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04 Indian Migration into
Malaya and Singapore
During the British Period

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23 借鉴新加坡管理经验
建设公共服务型政府

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Cover: Tanjore Temple in Tamil Nadu and the Goddess Parvathi from the Kailasanathar Temple in Tamil Nadu, India

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Director's Column

It has been two years since we moved to the new National Library Building at Victoria Street. In the last two years, the National Library had played host to several overseas distinguished guests. These include Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II; Japanese Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko; the former Crown Prince of Bhutan, His Royal Highness, Trongsa Penlop Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, and Mrs Laura Bush, First Lady of the United States.

I am happy to say that we have done reasonably well in a short span of time. To commemorate the re-opening of the National Library, we first published the inaugural issue of *BiblioAsia* in August 2005 and this is now the 10th issue. We also launched two permanent exhibitions at the National Library in November 2005. The first exhibition, *The Singapore Literary Pioneers Gallery*, pays tribute to the literary achievements of prominent Singapore writers. The second exhibition, *From Books to Bytes: The Story of the National Library*, visually celebrates the history of the National Library from 1823 to the present. Do come and visit these exhibitions if you have not done so!

In the same month, we also launched the Lee Kong Chian Research Fellowship to encourage research on Asian content and enrich the National Library's Asia-centric collections and resources. The closing date for the next cycle of the Fellowship programme is 28 February 2008. We look forward to receiving your applications.

Just recently, the National Library won the first prize in the ASEAN Energy Efficient Building Award (New and Existing Buildings Category). Acknowledged for its green features, energy saving devices, open spaces and sky gardens, the National Library Building was conferred the Platinum Green Mark Award by the Building and Construction Authority of Singapore (BCA) in 2005. Come November 2007, a book that showcases the National Library as an architectural icon will be published.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Raffles National Library Ordinance that heralded the beginning of free public library services and to celebrate our 2nd anniversary, the National Library will be publishing a pictorial book that traces the growth and development of libraries in Singapore. The Heritage Road Show is back after a successful inaugural run last year and this year's event promises to be more exciting. Do look out for the new e-Deposit online service whereby members

of the public can submit digitised version of old photos or valuables online. In line with the heritage theme, a series of heritage-related exhibitions will be held at the Promenades of the National Library. The highlight is the *KaalaChakra* (Wheel of Time) exhibition, which chronicles the early Indian influences in Southeast Asia in the areas of culture, history and society.

The National Library has always strived to acquire valuable and inaccessible content and make it accessible to the public. With this in mind, I am pleased to announce that we have just signed four Memoranda of Understanding (MOU). The first was with the Raffles Institution to make its collection of rare documents available to the public through digitisation. The second MOU was with the Singapore Press Holdings to digitise all back issues of *The Straits Times* and make it available online, in phases, to the public in all NLB libraries from the second half of 2008. The third MOU was with the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU) to preserve, archive and make accessible documents and information on international political violence and terrorism. The last MOU was with Encik Abdul Ghani Hamid, award-winning Singapore writer, poet and artist. A selected collection of his rare books, manuscripts and personal artifacts on Malay literature and the arts in Singapore and Southeast Asia will be preserved and archived.

The National Library Board (NLB) recently launched the EnterpriseOne Business Information Services (EBIS) for Singapore-based small and medium sized enterprises. Led by the Singapore Business Federation (SBF), the multi-agency initiative includes NLB, SPRING Singapore and International Enterprise (IE) Singapore. EBIS aims to empower enterprises in Singapore to become more knowledge-enabled, innovative and information savvy. More information on EBIS can be found at www.ebis.sg.

We thank you for your support and look forward to seeing you at the National Library. Happy reading and do keep your comments and feedback coming!

Ms Ngian Lek Choh

Director
National Library



Indian Migration into Malaya and Singapore During the British Period

By Makeswary Periasamy, Senior Reference Librarian, Lee Kong Chian Reference Library, National Library

INTRODUCTION

The Indian community in Singapore is heterogeneous, due to religious and linguistic differences. The term “Indian” refers to the people originating from the Indian subcontinent, which comprises India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives. As a community, Indians have played an important role in the historical, economic, cultural and political development of Singapore.

The arrival of Indians to Singapore reflects the long, historic association the Southeast Asian region has had with India. Before the 19th century, contact between India and Southeast Asia was characterised by a movement of goods and ideas. The nature of this contact somewhat changed with the British occupation of Malaya. Instead of merchants, traders and adventurers, more migrant labourers arrived at the region.

EARLY CONTACTS BETWEEN INDIA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

Early contacts between India and Southeast Asia can be traced to the days of first millennium B.C. In Ramayana and Mahabharata, two of the greatest ancient Indian epics, the

islands of the Malay Archipelago are referred to as *Suvarna Dvīpa* and *Yavana Dvīpa* (Krishnan, 1936, p. 1). Ancient Indian literary texts also make references to Southeast Asia, often describing it as *Suvarnabhumi*, or Land of Gold.

Archaeological and epigraphic evidences, such as Hindu/Buddhist structures, Indian-styled objects and inscriptions in early Indian scripts, indicate the presence of Indian mercantile communities in several parts of early Southeast Asia. Indian traders tended to settle in areas, which were used as entrepôts of trade, such as Kedah and Province Wellesley.

During this period of Hindu/Buddhist influence, which lasted till AD 1511, “Indianised” kingdoms flourished in Southeast Asia (Sandhu, 1969, p. 2). Moreover, Indian concepts of kingship and administrative institutions and ceremonies became deeply embedded in the socio-political institutions of some parts of Southeast Asia.

Indian literary influence in Southeast Asia is evident via the translations of Indian classical works into local literature. Wayang kulit, the popular shadow theatre in Indonesia, is based on the adventures of Rama, the divine hero of Ramayana. The Hikayat Pandawa, a Malay classic literature,

is a translation of Mahabharata. Mythological stories from the Puranas and Panchatantra have also been adopted by Malay literature. Researchers have noted several instances of Sanskrit words being adopted and adapted in local languages.

At the early period, the Indians arriving at Malaya were mostly merchants, traders, missionaries and adventurers. With the increasing trade connections, the Indian merchants founded their own settlements. The Malacca Chetties, Chulias and Jawi Pekan are examples of Indian communities who settled in Malaya.

Most of the Indian merchant communities were self-contained entities, such as the "manikramam", a South Indian mercantile corporation with its own regiment, temple and tank (Arasaratnam, 1979, p. 4)

The Malacca Chetties were Hindu traders who had settled in Malacca; their name arose because they were primarily involved in commercial activities.

The Muslim traders in Malacca inter-married with the local women and became known as Jawi Pekan, thereby creating unique cultural traditions. The eminent Malay writer, Munshi Abdullah, was of mixed Arab, Tamil and Malay parentage and was proficient in Arabic, Tamil and Malay (Arasaratnam, 1979, p. 7)

INDIAN MIGRATION DURING BRITISH PERIOD

It has been noted that 95 percent of Indians arriving into Malaya over the last 2,000 years seem to have entered the country between 1786 and 1957 (Sandhu, 1969, p. 13). Despite the long and historic association with Malaya, there were rarely large numbers of Indians in Malaya before the British period. Indians began to arrive into Malaya in 1786 when the British took control of Penang. However Indians were still not a significant part of the population till the latter half of the 19th century. According to Krishnan, modern Indian migration into Malaya began in 1833.

An increase in colonial agricultural activities in Malaya led to a demand for manpower, which could not be met by the local populace. The demand was satisfied by labour migrants from India, although such migration was seasonal.

With the abolition of slavery in the British territories in 1833, there was an even bigger demand for labour. This demand was precipitated by the "Industrial Revolution

and the development of large-scale production in Britain" and the need to tap the British colonies for raw materials (Sandhu, 1969, p. 48). It was easier to recruit labour to the Straits Settlements as they were under the Indian Government till 1867 and so Indian laws applied to them. Majority of the Indian labourers migrated to Malaya and Singapore as assisted labourers, via the indentured labour system or the kangany system, while a few came as free labourers.



Two Indian males in Singapore in the early 1900s

Source: *An official guide to Eastern Asia: Trans-continental connections between Europe & Asia*. Vol. 5, East Indies. (1920). Tokyo, Dept. of Railways

INDENTURE LABOUR SYSTEM

The indenture labour system "provided the first complement of Indian labourer settlers to the Malay Peninsula" (Arasaratnam, 1979, p. 12). Under this system, the Indian labourer was "indentured" to the employer for a period of five years and was paid fixed wages. Often, most of the labourers renewed their indenture at the end of five years. Indentured labour was recruited mainly through private companies based in South India and, secondly through speculators, who recruited on their own.

When the movement of labour to the Straits Settlements was legalised in 1872, the indenture period was reduced to three years. However, the indenture system was "riddled with abuses" as a result of poor living conditions, the questionable means of recruitment and the arduous ship journey, which caused high mortality and ill-health among the surviving passengers. Moreover the labourers were worked hard by the



Group of Indian labourers

Source: *Photographic views of Singapore*. (1900). Singapore: G.R. Lambert.

employers and their indebtedness was often extended, while their wages were lower than those who had come as free labourers (Arasaratnam, 1979, p. 13-14).

With the rise of Indian nationalism, such a system was condemned as “near slavery”. The indenture system was finally abolished in 1910.

KANGANY SYSTEM

An alternative mode of recruiting labour for Malaya developed during the latter part of the 19th century. Known as the kangany system, it supplied most of the labour to the Malayan coffee and rubber plantations till 1938. Kangany is the Tamil word for overseer or superior. Unlike the indenture system whereby mostly males migrated, the kangany system paved the way for more families to migrate to Malaya.

Although it was seen as the most satisfactory solution for the growing demand for labour, the kangany system was criticised by Indian nationalists as exploitative as it “induced persons to migrate under false pretences” (Arasaratnam, 1979, p. 19)

Poor economic conditions, including the Great Depression of 1930s, led to a decrease in demand for labour and thus a decline of the kangany recruitment. It was finally abolished in 1938 when all assisted emigration was banned by the Indian Government. Nevertheless, Indians continued to migrate to Malaya as free labourers.

PROFILE OF MIGRANTS FROM 1800S IN MALAYA

Before the large movement of labour into Malaya in the 1800s, Indian settlements in Malaya comprised mostly merchants and traders. From the 19th century, Indians worked as labourers in the plantations and in harbour ports. Prior to World War Two, labourers were the most numerous immigrants to Malaya.

The Indians arriving in Malaya as labourers were mainly from South India. Primarily because the Indian government had allowed recruitment for Malaya only from the Madras state, 90 percent of the labour migrants to Malaya were Tamil-speaking people. The rest of the migrants were Telegus and Malayalees from South India.

On the other hand, those recruited by the government were a mixture from Madras (still the majority), Punjab, Rajputana, Maharashtra and Bengal (Arasaratnam, 1979, p. 15). From the 1820s, Indian labour was recruited directly by the Straits

Settlements government for public and construction works, and municipal services. These were mainly English-educated South Indians and Ceylonese Tamils and Sikhs. The non-labour migrants tended to bring their families and relatives with them, thereby contributing to the Indian population growth.

Indians also came to Malaya as sepoy, lascars, domestic servants and camp followers when they accompanied the British who were stationed in the Straits Settlements. Another group that came to Malaya were the convicts during the early years of the 19th century. They were involved in various projects involving hard labour.

In the early years of the 20th century, Indians came in as lawyers, doctors, journalists, teachers and other university-educated men.

The phenomenal growth of Singapore also attracted various North Indian businessmen, such as the Parsees, Sindhis, Marwaris and Gujeratis. By the early years of the 20th century, Singapore was the centre of growth for Indian commerce. These businessmen established themselves as wholesalers and retailers. South Indian Muslims (many of whom were mostly descendants of the historic traders), including Malabar Muslims also arrived in Singapore (Arasaratnam, 1979, p. 35).

Among the Indian commercial groups were the Chettiers, a Tamil caste of businessmen and financiers who moved into the Straits Settlements by the middle of 19th century. One of the important subgroups was the Nattukottai Chettiers.

The migration of Indians as labourers declined after the war, while the migration of commercial and professional Indians predominated. Two acts were passed in 1953 that controlled the entry of Indians into Malaya, especially unskilled labour. Subsequently, only highly qualified professionals and technical personnel were allowed to enter the country. Unlike the labour migrants who were mainly Tamils, the latter type of migrants was more heterogeneous and hailed from different parts of India.

ARRIVAL OF INDIANS TO SINGAPORE

Indians were among the first migrants to arrive in Singapore. When Sir Stamford Raffles and William Farquhar landed in Singapore in 1819, they were accompanied by a trader from Penang, Narayana Pillay, and a troop of sepoy and a bazaar contingent. According to Sandhu, there is no record of Indians in Singapore when Raffles arrived (Sandhu, 1969, p. 178).



Government House garden being laid out by convicts

Source: McNair, J.F.A. (1899). *Prisoners their own warders*. Westminster: A. Constable.

Subsequently, Indian labourers began to arrive in Singapore too, as per the migration pattern seen elsewhere in Malaya. They were employed in the sugar, pepper and gambier cultivations. Two years later, there were 132 Indians out of a total population of 4,727. This figure excludes the military garrison and camp-followers (Sandhu, 1969, p. 178).

When Singapore became a convict colony in 1825, Indian convicts in Bencoolen were transferred to Singapore. After 1860, Singapore was no longer used as a penal colony due to protests from the business community, but Indian convict labourers remained in Singapore till 1873 (Siddique, 1990, p. 9). While a few returned home, others married and settled down in Singapore, as shopkeepers, cow keepers/ milk-sellers, cart owners, or as public works employees.

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS OF INDIANS IN SINGAPORE

Apart from the military garrisons, the majority of Indians in early Singapore had housed themselves in areas near to and around the city centre of the island. The initial settlement patterns of the Indians have been influenced by Raffles' urban plan to allocate and create ethnic enclaves (A. Mani, 2006, p.791). Subsequently, Indians tended to settle in areas near to their places of employment.

According to Siddique, five main areas of Indian concentrations in Singapore can be distinguished from the 1800s - namely, the Chulia and Market street areas, High Street areas, the Naval Base in Sembawang, the railway/ port areas of Tanjong Pagar and the Serangoon Road area (Siddique, 1990, p. 7).

Prior to 1830s, the earliest concentration of Indians in Singapore (mainly Tamils) was in the Chulia and Market

Street areas, which were situated at the western part of the commercial core, along Singapore River. "Most of these Indians were South Indian Chettiar and Tamil Muslim traders, financiers, money-changers, petty shopkeepers, and boatmen and other kinds of quayside workers" (Sandhu, 2006, p. 778; Siddique, 1990, p. 13). Indians also worked as doorkeepers and security men for commercial banks, offices and large stores in the commercial area, and carried out manual work in private residences within the European residential areas (A. Mani, 2006, p. 792).

When the British established a military base in Singapore after 1920, they built a naval base in Sembawang and an airbase in Changi. Many Indians were employed to work in these bases, and as a result, settled in the surrounding villages. The number of Indians who lived in Chong Pang, Jalan Kayu, Nee Soon and Yew Tee were higher than the Chinese and Malay populations (A. Mani, 2006, p. 793). Hence Sembawang became the third area of Indian concentration.

Another area of Indian concentration was the High Street area, which was occupied by Sindhi, Gujerati and Sikh cloth and electronics merchants. A few of the merchants also based themselves around Arab Street. Indians were also prominent in the areas around docks and railways at Tanjong Pagar. The latter group comprised mostly Tamils, Telegus and Malayalees.

Serangoon Road was first populated by Indians engaged in cattle-related activities. When cattle rearing in Serangoon Road was prohibited in 1936, the area became more densely populated by small businesses and their families. From the 1880s, predominantly Tamil South Indian businessmen began to settle here and on Farrer Road. Serangoon Road became a dominantly Indian area when government accommodation for labourers (mostly Tamils) was established along the area. As the Indian convicts jail was located at Bras Basah Road, Indian prison employees and those providing laundry services and food supplies to the prisoners also tended to settle near the prison; mostly along Selegie and Serangoon Roads, and the arterial networks (Siddique, 1990, p. 13; Sandhu, 2006, p. 778).

Besides the above areas of concentrations, Indians also settled near those areas set aside for plantations. The plantations hired mostly Indian labour, due to availability. As the plantations extended to Bukit Timah, Seletar, Pasir Panjang and Jurong, the Indian labourers tended to settle in these areas as well (Mani, 2006, p. 792).

From 1960s, there was a slight change in the settlement patterns of the Indians. Instead of the original areas of settlement, the "Housing and Development Board (HDB) estates became the new areas of settlement" (Mani, 2006, p. 793) With increasing affluence and education, younger Indians have moved out to newer towns, but nearer their original homes, such as Ang Mo Kio, Toa Payoh, Queenstown, MacPherson and Woodlands. Subsequently, Indians also settled in Yishun, Hougang, Tampines and Jurong.

As a result, the number of Indians staying in the previous areas of settlements has decreased. Even Serangoon Road, known as the Little India of Singapore, does not have a high concentration of Indian families. Despite this, Serangoon Road remains as the hub of Indian economic and cultural activities, mainly because of the concentration of Indian businesses in that area.

BUILDERS OF EARLY SINGAPORE: INDIANS' CONTRIBUTION TO INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMY

Indians have played an important role in the economic development of Singapore. They "have been conspicuous as textile and piece-goods wholesalers and retailers, money-lenders, civil servants, and especially labourers." The "wholesale Asian textile trade of post-war Singapore" was mostly "controlled by the Singapore-based Indian textile merchants, particularly the Sindhis and Sikhs" (Sandhu, 2006, p. 781).

A third of the estimated 400 registered money-lenders and pawnbrokers in Singapore in 1947 were Indians. In 1963, about 80 percent of the 104 registered money-lenders were Indians. "The most important money-lenders among the Indians have been the Chettiers, though the Sikhs have also carried on a substantial money-lending business. The Chettiers' clientele included not only Indian traders, contractors, and the like in Singapore and Malaya, but also Chinese miners and businessmen, European proprietary planters and others, and Malay royalty and civil servants" (Sandhu, 2006, p. 781).

Most importantly, the significance of Indian plantation labour to the economic growth of Singapore and Malaya cannot be underestimated. By the later half of the 19th century, rubber became Malaya's staple export due to increased demand from Europe; Indian labour was used to augment the demand.

As the population in Singapore increased, there was an increased demand for development works, all of which were completed through convict labour. Convict labour

was heavily tapped for the construction of roads, railways, bridges and government/public buildings, and for clearing and drainage projects.

"Filling up of swampy grounds; reclaiming large plots of land as intakes from the sea and river marshes; laying out plots of land for building purposes ... ; blasting of rocks, erection of sea and river walls, bridges, viaducts and tunnels; survey and construction of roads were all executed by convicts" (Krishnan, 1936, p. 16).

Indian convicts were responsible for building the St Andrew's Cathedral, the Government House and the Sri Mariamman Temple in South Bridge Road. Their contribution to public works is tremendous, as they toiled to build the North and South Bridge Roads; Serangoon, Bedok and Thomson Roads; the road leading to Mount Faber and Bukit Timah; and most importantly the Causeway to Johore. They also widened the Bukit Timah canal to prepare the adjoining lands for cultivation and helped construct lighthouses as well as the signal station on Mount Faber.



St Andrew's Cathedral and Raffles Monument

Source: *Photographic views of Singapore*. (1900). Singapore: G.R. Lambert.

The convicts also built their own prison building in Bras Basah Road, the Civil Jail in Pearl's Hill, the court house, public offices, General Hospital and several other public buildings. Besides being involved in construction work, the convicts were also trained as draughtsmen, bricklayers, blacksmiths and carpenters. Indian convicts were also employed in government kilns, to maintain supply of bricks, tile lime and cement required for new building constructions.

Among the many prominent and successful Indians in early Singapore who have not only contributed to economic growth but to the social and cultural development of the Indian community, are Narayana Pillai and P. Govindasamy Pillai.

Narayana Pillai was one of the first Indians to arrive in Singapore in 1819, together with Raffles. He rose from chief clerk in the Treasury to become the first building contractor in Singapore. He started the first brick kiln in Tanjong Pagar and also managed a successful bazaar selling cotton goods. He was recognised as an Indian leader and given the authority to resolve disputes amongst them. He built the Sri Mariamman Temple in 1828, which is the oldest Hindu temple in Singapore.

Another successful Indian businessman was P. Govindasamy Pillai, better known as PGP, who established the popular PGP stores. At the height of his success, he owned several textile shops, flour and spice mills, a supermarket, and also invested in properties in the Serangoon area. He was known as a benevolent philanthropist who donated to the Perumal Temple, University of Malaya, amongst others, and helped to found the Indian Chamber of Commerce and the Ramakrishna Mission, to which he also donated generously.

POPULATION GROWTH OF INDIANS IN SINGAPORE

Today, the Indian community in Singapore constitutes about 8 percent of the total population. In 2005, the number of Indians in Singapore was about 309,300. However these figures did not include the non-resident workers who are estimated to be between 90,000 to 100,000 (Lal, 2006, p. 176).

Year	Number of Indians in Singapore	Number of Indians as a Percentage of the Total Population of Singapore (%)	Number of Indians as a Percentage of the Total Population of Malaya (%)
1819	n.a	n.a	n.a
1821	132	2.8	n.a
1871	11,501	11.8	n.a
1891	16,305	8.7	21.0
1911	28,454	9.2	10.6
1931	50,860	9.4	8.2
1947	68,978	7.7	11.5
1957	124,084	9.0	15.2
1970	145,169	7.0	13.3
1980	154,632	6.4	11.7
1990	194,000	7.1	n.a
2000	257,800	7.9	n.a
2005	309,300	8.7	n.a

Table 1: Indian Population of Singapore, 1819-2000

Sources:

Figures from 1819 to 1980 from Sandhu, 2006, p. 775

Figures for 1990 to 2000 from Leow, 2001, p. viii

Figure for 2005 from General Household Survey 2005, p. viii

Prior to the Second World War, the growth of the Indian population has been through labour migration; the “excess of immigrants over emigrants” (Sandhu, 1969, p. 185). The majority of Indian migrants in Malaya during the early

stages were mostly males. There were about 171 women to every 1,000 men in Malaya in 1901. The number of Indian women increased as more came to work as labourers after labour migration was legalised and when more male labourers began to bring their families along. From 1930s, the improvement in the sex-ratio, as well as better health services contributed to the population growth via natural increase.

After the war, the increase in total Indian population was due to excess births as compared to deaths, and not through migration. During the 1947-57 period, significant increases in the number of Indians as compared to the total population was mostly evident in Singapore and Pahang (Sandhu, 1969, p. 197). This increase was estimated to be almost 80 percent (Sandhu, 1969, p. 190).

The number of Indians in Malaya declined in the middle of the 20th century as Indian migration was affected by the Great Depression of the 1930s and World War Two and the subsequent Japanese Occupation. Before the war, Indian labour in Malaya comprised 75 percent of total labour force. This figure declined to about 50 percent in 1947 (Arasaratnam, 1979, p. 38) The passing of two acts in 1953 to control Indian labour has steadily led to a decline in the proportion of Indian labourers to the total Indian population.

TRENDS IN OCCUPATIONAL DIVERSITY

A significant number of Indians were employed in the sugar, pepper and gambier, and later the rubber cultivations in Singapore. However, unlike the Malay Peninsula where majority of the Indians were plantation workers, Indians in Singapore were employed in various other occupations as well. Many Indians in Singapore were also engaged in small-time wholesale and retail trade.

When Raffles arrived in Singapore, his entourage included sepoys as well as a bazaar contingent of washermen (dhobis), tea-makers (chai-wallahs), milkmen and domestic servants (Lal, 2006, p. 176). These were a few of the traditional occupations that early Indians in Singapore were conspicuous in. The laundry business in early Singapore was monopolised by Indians. Majority of the dhoby lines were located around the Orchard Road area, today referred to as Dhoby Ghaut. Indians also monopolised the cattle and dairy farms.

Indians were also employed in the construction of roads and railways, in surveying lands and as clerks, dressers, plantation and office assistants, teachers, technicians, watchmen, caretakers and as technical personnel on the railways.

I.—ABSTRACT OF THE POPULATION OF THE SETTLEMENT OF SINGAPORE.

TAMILS AND OTHER NATIVES OF INDIA:—										
Bengalis, &c.,	1,091	237	110	107	1,207	344	1,551
Burmese,	31	10	2	3	33	19	52
Parsons,	18	0	4	...	22	0	28
Tamils,	7,435	1,480	977	615	8,412	2,005	10,507
TOTAL TAMILS, &c.,...				8,575	1,730	1,099	725	9,074	2,404	12,138

Census of Straits Settlements: Abstract of the population of the Settlement of Singapore in 1881

Source: Report on the census of the Straits Settlements, taken on the 5th April 1891. (1892). Singapore: Printed at the Govt. Print. Off.

It was mostly the English-educated South Indians and Ceylonese Tamils who were employed in the railways, as clerks in government offices (including Public Works Department, Sanitation Department, telecommunication departments, etc) and in businesses, as well as teachers.

The North Indians, specifically Punjabi Sikhs, were employed as policemen, watchmen and caretakers (Siddique, 1990, p. 11). Besides the municipal services, Indians in Singapore were the key workers in the dockyards and military installations during the second half of the 19th century (Sandhu, 2006, p. 783).

Over the recent decades, with “increasing sophistication, desire, and effort among the Indians to better themselves” and better educational opportunities, Indians have been moving away from “lowly paid wage-earning occupations into more profitable enterprises such as manufacturing, business and trade” (Sandhu, 2006, p. 782).

According to the population census of year 2000, the highest number of Indians (43.3 percent) was employed in professional, technical and managerial occupations. This is more than double that of 1990, where only about 22.3 percent of Indians were employed in such jobs (Leow, 2001, p. ix).

ETHNOLINGUISTIC AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

As a community, Indians are neither distinct nor homogeneous. They are “compartmentalised by occupational, religious, educational, and linguistic differences, and caste, as well as ethnic and sub-ethnic group differences based primarily on place of origin” (Siddique, 1990, p. 8) This compartmentalisation is sometimes viewed, in the broader sense, as North Indian vs. South Indian origin, and/or Hindu vs. Muslim religious practitioners.

The ethnic content of the Indian population in recent times has been conditioned by previous developments and patterns of labour migration. The majority of Indians in Singapore are generally Southern Hindus with the Tamils as the dominant group. According to Mani “three major linguistic groups became discernible” after the war, namely the Tamils, Malayalees and Punjabis (2006, p. 795).

There has been a substantial increase in North Indians after the first batch of Sikhs arrived as policemen in 1879 (Lal, 2006, p. 178). After the war, many more Indians arrived from North India, mostly as businessmen.

CONCLUSION

The Indian community in Singapore has come a long way from its days of being migrants. Though a minority, the Indian community is a vibrant and diverse group that has made significant contributions to the overall development of Singapore, and continues to do so. Indians from India continue to “migrate” to Singapore; such “migrants” are more heterogeneous, coming from various Indian states and range from unskilled labour to professionals.

Linguistic Group	Number of Persons	Number of Persons in each Linguistic Group as a Percentage of the Total Indian Population (%)
Tamil	150,184	58.3
Malayalee	21,736	8.4
Sikh	13,188	5.1
Hindustani	5,064	2.0
Punjabi	4,711	1.8
Sindhi	4,017	1.6
Hindi	3,971	1.5
Gujerati	3,260	1.3
Urdu	2,989	1.2
Sinhalese	2,427	0.9
Other Indians	46,244	18.0

Table 2: Indian Resident Population by Linguistic Groups

Source: Figures extracted from Leow, 2001, p. 47-49

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A Historical Review of the Pre-War Chinese Curriculum and Textbooks Used in Singapore:

Pages from a Community in Transition

By Wee Tong Bao, Reference Librarian, Lee Kong Chian Reference Library, National Library

INTRODUCTION

The Chinese society of Singapore in the 19th century was by and large, a transient community, comprising mostly Chinese immigrants from China. The majority of Chinese immigrants were males who had come to “Nanyang” in search of employment or to trade. Many of them left their families in China or eventually returned to China when they earned enough. With the lifting of the ban on general emigration by the Qing government in 1893, the number of Chinese immigrants increased significantly. Some of them brought their families along. In the year 1901 alone, 8,060 female immigrants arrived in Singapore. It was also towards this time that local Chinese births doubled from 1,076 to 2,203 between 1887 and 1900.¹ This was not merely a quantitative change within the Chinese community. With the increase in the number of females and children in the community, there were also fundamental changes in the nature of the community. The newly formed family units brought about an increasing need for social institutions, including schools for their children.

The early 20th century was a time of uncertainty and great changes for China. The Qing Dynasty, in its attempt to sustain the imperial regime, instituted a series of changes, including the modernisation of China’s education system. It was during this period that China started to transform its schools. Many scholars have elucidated on how education reforms in China had shaped similar initiatives of the Chinese overseas. The matter may be more complex and one can examine the reality of the matter by taking a closer look at

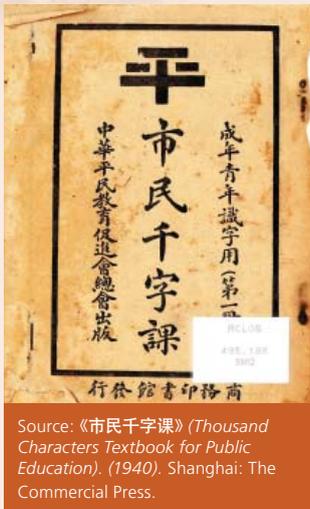
the actual situation in Singapore, in particular, through the curriculum and school textbooks used by the local modern vernacular schools.

AT THE DAWN OF MODERN VERNACULAR CHINESE EDUCATION

Up till the time when modern Chinese vernacular schools were founded in the first decade of the 20th century, Chinese classical texts like the Trimetrical Classics (*Sanzijing* 三字经), the Hundred Families Surnames (*Baijiaxing* 百家姓) and the Millenary Classics (*Qianziwen* 千字文) were known to have been used in the local Chinese schools.² This was first noticed by Khoo Soek Wan (1874-1941), “a man of enlightened views”, according to Song Ong Siang.³ Khoo was born in China and came to Singapore with his father when he was just seven years old.⁴ In 1888, he returned to China to prepare for the Imperial Examinations. Six years later, he took part in the Imperial Examinations and was awarded the title of *Ju Ren* (举人). Though educated in the Chinese classics, Song Ong Siang also described Khoo as “a man ... strongly in sympathy with the revolutionary movement in China”.⁵



Source: 《南洋华侨学校适用小学常识课本：初级》(Elementary General Knowledge Suitable for Nanyang Chinese Schools). (1935). Shanghai: Chung Hwa Book Co.



Source: 《市民千字课》(Thousand Characters Textbook for Public Education). (1940). Shanghai: The Commercial Press.

Evidence of this “strong sympathy” was his involvement in the founding of the Singapore Chinese Girls’ Schools in 1899. He donated \$3,000 towards the establishment of this school of the Straits Chinese, an act which Song felt was “worthy [of] more than [just] a passing mention, for at that time”,⁶ the leading Straits Chinese were “apathetic, if not inimical, to the cause of

female education and refused to contribute anything”.⁷ Khoo did not just contribute financially to such education efforts. He spearheaded early syllabus reforms too. Khoo had noticed that classical texts, such as the Millenary Classics (Qianziwen 千字文), used in many old-style private teaching (si shu 私塾) at that time, were too difficult for young students. He found that too many obscure words were used in the Millenary Classics and students who studied it for many years ended up still not being able to write their own names, compose simple letters or grasp the rudiments of the Chinese language. Hence, he concluded that if the teachers clung on to tradition and persisted in using these textbooks, it would ultimately be detrimental to the students.⁸

In 1902, Khoo selected 479 characters from the original text and added another 521 more commonly used words to form a new Millenary Classics (Xin Chu Qizhiwen 新出千字文). As Khoo was a talented poet, he put this poetic flair to good use when he put these 1,000 characters into 52 sentences, each with four characters. The sentences were grouped into eight chapters. The topics in these chapters ranged from teaching students how to recognise items from every day life and at the same time, instilling values in them.⁹ This new Millenary Classics is the earliest known existing textbook produced locally for elementary education in Singapore.¹⁰

As the winds of modernisation garnered greater momentum at the turn of the 20th century, the major Chinese dialectal communities founded several modern Chinese schools in Singapore. The Cantonese founded the Yeung Ching School (Yangzheng Xuetang 养正学堂) in 1905. The next year, the Hakkas set up Yingxin School and Khee Fatt School (Qifa Xuetang 启发学堂).¹¹ In 1906, the Toh Lam School (Daonan Xuetang 道南学堂) and the Tuan Mong

School (Duan Meng Xuetang 端蒙学堂) were founded by the Hokkiens and the Teochews respectively.¹² As for the Hainanese, they too started a modern school, Yoke Eng School (Yu Ying Xuetang 育英学堂), for their children in 1910.¹³

Although the syllabi and teaching styles of these schools have not been thoroughly documented, it is certain that they were not old-style schools (si shu 私塾). It was during this time that the 1911 Revolution in China also resulted in fundamental change in the socio-political culture for China. This new phrase of China’s journey towards modernity affected all Chinese, including those abroad. For the Chinese overseas, it was through their institutions like schools that the trappings of modernity first took root. The Hokkien merchants of Singapore were among the first to push for change. They advocated revising and bringing up-to-date the teaching at Toh Lam School and other old-style schools, according to the “new rules and regulations of the Chinese Ministry of Education”¹⁴. This is one of the first examples of how the Chinese in Singapore attempted to follow China’s education model. Eventually, the resultant form of vernacular Chinese education in Singapore also included the considerations of socio-political and economic realities of early 20th century Singapore. Even when they acquired textbooks from China, the China printers normally had a “Nanyang” edition of their publications that incorporated local “needs” and “conditions”.¹⁵ China also recognised this difference and even set up special colleges such as the Jinan Da Xue (Chi-Nan University) to train teachers specifically for Chinese schools in Nanyang.¹⁶

THE COLONIAL GOVERNMENT AND TEXTBOOKS FOR LOCAL NEEDS

After 1911, most of the colonial governments in Southeast Asia grew apprehensive of the political influences from China. In the Straits Settlements, the Colonial authorities passed the School Registration Ordinance of 1920. It heralded British direct involvement with the education of all children in Singapore. They were concerned no longer just with the English-stream schools and Malay vernacular schools.

With this Ordinance, the local government sought to “gain control over all schools in the Colony”. The government officially declared three points:

Firstly, that the schools shall be properly conducted as schools; secondly, that the teachers in them have efficient training for teaching, and thirdly, that the teaching shall

not be of such a kind that is against the interest of the Government of the Colony.¹⁷



Source: 《新撰國文教科書》
(*New Chinese Language
Textbook*). (1927). Shanghai:
The Commercial Press.

Under this Ordinance, both the managers and teachers of all schools were required to register with the Education Department within three months, for existing schools, and one month for new schools. In addition, any changes in the teaching staff or committee of management of the registered schools had to be reported to the Education Department within one month. Every registered school was also to be opened to inspections by the Director of Education and he was empowered to declare schools unlawful if the schools, the teachers or the managers were found to be involved in political propaganda detrimental (or prejudicial) to the interests of the Colony.¹⁸

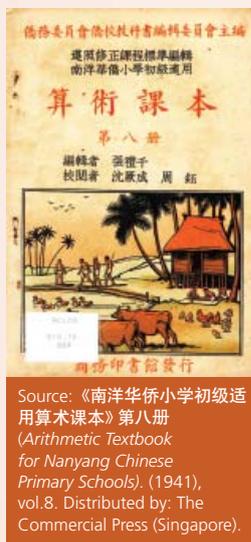
To ensure that the objectives of the Ordinance were met, the Ordinance and the General Regulations were repeatedly amended to make them more effective. The first amendment to the Ordinance was made in 1925 and it was amended again in the following year to make it even more stringent. The General Regulations were also revised for the same purpose.¹⁹ In addition to legislation, the Straits Settlements Education Department also started writing textbooks for use in the Chinese schools in the 1920s.

In 1923, the British Education Department explored the possibility of compiling textbooks locally, which would be suited to local needs.²⁰ The preparation of the books was slightly delayed, but by 1925, it was reported that “primary school readers and text-books on hygiene and geography with appropriate reference to local conditions” were in the course of preparation.²¹ This task was continued for another two years until 1927, when “a series of readers for Chinese Schools was nearly completed and arrangements to have them printed were under discussion at the close of the year.” When the compilation of a geography reader was nearing completion, there were plans to compile other manuals on arithmetic and hygiene.²² Approval was soon given for the publication of a trial edition of these locally written Readers by a local firm in 1928.²³ However, it appears that these textbooks were hardly used in the Chinese vernacular schools. From 1929 onwards, the *Straits Settlements Annual Reports* reported, “practically all

the text-books used in Chinese schools are published and printed in Shanghai”.²⁴

SURVEY OF MODERN CHINESE TEXTBOOKS USED IN LOCAL SCHOOLS

The Chinese textbooks that were used in these modern schools in Singapore covered a wide range of subjects. Students were taught Chinese (Guo Wen 国文、Guo Yu 国语), English (Ying Yu 英语), Letter-writing (Chi Du 尺牍), Mathematics (Suan Shu 算术), Abacus (Zhu Suan 珠算), Geography (Di Li 地理), History (Li Shi 历史), Science (Ke Xue 科学), General Knowledge (Chang Shi 常识), Nature Study (Zi Ran 自然), Hygiene (Wei Sheng 卫生), Moral Education (Gong Min 公民), Arts (Mei Shu 美术), Music (Yin Yue 音乐) and Sports Education (Ti Yu 体育). The range of subjects instructed in each school varied, depending on the resources of individual schools. Nevertheless, from the textbooks that survived till today, we could see that the schools of that period provided their students with a modern education, one that differed greatly from the old-style



Source: 《南洋華僑小學初級適用算術課本》第八冊
(*Arithmetic Textbook
for Nanyang Chinese
Primary Schools*). (1941),
vol.8. Distributed by: The
Commercial Press (Singapore).

private teaching where the students recited the lines of the Confucian classics after their teachers and committed these texts to memory.

An examination of the textbooks on these subjects showed that they broke away from the traditional curricula (ie. the Confucian classics) and were similar to the Western tradition of education. Learning took place on a progressive path. In the case of languages, students were introduced to basic words when they first enrolled in schools and were exposed to a larger corpus of words as they advanced. We could see this in both the Chinese and English language textbooks. Students at the elementary levels were first taught individual words or phrases and as they moved up, their language lessons comprised sentences and paragraphs.²⁵ Likewise for subjects like Mathematics, simple concepts such as counting, addition and subtraction were taught before the students learned about multiplication and division. For the students in higher levels, they were introduced to specialised branches of mathematics such as Algebra, Geometry and Trigonometry.²⁶ A similar approach was also applied to subjects like History and Geography.²⁷

Besides the subjects above, practical subjects that helped the students secure jobs after they graduated were also taught. There were textbooks on Abacus and Letter-writing. Equipped with the knowledge of how to use the abacus, students could work as book keeping clerks in shops and even within English establishments. Letter-writing lessons showed the students how to draft simple correspondences should their future work require so.²⁸

Students were also inculcated with general knowledge about the world they lived in. General Knowledge, Nature Study and Hygiene textbooks explained the changes in housing as human beings evolved (from the caves to the trees and eventually houses), parts of a plant and how they pollinate, organs of a modern government (parliament, constitutions, courts, etc), various types of transportation, personal hygiene to prevent the spreading of germs and many other issues.²⁹

Besides the textbooks above, there were also textbooks that instilled values to mould and shape one's character. Moral Education, Art and Music were taught in schools too.³⁰ In Moral Education, values that were perpetuated in the Confucian texts such as respect to the elders, good behaviour, cherish public property, care for another person and other similar subject matters were taught. Art and music lessons were held to teach students how to appreciate fine arts and music. Students also learned teamwork and keeping good health through sports.

While it appears that the modern Chinese education before 1941 had retained certain cultural and moral values of the old tradition, by and large, from the curriculum and textbooks used in the schools, we can deduce that Chinese education in Singapore had evolved into a modern form. Besides the influences from the changes and practices in China and in the English schools, some Chinese in Singapore had also taken the lead themselves, just as Khoo had shown the way.



Source: 《新课程标准南洋教科书高级小学用珠算》(全四册). (Abacus for Upper-primary Schools). (1938), vols. 1- 4. Distributed by: The World Book Co., Singapore.

CONCLUSION: SOURCES AND LOCATION

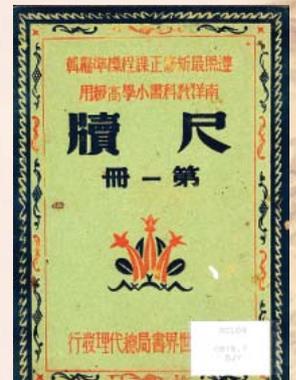
Studies on the education of the Chinese communities overseas have often been carried out within the framework of examining education policies and politics of China and that of the local governments. By examining other local events and factors, a more exact picture of the Chinese modern education in Singapore could be mapped out.

Firstly, from the efforts of Khoo, we can see that Chinese education in Singapore did not

entirely follow China's lead. Besides Khoo, there were many like-minded individuals who played an active role in setting up schools for the Chinese community in Singapore. These school founders were propelled by the need to educate their youngsters and it was this need that drove them to chart out an education that was best suited to the environment here. They had to ensure that the curriculum taught were not just propagation of tradition values but included practical skills and modern values, which would equip the students adequately to face the challenges of the "modern world".

Currently in Singapore, besides private individuals, several institutions are known to have collections of these textbooks used before 1941. These institutions include: the National University of Singapore Chinese Library, Singapore History Museum, Chinese Heritage Centre, Singapore Federation of Chinese Clans Associations and the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library of the National Library, Singapore.

Due to the antiquarian nature of these books, they are generally not available to the public. Nevertheless, these institutions have opened their collection to the public in other ways. For example, in 2003, when the Chinese Heritage Centre received a donation of Chinese-school textbooks,



Source: 《尺牍: 南洋教科书小学高级用》(Letter-writing for Upper Primary Nanyang Schools). (1941), vol. 1. Distributed by: The World Book Co., Singapore.



Source: 《自然: 高级小学用》(Nature Study for Upper Primary Schools). (1939), vol. 2. Distributed by: The World Book Co., Singapore.

periodicals, school magazines and school publications published between 1912 and 1960s, from an Indonesian-Chinese, Professor Eddy Hermawan,³¹ the Centre organised an exhibition titled “Grooming Future Generations Through Education: Chinese-School Textbooks in Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia before 1965”, in 2003. Items from the National Library’s collection and private individuals were also showcased at the exhibition.

Since the opening of the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library at Victoria Street in 2005, the Library has received numerous donations, including several hundreds volumes of textbooks. A selection of these textbooks will be displayed at the National Library’s newly created Donors Gallery in appreciation of the generous donations from the



Source: 《最新南洋华侨小学公民课本》(The Latest Moral Education Textbook for the Nanyang Chinese Primary Schools). (1941). Distributed by Chung Hwa Book Co. (Singapore).

various individuals. Opening in November 2007, the Gallery is located at Level 10 of the National Library. These donated materials are available for consultation upon request at the Information Counter located at Level 11. Library patrons may search the textbook collection through the Library’s online catalogue at <http://vistaweb.nlb.gov.sg> using keywords, such as title or subject.

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21. SSAR, 1925, p. 225.
22. SSAR, 1927, p.176.
23. SSAR, 1928, p. 240.
24. For example, in the 1929 SSAR, p.910; 1930, p. 745 and 1931, p. 822.
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27. Examples of History textbooks are: 《高级小学南洋历史教科书》(History Textbooks for Nanyang Upper Primary Schools) (1941), vol. 1 & 4. Examples of Geography textbooks are: 《高级小学南洋地理教科书》(Geography Textbooks for Nanyang Upper Primary Schools) (1941), vol. 1 & 4. Note: The last two Geography textbooks are from the Singapore History Museum.
28. Some examples of Abacus and Letter-writing textbooks in the LKCR collections are: 《新课程标准南洋教科书高级小学用珠算》(Abacus for Upper-primary Schools) (1938), vols. 1-4 and 《注释中华普通学生尺牍》(Annotated Letter-writing for Students) (1919), Part 1; 《尺牍: 南洋教科书小学初级用》(Letter-writing for Lower-primary Nanyang Schools) (1941), vol. 7 & 8 《尺牍: 南洋教科书小学高级用》(Letter-writing for Upper -primary Nanyang Schools) (1941), vol. 1 & 2.
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சோழர் காலக் கோயில்கள்

By Sundari S Balasubramaniam, Reference Librarian, Lee Kong Chian Reference Library, National Library

சுந்தரி பாலசுப்ரமணியம், நூலக அதிகாரி, லீ கொங் சியென் மேற்கோள் நூலகம், தேசிய நூலகம்

பல்லவருக்குப் பிறகு தென்னக வரலாற்றில் தங்களுக்கென ஒரு சிறந்த இடத்தைப் படைத்துக் கொண்டவர்கள் சோழர்கள். கி.பி. 850 இல் விஜயாலய சோழன் தஞ்சாவூரை முத்தரையர்களிடமிருந்து கைப்பற்றிச் சோழப் பேரரசை நிறுவினான். இப்பேரரசு 13 ஆம் நூற்றாண்டு வரை சுமார் 400 ஆண்டுகள் தமிழகத்தில் புகழ்பெற்று விளங்கியது. முதல் 250 ஆண்டுகள் சோழர்கள் தங்கள் ஆட்சிப் பரப்பை விரிப்பதிலேயே கவனம் செலுத்திவந்தனர். அத்துடன் பக்தியிலும் சிறந்து விளங்கியதால் பல கோயில்கள் எழுப்பினர். சோழ மன்னர்களுள் முதலாம் இராஜராஜன் தொடக்கம் முதலாம் குலோத்துங்கன் வரையில் ஆட்சிபுரிந்த காலப்பகுதியே தென்னக வரலாற்றில் ஒப்புயர்வுற்ற காலமாகும்.

முதலாம் இராஜராஜனும் அவனுடைய மகன் முதலாம் இராஜேந்திரனும் பற்பல நாடுகளைக் கைப்பற்றிச் சோழ சாம்ராச்சியத்துடன் இணைத்தனர். இதனால் இவர்களின் ஆளுமை வடக்கே கங்கைக் கரையிலும், தெற்கே ஈழத்திலும், கிழக்கே பர்மா, தாய்லாந்து, மலேசியா இந்தோனேசியா போன்ற நாடுகள் வரையிலும் அறியப்பட்டன. தென்கிழக்காசிய நாடுகளைக் கைப்பற்றி அந்நாடுகளில் சோழ குலத்தைச் சேர்ந்தவர்களை அரசர்களாக நியமித்தார்கள்.

தாய்லாந்து வரை இராஜேந்திரன் சென்று சில பகுதிகளை வெற்றிகொண்டான் என சரித்திர சான்றுகள் கூறுகின்றன. கடாரம் வென்றான் என்ற பட்டப்பெயரும் அவனுக்கு உண்டு. இது மலேசியாவில் உள்ள கடாரம் என்ற ஊரை வென்றதால் கிடைத்தது.

ஆட்சிச் சிறப்பாலும், கடல்கடந்த வாணிபத்தாலும் ஈட்டிய பெரும்பொருள் கொண்டு கோயிற் திருப்பணிகளைச் செய்து பெரும் புகழீட்டினர். இவர்களுடைய ஆட்சிக்காலமே அரசியல் வரலாற்றிலும், கலை வரலாற்றிலும் பொற்காலமாகத் திகழ்கிறது. இக்காலகட்டத்தில் சித்திரம், சிற்பம், உலோகத் திருமேனிகள் முதலியன வளர்ச்சியடைந்து முழு நிறைவு பெற்றன. தமிழகப் பண்பாடுகள் தென்கிழக்கு நாடுகளுக்கும் கடல் கடந்து சென்று பரவியது. சமயம், கலை, கலாசாரம் போன்றவற்றின் தாக்கத்தை இன்றும் இந்நாடுகளில் காணலாம்.



சுற்றுச் சுவரில் வரையப்பட்ட இராஜராஜன், குலகுரு கருவூர்த் தேவர் இருவரின் வண்ண ஓவியம்

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கோயில்கள்

ஆரம்பக் காலச் சோழர்கள் பல்லவமன்னர்கள் கையாண்ட கட்டிட மரபையே பின்பற்றிக் கட்டிடங்கள் அமைத்தனர். தொடக்ககால கோயில்கள் சிறியனவாகவும் சமசதுரக் கருவறைகளுடனும், ஒற்றைத் தளமுடையனவாகவும் கட்டப்பட்டன. படிப்படியாக வளர்ந்து முழுமை பெற்றது முதலாம் இராஜராஜன் காலத்தில்தான். சோழ மன்னர்கள் கட்டிய கோயில்களில் மிகவும் சிறப்பு வாய்ந்தவை முதலாம் இராஜராஜன் கட்டிய தஞ்சைப் பெரிய கோயிலும், முதலாம் இராஜேந்திர சோழன் கட்டிய கங்கை கொண்ட சோழேசுவரக் கோயிலும் ஆகும். இவ்விரு கோயில்களும் பெரும்பாலும் ஒரேவிதமான அமைப்புடையவை.

தஞ்சைப் பெரிய கோயில்

தனிச் சிறப்பு வாய்ந்த தஞ்சைப் பெரிய கோயில் இந்தியக் கலைப் பொக்கிஷமாக இந்திய அரசாங்கத்தால் பாதுகாக்கப்பட்டு வருகிறது. முழுவதும் தனிச் கருங்கற்களால் கட்டப்பட்ட இக்கோயிலின் ஒவ்வொரு பகுதியும் ஒவ்வொரு உறுப்பும் கலைக்கூடமாகும். கோயில் முழுவதும் அலங்கார வேலைப்பாடுகளுடன் கூடிய திடமான அடித்தளத்தில் அமைந்துள்ளது. தென்னிந்தியக் கட்டிடக் கலையின் மிக உயர்ந்த நிலைக்கு எடுத்துக்காட்டாக இக்கோயில் நிற்கிறது. மதிலார் சூழப்பட்ட 500 அடி நீளமும் 250 அடி அகலமும் கொண்ட இக்கோயிலின் மத்தியில் விமானம், அர்த்த மண்டபம், மகாமண்டபம், கருவறை ஆகியவை வரிசையாகக் கட்டப்பட்டுள்ளது. நான்கு பக்கங்களிலும் முக்கியமான இடங்களில் துணைக்கோயில்கள் அமைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. வியக்கும் வகையில் அமைந்துள்ள "இராஜராஜன் திருவாயில்", "கேரளாந்தகன் திருவாயில்" எனும் இரு கோபுரங்களும் முன்னைய கோபுரங்களைவிடப் பெரியவை. இராஜராஜன் திருவாயில் வழியாக கோவிலுக்குள் நுழைந்ததுமே நந்தி மண்டபம் எதிர்ப்படும். தற்போது இருக்கும் 11 அடி உயர மாபெரும் நந்தி பிற்காலத்தில் நாயக்கர்களால்



சோழர்பாணி துவாரபாலகர்

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நிலைநிறுத்தப்பட்ட உருவம். இராஜராஜன் அமைத்த நந்தி கோயிலின் தெற்குத் திருச்சுற்று மாளிகையில் வைக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது.

கோயிலின் முக்கியப் பகுதியும், முழுக் கோயிலுக்குமே ஒரு தனித்தன்மையையும் வடிவத்தையும் தருகின்றது. இது தரை மட்டத்திலிருந்து 216 அடி உயரத்தில் நெடிதோங்கி நிற்கிறது. இவ்விமானத்தை மூன்று பகுதிகளாகப் பிரித்து அறியலாம். அவை சதுர வடிவிலான 98 அடி அகலம் கொண்ட அடித்தளப்பகுதி; 13 நிலைகளில் மேலே சிறுத்துக்கொண்டே போகும் இடைப்பகுதி; இவற்றிற்கு மேலே உள்ள வளைகூண்டு வடிவிலான துமளிப்பகுதி ஆகியவையாகும். இரண்டு அடுக்குகளைக் கொண்ட கருவறையில், சிவபெருமானின் பலவித தோற்றங்கள் செதுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. தமிழரின் கட்டடக் கலையின் தன்மையின்படி ஒரு கோயில் சாதாரண மக்களின் குடியிருப்புகளை விட வேறுபட்டதாகவும் சுற்றுச்சூழலைவிட மிக உயர்ந்து நிற்க வேண்டும் என்ற விதிப்படி கட்டப்பட்டுள்ள இக்கோயில் கோபுரம், அதன் மேல் எழும்பியுள்ள விமானத்துடன் கம்பீரமாகக் காட்சியளிக்கிறது.



இராஜராஜன் அமைத்த நந்தி

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இரு பக்கமும் துவாரபாலகர்கள் அலங்கரிக்கும் இராஜராஜன் திருவாயில்

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கோயில் விமானம்

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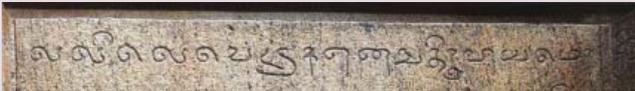
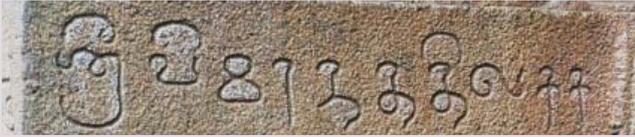
தஞ்சை பெரிய கோயில்

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உச்சியில் இருக்கும் தளம் 25 அடி சதுரமானது. நான்கு பக்கங்களிலும் நந்தி சிலைகள் செதுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. சிகரம் கூம்பு வடிவில் செதுக்கப்பட்டு நுனியில் பன்னிரெண்டரை அடி உயரமான கலசத்தைத் தாங்குகிறது. கலசத்தைத் தாங்கியுள்ள கல் எல்லாரும் கூறுவதுபோல ஒரே கல்லால் ஆனது அல்ல. பல கற்களை இணைத்து ஒரே பாறை போன்று தோன்றும் வண்ணம் மிக நேர்த்தியாக இணைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளதென்று ஆய்வில் தெரியவந்துள்ளது. விமானத்தில் 13 நிலைகளிலும் சிற்பங்கள் அழகுறச் செதுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன.

சோழர் காலத்தில் தனியாக அம்மனுக்கு ஆலயம் அமைக்கும் வழக்கம் இருந்ததில்லை. தஞ்சைக் கோவில் வளாகத்தில் அமைக்கப்பட்டுள்ள அம்மன் கோயில், சுப்ரமணியர் கோயில் பிற்காலத்தில் கட்டப்பட்டவை.

தஞ்சைக் கோயில் கல்வெட்டுகள்



இக் கல்வெட்டு கூறுவது - ஸ்ரீ விமானத்தில்க் கல்லிலெ வெட்டுக என்று திருவாய் மொழிந்தருள நாம் எடுப்பிச்ச திருக்கற்றளி)

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இக்கோயில் போன்று உலகின் வேறு எந்தக் கோயிலோ வரலாற்றுச் சின்னமோ தன்னுடைய வரலாறு பற்றிய விளக்கமான சாசனங்களைத் தன்னகத்தே கொண்டிருக்கவில்லை. இங்குள்ள கல்வெட்டுகள் இக்கோயில் நிர்மாணிக்கப்பட்ட கதையையும் அது நிறுவப்பட்டபோது இருந்த சிறப்பான சமுதாய அமைப்புகள் பற்றிய விரிவான விளக்கங்களையும் சொல்கின்றன. மேலும் கோயிலுக்கு அளிக்கப்பட்ட அறக்கட்டளைகளின் பட்டியல்கள், வழிபாடு செவ்வனே நடைபெற செய்யப்பட்டிருந்த ஏற்பாடுகள் கோயிலுக்கு அளிக்கப்பட்ட உலோகத்தாலான சிலைகள், சிலைகளுக்கூரிய தங்கம் வெள்ளியிலான அணிகலன்கள், கோயிலின் அதிகாரிகள், அலுவலர்கள், ஏனைய பணியில் இருப்போரின் பெயர்கள், முகவரிகள், சம்பளம் போன்ற சிறிய விவரங்களைக் கூட விடாமல் துல்லியமாக எழுதப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. கோயிலில் உள்ள மற்ற கல்வெட்டுகள்

யாவும் தகவல் கருவூலங்களாகப் பல தகவல்களைத் தருகின்றன.

வார்ப்பு சிலைகள் செய்யும் கலை மிகவும் விருத்தியடைந்தது இராஜராஜனின் காலத்தில்தான். இதற்காக அவர் குடும்பத்தார் அனைவரும் ஏராளமான உலோகச் சிலைகளும் அவற்றிற்குத் தேவையான அணிகலன்களும் கோவிலுக்கு அளிக்கப்பட்டன. ஒவ்வொரு நகையின் எடை முதற்கொண்டு எல்லா விவரங்களும் கல்வெட்டில் பொறிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன.

சோழர்களின் சிற்பத் திறன்

இராஜராஜனுக்கு முன்பு ஆண்ட கண்டராதித்த சோழனின் மனைவி செம்பியன் மாதேவி கோயில்கள் வளர்ச்சிக்கு ஆற்றிய பங்கு மிகச் சிறந்ததாகும். இவர் காலத்தில் பல கோயில்கள் எழுப்பப்பட்டன. ஐம்பொன் சிலைகள் வளர்ச்சி கண்டது இவர் காலத்தில் தான். சிறந்த வேலைப்பாடுகளுடன் விளங்கும் இச்சிலைகள் இன்றும் போற்றத்தக்கவை. இவர் கட்டிய கைலாசநாத சுவாமி கோயிலில் உள்ள சிலைகள் மிகுந்த கலை நயமும் அழகும் கொண்டவை.

பெண் தெய்வங்களின் உருவம் சிறிதடை கொண்ட மெல்லிய தோற்றத்துடனும் வேலைப்பாடு நிறைந்த நகைகளுடன் சற்றே சாய்வாக நின்ற நிலையில் காட்சியளிக்கின்றன. சிவனின் உருவமோ தெய்வீக அழகுடன், மார்பை குறுக்கில் அணியப்பட்ட பூணூல் அலங்கரிக்க ஒரு தலைவனின் அதிகாரத் தோரணையுடன் மிக நேர்த்தியாக வடிவமைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. குறுகிய இடையில் அணியப்பட்டுள்ள இடைக்கச்சையில், சிங்கத்தின் தலை வார்க்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. மூன்று மடிப்புகளுடன் இடையில் தவளும் ஆடை மிகுந்த கலை அழகுடன் வடிவமைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது



கைலாசநாதர் கோயிலில் உள்ள பார்வதி, சிவன் சிற்பங்கள்

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இராஜராஜன் எழுப்பிய திருவெண்காடு கோயிலில் உள்ள மிக அழகான விருஷபவாஹனரின் (சிவபெருமானின்) ஐம்பொன் சிலை பார்ப்பவர் மனதை ஈர்க்கும். கலை அழகுடன், தலையில் பாம்பையே தலையணியாகக் கொண்டு, ஒரு காலை மற்றொரு காலின் முன் குறுக்காக வைத்துக்கொண்டு புன்னகை தவழ நிற்கும் அழகு சோழர்களின் கலைத்திறனுக்கு ஒரு எடுத்துக்காட்டாகும். மற்றொரு எடுத்துக்காட்டு ஆடும் நடராஜரின் சிலை. இன்றும் பலரை வியக்கவைக்கும் கலை நுணுக்கம் கொண்டது.



திருவெண்காடு கோயிலில் உள்ள சிற்பங்கள்
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ஆசிய நாடுகளில் சோழர்பாணி கோயில்கள்

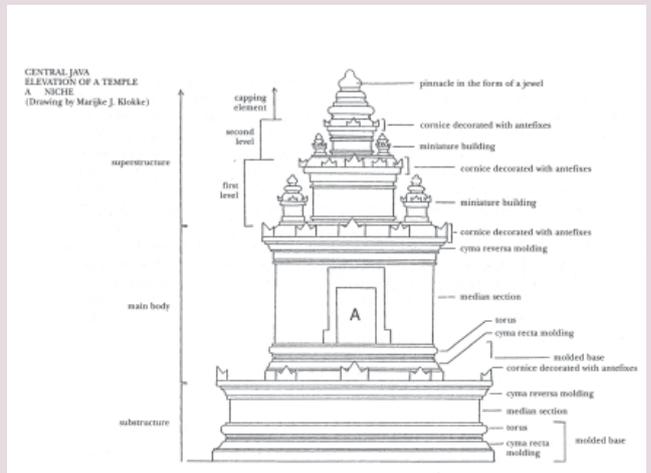
தென்னிந்தியபாணி கோயில்கள் பல ஆசிய, தென்கிழக்காசிய நாடுகளில் காணப்படுகின்றன. குறிப்பாக இலங்கையில் சோழர்கள் கட்டிய கோயில்களை இன்றும் காணலாம். ஈழநாட்டை வென்ற இராஜராஜன் அதன் தலைநகரான பொலனருவா என்ற ஊரில் சிவபெருமானுக்குக் கோயில் ஒன்றை எழுப்பினான். கருவறையும் எண்கோண வடிவில் சிகரமும் கொண்ட இக்கோயிலின் முன்பு அர்த்த மண்டபம் உள்ளது. இக்கோயில்களில் உள்ள வார்ப்பு சிலைகள் தற்போது இலங்கை அருங்காட்சியகத்தில் உள்ளன. இச்சிலைகள் இலங்கையில் உள்ள விற்பன்னர்களால் உருவாக்கப்பட்டதாகும். சோழநாட்டில் உள்ள கலைஞர்கள் போல் சிறந்தவர்கள் இல்லையாதலால் இவர்கள் வடிவமைப்பிற்கும் சோழ மண்டலத்தில் உள்ள சிலைகளின் வடிவமைப்பிற்கும் பல வேறுபாடுகள் உள்ளன.

இலங்கையில் உள்ள பொலனருவா என்ற இடம் 75 ஆண்டுகள் சோழர்கள் ஆட்சியினுள் இருந்தது. அங்குள்ள 'வானவன் மஹாதேவிஸ்வரம்' என்ற கோயிலில் இருந்த சில சிலைகளின் படங்கள்.

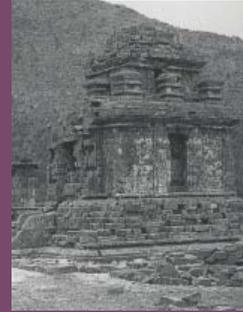
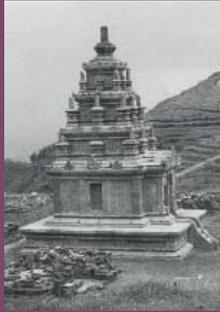
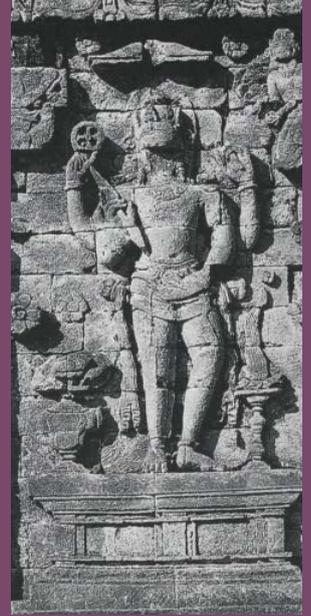


வானவன் மஹாதேவிஸ்வரம் கோயிலில் இருந்த சிலைகள்
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சோழர்களின் தாக்கத்தால் தாய்லாந்தில் இராமாயணக் கதை பரவியிருந்தது எனவும் அதிலும் கம்பராமாயணக் கதைப் பின்னணியே அதிகம் காணப்படுகிறது என்றும் ஆய்வாளர்கள் கூறுகின்றனர். தமிழர்களுக்கே உரியதும் சோழர்கள் காலத்ததுமான நடராசர் வழிபாடும் தாய்லாந்து, கம்போடியா, இந்தோனேசியா போன்ற நாடுகளில் பரவியிருந்ததற்கான சான்றுகள் கிடைக்கப்பெற்றுள்ளன. இந்நாடுகளில் உள்ள கோயில்களில் நடராசர் உருவமும், காரைக்கால் அம்மையார் உருவமும் இன்னமும் காணப்படுகின்றன. கல்லாலும் செம்பாலும் செய்யப்பட்ட இச்சிலைகள் இன்றும் இந்நாடுகளில் ஏராளமாகக் காணப்படுகின்றன. ஜாவாவில் காணப்படும் சிதிலமடைந்த கோயில்கள் பல இந்தியத் தாக்கத்தை வெளிப்படுத்துகின்றன. சோழர் காலத்தில் எழுப்பப்பட்ட கோயில்கள் அமைப்பில் சதுர அடிப்பாகத்தில் இருந்து எழும்பி போகப்போகக் குறுகி உச்சியில் கூர்மையான துமளியுடன் காணப்படுகிறது



மத்திய ஜாவாவில் உள்ள கோயிலின் மாதிரி வரைபடம்
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மத்திய ஜாவாவில் காணப்படும் சிதிலமடைந்த கோயில்கள்

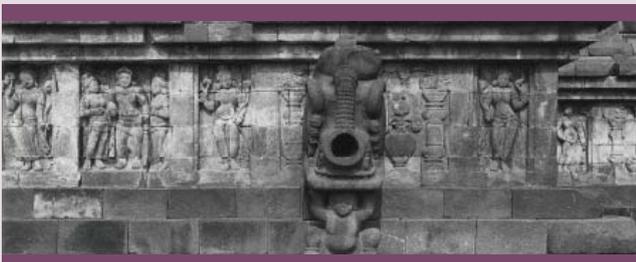
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இக்கோயில்களில் பிரம்மா, விஷ்ணு, சிவன் முதலான கடவுள்களின் சிலைகளைக் காணலாம். மேலும் இக்கோயில்கள் சோழர் கட்டிய கோயில்களைப்போல வாயிற்காவலர்களுடன் அமைக்கப்பட்டிருப்பது இதன் தனிச் சிறப்பாகும். கீழே உள்ள படத்தில் காண்பது கலைநயமிக்க கோயிலின் அடிப்பாகமாகும். இத்தகைய கலை நுணுக்கங்களை தமிழகத்தில் சோழர் காலக் கோயில்களில் காணலாம். கீழே தஞ்சைக் கோயிலில் உள்ள சுப்ரமணியர் சந்நிதியின் படிக்கட்டுகளின் பிடிசுவரும் போரோபுதூர் கோயிலின் படிக்கட்டுகளின் பிடிசுவரும் ஒத்து இருப்பதைக் காணலாம்.



தஞ்சைக் கோயிலில் உள்ள சுப்ரமணியர் சந்நிதியின் படிக்கட்டுப்

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மத்திய ஜாவாவில் உள்ள புகழ்பெற்ற போரோபுதூர் (Top) கோயிலின் அடிப்பாகம் (Bottom)

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பிற்காலச் சோழர் காலத்தில் தாய்லாந்து முதலான தென்கிழக்கு ஆசியா நாடுகளிலும் தமிழருடைய கோயில் கட்டடக்கலை செல்வாக்கோடு போற்றப் பெற்றதை நாம் காணமுடிகிறது. முதல் குலோத்துங்கன் காலத்தைச் சேர்ந்த பல கல்வெட்டுகள், செப்பேடுகள் சோழர்களின் தென்கிழக்காசிய நாடுகளுடனான தொடர்புகளை நமக்குக் காட்டுகிறது. சமத்திரா தீவில் உள்ள லோபாதீவா என்ற ஊரில் கிடைத்த ஒரு கல்வெட்டில் கடல் கடந்து வியாபாரம் செய்த 'திசை ஆயிரத்து ஐநூற்றுவர்' என்ற தமிழக வியாபாரக் குழுவினர் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளனர். மற்றும் கம்போடிய நாட்டுடன் கொண்டிருந்த உறவு பற்றியும் பல கல்வெட்டுகள் கூறுகின்றன. சோழர்கள் வரலாற்றில் போரும் கலையும் இரு கண்களாய் போற்றப்பட்டன. கலைகள், சமயம் என்ற அடிப்படையில் கோயிற் பணிகளாகவே வளர்ந்தன. இவர்கள் கலைக்கு ஆற்றிய பணிகளைப் பற்றி அறிய காலம் போதாது. ஆகவே சோழர்கள் காலம் தமிழகக் கலை வளர்ச்சியின் பொற்காலம் என கூறுவது மிகையாகாது.

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CHOLA ARCHITECTURE

For a period of 400 years, the Cholas were the dominant cultural, religious and political force in South India and beyond. Their empire included all of South India, the Maldive Islands and most of Sri Lanka. They temporarily occupied parts of Java and established diplomatic relations with many Southeast Asian countries.

During the four centuries of Chola rule, arts such as music, poetry, drama, stone sculpture, bronze-casting, painting and architecture reached new heights. Many temples were built during the Chola rule. Among the Cholas the period of Rajaraja and his son Rajendra is said to be the golden age of arts in South India. An example of their magnificent architecture is the Tanjore Temple built by Rajaraja Chola in the year 1010 AD. Its immense structure and architectural design was an inspiration to many temples.