusation cannot be brushed aside there were patriots who participated in the freedom movement.

In the freedom movement itself Roch Victoria, J.P.Rodrigus, Msillamani Pillai and many other Christians were involved. In the 1960s one Francis Rayan came to organize Christians who were more concerned with the other world for their political ends. As such he named his party as Christian Democratic Front.

Prof. Nathan a highly refined scholar, Prof. Jesuraj and Salem Pannerselvam were some of the few who went with Francis Rayan.

Later each one of them drifted away from the organization and Francis Rayan was left in the lurch. One Joseph Fernando who fell away from Francis Rayan could organize the Christians in a major way. Others remained in splinter groups.

Prof. Marianallu, Asha alias Arokiasamy of Trichy and Thamba attempted to organize Christians. One Irudayaraj of Trichy was also active in this regard. But, Israelites as they are, no one would agree with the other. Hence, quite often they fell apart from each other. Election to election they changed their strategies from aligning themselves to some major political party or the other.
Though there are organizations under the stewardship of Joseph Fernando and there are others that they were still running the show.

The Catholic Church came to patronize a political movement as a factor to be reckoned with. Rt. Rev. Dr. Remigius, Bishop of Kumbakonam was in charge of making Christians politically powerful. But there were enough people to misguide him.

There are two principal reasons why Christian organizations would not make an impact on the political scenario.

1. As long as the laity is under the influence of clergy no independent and progressive proliferation is possible and thereby no worthy change will take place.

2. Though they are all Christians no other community could be divided with castes as Christians are. That is why they are divided on caste lines and the consolidation is elusive.

Individual achievements of Christians in different fields are noteworthy but when they try to come together under one umbrella for political purposes the consolidation fails. But individuals who are in major political parties have a definite role on the Socio Political life of the state.

5. Vaigundar and Social renaissance:

Vaigundar known as Narayanar was a strange phenomenon in the social history of the south. Born in abject poverty and abysmal ignorance he had
strange visions of Lord Karthik of Tiruchendur. He established his Mutt at Pillai Thoppu in Kanyakumari district.

He simplified the complex liturgical forms. For him religion was simple service to the people who were in needs.

Like Narayana Guru of Kerala he was for the social emancipation of the depressed classes.

Then Nadar women were not allowed to wear jackets, sandals and they were not supposed to rear up cows. Nadar men could not have the shawl on their shoulders. Instead they had to tie it around their waists.

Such was the heinous social oppression. The religion of Vaigundar was to liberate his depressed class people from the shackles of native masters.

He had to fight with the powers-be at Trivancore since Kanyakumari district was a part of Kerala. The Trivancore Maharaja sent word for him and tried to convince that he if he fought for Nadars it was understandable but why he should fight for all the other 18 castes that constitute backward class.

Narayanar was very emphatic in that he said he stood for all depressed classes. Therefore, relentlessly he battled against the dictates of the government and secured a place of honour for his fellow beings.

He simplified the worship and asked his followers to chant only the Maha Mantram ‘Namo Narayanaya’.
Since they were commanded not to have shawls on their shoulders all the Nadars tied shawls around their waists. Therefore Vaikundar ordered them as a way of reaction to have Turbans on their heads as a mark of self respect.

His ‘Ahilath Thirattu’ consisting of many prophesies is praised as a revelation of the rarest kind.

Among Nadars his followers were few. Wherever they are they construct a temple of Vaigunda Swamigal which are known as ‘Nizhal Thankkal’.

Whenever any member of this organization meets another member they always exchange pleasantries by invoking his name – Ayya vazhi.

Though there is social relevance to all Indian religions only a few had realized it. Ayya was one to have appreciated the social relevance of religions. He was more spiritual than religious. Among the various religious leaders his dictum was strictly appreciated by his followers. He was a strange combination of qualities of head and heart.

He proved that religion should not lose its stream of reason in the desert of dead habits.

6. Struggle for annexation of Tamil parts:

In the question of reorganization of states mooted by some of the social stalwarts were involved for certain portions from other provinces to Tamilnadu. It was not more it was only due.
While Thirupathi was claimed to be the part of Tamilnadu as its north mark (Vada Malavan Kuntram) Telugus questioned such a move and rightly declared Madras is ours. Ma. Po. Sivangnanam a freedom fighter and a Tamil writer par excellence was highly responsible for annexing certain parts like Thiruthani with the northern districts of Tamilnadu. In the south, Marshal Nesamoni the architect of the movement, Kunjan Nadar and Ponnappa Nadar were the leading lights in the agitation to annex certain portions of Kerala originally belonging to Tamilnadu back again.

Marshall Nesamani's mass movement succeeded tremendously. Therefore the boundary in the west extended up to Kaliyakavilai.

But it is a pity that the people who wanted to remain with Tamilnadu were slighted beyond words. There are no industries in Kanyakumari district worth its name and not even an University. Though the district is full of leaders who would fight for the cause of the poor and the political circumstance is such that, people do not do it. Shimmering Kumaradoss showy at periodical intervals also has not evoked any worthwhile response so far.

Therefore the Tamils have to ever remember the four or five leaders who have been principally responsible for annexation of parts of Andhra and parts of Kerala to Tamilnadu.

7. Mandal commission and its impact:

When Moraji Desai assumed office as Prime minister one of his immediate tasks was to constitute Mandal commission to enumerate the social and educational backwardness of certain sections of Indian people.
This researcher functioned as a special invitee to Mandal commission on the recommendations of K. Subramaniam a socialist of considerable repute.

While Mandal and the members of the commission toured the district capitals of Tamilnadu this researcher had the rare opportunity of visiting the villages Mandal preferred.

In Tirunelveli District Mandal was specific that he visits a village of shepherds. When they took him to that specific village he was moved to tears seeing the appalling conditions of shepherds.

A questionnaire well prepared tried to determine the social and educational backwardness of these classes by putting across relevant questions. The response was immense. Therefore insistence to absorbe backward classes in educational institutions and industrial units were strongly recommended.

Though in the initial phase the recommendations of the commission were taken seriously when V.P. singh came to power all the fire was heaped on his head.

In the Supreme Court itself advocates who belong to the upper caste formed a group and others who are forlorn and forsaken constituted another group. There were acrimonious exchanges between the two.

It is a pity that BJP which swears by secular ideals is a fierce Hindu militant organization. Ashok singal’s utterance go to convince the law abiding citizens that he is treated leniently and no solution is in sight. It is man’s wild imagination that God wants tabernacles from him.
People who fight for Ram temple out of faith should show sympathy towards the backward classes as Sri Rama showed compassion to Vali, Vibishana and to Ravana himself. Therefore, Rama is not only an ideal character but he has lived his idealism through his thought word and action.

Now, Ram Jenma Bhumi has become a spot of contention. As there are reasonable people in both the camps there are impusively passionate volunteers who are in both camps. The Government which seemed to have clandestinely supporting the encroachers on Babri masjid now have taken a stand that they would abide by the decision of the Supreme Court.

One should think over why L.K. Advani the Home Minister would not see eye to eye with Mulayam Singh Yadav. Both these leaders have Lord Krishna as their object of worship. But this sort of worship had not culminated in any sort of amity among them.

When a Hindu and a Muslim clashes it is not a Hindu or a Muslim who falls down; it is the man who withers away. If Sants and Moulvis place man out of the canopy of humanity no one can save the fabric of the Nation.

BJP which realizes this basic truth of Hinduism is in core is apolitical force because of lack of will it is not able to implement what it believes.

When parliament failed and the President of India was silent the Supreme Court acted on many issues that had brought good and fair name to the highest judiciary.

Now the Supreme Court by its order asked both the parties to be away from the sight. They have to abide by the Supreme Court’s order. But it is quite
surprising the erstwhile Jansangh which speaks of Lord Krishna has not shown any sympathy towards the downtrodden.

8. Assertion of deprived classes:

SC & ST’s, despite the constitutional assurance had not been treated well. ‘Dalit’ is a Marathi word meaning one who is backward in his socio-economic condition. Now in course of time ‘Dalit’ the word has to come to be more identified with scheduled caste and tribe.

In our freedom movement some of the stalwarts who were already freed socially were always insisting that political independence should precede social emancipation. Dalits who were under the shackles for centuries together were mainly landless agricultural labourers.

As Dalits consolidate and come up in the social ladder due to social awakening they are systematically crushed. It is left to the landlords to exploit Dalits as they wish since their bargaining power is weakened since they are not an organised sector.

Apart from such social crimes, there are still villages in Tamil Nadu wherein the tea-shops there are two pots, one for the people of upper caste origin and the other for the lowest.

Civil Rights are said to be protected but even the constabulary behaves on caste equations. Their complaints to the police stations are sometimes not entertained.
Still the uppercaste upstarts beefed up with muscle power are under the mistaken impression that they can only preside over the peoples' court on Dalits.

But in recent clashes in Tirunelveli District wherein Dalits were not allowed to wear shirts and sandals the backward class men were chased away by the Dalits. Years of repression have strengthened their resolve to pounce back.

But it is a pity that Dalits could not be brought under one umbrella. Every Dalit leader of political shade thrive on his group and thus they are not factors to be reckoned with.

Vai. Balasundaram, Dr. Krishnasami, John Pandian Palraj and Poovai Murthy are some of the leading lights of Dalits. Thiru Mavazavan is an energetic young man who fights for their cause valiantly. They do not see eye to eye with each other and they never present a picture of unity.

When there is no semblance of unity it is easy for the predators to pounce upon them. Segments of Dalits are found in major political parties. But they are not partakers in political power. On the other hand they are exploited.

Religious Mutts at periodic intervals try to woo them to swell up the rank of Hinduism. Even within Christianity there is no justice for them since upper caste church authorities still treat them as untouchables.

Social boycotts of Dalits are unabated. No serious attempt has been made to analyse the economic conditions and political improvement of Dalits.

Writers like Rajasekaran, Raj Gauthaman and A. Marx excel in Dalit literature and others who belong to the backward classes thrive exploiting their disadvantages.
Even the patronage extended to Dalits is being resisted by the upper caste Hindus. The S.C. + S.T commission reports year after year remind the Government that it has not fulfilled its constitutional commitment to Dalits. Due to desparate charges and counter charges Dalits as a social group continues to suffer.

There are periodic conversions of Dalits from the oppressive Hindu fold to Buddhism and Christianity. Whenever they are converted to Christianity they embrace this faith with lot of dreams. But here too their caste tags continue and they are treated as untouchables.

In many of the Tamil villages public wells and public burial grounds are flatly divided to them. But despite all social ill-treatment Dalits surge ahead because of new awakening among them.

9. Local History:

Local History is conspicuously absent in Tamil history writing. Though there have been a few treatises on Madras and Madurai, now historians are interested in the research of their localities.

One such work of national of repute is from a historian from Tiruchirapalli, under the caption ‘Nandanithai Vazhi Tiruchirapalli’. 4

S. Muruganandam the historian has collected rare photos of the various incidents of the 20th Century. What has been codified is historical, political, artistic, literary, administrative, educational, religious and industrial occurrences.
It is a canopy of occurrences in and around Tiruchirapalli with Rock Fort of Tiruchirapalli of 1854 on the cover.

The author has collected rare occurrences like the memorable visit of Mahathma Gandhi, Anni Besant, Rabindranath Tagore, Sir.P.T. Theyagarayar and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Among the religious heads and spiritual seers Kanchi Sankarachaya, Kundrakudi Adigal and Kodi Swamigal were some of the few who have been reported faithfully.

How Tiruchirapalli transformed from a hamlet of obscurity to a town of dynamic modernity is represented powerfully by the author.

If the author's example is emulated the historical process in the land of Tamils would have a final shape. A Volume running to 750 pages of strenuous work is a seminal contribution to History writing from the historian S.Murugandam.

10. History of Spiritual Movement:

Though there are sharp religious differences spiritual movement has always attracted a refined few.

As Kabir says 'A fool witnesses God only in stone; but for the wise he is found every where'. In Tamil Nadu and that too in contemporary history there are many spiritualists. Though there are heads of various mutts and religious chieftains for different social groups there are spiritual seers of unquestionable disposition.
It needs lot of courage and sacrificial tendency to take an uncompromising stand of spiritual hierarchy.

If one is to say that his religion is superior to others he would be stoutly defended by his followers. But if some one chooses to say that all religions are the same then he may not be followed by huge crowds who are more religious than spiritual.

Spiritualism is not speech making. It is living; it is a process from being to becoming. Whenever one feels the pain if the other man sustains one can be sure that he is spiritual.

Though there were spiritual movements in the past they thrive in contemporary history amidst baffling multiplicity of challenges.

The Krishna Conscious Movement and Jesus Redeems Ministry are such spiritual get-togethers. Those chieftains prepare their followers out of frenzy towards a highly evolved stage of spiritual awakening.

In Islam there are Sufis for whom there is no religious difference. Many of the spiritualists concentrate on meditation and it is the panacea for all ills. Every religious tradition has a spiritual master. Jains, Sikhs and Buddhist too have their masters who prepare their minds towards spiritual evolution.

The spiritual tradition of Swami Sivanandha Paramahamsa of Kerala is one of the richest traditions in India. Nithyananda Swami and Mukthananda Swami came in the beaten track of Swami Sivanandha Paramahamsa. There are several thousands of followers in Tamil Nadu. Simply clad these followers worship prana as God and have no distinctions of caste and religion.
In the Himalayas Sivananda Maharaj has established a tradition of spiritual seers. In the south there are a few mystics whose contribution to spiritual awakening cannot be minimized. One Paranjothi Mahan realised that he is God himself. It is the culmination that God is in every thing. Therefore his endless enquiry into who am I? brought him to new areas of realisation.

Vedadri Maharishi, the world renowned spiritual seer is one of the disciples of Mahan Paranjothi and another Paranjothi Mahan a disciple of Paranjothi is a researcher into the structure of Pyramids and a great spiritual master. He lives in Tirumooorthi Hills, Udumalpet Taluk, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu. He is a realised soul. Because of his cosmic power he could cure many of their afflictions.

Ramana Maharishi who was appreciated by Somerset Maugham an athiest was a spiritual movement himself.

In Trichy there is a Sufi by name Ismail Khan lovingly called as Appa who too concentrates on the breath. When one witnesses breathing ultimately one comes to know to be alive one need not breath. This is Samadi. This spiritual seer has made it possible for married men and women to have their spiritual exercises which ultimately liberate them.

Though there are accounts of Ramakrishan Paramahamsa and Swami Vivekananda, Kabir, Gurunanak, Sheeradi Sai Baba and others this comprehensive history of spiritual masters is only repetative; not a research material.

Matha Amirthananda Mai is a classic herself distributing spiritual solace to one and all.
Kodi Swamigal, Mayamma and Visiri Samiyar are some of the few known for their spiritual evolution.

A Spiritualist dispels darkness from wherever it is found as the humanity seeks spiritual solace.

It is easy for a historian to leave aside spiritualism, which is one of the basic components of socio-cultural heritage of the people. But one should always remember that people should be educated that spiritual masters were not objects of worship to be kept at a safe distance. They should realise the indispensability of living among the people to make their lives on earth more meaningful.

Every spiritualist is a social reformer and always insist on the social relevance of different religions.

11. Catholic Church Vs Human Rights:

With growing awareness insistence on Human Rights is on the increase. As in many other countries here too the Catholic Church is in the forefront for fighting for Human Rights.

Recently one sister Vanaselvi was falsely implicated by the state police as if she was found in possession of certain hand-bills criticising the unruly behaviour of the police in desecrating tribal women in the name of nabbing Sandalwood Veerapan.⁵

While she was interred at Salem prison despite the resistance of the Human Rights associations she was tortured. Later she was enlarged on bail
without conditions what so ever by the High Court of Madras. The Honourable Judge was of the view that even if she had distributed those notices it didn't constitute the offence of sedition.

When she herself was one of the activists the Mother herself of the Servite order removed her from the order against the provisions of Canon Law.

The Mother wrongly placed her reliance on Sec.703 of the said act which empowers the authorities to expel a nun or a priest for external scandal.

Though this was construed to the most in favour of the authority to remove the religious from workspot and not from the order. To remove one the final concurrence of the Pope was essential. Therefore the religious order instead of protecting a nun from the police they themselves subverted the Cannon Law. This has become an acrimonious incident of Human Rights violation.

She has been suspended from her Headmistresship and livelihood has been denied to her by the authorities. Though there are many incidents of Human Rights violations wherein the Catholic Church which should have defended Human Rights behaved unlawfully. Therefore the Church has confined itself within the modest limits of imparting instructions to students on Human Rights. When it comes to action it simply withdraws itself and runs away from the scene.
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