CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

Ancient Indian Civilisation that had created distinct landmarks in the Cultural expansion and Artistic development, has bequeathed a glorious heritage to our Country. Indian music forms a priceless part of this hoary culture and since then it has been a process of continuous evolution. Music in India, is considered as Divine and there are many instances of Saints and Seers in the history of Indian Music who found God in Music and Music as God. The Musical Trinity of South India who were born, in the sacred district of Tanjore and composed soulful Composition were divinely inspired Vaggeyakaras to whom music was an artistic means of spiritual realisation. It is the spiritual approach to art that has given vitality to the classical music of India.

The evolution of Indian music from its primitive stages to its present highly advanced form, reveals the existence of a magnificent system of art music even during the ancient period. It unfolds how the art was never static but was ever growing in form and expression from time to time, assimilating all that was best into its fold. Of all the arts, it is music that has preserved continuity and growth throughout the cultural
history of India. Hence for a logical understanding and better appreciation of the values of Indian music, a historical study of its development is always considered important.

While surveying the growth of Indian music from the early times down to the present day, three distinctive periods are discernable viz. the ancient, medieval and the modern. The music of the ancient period may be classified under minor divisions as the Vedic music, music of the Sutra and Upanishadic period, music of the epic age and that of the Puranic period. The historic period in the history of music commences with Bharata, the famous Author of the Natya Sastra who may be hailed as the father of Indian Sangita Sastra. The medieval period commences from the time of Sangita Ratnakara of Sarngadeva in the beginnings of the 13th century and extends up to the period of Chaturdandi Prakasika in the 17th century. The so called modern period may be said to date from the time of Venkatamakhi onwards to the present day. The respective epochs are characterised by remarkable developments in the spheres of lakshana and lakshya, the two fundamental aspects of music. Each period has its relative contribution to offer in the growth of the art and its march towards final perfection.
The musical thinkers of the past had contributed towards the development of music by harnessing the technical, social and ideological forces inherited, which they related to their future aims rationally in the light of their own experiences. In this process new Theories and musical practice were recognised sometimes, while some concepts were neglected under certain circumstances. In further stages of evolutionary process, the concepts find a critical treatment in conformity with the development of musical practice. Music is an evolving art and is always susceptible to change in the matter of style and expression. This progressive nature of music has been emphasised by Sarangadeva and other later Lakhsmakaras. The ancient period in the history of our music witnessed the perception of the fundamental concepts governing the art such as the Swara, intervals, scales like Grama-Murchana Jathi and melodic embellishments like Alankara etc. Bharata’s theories of 22 arthas and consonance, and the classification of musical instruments into stringed, wind and percussion have been followed by later writers with an exception of few cases.

The Grama-murchana Jathi system which finds treatment in the Natya Sastra gave place in the gradual stages to other systems of raga classification. The Jathis gave rise to ragas and Matanga is considered as the earliest Lakhsmakara to define raga and raga rupa.
The dasa vidha Lakshna of the Jathis were ascribed to ragas and to this, Sarangadeva added three more and made it Trayodasa Lakshana of ragas. The birth of Desi music and Desi musical forms, viz. Prabandhas which were the precursors of all later musical composition representiative of vocal, Dance, and instrumental, is indicated in Natanga's work. The growth of the emotional concept of raga is reflected in the parallel development discerned in the sphere of musical forms. In the evolution of musical forms and raga, Natanga's Brhaddesi registers an important landmark. The classification of ragas into Suddha Chyalaga and Sankirna in Brhaddesi emphasises the emotional content of the ragas.

Emphasising the emotional quality of raga, the classification of ragas into Stri-purusha-napumsaka, Chandramsa and Suryamsa ragas, is referred to in Narada's Makaranda. The Stri purusha system is said to have given rise to the Raga-Ragini putra system of North Indian music. According to the presence of Swaras in a raga, the classification of ragas into Shadava Oudava and Sampurna also came into existence.

The medieval period in the history of music witnessed remarkable changes in the sphere of raga, and raga classification, musical forms and musical instruments. Sarangadeva's Sangita Ratnakara in the medieval period
is the most important work on the subject next to Bharata's Natya Sastra. The system propounded in Sangita Ratnakara is a considerable advance on that described in the Natya Sastra and is more scientific and expressive of greater national culture. It was further written at a time when there existed a single system of music throughout the length and breadth of India. These two works form a class by themselves and the Ratnakara is one of the works that is looked up for a comprehensive knowledge of Indian music in the past.

Sarangadeva's raga system includes grama, upa, Bhasha, Vibhasha, antarabhasha, Raganga, Bhashanga, Kriyanga, and Upanga ragas. Of these, the latter four are termed Desi ragas. Ragas had undergone considerable growth as early as the time of Sarangadeva. The Vina with frets was known as Kinnari and this Vina later led to the Rudra Vina of Ramaamatya with fixed frets which when modified by Raghunatha Nayak and Venkatamakhi emerged as the modern Tanjore Vina.

A survey of the musical instruments has revealed certain epoch making stages which coincided with those of the developments of other concepts. The harp type of Vina prevalent during the period of Bharata was ideally suited to play the Murchanas and the gramas. The strings were tuned to the various notes of the grama.
The Tri śruti Pa of Na-grama could be tuned as a samvadi to Triśruti ri. Taking the various notes of the gramas, seven murchanas were derived and this principle of the shift of tonic could be illustrated in such Vinas as Bharata's Dhruva and Chala Vina and Sarangadeva's Mattakokila Vina, the various harps described in the Tamil Epic, Silappadigaram.

With the introduction of frets in the finger board of the instruments a great change in the history of our music was visible. The open strings were tuned to Shadja, Madhyama or Panchama and the fixed pitches were defined by the frets. The system of fretting in Vina has ushered in the concept of Adharaka and thereby the Vikrita panchama of Na-grama became insignificant. Thus the way was paved for the fresh system of raga classification on the basis of the Svara system signified by the Vina frets, which recognised Sa and Pa as avikrita Swaras. This was the mela-Janya system referred to in Sangita Sara, by Swamy Vidyaranya in the 14th century. Kallinatha who is famous for his erudite scholarship as revealed in his 'Kalanidhi', has referred to the Janaka and Janya while commenting on the divergence between the Lakshana and the Lakshya prevalent during his period. In the subsequent centuries, it was the Vina and its svara system that dominated the field
of Lakshana. Amatya, Somanatha, Ahobala, Pundarika, Vittala and Venkatamakki, had devoted greater attention to this problem.

Further, the musical history of the Tamils points out their highly developed system evolved on a scientific basis as that of the Sanskrit texts. The classification of the musical instruments, the theory of 22 srutis known as Alagus, Sapta Svaras and their consonance, the harp vinas and musical forms known as Vari or Urukkal are also discussed in the Silappadigaram (2nd Cent.A.D.) with precision and clarity. The Silappadigaram proves that a constant cultural contact existed between the North and the South, the Aryan and the Dravidian systems of music sufficiently early in the history of our civilisation. The Tamils had a rich musical legacy of the past. The kingdoms of Chera, Chola and Pandya were famous for their proverbial patronage of music and dance. The far south had a historical individuality and the people had developed their own civilisation. The language of Tamil is referred to as Iyal, Isai and Natak. These three are collectively known as Muttamil. The seven svaras were known as Kural, Tuttham, Kaikkilai, Ulai, Ili, Vilari and Taran.

The musical intervals viz. Dvarutti, Trisruti and Chatusruti were also appreciated. The Tamils had
developed a beautiful raga system consisting of Pan, Thiram, Tirattiram, and Panniyattiram. A Pan was considered sampurna if the seven svaras were present either in the Arohana or Avarohana. The Tiram, and Tirattiram were identified as the derivatives of the Pan. A parallel classification of Pan on the basis of yanaka into Pagal (morning) Iravu (night) and Podu (always) pans is interesting. Again the suddha scale of Tamil music was Harikambhoji scale and the flute was graduated to this scale, which was again the Ma murchana of Sgrama. By the process of modal shift of tonic, known as 'Kural Thiribu' in Tamil, seven new scales were produced. Again the classification of the Pans on the basis of region, into Mullai, Marudam, Neydal, Palai and Kurunji referred to in the Tamil Epic finds a parallel classification in the persian system of music.

The exhaustive treatment of Yazh and its attractive varieties reflects the rich musical activity of the Tamil land. There were harps with 7, 9, 13, 21, 45 and 1000 varying strings. The yazh fell into disuse in view of its inability to provide scope for gamakas. The sangham works speak in eloquent terms about the vital part music played in the lives of the people. Glimpses of the glory of the ancient Dravidian music can be gleaned to a certain from Silappadigaram and the earliest available
literature, the Sangham works in Tamil. These establish that the South has all along been an intensely musical country.

In the history of South Indian Music the period commencing from the 16th century onwards may be considered highly significant. Karnatic music as it prevails to day with its beautiful system of scientific scales, a rich treasure of classical compositions, in attractive melodic styles and an astounding variety of musical instruments capable of expressing the dynamic subtleties of the ragas in a very precise manner, may be said to have taken shape, when Tanjore was the headquarters of Karnatic music during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

The Tamil country on the fertile banks of Kaveri had come under the rule of Telugu Nayaka of Vijayanagar as early as the 14th century and was originally a principality of the thriving empire of the Vijayanagar which flourished as a great centre of music in the 16th century. The contribution of Vijayanagar, to the lakshya and lakshana of South Indian Music, is priceless and as well forms an exhaustive subject for study by itself. The Karnataka Sangita Pitamah, Sri Purandara Dasa, Tala-pakkam composers of Tirupathi of this period have poured forth imnumerable compositions which have become inspiring

part of the later repertoire. Vijayanagar, which held the torch of musical learning in the beginning of the 16th century, had in its court eminent lakshanakaras. The precious work on the science of music, entitled Swaramelakalanidhi, which represents a land-mark in the historical development of South Indian Music in its scientific aspects, was composed at the request of Rama Raya; Lakshminarayana, who was awarded the titles, Abhináva Bharatacharya, Rayavarakara, and Sukshma Bharatacharya by the enlightened Emperor of Vijayanagar, Sri Krishnadeva Raya, wrote another important treatise, known as Sangita Suryodaya. Vijayanagar thus took a lead in the promotion of the arts and letters, in the South. South Indian Music came to be known as 'Karnataka Sangita' which meant the "old continuing music of South India." The term Karnataka sangita has also been understood as the music prevalent in the Karnataka country, which extended up to the Krishna and the Kaveri and the eastern and Western sea coast with Vijayanagar as the capital.

The fall of Vijayanagar in the battle of Talikota in 1565 saw the springing up of independent and small states in the south. "By the middle of the 17th century..."
the musical centre of gravity shifted to Tanjore and the
cream of Karnatic music was being formed at this centre
of culture", which kept itself open to the influence of
the North and even to some extent of the West, under the
fostering care of the Nayaks and the Maratha rulers". 1

"Of native musical art, Tanjore has been perhaps the only
seat, properly so called, South of the Krishna, since
the fall of the Hindu empire of Vijayanagar". 2

The history of music as prevalent in Tanjore during
the last three centuries represents the most remarkable
period in the development of Karnatic music. It was the
concentrated musical wisdom of the soil that has primarily
been responsible for the emergence of a living musical
tradition. As the most significant musical activity
centered around Tanjore during the 17th, 18th and 19th
centuries, it grew to be an active seat of music. It
must however be pointed out that Tanjore did not emerge
as a fresh seat of music. In fact it had the unique
distinction of being a centre of music since the 11th
century, i.e. Chola period. It is perhaps impossible
to think of any other region in the South with such a
glorious musical history as Tanjore. In fact the classi-
cal music of South India was perfected in this unique
place.

1. M.S. Ramachandran - Ragas of Karnatic Music -
   Intro. P.6
That Tanjore became a fullfledged seat of music during the last 300 years may be substantiated by the following facts.

In the first place, the growth of an art does not take place in a vaccum. "For any great empire to flourish and great art to thrive, attributes are given to the cause of emulation. This principle however cannot exist without encouragement which is the source for all emulation". An art to grow and establish itself with highly evolved and standard styles, distinct and characteristic techniques of expression, necessarily requires an unimpeded flow of artistic inspiration, enthusiasm on the part of the ruling and governing forces.

Tanjore had always enjoyed Royal patronage. Posterity remembers the royal patrons of South India like the royal artiste Mahendravarma Pallavan and Rajaraja Cholan. The Kudumiyamalai musical inscription stands as a testimony to the musical talents of the former, who had the title 'Sankirna jathi' and who was a good player on Parivadini vina. The Great Temple at Tanjore is symbolic of genius of the Cholas. A series of fine carvings illustrating the dance karanas as given in Bharata's Natyasastra, is available in this temple.

Rajaraja Cholan was verily a scholar prince who was well known for his liberal patronage. Tanjore was the capital of Chola desa and was the resort of dancers and musicians. The literature and inscriptions are highly eloquent about Rajaraja's munificent patronage. The division of the land into musical and dance regions like gita vinodavalanadu and Nritya vinodavalanadu, the appointment of 400 dancing girls in the Big temple and providing them with lands and houses to like, and the vast endowments to the temples for the perpetual conduct of musical services in the temples, bear ample proof of the abundant love the royal artists. It has been rightly said that Indian music arrived at its greatest height during the flourishing period of the native princes, if Tanjore once the sacred home and capital of the Cholas emerged as the great seat of music during the 17th, 18th and 19th century, it was partly due to the liberal patronage of the Nayaks and Marathas, who were themselves composers, musicologists and musicians.

The Nayaks brought with them the glorious cultural traditions of their country to the fertile region of the Kaveri. The splendour of the Vijayanagara court with its cultural fragrance, may be said to have had its reflection in the Tanjore court during the period of King Raghunatha Nayak and Vijayaraghava Nayak. The granary of the South became a meeting place of different cultures, of the Tamils, Telugus and Marathas. During the memorable rule of the Nayaks, Telugu became not only the court
language, but also the lingua franca of the people and the language of the poets and composers.\textsuperscript{1} The so-called southern school of Telugu literature emerged and the Nayaks fostered the Telugu learning in such a manner that this language became the most favourable medium of expression. Through song and music, this language came to be widely cultivated in Tanjore. The advent of many scholarly families of the Telugu country into Tanjore in quest of peaceful and fertile homes, has again contributed to the strengthening of a cultural empire that was founded firmly. Sanskrit had all along been held as the most dignified language of the intellectual society and received a considerable share of encouragement in the hands of the rulers, who were linguists and eminent composers in the several languages. It has been emphasised that the Sanskrit and Telugu learning reached their zenith of perfection during the Nayak rule in Tanjore. Consequently the historical city grew to be the home of fine Sanskrit, Telugu and Tamil. "The period of Nayak kings of Tanjore was in splendour and richness of output, the immediate corollary of the period of Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagar."\textsuperscript{2}

When King Venkhaji founded the Maratha kingdom at Tanjore after the spell of the Nayak glory at Tanjore came to an end, a glorious era of yet another dynasty noted for its cultural associations and warlike spirit, descended on

\textsuperscript{1} K. Sitarasayya Garu - The Tanjore Andhra Nayaka Charithra
\textsuperscript{2} P.P.S. Sastrî-The Des. Cat. of Telugu Mss. Introduction
Section III
Tanjore. The Maratha poets and artists of Ginjee which was captured by the Moghuls, flocked to the fertile lands of Tanjore, the peaceful resort of artists, musicians and the learned, where they found a congenial home for the peaceful pursuits of their arts. The Maratha rulers like their illustrious predecessors, were great scholars, eminent writers and highly accomplished in many branches of learning. The admiration and love they bore towards the flourishing Telugu language and the splendid literature and also the cultural traditions that had been founded on a firm basis by the Nayaks, could be easily felt from the mere fact that the Maratha rulers themselves mastered the court language of the country and rose to the ranks of first rate composers and authors of many a splendid work. In addition to the encouragement of Marathi and its literature, and song forms, unstinted patronage was extended to Telugu, Tamil and Sanskrit during the Maratha rule. Thus this dynasty brought with it, into Tanjore a fine language, the inspiring devotional literature in it and the fine culture of the patriotic Marathas. The lengthened duration of the Hindu Government and the uninterrupted cultivation of the fine arts like music and dance in all their classical purity have contributed in the preservation of the Hindu culture and its facts, in pristine purity in the blessed Kaveri region.
Further the musical activity of seat of Music can be assessed by the number of scientific treatises written during then and the output of a variety of musical compositions.

The scientific development of the art presupposes the progress in the musical practice and the intellectual writings are the index of scientific development. It may be seen that under the patronage of the Rajas of these courts, many scientific treatises in music came to be written in order to reconcile the gap between the theory and practice. In most cases, the kings themselves were the authors of many a standard lakshana grantha. A reference to some of them may not be out of place here. At the request of King Ramaraya of Vijayanagar, Rama Amatya (1550 A.D.) wrote the Swaramelakalanidhi. It was at the instance of King Singhana II (1210-1247 A.D.) of the Yadava dynasty that Sarngadeva wrote his monumental work Sangita Ratnakara. Again Kallinatha brought his commentary Kalanidhi on the above work.

Under the encouragement of Iimmadideva Cherukuri Lakshmihara wrote the commentary of Jayadeva’s Gita Govinda due to Aravidu Tirumala’s patronage. Sangita Suryodaya of Lakshminarayana was produced during the reign of Krishnadeva raya. A rich output of highly
devotional songs of the Dasakutas and Talapakkam composers has added a special significance. The choice of Mayamalavagoula as the beginners' scale dates from this period. In the history of North Indian music, there were many such instances.\(^1\) Bhava Batta wrote his Anupa Sangita Vilasa in honour of his patron king Anup Singh of Bikaner. Pundarika Vittala's works were produced at the behest of his patron, Burhan Khan. Further, musical treatises like Sangita Sudha, Sangita Saramrita, Hridayakoutuka, Hridayaprakasa, Sangita Sarasangraha, Sangita Sara, Sivatativa Ratnakara, Sangita Sudhakara, the commentary on Sangita Ratnakara and Sangita Raja are from the pen of royal musicologists of India. Royal musicologists, royal composers and royal patrons have always been unique for their contributions.

In Tanjore, the standard lakshana granthas like Sangita Sudha, Chaturdandi Prakashika, Sangita Saramrita, and Sangraha Chudamani etc. were produced. The 72 melakartas which provide the rocky basis of the edifice of the Karnatic music and her ragas were systematised. The best musical talents flocked to Tanjore and by their contribution enriched the Lakshya of our music. It was in Tanjore again that the 24 fretted Vina known as Tanjore Vina was perfected and the fretting is also significantly called the "Tanjore Melam".

\(^1\) Pandit V.N.Bhatkhande - Short history of the music of Upper India --pp.20-30, 1934
Expert players on Vina, Nagaswaram, Flute, Mridangam had lived and the Tanjore Band consisting of performers on brass wind and wood wind was developed here. Violin came to be learnt and played first by Balaswamy Dikshitar, while Mahadeva Nattuvanar was the first to play the Clarinet. Tanjore became famous for the manufacture of Vina.

If Tanjore became a glorious seat of music it is mainly due to the great Vaggeyakaras and saint musicians who laid the very foundations of our modern Karnatic music. The Musical Trinity have done priceless service to the cause of our music by setting up a classic tradition in their musical composition, Karnatic Music reached its peak in their songs which have helped to systematise its lakshana and Lakshya. This period is verily a golden age in the history of South Indian Music.

The kriti which represents the highly melodic composition was evolved by Sri Thyagaraja, who endowed them with an artistic appeal, simplicity of form and expression. By the introduction of Sangathis or melodic variations in his kritis, Sri Thyagaraja has emphasised that melody is more important in a highly artistic forms, in which the dhatu and matu form a consummate whole.
The illustrious musicians, in the subsequent generations were the torch bearers of the music of the great composers and handed down the classical tradition to the posterity. South India was again fortunate in having had a long line of such devoted musicians who interpreted the music created by the Composers by their polished and attractive renderings. This again led to the emergence of new styles of expression. Eminent composers in the Pre-Trinity period have also contributed to the growth of South Indian Music considerably.

Since the melodic individuality of the ragas were clearly illustrated by the wide variety of musical forms, perfection of manodharma sangita was achieved. Eminent performers of the different branches of creative music became the pride of Tanjore and the names of Atana Appayya, Sankarabharana Narasayya, Pallavi Doraismamy Iyer, Pallavi Gopalayya and Ghanam Krishna Iyer have down in the pages of musical history. The Sishyaparamparas of each of the musical Trinity have been doing yeomen service by zealously guarding the rich heritage bequeathed by their great masters.

There was also remarkable development of dance music and opera as evidenced by the rich output of dance musical forms like Alarippu, Svarajathi, Padavarna, Jathisvara, Sabda besides the operatic forms.
The modern Bharata Natya concert programmes was systematised in Tanjore. Bharata Natyam of today stands for its classic purity, interesting variety, graceful refinement and symbolic expression.

The classical dance dramas of Melattur and the delightful Kuravanjihatakas, represent distinct contributions of Tanjore to the South Indian Opera. It has been possible for composers of Tanjore to offer such outstanding musical works, because the entire atmosphere was pulsating with artistic inspiration. And the best music of the age found expression in the service of God.

Music is a holy art in India. It is believed to have been derived from Samaveda. The conception of God as Madabrahma is unique. Vishnupurana describes the Lord as wearing the form of sound. Indian music is thus essentially interwoven, rather outgrown out of the seeds of Indian Philosophy. Having thus a basis in spirituality, all our best music attempts at being something super sensuous. The spiritual side of music has taken deep roots in our land as the people have all along been more prone towards spirituality. It is the spring of bhakti that has inspired the finest art, music and literature over the centuries.

It has been said 'that in no part of India does the
Hindu religion preserve so much power or splendour as on the coast of Coromandel. It is primarily because of the spiritual influence of the temples of the place. South India is a land of temples and particularly in the Tanjore district, every small village had invariably a temple. In fact the temple is the centre around which the village developed. Since the days of the great Cholas these temples have not only been functioning as places of worship but also as centres of music and dance. The spiritual arts of music and dance grew as adjuncts to religion and the temple with its vast endowments had a regular establishment of Oudvars, Arâiyar and dancers, for offering musical service in its sacred precincts. The abundant epigraphical and inscriptional evidences simply bear testimony to the singing of Tiruppadiyam, Tiruvaymohi, the enactment of sacred dramas and performances of dances in temples. Thus music and dance became indispensable items of worship in temples. The Kshetra kirtanas were composed by great Vaggeyakaras in praise of the presiding deities of the temple in and around Tanjore. The festivals provided ample opportunity to the people to derive spiritual and musical enjoyment. Along with bhakti, music which is considered as the best offering to Him, also spread. The society in Tanjore thus permeated with love for music and dance. The Mayamars who

worshipped at almost every shrine in the district, have poured out their spiritual experiences in the highly sacred hymns. Further it was an age of tolerance, of broad outlook on life and of piety. This was undoubtedly most favourable to the growth of arts and literature. The kings who ruled over Tanjore were unsectarian in their religious views. The Sakvite and Vaishnavite hymnists swept the whole of South India with their devotional lyrics.

The Bhakti movement that was inaugurated in the 15th century by the Haridasas of Karnataka led to the development of devotional music. The philosophical kirtans, Suladis, Ugabhogas of Sri Purandaradasa have become very famous in Tanjore and have come to occupy a very precious part of our musical repertoire. About the same period, the kirtana movement in Maharashtra led by Namdev, Tukharam, Jnanadev and other saints, brought in its wake a flood of highly lyrical songs, which are noted for their spiritual favour.

The fertile land of Tanjore and its sanctity attracted the itinerant sages and preachers of bhakti cult, many of whom settled here. They set up matas which became centres of Bhaja and kirtan. It is the enthusiastic effort of the torch bearers of spiritual learning who appeared in different parts of the land
and particularly in Tanjore, that has helped in the preservation of our rich heritage of music and literature. The last centuries produced in Tanjore great saints of Namasiddhanta cult like Sadasiva Brahmendra and Sri Thyagaraja. Even now one can hear some of the finest devotional music during the annual festivals held in Tanjore.

Another important factor which is conducive for any seat of music to emerge is its geographical location. It has been found that places which were centrally situated and which had a favourable bounteous rain, a prosperous economic and ideal social conditions for leading a comfortable and artistic life became seats of music. Places which were lacking in natural resources and economic prosperity and politically insecure, never became seats of music.

Geographically, the district of Tanjore had an ideal location in the deltaic region of Kaveri, known as the garden and Granary of South India. Watered by Kavery and blessed with a bounteous rainfall, there was plenty and prosperity. Nature thus endowed the district with a fertile soil and an ideal climate for the pursuit of peaceful arts, particularly music and dance. Under these favourable conditions, the people led a very

1. Memories of Swartz -Chap.II. p.326
contended, philosophical and artistic life. There are plenty of references to illustrate the prosperity of the region in the literature dating from Chola period. The Sahitya Ratnakara refers to the fertility of the soil, peace and prosperity of the place.1 The great Vaggeyakaras and poets who flourished in Tanjore have extolled the sacredness of the Kaveri and its blessed region in songs and poetry. Sri Thyagaraja praises the Choladesa as the dancing resort of the divine Kaveri. The Yakshaganas produced during the Nayak and the Maratha period establish again the glory of Kaveri region and the cultural life of the people.

The land of the five rivers in the south, was noted for its traditions of learning and spirituality. Great composers have considered it their fortune to have been born in such a renowned place of cultural importance. Sri Thyagaraja sings of the Tanjore region as "The Chola-simha", 'the beautiful land in this world' - "I mahilo sogasaina cholasimayandu" (Muripenu - Mukhari). And in his Asaveri kriti "Sarivedalina! Kaverini judare, Varu. viranachu judaka ta ......." describes how Kaveri proceeds to her destination, "fulfilling the desires of all, touching shrine after shrine and worshipping deity after deity, with holy men paying obeisance to her on either side".

1. Yagnanarayana Dikshitar-Sahitya Ratnakara-
Canto II. S&c.(1-40)
The oft quoted proverb about the Tanjore district emphasises the thrilling melody of Savery and the transporting nature of the banks of the Kaveri. It is significant that Muthuswamy Dikshitar has immortalised the idea in his song Karikalabhamukham - "Kaveri tala sthitam - Saveri raganutam". Purandaradasa in his song 'Chandrachuda siva' in Purvikalyani raga, praises Lord Kumbeswara as inhabiting the banks of Kaveri: 'Kaveritira Kumbapura ni vasanu ni ne'.

The advent of the British into India and its influence in the Court of Tanjore had its cultural results too.

Though from the political point of view, the country had to undergo shift from one dynasty to the other, yet the basic cultural spiritual life of the society remained the least affected, since the Nayaks and Marathas were Hindu dynasties only. Hence political struggles and warfare perhaps had not penetrated into the cultural layer of the empire founded by the kings. The religion, music, dance, and literature flourished for over three centuries in their splendour unimpeded and had resulted in the setting up of a glorious tradition in music, fondly referred to as Tanjore tradition, which has been more or less used to denote the classical tradition in Karnatic music.
It is truly said that the periods of great private and royal patronage produced a large number of composers and that of public patronage produced more performers in music. Originally music was learnt by the disciple at the feet of the guru in his asrama resort in the interior of the forest and the asramas functioned more or less an institution where musical learning could be had. It was for the pursuit of religion that music was practised and nurtured in the past. Later the munificent patronage of arts and letters by the royal courts produced court poets and composers of music who naturally extolled the king. The temples that owed their existence to the rich endowments of the ruling monarchs, in their turn had musicians and dancers in their establishments. Alongside with the court music, the music of the temple flourished, in its orthodox quarters. The songs composed in praise of the kings could not survive for long by their very nature. With a change in the succession of the rulers, new and fresh songs extolling the kings and their accomplishments had to be composed naturally. Thus more composers lived during such periods and their compositions have naturally gone out of vogue. As long as the Kritinayaka was alive, the song was popular and not after. That may be one of the reasons for the loss of these court musical compositions.
Songs with devotional content, have always been immortal and have their own supreme value.

When Royal patronage declined, the musicians and composers looked up to the public and private bodies for encouragement. To please the audience, constituted of talented rasikas, critics and exponents of the art, the musicians resorted to attractive and delightful techniques of expression. This paved the way for the emergence of new forms and styles of compositions in music.

The cultural history of Tanjore after the annexation in 1856 by the British ceases to be interesting. With the decline of the fortunes of the royal house began also the decline in the patronage to arts and letters. In gradual stages, the royal court ceased to be musically active. This led to the migration of composers, musicians and scholars to other states which offered them shelter and cultural opportunities. Thus the music of Tanjore became popular in the different places like Trivandrum, Pudukkottah, Mysore and the flourishing city of Madras. The old Gurukula system of musical education had to slowly give way in the new society that had evolved. Music which was the monopoly of the gifted and chosen few disciples of the great Gurus, became slowly democratized due to the introduction of scientific equipment such as Gramophone, Radio and Mike. Madras, the capital of the State with all its modern facilities attracted the musicians and composers of Tanjore. The patronage of the court was replaced by that of the Government and local bodies like the Sabha.