

APPOLO STUDY CENTRE

Unit - 9

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Unit - 10

Social Transformation in Tamil Nadu

Learning Objectives

To acquaint ourselves with

- To acquire knowledge about the social transformation of modern Tamil Nadu
- To know the different social reform movements in Tamil Nadu
- To understand the ideas of the social reformers

Introduction

- Europeans established their political power over Indian subcontinent in the latter half of the eighteenth century. While they were concerned with annexing India, by the beginning of the nineteenth century they were reordering Indian society. New revenue settlements were made. Influenced by British Utilitarian ideas and evangelicals they also tried to impose their cultural superiority over the Indian people. Indigenous traditions were treated as primitive. Indian society was portrayed as conservative where human beings were discriminated on the basis of caste, gender, language and creed.
- This caused a reaction among the Indians. During the nineteenth century, educated Indians from different parts of the country began to feel the humiliation and responded by seeking their socio-cultural identity from their past. However, they understood some merits in the colonial arguments and were ready to reform. Raja Rammohan Roy was among the pioneers in this process. Roy and many like him came to be known as social reformers. They were preparing a social and cultural sphere to counter the cultural hegemony of Europe. It resulted in the social and religious reform movements in modern India. This particular historical development is also identified as the Indian renaissance.
- Renaissance is an ideological and cultural phenomenon. It is closely tied to modernity, rationalism and the progressive movement of the society. Critical thinking is at its root. A new philosophical tradition centring around human rationality and equality is its characteristic. The basic inspiration of renaissance is humanism and questioning the fundamentalist religious practices that denied humans their dignity. This ideology of humanism stimulated creative energy in all spheres of social life and knowledge such as language, literature, philosophy, music, painting, architecture, etc.

South Indian Liberal Federation (Justice Party)

- As World War I was in progress the British government was considering the introduction of representative institutions for Indians after the War. Fearing that such political reforms would further

strengthen the political power of Brahmins, educated non-Brahmins decided to organise themselves politically. On 20 November 1916 around 30 prominent non-Brahmin leaders including Dr. C. Natesanar, Sir Pitti Theyagarayar, T.M. Nair and Alamelu Mangai Thayarammal came together to form the South Indian Liberation Federation (SILF). In the meantime, at a meeting held in the Victoria Public Hall the Non-Brahmin Manifesto was released in December 1916. The manifesto articulated the voice of the non-Brahmin communities and surveyed the general condition of the non-Brahmins in Madras Presidency.

- The association started publishing three newspapers: Dravidian in Tamil, Justice in English and Andhra Prakasika in Telugu, to propagate the ideals of the Party.

The Non-Brahmin Manifesto pointed out that though “Not less than 40 out of the 411/2 millions” of the Madras Presidency were non-Brahmins, “in what passes for the politics in Madras they have not taken the part to which they are entitled”. Arguing that a government conducted on “true British principles of justice and equality of opportunity” was in the best interests of India, it declared, that “we are deeply devoted and loyally attached to British rule”.

- The first election, under the Montagu- Chelmsford Reforms, was held in 1920 after the introduction of the Dyarchy form of government in the provinces. The Justice Party won the election and formed the first-ever Indian cabinet in Madras. A. Subbarayalu became the Chief Minister of the Madras Presidency and the party formed the government during 1920–1923 and 1923–1926. In the context of Congress Party boycotting the legislature, the Justice Party continued to remain in office till 1937 elections were held. In the 1937 elections the Indian National Congress contested the elections for the first time and trounced the Justice Party.

Programmes and Activities

- The Justice Party is the fountain head of the non-Brahmin Movement in the country. The Justice Party government widened education and employment opportunities for the majority of the population and

created space for them in the political sphere. Tamil Nadu's legacy of social justice owes its existence to the formative years of Justice Party in power.

- The Justices removed the legal hindrances restricting inter-caste marriages and broke the barriers that prevented Depressed Classes from the use of public wells and tanks. The Justice Party government ordered that public schools accommodate the children of the Depressed Classes. Hostels were established for the students belonging to this social group in 1923. In the meantime, the Madras legislature under the Justice Party government was the first to approve participation of women in the electoral politics in 1921. This resolution created space for woman and thus facilitated Muthulakshmi Ammaiyar to become the first woman legislator in India in 1926.
- The Justice Party worked towards legislating provisions for communal representation – reservations for various communities. Two Communal Government Orders (16 September 1921 and 15 August 1922) were passed to ensure equitable distribution in appointments among various castes and communities as a part of achieving social justice. The Justice Party rule established the Staff Selection Board in 1924 for the selection of government officials and encouraged all the communities to share the administrative powers. In 1929, the Government of British India adopted the pattern and established the Public Service Commission.
- The Justice Party further concentrated on reforms in religious institutions. Tamil Nadu has a large number of temples and these commanded huge resources. In general, the resources were monopolised and exploited by the dominant caste in the society and led to mismanagement of public resources. The Justice Party introduced the Hindu Religious Endowment (HRE) Act in 1926 and enabled any individual, irrespective of their caste affiliation, to become a member of the temple committee and govern the resources of the religious institutions.

11th vol II

UNIT - 15 - Tamil Nadu Political Thought

Historical Background

- The 'Classical Tamil homeland (Tamizhagam) is called as Tamil Nadu besides some parts of Kerala, Andhra and Karnataka; Strabo (63 BC(BCE) to c. AD(CE) 24), a famous Greek geographer and historian observed the early diplomatic history of ancient Tamil Kingdom of Pandiyas. Naval expeditions of Cheras, Cholas, Pandiyas and Pallavas inform early maritime power and influence of Tamils. Ports in the coast of Tamil Nadu were important centres of trade between India and the Mediterranean, and India and southeast Asia, in the period. 200 BC(BCE) to 300 AD(CE). The ancient ports of Korkai, Poompuhar, Vasavasamudram, Perimula, Arikamedu, Alagankulam, Mamallapuram reveal the active trade, commerce and cultural exchanges with the Southeast Asian countries, Sri Lanka, China, Egypt, Greece and Rome. An established tradition of shipbuilding combined with rich maritime heritage of ancient Tamils are definite indicators of the foundations of influential polity, society, culture, trade and commercial ties with the outside world.
- Sangam literature dated approximately 300 BC(BCE) to 300 AD(CE) is another valuable literary source(s) that reflects society, economy, culture and politics. The classification of Sangam poetry into akam (on love) and puram (on war, good and evil, community, justice and kingdom) is a revelation of the Tamil polity. The Sangam literary works have been grouped into eight anthologies (Ettuthogai): (1) Natrinai, (2) Kuruntogai, (3) Aingurunooru, (4) Paditruppattu, (5) Paripadal, (6) Kalittogai, (7) Agananooru, and (8) Purananooru; and there is a ninth group of poems called the Patthupattu (Ten Idylls). The early part of the first two books of Tholkappiyam, a work on Tamil grammar, belongs to the same period.

Learning Objectives

The students will be able to

- ❖ Learn about ancient political ideas in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ State clearly the political ideas of Thiruvalluvar.
- ❖ Understand about Nationalism through Bharathiyar
- ❖ Learn about communist ideas that existed in Tamilnadu through Singaravelar's writings on communism.
- ❖ Learn and understand Dravidian Ideology and its impact on the society, polity and economy in Tamil Nadu through the contributions of E.V.R.Periyar on social justice, equality and liberation from oppression of higher caste.
- ❖ Describe clearly the core meaning of Tamil Movement and Dravidian movement and its political discourse.

- The famous post-Sangam literature which was collected later as an anthology is known as the Kilkkanakku. There are 18 works as part of this collection and the most famous is Silappadikaram, Manimekalai and Eighteen Minor Works (Pathinen kilkkanakku, which includes the Thirukkural) were written during this period. Prabandha literature consists of poetry of various forms: kovai, in which the verses are arranged according to a particular theme (usually about love), and kalambakam, in which the end of one stanza/line formed the beginning of the next (usually about kings and bravery) and parani. The best illustrations of this tradition are the Pantikkovai, Nandikkalambakam, and Kalingattup-parani.
- The ancient Tamil literature of Sangam age, Thirukkural, Silapathikaram, Manimegalai etc provide deep insights into the nature of polity, society and culture. Tamil language formed the core and essence of Tamil identity, culture, customs and traditions. Despite the diversity of land, geography, rulers and chieftains spread across the Tamil speaking areas the idea of Tamil country and confederation of Tamil speaking areas did exist. This literary finding(s) is also substantiated by a stone inscription of Kalinga King Kharavela (BC(BCE) 165), who claims to have destroyed a 'Tamil federation' which existed for 132 years. Similarly such a Tamil federation of kings to fight foreign invasion is also mentioned in 'Agananooru', a sangam literature. Hence the idea and prevalence of

Tamil nationalism is not simply a consequence of colonialism. The roots of Tamil nationalism are linked to the historical role and significance of Tamil language and culture in defining politics that could be traced even in the Sangam age.

- The concept of State and the idea king coincided with the territorial emphasis of polity as the Greek city-state. The classical Tamil country known as Tamizhagam covered areas south of Tirupati hills up to the tip of the Cape Comorin (Kanyakumari). The land was traditionally classified according to its nature into five geographical regions (tinai): the mountainous region (kurinji), the forest areas(mullai), fertile plains (marudam), coastal region (neidhal) and arid region (palai).
- Tamil speaking areas were divided between the principalities of the Cholas (its capital at Uraiyur), the Pandyas (Madurai as capital), the Cheras in most of present Kongunadu (and Kerala) and the Pallavas (Kanchipuram as capital). Tamil country included several kingdoms ruled by kings (vendhar), major and minor chieftains (vel/velar) who was less powerful than the crowned kings. The Sangam poets sang songs of praise about the velirs, especially the Seven Patrons, for their generosity towards the poets. Kapilar and Avvaiyar mention chieftains like, Aay, Pari, Ori, Malayan, Elini, Pegan and Nalli..
- The virtues of king did include the ideals of Just Ruler with qualities of kindness towards the subjects and bravery in the battlefield against enemies. The sabhai or mandram was the highest court of justice presided by the king himself. Every village had its own mandram which met at a common public place and was involved in organizing village and community activities. Warriors were respected, and a man who died in battle would have memorial stones erected in his honour and be worshipped in death. Even if a warrior dies in battle field with a wound in his back, it is considered derogatory in 'Sangam' traditions.

In praise of Citizen Kannagi

Eric Miller

Kannagi proved that even a non- native with no money and no

family in sight can fight City Hall and win her case that is inspiring.

- I write in praise of Kannagi, global symbol of justice, and of the dignity of the individual!
- This is her story the Silappathikaram, the Epic of the Anklet as I know it: Kannagi and Kovalan married in Poompuhar, on the east coast. After some time, Kovalan went off with a dancer named Madhavi. A year later, he returned home. He and Kannagi walked to Madurai, a distance of about 250 km, to start a new life. There Kovalan was unjustly put to death by the local ruler, the Pandian king: Kovalan had been falsely accused of stealing the queen's anklet. Kannagi came to the court and proved that her husband had been innocent of this crime. The king punished himself for the injustice he had done, by simply laying himself down and dying. Kannagi walked around the city three times, tore off her left breast and threw it against the city wall, and called for the city to burn but for good people and animals to be unharmed. Agni, the god of Fire, accomplished this. Kannagi wandered to the western mountains, where some people worshipped her. Eric Miller did his Ph.D. in Folklore, University of Pennsylvania, USA. His dissertation is on Tamil children's songs and games, and language learning. To conduct research on the Silappathikaram, he walked in the footsteps of Kannagi from Poompuhar, to Madurai, to the western mountains. (Quotes are from R. Parthasarathy's translation from the original Tamil: The Silappatikaram: The Tale of an Anklet, by IlankoAtikal, Columbia University Press, 1993.)

Extended Learning

Refer The Hindu website and read the article by Eric Miller. Share your views in the classroom.

- Lots of good practices of war find its mention in sangam literature. Purananooru, a sangam literature, hails the Pandyan king who announces all the women, children, sick and elderly people, cattles, to move to safety zone before invading a country. The idea of justice formed the conscience of State and king. Justice is an essential element in a king's rule. A good king should never sacrifice justice.

Just rule and good deeds always will bring everlasting fame to the king. An important political principle that prevailed was that

- (Despite the nature of political system being monarchy) the legitimacy of the king rests with the consent of the people as long as he enjoys people's support and he loses legitimacy if he loses their support. Sangam literature (Pattinappaalai) speaks about different types of taxations like customs duty, income tax, toll tax etc as specific source of revenue to the State. Tamil kings and chieftains ruled the land with simple administrative structure of council of ministers, subordinates and administrative officers. There were officers to deal with foreign trade and customs revenue which was an important part of the budget. Pandya inscriptions mention about officers for pearl fisheries (kalatika) and the chief scribes (kanatikan). In flags and coins, the Cholas were represented by the tiger, the Cheras by the bow and arrow the Pandyas by the fish and the Pallavas by the lion.
- The institution of 'spy' was considered as a necessary institution and the maintenance of peace and stability in the kingdom depended on the effectiveness of this institution. Though slavery as a form of institution was absent yet capturing of slaves after invasions, and slave trade or exchange for gifts did remain as practice among the rulers to undertake construction and building works.
- The practice of caste system or jati was unknown among ancient Tamils. The idea and concept of class with differences in status based on professional distinctions did prevail. The caste system was alien and unknown to Sangam society. The division of society based on class has been revealed by the Sangam poets who mention about social categories (kudi): tudiyan, panan, and kadamban; or arasar (rulers), vaishyar (traders), and velalar (farmers). Differences in status were accepted as inevitable, yet varna in the form of caste or jati seems to be little known to Sangam society.
- Though social stratification did prevail yet legitimization of Manusmriti or Aryan-Brahminical interpretation of caste as divine arrangement was not integral to the cultural universe or worldview of the ancient Tamils. The beginnings and early inroads of the Aryan-

Brahminical account of caste could be traced to later period of Sangam era. The ancient religion of Tamils was based on folk traditions. The worship of nature and natural elements were more common. The worship of Murugan among the tribes of Tamil Nadu and the cult worship of Murugan as the warrior God was based on folk culture. An earthly composition of God is rooted in the Tamil - Dravidian traditions. It was only after the sixth century AD(CE), inscriptions were written in Tamil as well as Sanskrit. Sanskritisation gradually spread to public space with the evoking of the doctrines of benevolence to Brahmin(s) and divine blessings to the king .

- The seeking of blessings from the Brahmin soon became a source of legitimacy for the Tamil king after this period. Along with the Sanskritisation, Vedic rituals, worship and orientation to social (caste) system as advocated in Manusmriti found their passage to transform the professionally stratified class structure of Dravidian society into a hierarchically classified social (caste) system with Vedic divine sanctions.
- The State and king were being seen as one and the same. The hereditary principle and evoking of divine rights with earthly symbols were prevalent among the Tamil kings. The idea of territorial State provided inherent reconciliation to the changing dynasties and geographical changes as boundaries of principalities were drawn and redrawn. The governing principles of power and location of monarchy also moved from culture specific to power centric based on authority. Thus in later period, during the post-Sangam era, the king gradually became the sole source of authority.
- The Pallavas maintained that as they were the descendants of Brahma, the kingship was of divine origin and was hereditary. The Pallava period witnessed the penetration of the Aryan culture of North India into the South as well as the assimilation of some of the patterns, ideas and institutions and rejection or modification of certain other aspects. Tamil devotional culture was one of the results of this interaction as revealed by the themes and dedication of deity at temples.

- Women were highly respected and performed a variety of jobs and duties including as bodyguards to the kings, yet power and authority rested with men. Women participated in public assemblies but rulers and administrators were mostly men. Women formed significant part of social rituals and functioned as pivots of the family despite the inheritance rights and formal authority remained with men.
- In narrating the role and status of women in Tamil society we need to mention about the tradition of Avvaiyar (meaning respectable women). More than a name, this was a title, literary canon, given to distinguished women who made contributions to Tamil literature. There were as many as four to six women who held this Tamil literary canon title at different times based on different sources.
- Avvaiyars of Sangam age and Cholas age are best known for their extraordinary influence upon literature, culture, moral universe, nature of polity, war, peace and the art of diplomacy. Sangam age Avvaiyar lived during the 1st and 2nd century AD(CE). King Athiyaman Neduman Anchi of the Velir Dynasty was her chief patron and considered as contemporary of literary legends Thiruvalluvar and Kabilar with notable contribution of verses in Natrinai, Kuruntogai, Akananooru and Purananooru. She is also credited as the most gracious and scholarly diplomat who undertook diplomatic missions for King Adhiyaman Neduman Anchi. Avvaiyar, a poetess and friend of King Adhiyaman, ruler of Tagadur, is supposed to have helped in avoiding war between two kingdom states.
- King Thondaiman, ruler of Kanchipuram, had sent him a note declaring his intention to attack Thagadur Avvaiyar spoke "Oh Thondiaman, how different indeed are your clean and shiny weapons from those of Adiyaman, always stained with blood and under repair."
- Thondaiman had far less experience in war and was unlikely to win – she was making this clear under the guise of praise. Another famous Avvaiyar was from the Cholas age, around 10th Century AD(CE), who wrote moral universe for children and advocated ethical principles for all. Whilst her works Aathichoodi and

Konraiventhan were written for young children, Mooturai and Nalvazhi were written for older children.

Thirukkural

- All these classical works not only reveal the cultural and literary traditions of the ancient Tamils. They also serve as historical testimony to the nature of Tamil society, socio-cultural and religious beliefs, livelihood, vocations, professions, role and status of women, marriage, gender, class structure, origins of caste system, kinship, polity, governance, ideas of justice, wars, peace, diplomacy, naval warfare, maritime traditions, trade, commerce, shipbuilding and seafaring skills, economy, land, water systems, agriculture, art, dance, poetry, music, architecture and relationship with the neighbouring countries and far away places.

Introduction

- Politics intends to create change-oriented awareness in the society. It is not necessary to adopt and follow the existing social system which the present politics do. This awareness can be initiated by ideas and ideologies of society-laden thinkers.
- With the advancement of civilization to the next stage through socio-economic and technocratic developments, emerging new ideas got stumbled by the existing belief system and functions followed until now. Albeit of these stumbling blocks, the constructive impact made by the thinkers and thinking is ever-lasting on the basis of mind-capturing of the people. Ideas are dangerous than the technocratic revolution, positively. Quite apart, pen is more powerful than sword.

In your note draw three columns as given in the text book

POLITICS		
what I know?	what I want to know?	what I have learnt?

The definite part of thinkers is as follows:

- ❖ Being the basis for the social changes and subsequent events including the change in the public minds;
 - ❖ Having taken political decisions which had an impact on social turning points;
 - ❖ Serving as best brains behind the major political decisions which has benefitted the diversified communities;
 - ❖ To convert social ideas into common which assisted people's advancement belonging to various communities
-
- New political ideas are supported by the activities of the political thinkers which kindles interest and rational thinking of the common people. The interaction of those thinkers with the contemporary society makes a new framework for the entire system. New political decisions which intend to create great changes for the emerging generations were undertaken. The day-to-day life of common people may be engulfed with many changes by the political decision of the thinkers. At world level these kind of thinkers made changes in the socio-political systems. Such great thinkers made their extra-ordinary presence throughout the past centuries in India in general and Tamilnadu in particular.
 - National political thinkers, Tamil political thinkers, Socialist thinkers, Thinkers of social justice are the different parts of modern categorization. In this part we can discuss about different political thinkers of Tamilnadu who made out-standing contribution for the social changes.
 - Political ideologies in Tamilnadu is rich with ideas, beliefs, opinions and attitudes towards society, polity and economy. This is evident from the ancient political ideas of Thiruvalluvar, where as Bharathiyar is a nationalist and Singaravelar is a communist. According to periyar, Dravidian ideology focuses on social justice. The political ideologies in Tamil Nadu are a combination of all three left, Right and centre ideologies.

Ancient Political Ideas Thiruvalluvar

- In Arathupal of Thirukkural, Valluvar was a great enunciator of morals; In Inbathupal, he has become a poet and in Porutpal, he is known to be a political philosopher. The political philosophy of Thiruvalluvar is applicable across times even today.

Seven Parts in Porutpal

- Porutpal consists of 7 parts, further it has 70 verses / couplets. They are Politics-25, Ministry-10, Defence-2, Wealth-1, Army-2, Friendship-17, and citizens-13 respectively.

“ ஂறெ குடி கூழ்அறமச்சு நட்ர்ண் ஆறும்
உறெொான அரெருள் ஏறு “ (குைள்: 381)

“ An army, people, wealth, a minister, friends, fort; six things
Who owns them all, a lion lives amid the kings”
(Kural: 381)

- Thus, in porutpal, at the first verse itself valluvar differentiated the six categories essential for a state. Thus, different parts of government are ministry, army, wealth, people, friendship and citizens, which determines the rule of a king. Moreover, these components are categorized for king in a separate way, thus contributing a lot of ideas regarding administration of a state and assets for a king.

Nature of a king - 25 Chapters

- In porutpal, Valluvar mentioned about nature of a king in detailed manner in 25 chapters starting from Qualities of ruler (Iraimatchi - chapter 39) to idukkan azhaiyaamai (Unfazed in the face of trouble - chapter 63) in 25 chapters, in the name of “Arasar”, “Vender”, “Nilan Aandavar” “Mannavar” he has indicated 46 times about the king.
- The King must possess the leadership qualities such as, Education (40), Listening Ability (42), Wisdom (43), Fending off Faults (44), Seeking the company of great men (45), Avoiding mean-minded (46)

Rationality (47), Priority for time for action (51), Assessing and Assigning tasks (52), Embracing the Kin (53), Doing duty without forgetting (54), Justice (55), Knowing the right place (50), Refraining from Terrifying Deeds (57), Compassion (58), Espionage (59), Spirit (60), To avoid laziness (61), Perseverance (62) and Determination (63) which should be the requisites of a king. These above-mentioned qualities may also be possessed by good people.

Ideas on Democracy

- Valluvar lived in the period of monarchy. However, his ideas and ideals are also applicable for the present leaders of democracy. He also indicated the nature of state and government in the king's rule. The words of Valluvar regarding government and state is applicable and suitable to all over the period as well as every organization in the world.

Welfare state and King

- To put it in simple words, Valluvar's political system is based on welfare state. For instance, in Iramatchi (Qualities of a ruler), he says

முறைசெய்து காப்பாற்றும் மன்னவன் மக்க ட்கு
இறையென்று வைக்கப் படும். (குறள்: 388)

Who guards the realm and justice strict maintains,
That king as god over subject people reigns.

(Kural: 388)

- If a king delivered justice by doing the duties honestly, he may be regarded as a God. Ideal path and welfare – arrived kings can be respected and kept on par with divine. This kind of view is not only applicable to monarchical period but it also applicable to present democratic period.

Features of State

- The characteristics of a state is to maintain ethics, the eradication of wrong doing activity, mandating impartiality of justice and protection of honour.

அறனிமுக்கா தல்லவை நீக்கி மறனிமுக்கா
மானம் உடைய தரசு (குறள்: 384)

Kingship, in virtue failing not, all vice restrains,
In courage failing not, it honour's grace maintains.

(Kural: 384)

- King's path is the peoples' path, king should act as a guide for his subjects, if he does harm or evil activities, it may influence all. It is because of his position as a leader, his discipline and private life will spread to all in the kingdom. Moral and ethical life is quite essential for the ruling kings. Indicating "Respect" in a broad manner relating it with nation, Valluvar gave priority for great honour which may be equated with the courage. He stressed that king must be loyal to the nation, it is the honour of nation.

Ideal State and Welfare of people

- In the monarchical rule, the integrity and ideal governance for all periods were advocated by Valluvar. People of all regions expect rain for their growth; likewise, citizens of a nation expect integrity and ideal rule of the king.

வானஊக்கி வாழும் உலகெல்லாம் மன்னவன்
கஊல்நோக்கி வாழுங் குடி. (குறள்: 542)

All earth looks up to heaven where raindrops fall;
All subjects look to king that ruleth all.

(Kural: 542)

- In this couplet Valluvar indicates "Kol" as ideal rule which not only applies for monarchy but also for democracy.

குடிதழீஇக் கஃலோ ச்சம் மாநில மன்னன்
அடிதழீஇ நிற்கும் உலகு. (குறள் 544)

Whose heart embraces subjects all, lord over mighty land
Who rules, the world his feet embracing stands.
(Kural: 544)

- This means that for a King, who protects his citizens with love and affection, his feet will be embraced by his subjects with love. This is an everlasting phrase propounded by Valluvar related to good governance.

Against Tyranny

- In the chapter “Kodungonmai”, (Cruel Scepter) Valluvar explained it in negative words. The suppressive and exploitative rule of evil king may kindle unknown and indefinite agonies among the people. Those tears are most powerful and may annihilate the entire kingdom.

அல்லற்ப ட்டு ஆற்றா து அழுதகண் ணீரன்றே
செல்வ த்தைத் தே ய்க் கும் பட ை (குறள் 555)

His people’s tears of sorrow past endurance, are not they
Sharp instrument to wear the marches wealth away.
(Kural: 555)

- Sad tears of suffering citizens may dethrone and destroy the entire government, says Thiruvalluvar. Tears were equated with army, thus Valluvar’s visualization stands unique among others.
- Autocrats and Dictators like Hitler, Mussolini and Czar were the negative players for whom, Thirukkural served as a funeral sound.

Government's Budget

- A king should be an able handed administrator in increasing the income of government. Further he should be an expert in handling the budget.

In Iramatchi, he said,

இயற்ற லும் ஈட்ட லும் காத்த லும் காத்த
வகுத்த லும் வல்ல தரசு. (குறள் 385)

A king is be who treasure gains, stores up, defends,
And duly for his kingdom's weal expends.

(Kural: 385)

- At first point, a king should search for the different sources of income. For this, he calls it as "Iyatral". Then, the second point is that, all such resources should be put together, which is called as "Ettal". Third, the resources thus collected must be protected with all precautionary measures which is called as "Kaathal"
- Fourth one, is most important (i.e) allotting the resources to various sectors for the welfare of the people, this he called it as "Vagutthal". Thus iyatral, eettal, kaathal and vagutthal are the four ways of utilizing the income to be expertise by the king of nation. It is a primary duty of the king.
- These innovative and practical ideas were accepted by political and as well as economic exponents as the basic idea of socialistic society.

Relevance of Thiruvalluvar

- The Educational qualities that are indicated by Valluvar for a king may also apply to the citizens. Thus, he used the words "Idukkan Ariyamai", "Kalvi" for "Vazhum Uyirku", "Maandharkku" which is for all the people.

- The political ideas advocated by Valluvar in porutpal highly circumvent around morals and noble principles. "People's-welfare" is the basic foundation of his contribution.
- To put it in a different way, Valluvar's contribution to politics is applicable to the present democratic governance for the welfare of all the people.
- The qualities that were indicated by Valluvar for a king may also apply to the citizens. Thus, he used the words "Idukkan Ariyamai", "Kalvi" for "Vazhum Uyirku", "Maandharkku" which is for all the people.
- The political ideas advocated by Valluvar in porutpal highly circumvent around morals and noble principles. "People's-welfare" is the basic foundation of his contribution.
- To put it in a different way Valluvar's contribution to politics is majorly applicable to the present democratic governance for the great welfare of all the people.

Thirukkural - A truly secular book

- The very first observation about the Kural is the fact that it is a secular book. During the days of Valluvar many religion existed in India. There were Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Hindus as well as agnostics and atheists. But secularism as a concept was unknown. Valluvar himself was a believer and he has devoted one chapter to praise of God. He must have observed a particular religion. But in his book he advocates no religion, he does not even refer to any religion.
- The ancient Indian law-giver Manu and the ancient Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle maintained with absolute certainty that human beings were not born equal. This popular view is accepted in all civilizations over centuries. Valluvar, the philosopher poet, held a radically different view. He says:

" All human beings are equal by birth; but differ as regards
characteristics

because of the different qualities of their actions.” (Kural 972)

Nationalism Subramaniya Bharathiyar (1882 - 1921)

We shall not look at caste or religion, All human beings in this land, whether they be those who preach the vedas or who belong to other castes are one.

-Subramaniya Bharati

- C. Subramaniya Bharathiyar was a poet, freedom fighter and social reformer from Tamil Nadu. He was known as Mahakavi Bharathiyar and the laudatory epithet Mahakavi means a great poet. He is considered as one of India's greatest poets. His songs on nationalism and freedom of India helped to rally the masses to support the Indian Independence Movement in Tamil Nadu.

Bharathi: A poet and a Nationalist

“We may have thousand of sects; that, however, does not justify a foreign invasion.”

- Significantly, a new age in Tamil literature began with Subramaniya Bharathi. Most part of his compositions are classifiable as short lyrical outpourings on patriotic, devotional and mystic themes. Bharathi was essentially a lyrical poet. “Kannan Pattu” “Nilavum Vanminum Katrum” “Panchali Sabatham” “Kuyil Pattu” are examples of Bharathi's great poetic output.
- Bharathi is considered as a national poet due to his number of poems of the patriotic flavour through which he exhorted the people to join the independence struggle and work vigorously for the liberation of the country. Instead of merely being proud of his country he also outlined his vision for a free India. He published the sensational “Sudesa Geethangal” in 1908.

Bharathiyar's "Panchali Sabatham" (The vow of Draupadi) is an iconic work that pictures India as Draupadi, the British, the Kauravas and the freedom fighters as Pandavas. Through Draupadi's struggle, he euphemised the struggle of mother India under British rule.

Bharathi as a Journalist

- Many years of Bharathi's life were spent in the field of journalism, Bharathi, as a young man began his career as a journalist and as a sub-editor in "Swadesamitran" in November 1904. "India" saw the light of the day in May, 1906. It declared as its motto the three slogans of the French Revolution, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. It blazed a new trail in Tamil Journalism. In order to proclaim its revolutionary ardour, Bharathi had the weekly printed in red paper. "India" was the first paper in Tamil Nadu to publish political cartoons. He also edited and published 'Vijaya', a Tamil daily "Bala Bharatha" an English monthly, and 'Suryothayam' a local weekly of Pondicherry.
- It is not surprising therefore that soon a warrant was waiting at the door of the "India" office for the arrest of the editor of the magazine. It was because of this worsening situation in 1908 that Bharathi decided to go away to Pondicherry, a French territory at that time, and continue to publish the "India" magazine. Bharathi resided in Pondicherry for sometime to escape the wrath of the British imperialists.

In Madras, in 1908, he organised a mammoth public meeting to celebrate 'Swaraj Day'. His poems 'Vanthe Matharam', 'Enthayum Thayum', 'Jaya Bharath' were printed and distributed free to the Tamil People.

- Subramaniya Bharathiyar was born on 11th December 1882, in a village called Ettayapuram in Tirunelveli District in Tamil Nadu and his childhood name was Subbiah. His father was Chinnaswamy and his mother was Lakshmi Ammal.
- At the age of seven, he started writing poems in Tamil. When he was eleven, he wrote in such a way that even learned men praised him for his great knowledge and skill. In the eleventh year, Subbiah felt that he had to establish his credentials. He threw a challenge to the eminent men in the assembly of scholars that they should have a contest with him in a debate on any subject without any previous notice or preparation. The contest was held at a special sitting of the

Ettayapuram Durbar at which the Rajah (the ruler) himself was present. The subject chosen was "Education". Subbiah efficiently won the debate. This was a memorable moment in Subbiah's life. The boy who was till then referred to as "Ettayapuram Subbiah" came henceforth to be known as "Bharathi", and later he was respectfully referred to as "Bharathiar" by nationalists and by millions of Tamil lovers all over the globe.

- In June 1897, Bharathi was hardly fifteen when his marriage took place, and his bride was Chellammal. Bharathi left for Benaras which was also known as Kashi and Varanasi. He spent there the next two years with his aunt Kuppanmal and her husband Krishna Sivan. Speedily gaining a fair knowledge of Sanskrit, Hindi and English, he duly passed with credit the Entrance Examination of the Allahabad University. The Banaras stay brought about a tremendous change in Bharathi's personality. Outwardly, he sported a moustache and a Sikh turban and acquired a bold swing in his walk.
- During his exile, Bharathi had the opportunity to mingle with many leaders of the militant wing of the independence movement such as Aurobindo, Lajpat Rai and V.V.Subramaniam who had also sought asylum in the French ruled Pondicherry. The most profitable years of Bharathi's life were the ten years he spent in Pondicherry. From Pondicherry, he guided the Tamil youth of Madras to tread in the path of nationalism. This increased the anger of the British towards Bharathi's writings as they felt that it was his writings that induce and influence the patriotic spirit of the Tamil youth. Bharathi met Mahatma Gandhi in 1919 in Rajaji's home at Madras. Bharathi entered British India near Cuddalore in November 1918 and was promptly arrested. Even in prison, he spent his time in writing poems on freedom, nationalism and country's welfare.
- In his early days of youth he had good relations with Nationalist Tamil Leaders like V.O.Chidambaram, Subramanya Siva, Mandayam Thirumalachariar and Srinivasachari. Along with these leaders he used to discuss the problems facing the country due to British rule. Bharathi used to attend the Annual sessions of Indian National

Congress and discuss national issues with extremist Indian National Leaders like Bipin Chandra Pal, B.G. Tilak and V.V.Subramaniam. His participation and activities in Benaras Session (1905) and Surat Session (1907) of the Indian National Congress impressed many national leaders about his patriotic fervour. Bharathi had maintained good relations with some of the national leaders and shared his thoughts and views on the nation and offered his suggestions to strengthen the nationalist movement. Undoubtedly, his wise suggestions and steadfast support to the cause of nationalism rejuvenated many national leaders. Thus Bharathi played a pivotal role in the freedom of India.

Bharathiyar as a social reformer

- Bharathi was also against caste system. He declared that there were only two castes-men and women and nothing more than that. Above all, he himself had removed his sacred thread. He had also adorned many scheduled caste people with sacred thread. He used to take tea sold in shops run by Muslims. He along with his family members attended church on all festival occasions. He advocated temple entry of Dalits. For all his reforms, he had to face opposition from his neighbours. But Bharathi was very clear that unless Indians unite as children of Mother India, they could not achieve freedom. He believed in women's rights, gender equality and women emancipation. He opposed child marriage, dowry system and supported widow remarriage.

His meeting with Sister Nivedita, Swami Vivekananda's disciple, added women's rights to his already wide repertoire of social issues from caste to Independence to spiritualism. He took up the symbolism of Shakthi as the image of modern women; powerful, strong, independent and equal partners to men.

"World will prosper in knowledge and intellect, if both men and woman are deemed equal."
-Subramaniya Bharathiyar

Bharathiyar - A Visionary

- Bharathi as a poet, journalist, freedom fighter and social reformer had made a great impact not only on the Tamil society but also on the entire human society. He followed what all he preached and it is here that his greatness is manifested. His prophecy during the colonial period about the independence of India came true after two and half decades after his demise. His vision about a glorious India has been taking a shape in the post-Independence era. Bharathi did not live for himself but for the people and nation. That is why he is respectfully called as Bharathiyar. Even today, after many decades, Subramaniya Bharathiyar stands as an undying symbol of Indian freedom and vibrant Tamil nationalism.

Bharathiyar passed away on 11th September 1921. It was a travesty that only 14 people attended his funeral, fearing repercussion from the British and caste ostracisation.

- The emergence of Swadeshi and Home rule movement in India in the initial part of 20th century aroused the thirst for freedom. Reforms were made in Hindu religion in accordance with the existing society. These movements played a key role in creating the feeling of Indianness and Nationalism in the political Scenario.
- But these movements are religious in nature. Moreover, those who participated in these movements are from upper social class. Freedom sought by these people are political in nature neglecting the interests and economic upliftment of farmers and labourers. This affected the majority Indians who are poor and belong to farmers community. Further, caste discrimination existed within Congress Party. Particularly, in Tamilnadu there existed a clear difference between brahmins and non-brahmins.
- In this context, Singaravelar played a pivotal role in spreading rational ideas and scientific perception in to politics. He also played a key role in connecting welfare of farmers and workers in to freedom struggle and spreading socialist thinking in to politics.

Impact of Singaravelar's Ideas on Congress Party

- The British empire which exported the raw materials in the initial stages started industries later in India as the demand increased. This worsened common people's life standards. They are ready to work even for meagre wages. Hence, those who are employed were treated as slaves. Even a minor protests by the employees were suppressed with iron hands. More labour organizations emerged to protect the rights of working class. These organizations were headed by Thiru.V.Kalyanasundaranar and D.Varadharajalu in the Madras presidency. It was Singaravelar who took major efforts in the emergence of labour organizations in Madras presidency.
 - Singaravelar wanted to sensitize the workers on politics and wanted to engage them in the freedom struggle. But Congress Party did not accept this idea of Singaravelar. Singaravelar criticised it vehemently and send telegraphs to Congress high command, following this, he wrote a letter to Mahatma Gandhi. Further, he also wrote about this issue on the popular dailies Swadesamitran, The Hindu, and magazines like Navasakthi. He also propagated this among congress workers. In this juncture, he participated in the Congress Committee (1922) meeting as a representative of Tamilnadu, there also he explained the following demands and sought support from Congress members.
- ??
- ❖ Indian freedom includes economic freedom of workers and farmers.
 - ❖ The welfare of farmers and labourers should also be the motto of Congress party.??
 - ❖ Farmers and labourers must be included in the Indian national movement.??
 - ❖ Congress leaders should help to raise masses from different organization.
- In consequent with this, in 1922, Indian National Congress, passed a resolution to raise people from various organizations. A six member committee was constituted, in which M. Singaravelar was appointed as a member. In addition to this, he also fought for the protection of labour rights. He emphasized this demand by writing in all popular

dailies. As an outcome, labour protective law was passed in 1926, in India. Moreover, he advised for speaking in vernacular languages. Only then, he believed that the ideas will reach all the people. So, that leaders and people can maintain good relations. He is also determined to speak in Tamil, when speaking about the issues of Tamilnadu people.

- In 1918, a resolution regarding this was passed during Chennai Presidency Association Conference. Singaravelar and Periyar were the dignitaries in this conference.

Singaravelar's Impact on Self-Respect and Communist Movements:

- When Periyar resigned from Congress Party citing the existence of Brahmin and Non-Brahmin divide and discrimination in the party, Singaravelar supported the action of Periyar. After visiting USSR, Periyar was influenced by the Communist ideals. He changed the name of self-respect movement to Self-Respect Social Justice Party. Singaravelar made his contribution in framing the policies and principles of the movement. He also wrote extensively in Periyar's Republic magazine against superstitious beliefs. These writings were simple and can be understood easily.
- Singaravelar has a deep faith in the philosophy of Communism. He urged the Congress party to support labour organizations. In the name of Madras Socialists, he telegraphed Congress High Command. In all the Congress Committee meetings he argued as a Communist representative.
- In 1923, it was he, who organized the first May Day celebrations in Chennai. In the same day, he announced the formation of labour-farmer political party. The demands of his new political party are

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- ❖ Eight hours work
- ❖ Right to form union
- ❖ Right to strike as a last resort to pressure labour demands.
- ❖ Three level committees for reviewing the demands.?
- ❖ Minimum wages

- ❖ Shelter with basic amenities
- ❖ Medical and life Insurance
- ❖ Provident fund facility
- ❖ Earned leave
- ❖ Free Medical assistance
- ❖ Maternity leave
- ❖ Put an end to contract basis

For Farmers

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- ❖ Free water for agriculture
- ❖ Abolition of Zamindari system

For People

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- ❖ Voting rights for all
 - ❖ Right to contest in elections for poor, labour and farmer communities.
- First socialist conference was headed by Singaravelar in 1925, in Kanpur. He spoke about socialism without violence. Also, he resolved for adopting Communism according to Indian circumstances. A socialist should play a role by being in the member of Congress Party, he advised. Eventually, Socialist block was formed inside the Congress Party.

Life and Services

- Since his childhood Singaravelar did not believe in the Varna System and superstitious belief. As a result of this, he established Buddhist Association and propagated against Varna System and superstitious beliefs during 1880 itself.
- Born in a rich family and well versed with law, he served as a member in Chennai Municipality and also in health sector. Due to the endemic diseases in the down-trodden areas, he gave priority to health and education. He also fought for rights of labourers. Based on this, he played active role in Congress Party. Later, he joined in Periyar's Self - Respect movement.

- Though he entered into politics after he crossed the age of 50, he actively propagated and wrote about communist ideas for more than thirty years. He was fondly remembered and called as the first communist of south India.

Dravidian Ideology Periyar (1879-1973)

Introduction

- Periyar E.V.Ramasamy is regarded as the best political thinker in Tamilnadu. This is because he is the foremost reformist in our state. Let us see about him in detail in this lesson.

The original name of Periyar is E.V.Ramasamy. He was born in the year 1879 in an affluent business family in Erode. Even during his youth, Periyar criticized the superstitious beliefs in his family and surroundings. He did not enter politics at the early stages of his career. But still, he occupied posts like chairman of Erode municipality.

- Periyar fought against superstitious beliefs, enslavement of women and social backwardness which existed in Tamilnadu from time immemorial based on his wisdom and self-respect throughout his life. It is because of this, he is fondly called as 'Thanthai Periyar'. Various scholars on Social Justice say that the Dravidian ideology enunciated by Periyar on cultural lines shines all around our country.
- Periyar was attracted towards Gandhi's entry into politics and hence joined congress and became actively participating in freedom movement and social reforms. During that period in 1920's Congress was dominated by upper class people. But Periyar took Congress to the down trodden and successfully organized temple entry movements as a true Congress man. Periyar was very much disgruntled by the practice of Varnashrama in Congress party and left it. He joined Justice party and formed the self respect movement later. After this, the contributions and activities of Periyar became inseparable from the politics of India and Tamilnadu in particular.
- In the name of nation, if a group of people exploit other groups that is not the real freedom which a nation fought for, said Periyar alias E.V.

Ramasamy. Periyar vociferously criticized against Nation, Race and Nationalism at various levels. All Nation, nationality and nationalism are similarly related concepts. All these differentiations indicate the “Self Respect” of the entire population of a country. If anybody speaks about nationalism in Tamilnadu, I wonder, that will they think about “welfare or botheration about people” questioned Periyar.

Nationalism as exploitation

- There are people who may not bother about Indians, Tamilians and the self-respect of the people. They deceive people to believe in nation and nationalism for their own welfare and betterment. If self-respect is submerged in the name of nation and nationalism that will be the crime against India, stated Periyar.

An iconoclast and rationalist social reformer

His work and his legacy

For the average Tamil, Periyar today is an ideology. He stands for a politics that foregrounded social equality, self-respect, and linguistic pride. As a social reformer, he focused on social, cultural and gender inequalities, and his reform agenda questioned matters of faith, gender and tradition. He asked people to be rational in their life choices. He argued that women needed to be independent, not mere child-bearers, and insisted that they be allowed a equal share in employment. The Self Respect Movement he led promoted weddings without rituals, and sanctioned property as well as divorce rights for women. He appealed to people to give up the caste suffix in their names, and do not mention caste. He instituted inter-dining with food cooked by Dalits in public conferences in the 1930s.

Over the years, Periyar has transcended the political divide as well as the faultlines of religion and caste, and come to be revered as Thanthai Periyar, the father figure of modern Tamil Nadu.

Courtesy ; Arun Janardhanan, The New Indian Express, 13.3.2018.

- Nationalism is an unreal feeling. Since National feeling is nothing but a conspiracy framed by rich and power-centered, people who deceive the other people by controlling the negative emotions. It is a false assumption, propagated by these upper rich communities in order to curtail the rights of the poor community.

Nationalism has become a buzz word of addictiveness and emotionalist for the people, he exclaimed.

Global Nationalism - A Denial

- Periyar in his speech in Sri-Lanka, opposed strongly against Nation and Nationalism when others used 'Indian Nationalism' as a weapon, Periyar spoke against these factors. He has also shown about other nations, nationalistic feeling apart from Indian Nationalism.
- It is to treat people as scapegoat, Capitalist Class along with other similar people, Patriotic feeling was misused, said Periyar.
- For instance, if rich communities in U.K have any clash with USA or vice-versa they may give clarion call as "Oh ! Britons, Patriots, our nation is under threat". Such kind of false words is only for their economic advancement and not for the poor communities.
- Erstwhile, Russia has many races and cultural groups, but there is no discrimination in that nation. He also supported communist revolution. These nations which are free of nationalism, religion and God may not be affected with luxurious life styles, poverty and exploitation by rich community. Those people may not stick upon with national and godly attachments. Equality and egalitarian society is the only priority of that place. There will not be any discrimination like rich-poor, owner-worker, powerful-powerless in that region. Those people of high value and egalitarian-longing are not equal to the nation which gives priority for God and Nationalism.
- By showing other nations as evidences, Periyar also criticized Indian nationalistic feelings and patriotism. Because these feelings are exploited as weapons by certain dominant groups.

India - A Land of Diversities

- Whether “Nation” as a concept is suitable for India? Periyar raised a pertinent question and answer as well.
- “Madras is not a separate nation and cannot function separately,” says some of our friends. Once ‘Madras’ was a nation. Also now, “Dravidam” it is. The culture and other practices are different from Bengal and Mumbai. English language is the main base for the familiarly among these different nations in India. If British Empire and its language is relieved from India, Hindi may become the national language. Instead of calling India as a nation, Dravida Nadu, Andhra, Bengal can be separately called as nations respectively. For instance, Dravidian nation had its culture, language, civilization and rule for thousands of years on accordance with historical facts. Undoubtedly it is known to all the people.
- “Dravidian Nationalism” proposed by Periyar was to a large extent against religious dominations.

On Language

- Each and everyone have their own rights to protect their languages. These rights can be protected and provided under Dravida, Socialist Republic Rule. No language can be enforced.
- Language should not be misused as weapon for separatism. If people are dependent upon Central rule for all kinds of amenities, there is no outcome in it. If languages are officialised at Central level, will the poor people relieve out of hunger?
- To put it in clear way, are Tamil labourers exploited only by the Tamil speaking owner class?

Casteless Society

- Periyar’s protests and speeches always centre around, “Tamilnadu for Tamils and Dravidian nation for Dravidians.” His ideologies

include Common plan, common work plan, Islamic conversion, separate Dravidian nation for which he fought against the dominant communities.

- His argument was that the dominant communities misused Tamil, Tamil nationalism, Tamil race for sustaining the power in Tamilnadu. It is with the help of Tamil leaders, they injected Tamil nationalism in the minds of the people for holding the power for a long time he said. Consequently, Periyar put an end to the demand of separate Tamilnadu and upheld the ideal of casteless society.
- Thus, casteless society has become the top most priority for Periyar. Other ideals like separate Dravidian nation, abounding dominant communities, distortion of capitalist class became secondary priorities for Periyar.
- This may be the only ambition and goals for Dravida Kazhagam, claimed Periyar. “The caste feeling, thus divided the Dravidian race and Dravidians became slaves for Aryans” stated Periyar in his writings published in the 1950’s in Tamilnadu.