CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

India is known for more than its traditional fashions we perceive today. There is more to its mere modern society. India is an ancient city with a very captivating background. From social, religious, to historical aspects, ancient India has been created on a foundation that stands strong in its beliefs. There were countless steps taken in order to instill a value in its large society.

South India as considered here is a complex, composite region consisting of diverse physical, social, and cultural components. Definition of its distinguishing characteristics constitutes a crucial and, often, difficult problem. To a large extent, the difficulty is conceptual. That is, delimiting the distribution of some element or related elements which distinguish one segment of the time-space continuum from another requires both adequate and relevant distinguishing elements chosen to constitute the region. The adequacy or relevance of the elements according to which a region is defined are related to and are alone justified by the problem at hand.

The term ‘South India’ has been used at times to designate the entire peninsula, but that is not its meaning here. In this study, ‘South India’ refers generally to that portion of peninsular India South of the Karnataka watershed on the west, and the Kistna-Godavari delta on the east. Within this portion of
the peninsula, there has existed a region characterized by a high degree of sharing of significant social, cultural, and political elements and an order of interaction such as to constitute a viable unit for the study of certain problems.

It includes most of what has been called the ‘Dravidian culture sphere’ following the linguistic usage first suggested by Francis W. Ellis in 1816 to describe a family of languages in the Southern peninsula. Spate employs the term ‘Dravidian South’ to refer to this part of the sub-continent and sees it as consisting of a group of ‘perennial nuclear regions’ of which he lists: Kalinga country or Orissa, Andhra or Telugu country, Chola and Pandya parts of Tamil country, and the isolated South-western littoral of Kerala or Malabar. In social terms the Southern peninsula has also been recognized as distinctive. Irawati Karve delineates a separate Southern zone of kinship organization which includes Karnataka, Andhra, Tamilnadu, and Kerala. Hence the present study is limited to the zone suggested by Irawati.

A majority of Indians from the Southern region speak one of the Dravidian languages: Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Tulu, and Kodava. During its history, a number of dynastic kingdoms ruled over parts of South India whose invasions across Southern and Southeastern Asia impacted the history and cultures of modern sovereign states such as Sri Lanka, Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia.
The history of the Southern part of India covers a span of over four thousand years during which the region saw the rise and fall of a number of dynasties and empires. The period of known history of the region begins with the Iron age (1200 BCE to 24 BCE) period during which Chera, Chola, Pandya ruled the South Indian country until 14th century C.E. Other dynasties of Shatavahana, Chalukya, Pallava, Rashtrakuta, Kakatiya and Hoysala were at their peak during various periods of history. These kingdoms constantly fought amongst each other and against external forces when Muslim armies invaded South India. Vijayanagara empire rose in response to the Muslim intervention and covered the most of South India and acted as a bulwark against Muslim expansion into the South.

India is an ancient country with a very captivating background. From social, religious, to historical aspects, ancient India has been created on a foundation that stands strong in its beliefs. There were countless steps taken in order to instill a value in its large society. History and religion play the most important role in doing so. Having a powerful structure will insure any society of their chance at gaining an advantage in understanding the value of the society's beliefs. This has allowed the caste system to stamp its position in India’s ancient history. The caste system is a division of society based on differences of wealth, inherited rank or privilege, profession, occupation, or race. As we uncover the numerous explanations of why society is in its present condition, we will gain a detailed understanding of its many
influences. While referring to the Rig Veda and Aryan influence, it is evident that the Hindu creation myth has helped established society’s caste system. The influence of Aryans around 1500 B.C.E. in the Indian society influenced the Indian caste system drastically. The Aryans had a system of cosmic and social order.

When the Aryans arrived in India they began conquering and taking control over regions in north India and at the same time pushed the local people Southwards or towards the jungles and mountains in north India. This prompted the society to create a system of class. As the influence of a class system hardened in Ancient India, the idea of varna’s had become so deeply embedded in the Indian mind that its terminology was even used, for the classification of precious commodities. There were four main class levels or Varna’s in the caste system, Brahmanas, Kshatrias, Vaishias, and Sundras. According to the religious aspect of the ancient period each level of class was created from each body part of Purush. The Aryan’s distinguished different classes and brought attention to a system known as the caste system.

During the Pallavas there seems to have been a vast influx of Brahmins from north India. Groups of Brahmins were welcomed and settled in different villages and were helped by generous grants of land and gifts. Several ghatikas or sacred schools of learning under the patronage of Brahmins were established in the Pallava and Pandya territories. This was
also the time when numerous temples of stone were erected. And it need hardly be repeated that the temples were the citadels of the orthodox caste system and the supremacy of the Brahmin hierarchy. In the religious and social spheres the supremacy of the Brahmins was established. The kings patronised the Brahmins and supported them in their move for exalting Brahmins. Around the temples there appeared settlements of agraharas containing the residences for scholars devoted to the study and teaching of the Vedas. The rules prescribing the privileges of the various castes with reference particularly to the temples were formulated. It is well known that Mahendravarman II professed himself to be the champion of the varnashrama-dharma. Pallava rulers, in general, are said to have enforced the special rules of all castes and orders. With the systematisation of the four castes, their duties and rights, the tendency for the growth of sub-castes appeared. In particular, numerous small groups appeared among the Sudras; Intermarriages among them were not allowed.

The age of the Great Pallavas marked the heyday of the Bhakti Movement in Tamilnadu. This encouraged devotion to temples and rituals. Among the 63 Nyanmars, besides Brahmins and Arasar, there were Vanigar, Vellalas, Idaiyar, Kuyavar, Panar, Vedar, Sanar, Saliyar, Sekkár (Oil monger), Vannar (washer man) and Pulaiyar. Among the Alavars of about the same epoch, along with Brahniins, Kshatriyas, Vellalas and Majavas, there were some like Tondaradippodi, Tiruppan-alvar, not born in any of the four
principal castes. It is significant that Tirumalisaiyar, though of a high caste, states in one of his hymns that he did not belong to any caste.

During the period of the Imperial Cholas the social disparities which had appeared in the earlier epoch of the Pallavas continued in an accentuated form. Temples increased, and with them the rituals and ceremonies in temples increased. Caste regulations in respect of temples became rigorous. Untouchability and unapproachability developed. The number of sub-castes multiplied. New brahmadeyas appeared, and more Brahmins from the north were invited to settle down in new villages. Ghatikas and Vedic centres of learning increased in number. The same social setup continued in the 16th-17th centuries. During this period when the Vijayanagara empire expanded into the Tamil country, several new-castes appeared on account of the inflow of Telugu and Kannadiga settlers in the Tamil country.

The Andhras as a tribe or cultural entity, existed, in the Brahmanaical period. In the Aitareya Brahmanaa, they were listed as a non-Aryan tribe along with others such as Pundras, Savaras, Pulindas and Mutibas. From very early times, it appears that the Andhras have been occupying the lower courses of the Godavari and the Krishna together with the adjoining areas. It is not clearly known when the Andhras passed into the fold of Aryan culture but it must have happened long before the foundation of the Mauryan empire. Aryanisation must have brought with it Vedic ritualism and caste system into
this non-Aryan tribal society. Apastambha, one of the sutrakaras is believed to have sailed from Andhra-desa. The society shed off its tribal character, was reconstructed and given a new shape - a shape cast in the Aryan mould. In the new set up, each of the four traditional classes had clearly defined roles to fulfill, in which that of a Kshatriya was to protect and rule. Surely, the essentials of an urban society - institutionalised social inequalities, division of labour, social surplus, and at least a rudimentary form of government were satisfied.

Society of the Shatavahana period was less homogeneous than before, the influx of new religious and racial elements having contributed to this effect. One of the effects of the Mauryan rule was the steady infiltration of the two faiths-Jainism and Buddhism into the Deccan. Of the two, the latter was more active and commanded a larger following. The new religions received liberal patronage from both kings and commoners. Inscriptions of the Shatavahana times speak of halikas (cultivators), kularikas (potters), kolikas (weavers), kamaras (smiths), kasakaras (braziers), vasakaras (bamboo-workers), tilapisakas (oil-mongers), vadhakis (carpenters) sethis (merchants), odayantrikas, (boatmen) etc. It appears that these professions were not the monopoly of one particular caste, although according to Vedic injunction Vaisyas were to be the tradesmen of the society. We hear from inscriptions of the instance of a Kshatriya who took up the mercantile profession. The Stavahanas were Brahmins by caste but became a ruling family.
With the end of the Shatavahana rule, perhaps, passed the meridian of the glory of Buddhism in Andhra. A powerful revival of Brahmanism was the keynote of the society in Andhra ever since 3rd century CE. Vasishthiputra Siri Chantamula’s performance of Vedic sacrifices like Ashvamedha, Agnisthoma and Vajapeya signalised this change in the religious outlook of the people. Many of the copper-plate inscriptions of the post-Satavhana and of the astern Chalukyan times were records of gifts of lands and villages to the learned members of the community (Brahmins) so that they might devote themselves to the performance of the Six traditional karmas—yajna, yajana, adhyayana, adhyapana, dana and pratigrahana enjoined upon them. In course of time, these vocational groups crystallized as so many sub-castes or jatis, which were a constituent element of the society in medieval Andhra.

In Andhra, as elsewhere in South India, the society was dominated by the temple and the so-called caste guilds. A medieval temple was not merely a religious entity, but a powerful centre of social and economic activity. Apart from Brahmins, other vocational groups as well of the medieval times formed themselves into self-governing corporate units well-known among these are the panchanamvaru corporation of artisans, virabhalanjas confederation of trading units teliki-veraru corporation of oil-mongers with headquarters at Bezawada and nakaramu corporation of Vaisya trading community with headquarters at Penugonda in the West Godavari District. Some of these communities, especially the virabhalanjas, vaisyas and the teliki grew so rich
that the kings had to respect and acknowledge their wealth and social importance. With the society divided into a number of self-functioning units, the state had only very little responsibility in the form of social regulation.

Villages differed in terms of society, villages given over tax free to officers in reward for state service were known as *umbalikas* and if such were granted to Brahmans devoted to Vedic studies, they became *agraharas*. The *purohita* advised the villagers on auspicious moments, significance of omens and such other matters. There were also washermen, barbers, goldsmiths, carpenters, blacksmiths, potters to attend to the needs of the village community. The influence of new-religious and ethnic elements in pre and early Christian times tended to weaken the Vedic fold but only for a time, till the Vedic religion revived and worked up its way to regain the position of preeminence. Soon, however, the stage was set for another social split based on occupational specialisation within each caste group. These new social sub-divisions did not show up fully in crystallised form till after 12th century CE. The changes visualised were all processual and subtle and happened on a plane outside the sphere of state action.

The Caste or Chaturvarna system developed in northern India has little evidence in Karnataka or South India in its earlier times. Literary sources and inscriptions, while explaining the social act up in ancient Karnataka speak of 18 traditional castes (*hadinentu jati* or *samaya* or *ashtadasha prakriti*). Mostly
the four varnas spoken of in Vedic tradition and some other 14 castes are mentioned while identifying these castes in some of the literary works. But at a later date (in a 17th century work) the Lingayats are also mentioned as one of these castes. Though the division of society on the basis of varnas was introduced in Karnataka after Aryanisation which started from about 600 BCE caste differences do not appear to be the legacy of Aryanisation alone. Some class or group of even among the least aryanised, considering itself as superior or inferior to some other shows that social differences existed even earlier to aryanisation. Many of the castes in Karnataka are tribal in origin and they have nothing to do with the classification introduced by varna system. Among the 18 castes, Brahmanaas are mentioned superior in the hierarchy and they were found engaged in priestly and academic pursuits. They were expected to engage themselves in shatkarmas or six-fold duties, viz., yajnya (performing sacrifice as a priest), yajana (sponsoring sacrifice), adhyayana (engaging in academic pursuits) adhyapana (teaching), daana (donating) and prateegraha (accepting donation). But there were Brahmanaas who took to the career of warriors, as its the case at Mayurasharma the founder of the Kadamba dynasty. They are referred as ‘Bhuvanakkaaradhyaviprottaamakula-tilakam’ in inscriptions. A definite exclusive caste of Kshatriyas in does not appear to have existed ancient Karnataka. Any successful soldier who could have crowned himself was dubbed as Kshatriya. The next caste, Vaishyas, was also a loose group when all people following the profession of traders is
taken into account in ancient Karnataka. Though there was a small group belonging to the Vaishya caste, there also existed castes calling themselves as *Banajigas, Balijas or Balanjus*. Inscriptions speak also of the *Veera Balanju* their guilds. Later literary works speak of the Vokkaligas as a separate caste. Among the other castes mentioned in the traditional list are the *panchalas* (the smiths, sculptors and carpenters), the *Agasa* (washerman), the *Navida* (barber), the *Jeda or Deva* (weaver), the *Chippiga* (tailor), the *Telliga* (oil monger), the *Kumbhar* (potter), the *Mochchiga* (shoe-maker), the *Meda* (Basket-maker, the *Golla* (cowherd), the *Tambuliga* (betel-leave seller), the *Domba* (acrobat), the *Uppara* (mason) and the *Holeyya*. Untouchability too prevailed, and inscriptions speak of the residences of the *Holeyas* being outside the village or town. The kings considered it their duty to protect the caste rules, they called themselves as “Protectors of Varnashrama Dharma”.

Discussion of the right and left divisions during the Chola period has been shaped by the necessity of examining the fragmentary evidence of this early period in the light of the more complete information of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. However great the gaps in evidence and understanding of the two fold divisions between the tenth and thirteenth centuries, these are as nothing compared to the difficulties of considering the origins of the divisions. The vagueness with which the dual social divisions may be seen in the period from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries may appear to make suggestions about origins particularly hazardous. However, it
is particularly because knowledge about the divisions is so fragmentary at this time and even later that any analysis must imply a set of notions about their origins.

The development of the two fold division of lower castes appears as the consequence of two significant structural features of the society of the region during its early history. These are the territorial segmentation of society and culture, and the ambiguous social status of the non-Brahmana population given the commitment to Brahmanaical ideology by the Pallava period. Early attempts by people of the region to cope with these structural features produced a status system pivoting upon the power of the peasantry of the numerous localities into which the Southern peninsula was divided. For a substantial portion of the population-those who were not of the dominant peasant groups-the status system of the Pallava and most of the Chola periods was unsatisfactory, and by the eleventh century, merchants and artisans along with their urban and rural dependents began to function independently of and to some extent in opposition to peasant leaders of local society. This modification occurred without altering the basic territorial segmentation of society or the ambiguous status positions of non-Brahmanas in South India, and the two fold social divisions of the eleventh century were to remain important for centuries. Membership in, or at least association or alliance with, established status groupings in an increasingly stratified society was the principal motivation for the division. The process of an expanding
agrarian system partly by military means, partly by peaceful means created
the need to assimilate new people; this was an important feature of the
Pallava and early Chola periods. In this process, occupational and residential
groupings were the prime organizational loci. The expanding requirements for
the services of essentially urban-based merchants and artisans provided the
opportunity for the development.

The emergence of groups identifying themselves as the left division in
the eleventh century does not rule out the possibility that there might have
been an earlier foundation for such a division. One such hypothesis is that
the divisions represent peoples of different racial origin within South India
dating from ancient times. Racial admixtures were there, but apart from the
‘Aryan migration’ which introduced Brahmanical as well as Jaina and
Buddhist institutions, there is no convincing historical evidence of a
significant, racially distinct stratification which could account for the divisions
as known after the tenth century. Nor does the view here deny a variant of
the, ancient racial argument which distinguished between ‘indigenous’ people
of a culture area and ‘strangers’ who took up residence there. The latter
hypothesis is supported by occasional references in Karnataka where nadu
and desa (for strangers) are co-equal with edagay and balagay. Valangai
velaikkarar are considered by Srinivasa Iyengar to be ‘Tamilians’, whereas
the Idangai velaikkarar, according to him, consisted of warriors from Andhra
(vadugan), Kerala (malaiyalar), and others not of the Chola heartland of
Cholamandalam and Tondaimandalam (other groups ‘mentioned included Pallan and Mallar from Pandya country, Bedar from Karnataka, and Madigas from Andhra.). Another manifestation of this ‘stranger’ versus ‘indigenous’ classification is in the epigram of the low caste of Paraiyan, invariably associated with the right-hand division in recent centuries: ‘the paraiyar are not of the left hand, they are Tamilians’. While the conception of ‘stranger peoples’ may have entered into the dual division, the core elements of the divisions, on both sides, must be considered as ‘indigenous’.

Another view of how earlier divisions in the society of the region may have served as the basis for the subsequent development of the right and left-hand divisions appears to be emerging from recent scholarship on the classical or Sangam era. Poets of one order may not have been poets of the other, and while certain cultural continuities existed between the orders-in language and beliefs at least-it is as yet difficult to see’ them as constituting a single civilization. However, these two orders might have comprised a single society as proposed by SuBrahmanaian and this could have established the basic framework for the later, historical divisions.

Territorial segmentation has referred principally to the isolation of the many locality cores of peasant population, nadus, scattered over the Tamil plain. The degree of isolation conformed with physiographical factors to a significant extent; thus, in the central Kaveri basin, there was less isolation,
greater continuity of settlement, than in the western parts of the basin (parts of modern Tiruchirapalli, South Arcot, and Salem) and in the tracts South of the Kaveri. Judging from the distribution of ancient inscriptional and modern records referring to the right and left divisions; the greater the degree of isolation among the peasant cores of settlement, the more important and conspicuous was the dual division. The central Kaveri basin appears never to have developed the intensive divisional alignments found in the central portion of the Tamil plain where the dual divisions were both an early and persistent phenomenon with Kanchi serving as the centre for both.

By the late Pallava period, and certainly in the Chola period, Brahmana groups were virtually closed, priestly corporations dominated by Smartas of various divisions. Vadama Smarta Brahmanas perhaps, were the most prestigious. Their names suggest a northern origin (vada means ‘north’) but the title, vadama could also refer to the proficiency in Sanskrit and Vedic ritual, which then and earlier were associated with the north. Other Smarta Brahmanas were divided into territorial sub divisions. There was also a smaller group of Vaishnava Brahmanas the Vaikanasas; it was not until some centuries later that Vaishnava Brahmanas began to constitute a somewhat larger proportion of the Brahmana population, and at that later time, the numbers were primarily the result of a shift of Smartas to the fold of the dynamic and expanding Sri Vaishnava sampradayas. Brahmanas were unchallenged in this sacred or secular authority either by rival religions or by
warriors determined or disposed to diminish their role. Brahmanas thus, constituted a strong and impenetrable stratum of the contemporary social system. No less clearly defined in this social system were those at the bottom. Enjoying neither the high ritual status nor the status provided by holding land or possessing skills essential to the maintenance of peasant agrarian operations, agricultural labourers occupied the unambiguously lowest strata of contemporary society.

When the marginal tracts were brought under irrigation by the expansion of prosperous and powerful peasant groups with requisite organization, capital (mostly in the form of superior skills but also livestock), adequate manpower, and superior military power, the former occupants of these lands were reduced to labour dependents of the expanding peasantry, or they fled to still more marginal tracts only to be incorporated later or forced once again to flee. Another source of this lowest tier of social groups were those of the forests to whom regular sedentary agricultural pursuits were unknown. When forests were felled by expanding peasant agriculture, as they were throughout the Pallava period, the fate of the forest dwellers was the same as that to whom agricultural labour was already a fulltime though hazardous basis of livelihood.

Apart from the degraded status which was attached to those who laboured on the fields of others and were therefore without substantial rights
or means for ameliorating their conditions except the threat of absconding, there were those whose purchase in peasant social organization was even worse, by a slight degree, because they combined some polluting craft with their principal agricultural labour. Such were the leather workers, Sakkiliyar and Madiga, for example, whose low occupational status as field workers was negatively reinforced by their work with leather and the preparation of hides. Others included musicians and dancers who constituted part of the corps of bards in the classical period.

Between the poorest field workers, artisans and artists and the highest strata of priests were the majority of the population. During the recent, modern past, ranking pressures have been the most severe at this level of society consisting of powerful land controlling peasant groups and wealthy merchants, bankers, and artisans. Beneath these has been a second order of peasants who lacked the means to support a claim to being dominant peasants, *pumpputirar*, ‘sons of the soil’. Finally, there have been many kinds of village artisans and service groups (as washermen, barbers, and potters) whose work was tainted by a not always logical set of pollution norms. Among such varied groups, the terminology dictated by Brahmanaical usage, such as ‘Sudra’, serves no analytical purpose, and, in the recent past, that label has been rejected by those upon whom it was placed by other Indians or by British administrators.
The modern term ‘non-Brahmana’, comes closer than any other to encompassing the middle groups of the early period in the sense of being ‘respectable’, socially mobile, and yet clearly neither of the highest nor lowest strata. To the modern era, however, ‘non-Brahmana’, is difficult to disassociate from the twentieth century context when the term was claimed by educated and politically mobilized groups of Tamil Nadu and Andhra bent on displacing Brahmanas from what they regarded as places of disproportionate advantage. Still, the term ‘non-Brahmana’ is more appropriate than the varna terms Vaisya and Sudra in the South Indian context though the latter terms occur in ritual manuals (agama) and inscriptions occasionally. In fact, there appears to be no generic term for those beneath the status of Brahmanas in the medieval period or earlier. Sectarian terms such as cattatavan and saiva, denoting votaries of Vishnu and Siva who were not Brahmanas, are too narrowly circumscribed in their reference. In the corpus of South Indian inscriptions, there occur numerous specific ethno occupational groups below the status of Brahmanas such as: adavimar, ayogavar, kaikkolar, salgar (weavers), alavar, parampar, vellan (cultivators), anjuvannam, kammalar (artisans), pattinavar, bharatavar (fishermen), davana-chetti, teliki (merchants), ilavar (toddy tappers), kannakkanan (brazier), mannan, vannan (washermen), manradi (shepherd), navisan (barber), taiyan (tailor);’ and vetkovan (potter). The terms Idangai and Valangai are themselves references to general classes of non-
Brahmanas, except that the two fold divisions included among their most active members those of very low status.

It seems evident that there was little of the rank striving and conflict among local ethnic groupings that one finds in contemporary South India. The nineteenth and twentieth century claims of some middle groups to the status of Brahmanas may have occurred earlier; Vellalas and Reddis, dominant peasants of the modern Tamil and Andhra plains, occasionally equated their control over land with the rights of Kshatriyas. Such claims were as irrelevant in an earlier age as they were during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Ranking postulates are ‘not based upon unilateral claims, but upon interactions among claimants with each other and with those considered the lowest and most polluted, on the other side.

From the earliest references to the two fold division their compositions appear to have included a wide range of groups which in more recent times maintain punctilious differentiation and relative ranking. Yet, regarding the diction of the Idangai and Valangai ‘inscriptions and the administrative and judicial records of the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries give no importance to relative rank within the divisions. On the contrary, the divisions represent themselves or are represented as pluralistic collectivities enjoying an apparent equality as in various kinds of sodalities. The critical factor in the divisions of this early period and later was not relative ranking among the
constituents, but shared substance and interests. It was not rank but membership within a division which was important. Only the very powerful or very marginal could claim or afford a position of neutrality (e.g. the status of madhyasta in the Baramahal Records) with respect to the dual-alliance formations.

The powerful nattar were in the best position to separate themselves from others of the ambiguous middle strata. Their economic control and military authority within the framework of the Chola overlordship, their claims to ancient respectability and political primacy, and their close relations with Brahmanas all combined to effect this separation. To those less favourably placed, but still important in agrarian relationships peasant groups of lesser status and certain merchants and artisans—the right division provided alliance support of importance. Craftsmen and merchants less directly involved in agrarian relations sought alliance refuge in the left division, for in the balancing of status and locality solidarity which hinged upon links to the land, they had but poor claims. Moreover, to the extent that such craft and mercantile activities could be identified with the urban social order, they bore an additional status handicap of having been associated with heterodoxy. A core of military forces stood ready to support the latter coalition in the form of armed contingents of itinerant traders.
The supra local system of dual divisions became evident first in the Valangai military units of the first of the great Cholas, Rajaraja-I. At that time there appears to have been no contending Idangai. The designation Valangai at this earlier time may have been the way of referring to the armed peasantry of Cholamandalam and Tondaimandalam who had overcome a considerable measure of isolation and had begun to cooperate militarily, first under various chiefs and later under the great Cholas. They had become the weapon, the ‘right-hand’, of ambitious warrior leaders. These were potential or relative structures, not absolute and continuous ones, as suggested in the term velai, in velaikkarar, meaning ‘occasional’. It was not until two centuries after the first references to essentially localized peasant groups collaborating on wider regional lines for military purposes that the left division appears to have achieved the same degree of supra-local potential organization. Venkayya’s view that the existence of the Valangai soldiers in the time of Rajaraja-I implied the existence of the Idangai would, under this interpretation, be questionable. It is more probable that the prior existence of the peasant-dominated right division led to the development of an opposing division at a later time that is during the eleventh century.

Removed from the great brahmadeya centres of orthodoxy of the tenth and eleventh centuries, which afford the most important sources of information of this period, the rise of the left-hand division and the establishment of a true dual division was slow to be registered. Mobile
artisan/trader groups, even after they had shifted their allegiance from the heterodox to the Saivite orthodox faith of the era, probably continued to be held in suspicion. However, such groups could claim an ancient and honourable past during which they enjoyed respectable status if evidence such as the Classical epics, Cilappadikaram and Manirnekalai are to be credited even partially and if the rathakara connection was accepted widely. Neither these artisan/trader groups nor the itinerant traders with whom they were linked would long have willingly accepted the low status which had befallen them in many agrarian settlements. They would, accordingly, seize upon the new opportunities of the twelfth century and after to alter that status. Among the most important of the opportunities were those associated with temple development in that age.

**Research Findings and Solution to the Problem**

The castes system in ancient South India in particular and the caste system generally in India overall helps us to understand and digest the thorough knowledge about the caste system prevailing during the times of pre-historic times, Vedic age, Aryan Invasion and Brahminical expansion in the society. The caste system existing in India in the different nook and corner of India varies from places to place according to the existing condition and the different situations, therefore many historians have done commendable work about the caste system, its origin and genesis and its
growth. The author G.S. Ghurye states about the caste system since the beginning of the Vedic age. Again he says that when the Aryan Invasion took place how the changes occurred in the society and community. He later differentiate between the Caste and the Varnas. How Varnas later on took the shape of the dominating figures in the community over the Shudra. Indirectly how the down trodden and the how class people were exploited to a greater extent in various aspects. The liberty of the person was seized by putting the lable of caste on them. Even the women’s were not excused from this type of attitude. Even the women’s were highly targeted equally with the men’s. Because women she did not have right to cover the whole body, instead she has to keep the upper part of the body bare to denote that she is low caste women. ‘Burton Stein’ also helps us to know the caste system prevailing in the Medieval South India. He highlights the state and conditions existing totally in the Deccan region. “Edgar Thurston” in his castes and tribes of Southern India, helps us to know the various tribes and their castes of and their occupation carried according to their caste level. The caste system in ancient South India is an interesting topic. So the scholar has chosen this topic to understand the caste system in India in general and Ancient South India in particular and he had a great concern towards the society and community.

1. How was the caste system in Ancient, Vedic period and during the times of the Aryans?
2. How was the society divided and on what base?

3. Why the Brahmin’s dominated over the Shudras and low class people?

4. What was the profession of the Shudras carried on?

5. How was the Hierarchy system divided?

6. Was Shudra women exploited in the name of caste system?

7. What type of caste system prevailed in ancient South India?

8. What was the role of “Varna” system and how Varna System changed its concepts later on eventually?

9. Whether the sub caste and caste were equally treated by the upper categories.?

10. Did caste emerge in India after Invasion of the Aryan expansion?

11. How the caste system had the adverse affect on the Shudras?

12. How was the caste system in Tamil region?

13. Why the rituals and sacrifices enforced on the low class and shudras by the Brahmins?

14. Was the caste system in ancient South India was different from than that of north India?
15. The evil practices of untouchability and inapproachability in the social order of South India was the gift of Aryans, in fact the culture led for the rise of social harmony and mutual understanding.

16. What was the difference between Valangai and Idangai?

These are the some findings mentioned above are considered in the research topic and also here I came across suitable solutions, as caste system is one of the major problem in India, though many initiative have been taken by the state and central government. But still somewhere in the grass root level it has its own remarkable foot prints, where it makes the scholars to think why it is so deeply rooted into the soil of India and what might be the proper solution. It is not only the work of government to fight back against the caste system, but it is the duty of each and every educated individuals to take a stand in routing out this problem.

The solutions that I have come forward are as follows:

- As this era is the age of computer and technology scientific and rational thinking is very important. Firstly each and every individuals has to change his attitude and outlook towards the society and social being.
- Secondly one should have human concern towards all community people.
Thirdly, the initiative should be taken immediately against the exploitation by the dominant over the weak.

Fourthly give co-operation and join with the institutions and the government in eradicating or solving the existing problem.

Next the youngsters have to take lead as they are the future generation and the fate of India is decided by the youths of this nation. The press media and television has also greater responsibilities towards the people, if they come across such problem and if the innocent is troubled and socially exploited then it is their duty to bring to the notice of the concern officer and the government and enrich speedy justice to the hurted once.