

# **FILM AND POLITICS OF TAMIL NADU: A STUDY OF FAN CLUBS**

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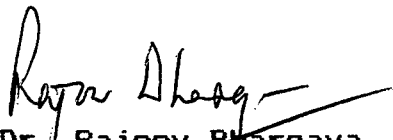
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CERTIFICATE

CERTIFIED THAT THE DISSERTATION ENTITLED FILM AND POLITICS OF TAMILNADU: A STUDY OF FAN CLUBS, SUBMITTED BY C. LAKSHMANAN IS IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY, IS HIS BONAFIDE WORK AND HAS NOT BEEN PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED FOR ANY OTHER DEGREE OF THIS OR ANY OTHER UNIVERSITY.

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**C. LAKSHMANAN**

Dedicated to

**HUMANITY**

**RATIONALITY**

**INTEGRITY**

...without which human  
identity would have been  
incomplete.

### **"Hero and Hero-Worship"**

"Hero-worship in the sense of expressing our unbounded admiration is one thing. To [blindly] obey the hero is totally different kind of hero-worship . There is nothing wrong in the former while the latter is no doubt a most pernicious thing. The former is only man's respect for every thing which is noble and of which the great man is only an embodiment. The latter is the Villains fealty to his lord, The former is consistent with respect, but the latter is a sign of debasement. The former does not take away one's intelligence to think and independence to act. The latter makes one a perfect fool. The former involves no disaster to the State . The latter is the source of positive danger to it..."

**-Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.**

## INTRODUCTION

In India, popular cinema can be considered to be a fairly accurate reflection of the public mood. The cinema is one mass media of communication in which the audience can immediately send back their comments and their evaluation, on what is being communicated through a film. As films articulate one or the other aspects of contemporary life, and wish to emulate a selection of the nine essential rasas of human emotion, the popularity of a film should also be taken as an indication of an important cross-section of society in socio-economic cultural terms.

According to Amit Khanna's statistics, more than 13 million Indians watch the feature films every day in India, 91 million audiences per week watch the feature film in a total of 12,978 cinema houses. Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu together account for 4,707 cinema houses (Andhra Pradesh-2487, Tamil Nadu 2220) Both States produce approximately 150 feature films per year.<sup>1</sup>

An interesting and most important fact is that, more than any other part of India, the people of these two states (Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu) are said to have a special relationship with cinema. The most common example cited in order to substantiate this is the fact that, since 1967 the



highest elected office in Tamil Nadu, the has continuously been dominated by the personalities of film industry the been either a film star or a film script writer. Andhra Pradesh followed Tamil Nadu in the same way Ascending the throne in the politics of Tamilnadu depends on influencing the emotional psyche of the rural and urban masses. Thus, cinema plays a vital role in this direction.<sup>2</sup> Cinema has had an important role at least for half a century, in the political evaluation of Tamil Nadu. As the Tamils have a long lineage of tradition and a highly developed culture, they have been embraced by cultural forms like folklore, ballad, drama, music, cinema etc.<sup>3</sup>

Tamil cinema has many different meanings for many different people. It is both a major industry and the most popular form of entertainment; it is considered to be both a form of art and a debased corruption ruining proper social values; it is both used as a mode of education and as a form of political propaganda.<sup>4</sup>

In pre-independent India, during the upsurge of the nationalist movement in the early decades of this century, poems, songs, plays and films were the aural/visual media that were used to spread its ideas and messages to the urban as well as rural areas in Tamil Nadu. Songs have been the most popular medium of expression to reach out political

messages to the people. The anti-British sentiments, patriotic songs, songs commenting on current political events, were an essential part of Tamil plays and films, whose themes were mostly historical or mythological. Many theatre companies and artists participated politically in the freedom struggle. They staged prescribed plays under different titles or introduced extempore dialogues propagating nationalist ideas. Theatre artists also took part in agitations and courted arrest.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, in this context, the emergence of the non-Brahmin Dravidian movement in the socio-political spheres of Tamil Nadu could be studied. During the British rule the Brahmins were possessing superiority in all forms of life, education, religious authority, economic and political power. They started monopolising the administration and professions.<sup>6</sup> [Even today, the Brahmin community, constituting barely three per cent of the population in Tamilnadu, wields (as it does) a near monopolistic control in all the form of life].<sup>7</sup> The Dravidian movement challenged to eliminate the Brahmin monopoly of power and social evils (from social system) through assertion of Dravidian identity and self-respect. Prominence was given to the study and development of the Tamil language and literature. Atheism, social reform, an avowal of socialist and communitarian goals became part of Dravidian ideology. An anti-Northern, anti-Aryan, anti-

Brahmin ideology hailing back to a glorious pre- Arya Dravidian past came into being.<sup>8</sup>

In order to propagate the Dravidian ideology, the leader of the Dravidian movement exploited cinema effectively in all possible manners, to spread the political and social messages among the people and to expand its mass base. The *Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam* (DMK) had manifold personnel linkages, with the film medium. Late C.N. Annadurai, its founder, was a script writer, director, producer, and financier of Tamil films. Other leaders M.Karunanidhi, A.K. Velan, A.V. Asaithambi and Murasoli Maran were also film script writers. N.S. Krishnan (lyricist and actor) appeared as a modern clown on the screen to popularise rational and reformative ideas. K.R. Ramaswamy, S.S.Rajendran, Sivaji Ganeshan and of course M.G.Ramachandran (popularly known as MGR) were also in the Dravidian fold. An interesting thing to be noted in this context is that, before MGR's period, the fan clubs did not receive any normal response and were not recognised for its strength and political importance for the party politics. Even though numerous fan followers were there for noted personalities. Nevertheless, they were not interested in promoting or encouraging such phenomena in party/movement. (Several party leaders and film stars had owned film

companies M.Karunanidhi's Mekala pictures, M.G.R's MGR Pictures, R.M. Veerappan's Satiya movies). The famed lyricist Kannadasan breed dravidian ideology whereas the left ideology was very much expressed with rigour by Pattukottai Kalyanasundaram.<sup>9</sup>

Hence, from the history of Tamil Nadu politics, it is learned that the film industry is inseparable from politics. This tradition reached its zenith with the careful portrayal of M.G.R. as the infallible "Hero". The *Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam* and its leaders projected the celluloid patron MGR as hero and immortal personality. During the 100th day celebration of movies and party functions boosting of MGR through large cut-outs, chariot procession, carrying festoons for patron. As Tamils would do this for religious festival practices. (MSS Pandian, 1992). By this time, MGR's dynamic screen image, had become a main crowd puller for DMK functions. Now, it has become a culture for the fans of actors/actresses and politicians as well.<sup>10</sup> This popular mass stood with him in the period when he broke from the party *Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam* (DMK) in 1972. He started his own party *Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam*, (ADMK, which later changed its name into *All India Anna Dravids Munnetra Kazhagam*, AIADMK). Which ruled Tamil Nadu from 1977 to 1987. When he formed the party, he decided to pull out his fans from the DMK and make it as his own, so that he can rely on

his huge fan following, one of the world's largest. The *All World MGR Fans Association* had about 10,000 branches throughout Tamil Nadu and other parts of the world served as the backbone of the ADMK.<sup>11</sup> Even after he became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, he had exploited his fan clubs to strengthen his political base in Tamil Nadu politics. (He staged an *All world MGR Fans Association* conference at Madurai on 12th and 13th July 1986). An understanding may be sought in the fact that to tackle the continuing power struggle and the erosion of mass base, MGR had to resort to such colossal theatrical shows.<sup>12</sup>

It was his screen image and support of fan clubs which made the people by and large to support his emergence as their political leader. Some of the fan club office bearers had become MLAs, Ministers and party Secretaries as well. Notable among them are Muchiri Puthan, S. Thirunavaugarasu, MLA, (now leader of MGR AIADMK party), K.K.S.S. Ramachandran, (now MLA), Thamaraikani (now MLA), Annanambi, Tiruchi Soundarajan and Sengottayan (now Transport Minister Tamil Nadu) who attained their political prominence through Fans Associations.<sup>13</sup>

After witnessing MGR's success in Tamil Nadu politics and the strength of his fan clubs and its net-work, some of the film actors and actresses of the present have tried

emulating him seeking transition from celluloid glamour to political power.

After 1977, the complexion of the Tamil Cinema Changed considerably. M.G.R. retired from cinema and involved in active politics. Sivaji has already reached his peak. There was a vacuum in filling the places of the Super Stars (No. 1. in the cinefield). The early eighties saw the emergence of Rajnikant and Kamalahasan, who gave lot of box office hits (commercially successful movies) in the Tamil Film industry in Kamal and Rajini. Numerous Fan clubs were started all over Tamil Nadu for Kamalahasan and Rajini Kant (Pommai 7th January 1993). At present there are more than 3,000 fan clubs for Rajinikant and more than 2,000 for Kamalahasan (Aside May 30, 1989). By the mid eighties other heroes like Vijayakanth, Sathyaraj, Prabhu, and Karthik arrived in the scene. Numerous Fan clubs were started in their name. K. Bhagyaraj a Director cum actor, gave hits based on the family stories. T. Rajendar a multi-faceted personality also became very popular by his mega productions. Previously. Fan clubs were started after the hero attains little prominence. But by now the Situation has completely changed. Even before the release of the movie, the new hero will have number of Fan clubs in his name.

Sivaji Ganesan, an internationally recognized for his acting too earned quite a number of Fans Association, which supported the Congress party. But in 1987 after the death of MGR, he got into controversy with congress leaders over the dual split of AIADMK led by Janaki and Jayalalitha, when the congress sought an alliance with the group led by Jayalalitha and supported it. Sivaji left the congress and launched his own political party *Tamizhaga Munnetra Munnani* (TMM Tamilnadu Progressive Front) in February 1988. His party was supported by his fan clubs and he had on alliance with Janaki's faction of AIADMK. This alliance could not yield any success during the 1989 Tamilnadu assembly elections<sup>14</sup>.

K.Bhagyaraj, actor, script writer, journalist, gained popularity of an unexpected level in a short span of time. He was an ardent admirer of MGR whose popular gimmicks were portrayed in his films. Acknowledging his mass appeal, MGR announced him as his heir in the film world<sup>18</sup>. He was actively involved in party politics of AIADMK in the 1984 public elections. After the death of MGR, he shifted his loyalty to Janaki's faction of the AIADMK but he was sidelined by party leaders which forced him to form a new party, i.e. *MGR Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam* (MGR People Progresseive Front) with the support of senior Congress(I)

leaders<sup>15</sup>. But he too failed to make a mark in politics. Now is running a magazine *Bhaghiya* with the support of fans and followers.

T.Rajendar, is yet another film personality who showed interest for Tamil Nadu politics. He is a multifaceted personality in the Tamil filmdom, and shone as a script writer, music director, editor, cinematographer, actor, lyricist and director. He makes about two movies a year which are usually box-office hits. Attracted by his talents many youngmen started fan clubs by his name. He actively involved him self in the DMK and campaigned for the party in the 1984 assembly elections, due to a tiff with MGR<sup>16</sup>. Later, he left the DMK and started his own party *Thayaga Marumalarchi Kazhagam* (TMK) with the support of his fan associations. He too runs a Tamil magazine *USHA*. But he still does manage his political career. He filed his candidature for TMK against Jayalalitha in the last assembly elections of Tamil Nadu in 1991, in the Bargur Assembly Constituency of Dharmapuri district. Though he could not win in the election, his efforts however secured him a reasonably large number of votes.<sup>17</sup>

Nevertheless, Fan Clubs are strong support bases for their patron's economic, political demands<sup>18</sup>. Not only their patron but also those who have money making motive (Print



media for instance) use actors and actresses names to earn money. Hence they (vested interest Press media) essentially exploit the patron's fan clubs and their strength by playing upon their sentiments. More than ten cinema magazine, like 'Rajni style', 'Rajni Rasigan' etc., are being published regularly on Rajnikant's name alone who is considered to be the like this, others are also having their own fans magazines. superstar of Tamil filmdom at present.<sup>19</sup>

Thus, political parties are mobilised not only on the basis of caste, communal, class and regional, but also on film personalities and their fan clubs strength and support. The members of the fan clubs actively popularise their patron's image to convince the masses about his/her generosity, personal, and political efficacy. Nowadays the popular trend both in urban and rural Tamil Nadu is that the creation of a net-work of fan clubs of film Stars.

This study attempts to deal mainly with celluloid politics and its special emphasis will be focussed on film stars' fans clubs/associations.

The sources are, Hardgrave's book The Dravidian Movement 1965 and his article "The DMK and the Politics of Tamil Nationalism" : 1965, who considered the political position of fan clubs in any depth, are the important sources for this study. These works provide useful analysis

of political events and strategies. To understand fully the cinema's Powerful ability to produce political leaders, however, we must look more carefully at the places where cinema and politics overlap, in the ways that certain film images in detail with the exigencies of electoral politics, and the expectations inherent in the leader-follower relationship.

Sara Dickey's The Politics of Adulation: Cinema and the Production of Politicians in South India, 1993 studies centre around the film-going public and fan clubs of MGR in the city of Madurai. She briefly reviews the 'person-centre', 'Personality' politics in Tamil Nadu, its historical reason and people's psyche about hero, hero-worships attitudes. Also, she attempted to give Dravidian ideology and party politics and their position. Ashay Chitre's, Book Review of Cinema and the Urban poor in South India by Sara Dickey, Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology Foundation Books 1994, found that films drew heavily from reality. Portraying situations that bear remarkable resemblance to the every day stresses and aspiration of viewers' lives, the audience recognizes the likes. They see connections between their lives and films in both general and specific terms. She comments, "draws suppressed fears and desires into a public realm, but

suggests personal solution". Which sought to make understand the problem of cinema and Politics<sup>20</sup>. Along with, Baskaran's, 1981, The Message Bearers: The Nationalist Politics and Entertainment Media in South India a detailed study of film and Indian nationalism, and Aranthainarayan's, Tamil, 1988, Sudhandira Puril Tamil Cinema -Tamil Cinema During the Freedom Struggle (Tamil), as the same kind as Baskaran's. Edirolli Visvanathan's, 1989, Sivaji Oru Sagabtham-Sivaji as Legend(Tamil). Which explains Sivaji's life history and his link with politics past and present was also used for this study. Mohan Das, 1992, (former DGP of Tamil Nadu) in his book MGR The Man and the Myth discusses in detail about the politics played by MGR in Movies as well as in reality, M.S.S. Pandian, 1992, in his book Image Trap analyses the double role played by M.G.R. in cinema and in real life. He then attempts to explain M.G.R.'s construction of image, which fortunately had connections with rural traditional Folk-lore, ballads, and Dravidian religiosity. to promote his image.

This study propose to do an analysis on the subject of film and politics of Tamil Nadu : A Study of Fan Clubs. The present day youths are popularising or promoting their idol image, for political purpose of their own and patron as well, through pity social services to the youths (Students) and public. It has been motivated by patrons themselves and

also by certain vested interest local politicians, Who are giving moral, financial support to young cinema admirers. The young people are exploiting their energy, time and money for the devotion of cine idols. The objectives of this research are :(i) to find out the political status of fan clubs, its activities and their net-work establishments: (ii) to find out the motive behind their activities and their social services. (iii) to find out the resource bases for these organisatio, through analysing the present day political scenario of Tamil Nadu.

The hypothesis is that fan clubs/associations are not only meant to enhance the patrons' political image, but also, their own popularity among the local mass.

The methodology used to do this research are questionnaires, interviews, observations along with existing primary and secondary materials. Questionnaires were of the structured and the unstructured formats for data collection. The questionnaires were distributed to the Rajnikanth's Fans clubs' members and Kamalahasan's Fan Social Welfare Associations' members in Madras and Salem. Also, other fan clubs office bearers were interviewed and their activities were discussed in detail. But analysis has been done togetherly not separately as Rajnikant fans and Kamalahasan fans, because both does not have any political affiliation.

The questionnaires enquired in detail the fans socio-economic background, their frequency of visits to cinemas and assessing the quantum of cinematic influence on the viewers life. Also enquired were the motivations of the youths for becoming the fan club members, the nature of clubs and financial support and political linkage of the patron and the members. Finally, the fan's awareness on current political scenario, and Centre and State relations were also examined.

The fields of study were in the Town of Salem and Madras city. The reason for the field sampling was that Salem had one of the oldest cinema industries, like Modern Theatres, Ratna Studio, etc., the other reason was that, Salem Town has had large number of cinema houses (around 60 cinema house within 8 sq. km area)<sup>21</sup> than any other part of the State probably in the country as well. According to my observation for fact, it is due to the lack of other forms of entertainment in the town.

Madras, is well known for its second largest film producing centre in the country [Bombay is the first]<sup>22</sup>, where most of the south Indian films [Tamil, Telugu, Malayam, Kannda] are being made. Respondents are fan club members as well as club office bearers both male and female.

However one hardly finds female members in the clubs. Sampling has been done randomly and not on any particular star alone, the reason for being that, at present no one has clear cut links with any particular political party.

The research has not dealt with any kind of comparative study as such. No emphasis has been placed on any comparative personalities in cinema and politics. But the main stress has been on fan clubs in particular and Dravidian party politics in general.

In this Chapter (I) the following question has been analysed. A major arguments how far the Dravidian parties are paradoxically capitalizing on cinema considered by Periyar as the most important ideologue of the Dravidianism, and an anti-rational medium to counter Brahminism, Congress and Hindi in evolving a Dravidian identity based on Tamil cultural nationalism.

In this Chapter (II) arguments have centered around the attitudes of the fans towards their patrons, and party cadre towards the leaders. The argument would attempt to explain the phenomenon of "Personality Politics" or "Person Centered" political orientation rather than an ideology and issue based one. An explanation would be sought in the socio-cultural attitudes, which may suggest the emergence of the phenomenon of 'Heroism', culminating in blind belief and

fanatical behavior, worshiping living cinema/political Gods/Godesses.

Here, (chapter III) the attempt has been on the analysis of primary data. The major aspect that has been analysed is the extent of the influence of cinema on one's personal life in general and political life in particular. Further, an attempt has been made to study the celluloid admiration of motives behind the formation, function and connection with politics of stars and fans general opinion may be sought on day-to-day politics of Central and State governments.

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## CHAPTER I

### Tamil Cinema and Dravidian Politics

In this chapter the major arguments have been discussed on how far Dravidian parties have been paradoxically capitalizing on cinema, considered by Peryar the most important ideologue of Dravidianism, as an anti-rational medium to counter the Brahminism, the Congress and the Hinduism in evolving a Dravidian identity based on Tamil cultural nationalism.

It is an altruism that Tamil cinema has always been an integral part of major socio-cultural and political upheavals of the state. It has played a pivotal role not only in inculcating patriotism among the people in the pre-independence era but also in the process of rebuilding the nation after independence. Since then, it has undergone a natural and systematic evolutionary process.<sup>1</sup>

In the process, important shifts took place as the dominance of the "Studio system" of the 40's and 50's gave way to the "Star system" in the sixties into seventies.<sup>2</sup> During the seventies the audio-cassette player and the taped music business added new outlets and dimensions to mass cultural trafficking. The early eighties are associated with a major boom in the popular press and

their reading audiences. The latter half of the decade brought televisions and TV broadcasting and then VCRs to predominantly middle class audiences.<sup>3</sup>

Cinema music and magazines have played a vital role in the lives of people in general and fans in particular as much as for cinema personalities.

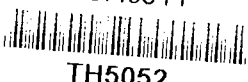
A unique feature of the Tamil film industry is that it has provided a strong base for the State's political scenario. Most politicians belonging to the Dravidian movement, irrespective of their present divisions are basically "cinema personalities". Tamil literature, theatre and films have been exploited for various political ends. Besides being a glamorous world and a realm of willing suspension of disbelief, the industry has so far produced five Chief Ministers and a number of ministers and MLAs.<sup>4</sup> All are from Dravidian political parties' background except one or two (like Vijanthimala Bali, Cong- (I), Sivaji Ganesan Tamil Nadu Janata Dal Ex.president).

Tamil Nadu gave birth to a popular and indigenous rationalist movement in 1925 when E.V.Ramaswamy Naicker broke off from the Congress party to start the "Self-respect movement which was dedicated to the goal of giving non-Brahmin a sense of pride based on their Dravidian past, which also meant a denial of the superiority of the Brahmin.

The movement sought to turn the social system topsy-turvy and establish a living bond of Union among all people irrespective of caste or creed. The Brahmin as the leader of the social and religious life of Tamil Nadu, was the target of "self-respect" attacks.<sup>5</sup> E.V.Ramaswamy popularly known as Periyar (wise man or bigman) started the *Dravidan Kazhagam* in 1944. DK and five years later (in 1949) his right hand man, C.N. Annadurai, intellectual, writer and orator, broke away from him (Periyar's DK) to start the *Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam* (DMK) - Dravidian Progressive Federation. Its membership was primarily urban, non Brahmin upper, middle backward class / caste. The party platform was geared towards the socially and economically frustrated elements of the urban population.<sup>6</sup>

The *Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam* early on stressed the creation of a separate : "*Dravida Nadu*" (consisting of parts of the four states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka) or a United Dravidian State and the promotion of a Dravidian ideology. In the 60's the Tamizhe - language state of Tamil Nadu had been formed by the State Reorganization Act 1956, on the basis of language. And the goal of a more encompassing Dravidian State was thereby undermined. Party leaders turned from linguistic and ethnic separatist issues to more typical political issues like

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wages, high prices and food shortages. Most importantly, the principal focus was now on the "common People" and their neglected concerns soon after the dramatic victory in elections. In the early 60's when the party gained enough legislative seats to secure its role as the loyal opposition to the Congress party.<sup>7</sup>

During this period of policy transformation one of Annadurai's more effective means of attracting the masses was to incorporate film stars in the party. He also sought to use the film as a medium of politicization and mobilization. Once Annadurai said, "*If I am allowed to release three movies without censorship, I would see to it that Dravidastan is achieved*".<sup>8</sup> His timing was ideal. Prior to independence, regular contact with cinema had been limited to towns and cities. A rural electrification programme begun in the late 40's facilitated the proliferation of cinema halls, coinciding fortuitously with the DMK's initial use of film as a political medium.<sup>9</sup>

Ananadurai and Karunanidhi, who had put their powers of rhetoric to use for D.K., as playwrights used film-script songs to criticize social evils and political oppression. The extent and intensity of their political and social criticism appears to have been unprecedented in Tamil cinema. Annadurai's *Veelai Kkari* [servant women] for example

projected a trenchant critique of social conditions particularly the power that was vested in landlords, who were traditionally allied with the ruling Congress party of Nehru and Mrs.Gandhi.<sup>10</sup>

The movie "Paraskthi" which was written by Karunanidhi in which the actor Shivaji Ganesan was introduced launched a scathing attack on Hinduism. The chaste young heroine of the film, who has been widowed, impoverished and sexually assaulted is arrested after drowning her child and attempting to drown herself. Charged with murdering her child, she accuses the judge "where did you go when my child and I were living in the street corner? what did you do when my child was sucking my dry breast in vain? Parvathy [Godess] did not come to child" [A famous Tamil literary story which narrates, that Saint Thirunavghkarasu had milk from Parvathy, when he was a child, because he had nobody]. In connection with brother Gunasekar, who was charged for the murder of a temple priest, he says, why did I kill the priest? not because we don't want the temple, but the temple should not become the home of criminals. Such dialogue as these searing monlques were called, became the mainstay of much Tamil cinema in 1950's and 1960's. Dramatic and rousing, they proved to be very popular with viewers, and a highly they proved successful tool to be very popular with viewers, and a for propagating D.M.K. ideals.<sup>11</sup>

A variety of social issues were projected through films including temperance, untouchability, temple entry, and child marriage. The *Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam* (DMK) brought cinema and politics together in many ways, but perhaps none more obviously than in the case of the film star, M.G. Ramachandran whose career spanned forty years and 136 films. From the late fifties, the DMK screen writers carefully scripted MGR's public persona with his film roles: he typically played the part of a working-class action hero selflessly fighting for the oppressed.<sup>12</sup> By the 60's MGR was the most successful Tamil cinema star of all time, fully in control of his film roles and rivalling his own DMK party in popularity.<sup>13</sup> MGR's films were said to have extended beyond the movies, most frequently in conspicuous acts of generosity to the poor.

DMK films of this period communicated in their own style of dramatic narrative which represented a valorized version of common people, rickshaw drivers, rural villagers, and the urban working class. As a genre these films invariably centered around the struggle against social oppression played out in a moral economy of asymmetrical power relations between peasants and landlords, workers and capitalist, poor and rich, women and men<sup>14</sup> DMK films represents an aesthetic and political identity of the people

which emphasized their version of Tamil linguistic and cultural identity a chain of negative significations: northern "Aryan" domination, Congress party rule, imposition of Hindi and Brahmin's social, economic, political and religious authority.<sup>15</sup>

M.G.R.'s relationship with the DMK began in the early 1950's and strengthened through the decade. His position was solidified by Sivaji Ganesan's departure from the Congress party in 1961. MGR whose film style emphasized forceful action in preference to the critical rhetoric contributed by the two leaders became more heavily involved in electoral politicking.<sup>16</sup> He soon became so popular that he could wield substantial control over many aspects of his films, ensuring that they supported the party. However MGR did not allow his identity inside or outside the party to become totally merged with that of the DMK. He built up his image as hero by making independent and widely publicised donations to charities and began to suggest through his films that the ideals he espoused could be achieved only through a leader like MGR. Eventually "*People began to think the leader whom they wanted was not somebody like MGR but MGR himself.*"<sup>7</sup> This kind of aspiration led to formation of MGR Fans Club. The first MGR Fans Club was started by a Tamil Brahmin Kalyanasundram in Madras in 1954.<sup>18</sup>



His fan clubs became involved with party recruitment and voter mobilization and gave the party strength in the legislature. The power was concentrated in the hands of film actors and their fans. Karunanidhi made several attempts to weaken MGR's position within the party. MGR responded in 1972 by loading a number of charges against the party,<sup>19</sup> involving corruption and nepotism against the DMK government, and openly criticised in public, that party president Karunanidhi was not maintaining proper accounts of party funds. The fact was that MGR wanted to continue his film career along with his ministership.<sup>20</sup> Karunanidhi and others party leaders responded at once by taking this opportunity to dismiss MGR from the party, accusing him of "indiscipline". The Congress(I) party in the state, which had not legally entered Fort St George (State Legislature & Secretariat) since 1967 saw the simmering differences between MGR and Karunanidhi as an opportunity to split the DMK. A section of the state Congress which was thing to ditch the DMK government, dragged the Congress high command into the scene. The topplers and leaders in Delhi were only too willing to oblige. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was also annoyed with Karunanidhi at this juncture for his criticism of the "emergency". The master schemer [Union Ministers for Tamil Nadu in Secret] quickly saw that it was essential to split the DMK party as a prelude to toppling the DMK

Ministry, so he took advantage of the discontented MGR.<sup>21</sup> MGR's own response to disciplinary action of expulsion from the party, was just as swift and dramatic, He immediately formed a new party of his own "Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (ADMK),<sup>22</sup> which he later changed to All India Anna Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) when rumours started floating from New Delhi about a possible ban on secessionist political groups. The name was rather curious, in as much as Dravidians were confined to South India<sup>23</sup>

The structure of his AIADMK has largely centred around his Fan Clubs. Very few DMK legislators were left with MGR but a high percentage of the rank and file accompanied him. As this division resulted from a clash of personalities rather than politics, there was virtually no difference in ideology between the parties.<sup>24</sup>

MGR concept of "Annaism", he described as an amalgam of communism, socialism and capitalism.<sup>25</sup> The new party appealed to students and labourers and to the lower middle class and backward castes.<sup>26</sup> Any direct contest between the two parties was postponed by the Prime Minister Gandhi's declaration of a nation-wide emergency in June 1975 officially denounced by the DMK because of the dissolution of the executive and the legislature. MGR who had been courting the Congress(I) since forming his party, travelled

to Delhi, to express his personal approval of the emergency.<sup>27</sup>

The state elections were held shortly after Indira Gandhis's Congress Ministry was defeated and replaced by the Janata Party Ministry in 1977. This time the AIADMK won the majority of seats and installed MGR as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. He was at once a film star and a politician. His extremely successful film career, had earned for him one of the world's largest fan followings. The All World MGR Fans Association (*Akila Ulaga MGR Rasigar Mantram*) had about 10,000 branches throughout Tamil Nadu and served as the backbone of the AIADMK.<sup>29</sup> A number of AIADMK leaders like K.K.S.S.R.Ramachandran (former Minister in MGR's Ministry), K. Sengotayan (Present State Transport Ministry), Annanambi, Muchri Pithan, Tiruchi Soundrajan and others attained political prominence through these fan clubs/associations. Remarkably, MGR him self claimed in public that the fan clubs/associations and the party were not different.<sup>30</sup>

The film messiah of the subaltern class, during his Chief Ministership of Tamil Nadu for a period of 11 years, carried out major structural change, one remarkable social reform step introduced by MGR, was to abolish the post of *Karnam* or the traditional village accountant (a post normally held by brahmins or upper caste persons) by

replacing them with the present system of government-appointment as VAOs (Village Administrative Officers) in which Schedule Caste Schedule Trib, Most Backward Caste and Backward Caste persons were also to be appointed as per reservation norms. Thus for the first time ever, SC people were appointed a VAOs. All the other caste groups would now have to approach them to get certificates, pay revenue etc, something was unthinkable till then. It was for this major change in social relations, that was proved MGR as a *Puratchi Thalaivar* or revolutionary leader.<sup>31</sup> But his economic policies had taxed the poor to benefit the rich. Even the populist Nutritious Meal Programme for children and the old age pension(both had already been introduced by Kamaraj then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, without any kind of populist propaganda), were substantially financed by the poor themselves, through tax revenue. As, he maintained cordial relations with the Central Government and the Congress(I), he was able to rule the State till his death.<sup>32</sup>

MGR died in late December 1987. But instead of selecting one of the main factional leaders to replace him, as was expected, the party chose V.N. Janaki, MGR's widow. As the new Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. She was closely allied with Veerappan(senior AIADMK party leader). However, emergent factional difference Jayalaltha apparently prompted

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to impose President's rule in Tamil Nadu at the beginning of Feb. 1988. Janaki's ministry was dissolved. In the legislative assembly elections held in 1989, the DMK won a majority and Karunanidhi became Chief Minister once again.<sup>33</sup>

In this election, cinema actors/actresses were very much used for electioneering. Notable are Radhika, Radha Ravi, Chandrasekar, Pandiyarajan, Pandian, S.S. Chandran and others too in vote mobilization for DMK. Interestingly they all of them had a large number of fan clubs as well.<sup>34</sup>

For AIADMK, already had two factions led by Janaki (wife of MGR) once she too had been heroine in MGR's movies, and other led by J. Jaylalitha. She was heroine in 28 MGR movies out of a total of 187 movies she acted.<sup>35</sup>

In a four corner contest (Congress-I, DMK, AIADMK-Janaki, AIADMK-Jaylalitha) DMK secured 151, Congress-26, AIADMK Jaylitha-27, and AIADMK-Janaki-1. After 13 years DMK once again formed the government in Tamil Nadu in 1989. Meanwhile, two factions of AIADMK came together and restored "Two Leaves" (MGR's AIADMK, symbol which was banned due to conflict between two factions). DMK government could not complete its term of five year, e.i. Karunanidhi Ministry was dismissed by the then Prime Minister Chandrasekar and president's rule was imposed on the state. This decision was

prompted by the deteriorating law and order situation caused by Sri Lankan Tamil militants (LTTE).<sup>36</sup>

Then in the next election June 1991 AIADMK won 163, Congress 61 seats. For the first time Tamil Nadu had no opposition in the legislative assembly.<sup>37</sup>

The following chapter would seek to discuss the symbiotic attitude of political parties and fan clubs in Tamil Nadu, person-centred or personality-politics of Tamil Nadu, with reference to Indian political context. It would also include a brief account of "Hero/Heroine worship for the same.

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## CHAPTER - II

### The Symbiotic attitude of Political Parties and Fan Clubs in Tamil Nadu.

Politics is a competitive enterprise. Its purpose is the acquisition of power for the realisation of certain goals, and its process is one of identifying and manipulating existing and emerging allegiances in order to mobilise and consolidate positions. The important thing is organisation in which the masses are to be found.<sup>1</sup> In every human community the organization of power is the result of two opposed forces, beliefs on the one hand, practical necessities on the other. In consequence the leadership of political parties-like that of most present-day social group's: Trade Union, associations, business firms, and so on-presents dual characteristics: it is democratic in appearance and oligarchic in reality.<sup>2</sup> The position of power offered by the new institutions and the new leadership drew the articulate sections of society into the modernist network. In return, the leadership was provided with a basis of support that kept expanding from urban centres into the another.<sup>3</sup>

Different stages in the social organisation of politics call for somewhat different leadership and the movement from

one stage to another may entail displacement of one kind of leadership with another; and consequently of one social group endowed with one type of skills by another endowed with another type of skills.<sup>4</sup>

The most important are the person-centered expects of Indian political leadership, the partonage system prevalent in India, and the structure of party politics in Tamil Nadu. The first significant aspect of the political context is the striking success in India of person-centered politics, a phenomenon more popularly refined to as "personality politics".<sup>5</sup> The political "Personality" in this formulation is some one who inspires voters not because of political recordor stands on issues, or even communal affiliation, but because of popularity based on personal attractiveness. It should be stressed that this attractiveness is determined more by aspects such as personal nature (charisma) and even family background than by physical features, although the latter may certainly help. Such leaders have been able to build a mythdology about themselves that serve as a protective coating, attracting votes, trust and repelling attempts to discover something underneath the outer image. They are more likely to be found at the State (or) National rather than the local level: notable examples include MGR, N.T. Rama Rao, J. Jayalalitha and Vijanthimala, who was the

most popular movie stars in Tamil Nadu politics for years and Rajnikanth yet to disclose political interest.<sup>6</sup> Even Annadurai and M. Karunanidhi were very much associated with the Film industry and person centered politics of the State.<sup>7</sup>

While the phenomenon of political success based on personal appeal is not limited to Tamil Nadu it is not notably frequent and widespread in India. Not all elected leaders possess such appeal by any means but those who do generally succeed are limited to other factors such as a lengthy incumbency or a solid reputation as an efficient administrator. Cinema stars are one example of individuals who achieve such appeal throughout a wide populous others, past and present include freedom fighter, orator, caste/community leader, heads of religious organisations, union organizers, student leaders and gang lords. The appeal of "personality" is part of a general emphasis in Tamil Nadu and probably much of India on "person-centered" politics as opposed to, for example, the "issue" based politics.<sup>8</sup>

Sara Dickey analyses the politician's role in developing and spreading awareness of their "Person" in a variety of ways. Any public event of the slightest political significance requires a stage from which important figures

will speak and on which as many local politicians and officials as possible will crowd to promote themselves by demonstrating their association with other important personages. All important buildings begin construction with a dedication by a local or higher politician and a cornerstone-laying ceremony with the politicians name inscribed on the stone. There is a similar obsession with photo opportunities. Appearances in numerous photographs-which are usually published with names in newspapers or leaflets-put forth the person, prove that she or he was involved in a certain important event and perhaps preserve in the same way its impact on public consciousness that placing a name on a building cornerstone does. The importance of documenting the person, and the prestige that derives from appearing and being identified in such documents, are not limited to politics. It should be noted that each of these is a reciprocal event; the presence of the politician, or any respected person, also bestows honor on the ceremony or occasion.<sup>9</sup> Cinema both creates and preserves the widely publicised, dynamic, and attractive images so valuable in person-centered politics, Successful actors can select and shape their film roles in accordance with any image they would like to project. Because of the popularity of cinema and glamour attached to its stars, any

film star who enters politics will be perceived as a "personality" by viewers and attract votes on that basis.<sup>10</sup>

Regardless of the image created, the film star has an additional advantage in entering politics because of the cultural importance of heroes. There is a particular intensity of following the depth of devotion, felt for leaders perceived to be "heroes". The intensity of the follower's idolization of hero/heroins is widely regarded a fanatical.<sup>11</sup>

Any number of incidents can be cited here. For example, on 12 January, 1967 MGR was shot at and injured by one of his co-actors-Mr.Radha. On October, 1972 MGR was suspended from primary membership of the DMK. In December, 1987, MGR was dead. On all these occasions, the state witnessed, looting of shops, self-immolations and so on. Similar responses came from the public on C.N.Annadurai's death in 1969. Tamil Nadu witnessed a number of self-immolations and violence throughout the state.<sup>12</sup>

When in July 1993, Ms. Jayalaitha went on fast a fall out.<sup>13</sup> In Oct. 1993 due to between DMK parts, and President Mr. M. Karunanidhi and V. Gopalswamy M.P. (Rajya Sabha), more than ten young men immolated themselves.<sup>14</sup> Of course, not all politicians are heroic figures.

The heroic patron/leader, by contrast, is virtuous because of works done for the good of others. Most heroic patron/leaders have achieved their status by fighting against some thing or someone inimical to their followers gaining spiritual or material well-being for their supporters in the process. Tamils heroes have included Kings, freedom fighters, leaders of resistance movements, social reformers, and literary figures,<sup>15</sup> and ultimately cine idols too.

Heroes/heroines also tend to be ascribed divine attributes, a tendency that is easily allowed in Hinduism, Polytheistic. India has ancient traditions of god-heroes goddess heroines such as Rama and Seetha who perform their deeds on earth as humen,<sup>16</sup> and in Tamil gods/godesses of non-Brahminical folk Hinduism, whose followers are by and large drawn from lower caste/class groups. Deification of human beings is a generalised religion-cultural practices in Tamil Nadu, particularly among non-Brahmin Lower caste Hindus.<sup>17</sup>

After the death of C.N.Annadurai, his grave in Madras has almost become a revered site for the committed DMK Cadets. Women circumambulate and touch the Eternal Flame at the Samedhi just as they would in a temple. Sometimes they light camphor at the Samadhi and in the early days, some

cadres even shaved their heads theirs as they would have at Pilgrim centres like Palani and Triupathi.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, MGR's Samadhi in Madras has become a place of worship. His devotees—there is no other word for them, it visit the Samadhi after a regimen of fasting and sexual abstinence for 40 days, the same regimn that is observed for lord Ayyappan of Sabarimalai in Kerala.<sup>19</sup>

The attitude toward elevated Patrons/leaders apparently signifies that "superior status and power... have divine attributes in popular Hinduism". Thus, there is no ideological impediment to assigning heroic Patron/leaders the qualities or deities, nor even to worshiping them as gods. Nor it therefore a contradiction to attribute divine qualities to leaders like (K.Karunnidhi), MGR, (Annadurai), Jayalalitha Sivaji Ganesan, Rajnikant, Kamalhasan and others. Simultaneously as a family member, in Tamil Nadu, this is precisely the relationship most frequently perceived between worshipers and Gods/Godesses in the devotional Bhakti tradition, where divinities are worshiped and implored as parents, children and siblings, as well as lovers, friends and Gurus.<sup>20</sup>

With reference to this aspect, consider Jayalalitha who is the first elected women Chief Minister of Tamilnadu. Her political image is a product of cinematic image of her past

and devotional relationship with MGR. We have to remember here that Jayalalitha, in the context of her entry to politics, claimed her close relation with MGR as exclusive and singularly privileged.<sup>21</sup> "There are just two people to whom I (Jayalalitha) have bowed my head, one is my mother and the other is MGR. It is not that I am arrogant. I have allowed myself to be dominated by these two. There can never be another figure in my life to whom I will ever be 'subservient', whom I allow to influence. Today MGR is everything to me. He is my father, mentor, political guru, guide, friend, philosopher-everything."<sup>22</sup>

Now Jayalalitha's follower-worshippers in the context of her so called relationship with MGR, address her as "Anni" (sister-in-law, MGR being their elder brother) to Amma, "Adi-paraskthi", "Deiva Thai" (Divine mother) "Nadamdum Deivam" (walking Goddess) and so on. As a Chief Minister, she uses her political authority to enforce this new image. While Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan (the famous violinist in Tamil Nadu) named a raga as "Jaya Ragam", the veteran film producer G.Venkateswaran (the brother of Maniratham, "Roja"-director) called for the celebration of "Jaya Jayanthi" in the same way as "Krishna Jayanthi" and "Gahdhi Jayanthi". Jayalalitha's new image as a female deity is explained by a transformation of her relationship



as well.<sup>23</sup>

Mythological gods/characters have been replaced by people in real life who are perceived to be embodiments of goodness. Reality has nothing to do with such a perception for the "goes" have largely failed and have never been able to address/deliver the public issue or goods.<sup>24</sup>

Though Ms. Jayalalitha was not moulded in the same image, that of the silver screen-if anything, she was portrayed as a beautiful doll who swept men off their feet. Her undoubted charisma and proximity to MGR in number of films as in real life have helped in her gaining acceptance as MGR's political heir.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, cinema can be a powerful tool in constructing an attractive image. Cinema is also useful to actors who aspire to politics because of the political and cultural importance attached to charity or patronage. One of the main means of gaining political support in Tamilnadu is doing favors: such favours can vary from the holly legitimate assistance given to a constituent who is having trouble making the bureaucracy give him something which is legally his right, down to the supertitious and entirely illegal offer of cash in return for vote.<sup>26</sup>

The phenomena of charity and gift-giving carry a deep-

seated cultural significance that underlies the utility of acquiring votes through favours. While the sum of transactions defines the "givers" and "receivers" statuses throughout India, the exchange of material goods for political support is a long standing element of Tamil Nadu political relationships. The sovereignty of Tamil Kings was traditionally dependent on their ability to give gifts of land, titles, or honors to certain subjects and the acceptance of such gifts denoted loyalty and service to the sovereign.<sup>27</sup>

These traditional commitments accompanying political patronage relationships reflect today's politics of Tamil Nadu, where the politicians or political activist's acts of beneficence occur in stark contrast to the corruption and bureaucratic unresponsiveness met with by the poor in their attempts to acquire even those material improvements accorded them by government laws or programmes.<sup>28</sup>

In addition, the pre-political organisation-fan clubs make point of carrying out social service projects, including highly publicised distributions of valuable gifts to the poor, all done in the name of the actor/actress/ politician/ personalities. These events are represented and accepted as instances of the film star's largesses, of whether the star is present or not Patronage and personal

appeal are important in politics throughout India. In Tamil Nadu, a third factor the state political structures makes cinema an even more useful tool than it might be else where in India. Given Tamil Nadu's political structure, it is easy to see why regional political parties would particularly benefit from a leader, whose personality is the unifying factor which can do away with other factional divisions in the party.<sup>29</sup>

Such of these characteristics of the political system in India, especially in Tamil Nadu i.e. the central importance of the attractive person, the significance of partonage, the advantages of a wide appeal, non chauvinistic image at the state level contributes to the auxiliary yet remarkable role of cinema in politics. In an area in which most voters have little access to television or news-papers, cinema can solve one of the main problems associated with non-local electoral candidacy: it allows the crafting of a carefully molded, widely recognizable image.<sup>30</sup>

Fan clubs as pre-political organizations contribute in a significance way to establishing grass roots network of committed political supporters. The lines of demarcation between political supporters of a particularly leader and member of a film personalities is this and blurring of times. They act as if they were one. In other words politics

and cinema supplement each other at least in image building of a personality. Fan clubs' role as much as crucial in the making of cinema a success as member of a leader in making him a success in politics.

These Fan clubs play a crucial role among the majority of the youth in Tamil Nadu youths of middle class, lower middle class and the poor these constitute the major part of the fan clubs.

The main occupation of these Fan clubs are to erect cut-outs of their heroes during a release of his new movie, and they would decorate the cinema theatres: They would distribute sweets to the public who come to see the movie. Posters, which wishes for the success of the movie. will be pasted all over the area. Various branches would come in a procession and they Conglomerate at the theatre. They would collect money from the Public and make decorative stars and cut-outs. Fans would start working three weeks before the release of the movie. spend most of the time in preparing this huge stars and cut-outs. The stars will have the colour photographs of the hero. The interesting to learn about the superstitious beliefs of the Fans. In 1992. When Kamalahasan movie "Thevar Magan" was released in Tiruchi, the Tirich Fan club did "Palabishegam" (Pouring milk on the head) to Kamalahasan's cut out. (these kind of Abishegams

are normally done to the statues in the temple).<sup>31</sup> Rajinikanth's Fans promptly reacted by doing 'Aaarathi and Pooja" to Rajinikanth's cut out. They broke coconut and did elaborate rituals to his cut outs.<sup>32</sup> Fan clubs of the other heroes do not lag behind. Madurai, the temple town of Tamil Nadu, is very famous for all the actors and actresses. Some of them will stay alive as long as the hero or the heroine is very popular. They will vanish once the market of the hero or heroine comes down. It will be proper to mention two incidences to highlight the craziness of these Fan clubs.

The members of the Fan clubs wore a dollar chain which consisted the photograph of the actress (as they would for lord Muruga, Tirupathi, Vellankanni). "Khusboo" is another cine heroine who was holding no.1, position till recently. "Khusboo" craze was all over Tamil Nadu. A college student in Tiruchy constructed a temple for "Khushboo" and appointed himself as the priest in 1992.<sup>33</sup>

Some of the Fan clubs also serve as social service organisations. Kamalahasan asked his Fan clubs to rename them as "KamalaHasan Narpani Iyakkam" (KamalaHasan social welfare organisation) In 1988. Other heroes also insist in their Fans to do social service. On the hero's birthday, free meal will be given to the poor people. Some heroes donate wheelers and sewing machines to the poor and the

handicapped. During floods or earth quakes these Fan clubs collect money from the public and send it to the concerned people. On the hero's birthday, thousands of Fan would give blood donation of late the face of these Fans clubs are changing. But there seems to be a reason behind all these social service activities.

A survey was conducted in Madras and Salem among the various Fan clubs. The result of the Survey shows the fact that the Youths are vary of the politics. They do not want to Join Politics siraightaway. Joining a Fan club is considered less harmful than joining political platform. Some of them say that they gain recognition among the local people through their clubs. Various social service activities attract the attention of the public. They start admiting the members of the Fan clubs. Some of them were encouraged to contest in the local elections. Even though the heroes do not support openly they give green signals. They do not object to their fans contesting in elections.

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## Chapter - III

### FAN CLUBS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES

An attempt has been made to analysis the primary data on the fan clubs. Major aspects dealt with are the extent of the influence of cinema on one's personal life in general and political affiliation in particular. Further an attempt has been made to examine the phenomena of celluloid admiration and motives behind the formation, function and connection with political parties and the entry of "stars" and fans into politics. General opinion may be sought on day-to-day politics of the governments. Also, a brief account about area of sampling has also been included.

The methodology used for primary data collection, was the questionnaire, interview and observation method. The questionnaire was both structured and unstructured. General information like age, education, marital status and occupation/employment of the fan club members, were sought out. Hobbies, reason for watching movies regarding frequency of movies and repetition of same movies by the respondent were also investigated. The questionnaire investigated factors relating to the formation of fan clubs and its function: social services, particularly political stand, support of party and patron's political entry in the near

future. Basic reasons for club and its financial base and so forth, were also enquired about.

The questionnaire was distributed randomly to Rajnikanth Fan Clubs and Kamalahasan Fan welfare association' members and office bearers in Madras and Salem Town. And other stars fan clubs office berrers were interviewed. Those stars having some standing in the Tamil Nadu filmdom whose encouraged fan clubs were enquired about. Some of them are Bhagiyaraj, Sarth Kumar, Vijya Kanth Prabu (son of Sivaji ganesan) T. Rajender. These clubs were taken up for investigation because they are active in social, political activities in Tamil Nadu.

In Tamil Nadu the "film world" is concentrated in the major urban centre of Madras, producing Tamil films at the rate of 150 per year (approximately) for some 60 million Tamils both in India and for the ever growing diaspora. Besides, the cinema is refracted and multiplied through a wide range of media cinematic cultural forms multiplied everywhere: songs on the radio and in the streets, films on television, images in the press and on billboards. The overwhelming presence of the cinematic forms is strikingly obvious to any one who walks through the streets of Madras. The urban landscape is dominated by a constant barrage of glamorous and spectacular images and sounds from the cinema.

The cinema supplies the images, personalities and music which get isolated, abstracted, reproduced and set adrift circulating through other media into homes and streets.<sup>1</sup>

The focus on Salem and its significance comes from cinema and cinema houses. Cinema has a rich legacy in Salem for several well known reasons. Some of the oldest studio and theatres are located in Salem. Cinema itself is an industry covering major portion of the work force. It is a favorite pastime among the masses.

Salem is the test bed of success of movies and its establishment itself. The period of films shown in Salem cinema houses determine the success of the movies. Salem is thus an important movie evaluation centre.<sup>2</sup> Apart from these, there are around 60 theatres in 8 sq. km in the near of Salem Town. Patronage received by the theatres is due to the lack of other form of entertainments.

Then Chief Ministers of Tamilnadu, M.Karunanidhi and M.G. Ramachandran, in their early days got their popularity in the cinema field from Salem, with Modern Theatres, as script writer and as actor respectively.

Madras as well as Salem holds the largest number of fan clubs widely active in social and political activities. It

is because of this significant reason that a study of Fan clubs, have been chosen from these two areas.

The respondents were male fan club members. The research observed that they were in the age groups of 20 to 35 years. Female members were not found in any club, though each political party has its women's wings.

Among hundred respondents, about 78(%) of them were unmarried, 22(%) of them married. Then 65% of them were matriculates and above. Similarly 28(%) had primary education and, 7(%) were illiterate. As for as employment was concerned 56(%) had jobs, (not only in government jobs alone but mostly private companies and factories too, which included casual laborers too) 35(%) of them were unemployed [not even on daily wage jobs] 9% were students, studying at the Hr. sec, B.A. levels. This was the reason for the lower level of student membership, and that majority of the clubs were situated in slum areas with very poor living conditions. Most of them were drop-outs from schools and were seeking jobs or pursuing vocational training (in auto-mechanical workshops or factories) 40% of the respondents had "hobbies" like watching cinema and 24% listening to cinema music, 44% went to movies three to four times a month. The average worked out to 5.4 movies per head monthly. Thus, these respondents watch movies as a pastime

43%, watch movies for entertainment 19%, 22% for the sake of the patrons, 10% for education and 6% for other reasons (may be story, music, or technicalities in the movies).

To the question of influence of movies on one's personal life, 46% answered yes and 54% says 'No'. But among 46% of them could not specify the influence. Some of the members responded to unstructured questions. They mention certain political dialogue in the movies as the motivation. (For e.g.)

The Rajnikanth club office bearer said, that in the Tamil movie "MANNAN" (acted two superstar Rajnikanth and Vijyasanthi) the dialogue between hero and heroine often related to the conflicts of political leaders against a particular popular actor. Due to controversy, actor's fans and Chief Minister's security often had disputes over traffic inconvenience. When fans visit the patron's resident in the Poise Garden, the actor has shifted his resident near the Chief Minister's residence, in order to avoid confrontation and in convenience of his fans for his 'Dharsan'. Similarly in the movie "Annamalai", the hero (Rajnikanth) said, I am going my own way if any one robbed me then I won't fare them.

In the movie "Valli" the popular actor, criticized the present politics, particularly free distribution of clothes,

rice etc. And very often they refer to the particular dialogue of the patron among friends. Apart from this, some of them follows certain philosophical advice of Patron. The actor Rajnikanth interviewed in *Annadh Vikatan* (Tamil Weekly 7 January 1994) expressed that, he is not happy with political system at present, he believes in dictatorship and he wants revolution, total change of political system. Even he remarks that the Constitution needs drastic changes. More so, influence was very much explicit that in the way of dressing, style, one's personal life, one observed, a strong influence of movies and patron. Majority of the youth imitate their patrons in very many ways.

The greatest Tamil film star, M.G.R. became a devotee of the goddess Mookambika at Kollur in Western Karnataka. Then his fans/followers were influenced by the Mookambika cult. Very recently, the actor Rajnikanth, who became a devotee of the Madhva Saint. Sri Raghavendra, whose Brindavan (Samadhi) is in Mantralaya, in north Karnataka. According to V.R.Mani (in The Times of India October 5, 1993) "...Scores of temples for Sri Raghavendra have sprung up in Tamilnadu". It is understandable that the adoring fans of MGR and Rajnikanth follow their heroes into the cults of Devi Mookambika and Sri Raghvendra.<sup>3</sup>

About 40% watched a single movie two times on account of the admiration of the patron and for 35% average repetition was for more than once, which helps the actor, to demand an increase in his salary per movies.

The repetition of same movie led to box-office hits and gives immense popularity to patron's interest. Many enthusiastic youths were attracted by the star(s), show their admiration and affection by forming the clubs. New Fan clubs would be started in the name of new movie (majority to the movie will be named) named after the hero/heroine. For e.g. 'Saithiya' (acted by Kamalahasan) Kamal Narpani Mantram. 'Annamalai' Rajnikanth Fan club. Some of them named after the patrons standing e.i. 'Superstar', 'Kalaichirpi' 'Kotavallal' (generous) etc were used when they open new clubs.

About 43% was attracted by the patron's charisma, 19% of them attracted by patron's character role in the movie (gentleman, honest worker, saviour of poor, hard working, generous, protector of women, law-abider, reformer, uncorrupt politician, refined-bad to good etc...) 17% of them were attracted by generosity of the patron. As when the patron donates books and uniform for orphanage schools, huge amounts for natural calamities, flood, fire also functions. The researcher was informed by the different fan

club office bearers, Kamalhasan Narponi Iyankkam in Salem Town, during an interview that Rs 10,000/ worth of medicines were distributed to the Tribes of Bargur in Dharmapuri District, Tamil Nadu. The fans have involved themselves even in doing sanitation work voluntarily, during strike organised by municipal workers in Salem, 1989.

Bhaghiyaraj fan clubs involved themselves in cleaning the streets. They distributed free clothes to the poor people, also informed that clubs took up issue of non-supply of water in the summer. By their persistent efforts they managed to restore the supply of water.

Sivaji Ganesan fan club arose to the contingency and enthusiastically collected money and other materials and added its own contribution and sent it to the government's relief funds. They also distributed free-khadi cloths to freedom fighters in every year.

Rajnikanth donated the thatched roof for poor in slum, due to fire incidents worth of Rs 36,000 which was handed over by his personal secretary Sathiya Narayan, through his fan club in Kilpakk, Madras.

Similarly, T. Rajendar contributed 8,000, for their relief, when a slum area was severely effected on fire in Saidapet, Madras in 1990. Once he celebrated 150th day of



one of the successful movie, he and his fan clubs conducted free marriages for 25 couples and gave sovereign (Gold Thallis-Mangalsutra) to each of the couples.

In the same manner most of the actor/actress involve themselves in some social activities for the society. But these may be use for their interest or may not be so. About 18% were attracted by the life of the patron. They came to know about, patron's life through news papers, cinema magazines, and 3% others reason for joined fan club. Other reasons would be getting thicket for new release of patron's movies, and self projection in the local area.

### **Organisation and Leadership**

Any movement organised under charismatic personality has certain goals. In the cinema world one characteristic tendency has been the growth of fan clubs centering on a patron. These clubs found in numerous numbers throughout the state consisted mainly of admirers and cinema-loving public. One can find an uneven distribution of the cinema scattered both in urban and rural areas. One trend that is observed that these clubs exist largely in areas where there are a number of cinema theatres. These clubs maintain grip over cinema goers particularly fans and admirers. These associations turn out to be forums for bringing like minded

fans admirers into one group. such an association has a social concern, sense of public duty and above all the desire that their cine idol should one day emerge as an important political leader, probably as the Chief Minister or top politician. Thus it seems that film stars of the respective association aim at political power but would like to carry the masses in the name of public duty and social services. In short many try to bring to reality what is seen on the screen i.e. reform, progress, honesty, protecting public welfare etc.

It is interesting to note that such associations maintains an organisation in towns, various districts and villages. Formal registration with serial number is approved by the head office of the club mainly in Madras, metted out by one of the personal secretary of patron. Certain fan clubs are not registred formally. Renewal of registration is once in a year with minimun amount of Rs 50 to 100 per club. Club/office bearers have printed letter pads for communication. They try to promote the cine idol's popularity by several functions and charities organised in his/her name. Simultaneously office bearers are selected from among the committed fans. To run such association, finance is an essential need. It is mobilized through membership subscription collected annualy at a rate of Rs 25/= per

year. Apart from this, cine stars from time to time offer generous donations for developing programme.

It is understood that the first day collection made in the patron's new movie(s) release, goes to the fan club. Most office bearers claim that they spend this money on organising certain functions. On an average, each club office bearer spent about minimum Rs 500 per year. It is basically for self popularity among public. It was told that very often office bearers selected on the basis of the money they donated. Thus researcher's observation was that there even very low-income labours who did not even have minimum house-hold utensils, did not have money for their children's education and other essentials.

The members told that apart from the contribution they use to spent money for cinema magazines and fans magazines. Some of them are, 'Rajni style', 'Rajni Rarigan', 'Ungal Sathiyaraj' 'Kamalahasan's Myyaim' for his fans 'Ungul Prabu' etc., get to know about their patron's movies as well as patron's life.

### **Interest And Activities**

Fan club/associations have specific interests that create enthusiasm and activities among the members. Thus the study shows an interests for social service 76%. Only 11% of

them accept the club's political interest of clubs and patron's political interest 8%. But the very motive of social service is a political one. It is understood that associations function according to its often not openly revealed, causes. They silently work to gain public sympathy and support.

They concentrate mainly on educational activities, like sponsoring free text books, note book, uniforms for poor students, impressing upon them that these are the gifts given in the name of film star, thereby winning loyalty as well as long term association of these poor students who would be future members of the association, potential volunteers, party men and voters.

In the area of health activities, fan clubs have provided hospital beds, medicine, organised blood donation camps and eye donation camps. They provide social service for blind persons, they clean the streets, involve free plantation. All these activities have an ulterior motive of gaining public sympathy and support which are potential assets for political parties. It provides political parties with votes that could be gained through the association.

The political interest of the clubs depend upon the following: office beares interest 27%, patron's interest 34%

individual's interest 19% can't say 19%. 47% welcomed the political entry of patron. Among 47% only 5% deferred on the patron's starting a new party, 42% wants the patron should start a new political-party. But majority said 'No' to political entry of their patron.

An interesting fact that was observed the same patron's clubs have connection with different political parties and different places or areas, i.e in Kottorpuram Rajnikanth fans clubs supports Congress-but kilpack Rajniknath supports AIADMK or DMK. In Arichipalayan Kamalhasn fan club office bearer once demand the seat for local body (minicipal block) election, bases of his fame developed through fan club. Remarkable service done to local area people. During '89 municipality worker strike, where they cleaned the streets drainage etc. But both actors were not interested in politics. Kamalhasan was not interested in fan clubs as well. There is no possibility of further successful (MGR and Jaylalitha) cine idol politician in near future. Simply, there can be no uniformity among members as well as clubs of same patron.,

No one patron had a clear cut political link with fan club net-work, as MGR had, in his film as well as political careers. And the Dravidian movement/party promoted MGR as mass leader, in return they benefited through his

charismatic appeal for immediate purpose - capture of power.

No one else had an "Image" like that of a savior of poor, women, or even that of a localized folklore hero/heroine, which was systematically constructed through movies.

There was a lack of co-ordination and over-all control of the net-work of clubs, eventhough it had formal links with one area to another in the same patron's fan club.

No political party was interested in encouraging the cine idol in the absolute sense of promoting the patron's political image. But every political party used them (actors/actress) for temporal political purposes.

Another reason could be the mushrooming growth of political parties/factions. Even, the political decision of the patron was not accepted by 67%, only 33% accepted.

The political interest of club expressed through public meeting: 15%, raising public issue 20% agitating for public cause 30%, other ways 45% like leaflets, wall posters, which were very much prevalent. During birthdays, release of new movie(s) of the patron, depiction of the patron on posters as a future Tamil leader(s) Chief Minister etc. One controversial posters were depicted by Rajnikanth fan clubs

in Madras, Tirichy, Madurai, Salem and throughout state as follows:

YESTERDAY	-	MAN (Manidan)
TODAY	-	COMMANDER (Thalpathi)
TOMMOROW	-	KING (Mannan)

This very much disturbed the ruling party (J.Jayalalitha's AIADMK). The poster was banned and police took strong action against fans of the particular patron (Rajnikanth). The state Government, even went to the extent of introducing Bill in the Assembly for prohibition of wall posters in public places.

One important finding was that even though patron did not join/support any political party, the club supported different parties.

Regarding conflicts between different patron's clubs, members denied that they didn't have conflicts with other patron's club. But in earlier days MGR & Sivaji clubs fans often fought with each other claiming superiority.<sup>3</sup>

Even, it was observed in 14th January 1994, during the Tamils harvest Pongal festival when more than 15 movies had been released, fans were too busy with postering and decoration in the theatre for their own respective patron's

movies. This led to fights, due to violation of allocated spaces in the in Theatre complex (more 3 theatre in same complex). Cut-out, banners etc...also led to violence. Theatre management and the police had problem in controlling these fanatics of cine idols.

They had strong opinions about governments (central & state), and citizen exercise of franchise in the democratic process. Majority claimed that the both governments functioning are not good but they had no choice. Also that they knew only about personality disputes rather than issue or ideology, policy and programme based. The person-centred or personality politics was prone to be dominate among fans and voters as well.



**TABLE A**

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1.	Married	22%
2.	Unmarried	78%

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**TABLE B**

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1.	S.S.L.C. & Above	65
2.	Primary	28
3.	Illiterate	7
Total		100

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**TABLE C**

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1.	Employed	56
2.	Unemployed	35
3.	Student	9
Total		100

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**TABLE 1**

**Hobby- (n point scale)**

1.	Reading	18
2.	Music	24
3.	Cinema	40
4.	Politics	8
5.	Other	8
6.	Unfilled	2
Total		100

**TABLE 2**

**Frequency to Movies Monthly**

1.	1-2 (Monthly)	16
2.	3-4 (Monthly)	44
3.	5-6 (Monthly)	19
4.	7-8 (Monthly)	14
5.	9-10 & above	7
Total		100

\* Average per head-5.04 movies

**TBALE 3**

**Reason For watch movies**

1.	To pass-time	43
2.	Entertainment	19
3.	Actors/Actorss	22
4.	Education	10
5.	Other	6
	Total	100

**TABLE 4**

**Preference of Movies**

		%
1.	Social	56
2.	Political	32
3.	Historic	4
4.	Religious	5
5.	Others	3
	Total	100

**TABLE 5**

**Influence of Movie in life**

1.	Yes	46
2.	No	54
Total		100

**TBALE 6**

**Repetition of same movie of patron**

1.	1-2 (Times)	40
2.	3-4 (Times)	35
3.	5-6 (Times)	18
4.	7-8 (Times)	05
5.	9-10 & above	02
Total		100

**TABLE 7**

**Reason for Membership of Club**

1.	Patron's Charisma	43
2.	Patron's Character role	19
3.	Patron's Generosity	17
4.	Patron's Life	18
5.	Others	3
Total		100

**TABLE 8**

**Aim of Club**

1.	Social Service	76
2.	Club Political interest	11
3.	Patron's Political interest	5
4.	Other	8
Total		100

**TABLE 9**

**Political Decision**

1.	Club office bearers	27
2.	Patron's	34
3.	Individual	19
4.	Can't say	19
Total		100

**TABLE 10**

**Political entry of Patron**

1.	Yes	47*
2.	No	53
Total		100

TABLE 11

1.	New party	47*
2.	Old Party	53
Total		100

TABLE 12

Acceptance of politician of Patron

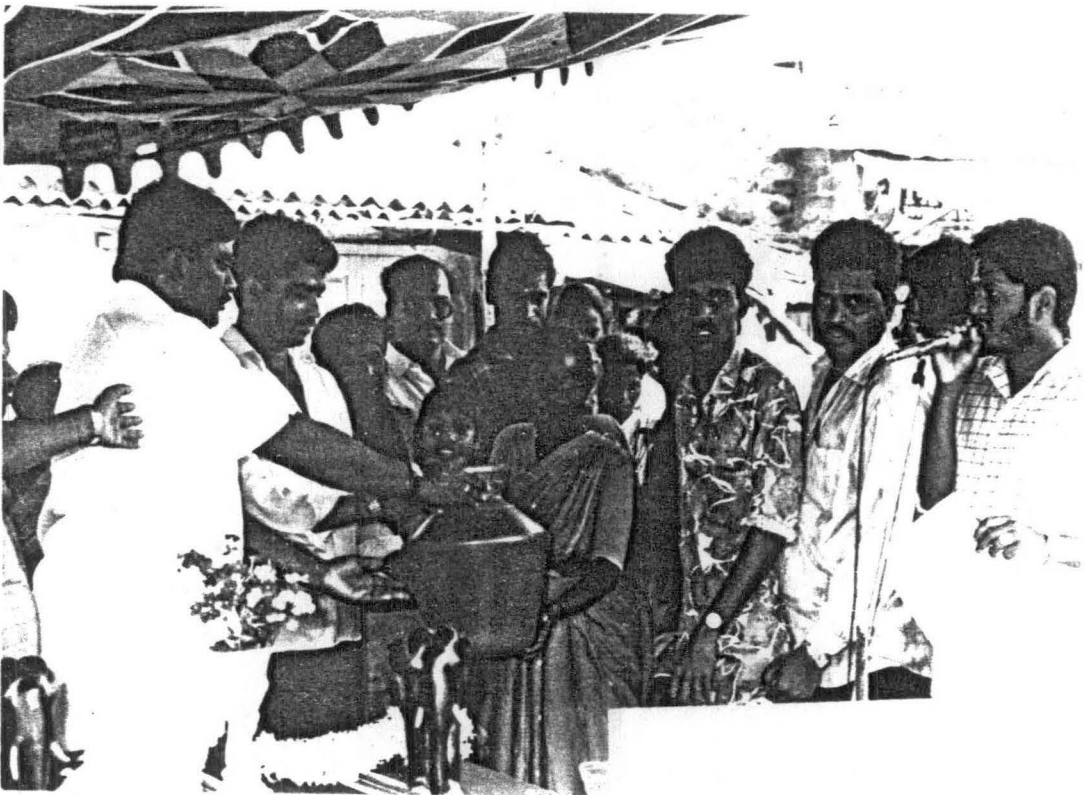
1.	Yes	33
2.	No	67
Total		100

TABLE 13

Expression of club pol-interest

1.	Through Public Meeting	15
2.	Through Public issues	20
3.	For Agitation	30
4.	Other	45
Total		100

Rajnikant Fan Club Celebrated, Rajni Birthday on 12.12.93 at Kotturpuram. When it distributes Free plastic pots to the poor by its members and local politician 'Karate' Thiyagaraj Candidate for Cong-(I), in the Mylapore by - election - May 1994.



Rajnikanth Fan Club at Kilpack Madras, is distributing Thatched roof to the poor, due to the sever fire which engulfed slums of the poor and they lost their belonging. The function was headed by Rajni kant's P.A. and club office bearers. ●





The following chapter, would attempt a critique about the study. With overall analysis of the Dravidian party politics and megalomania malady in the political culture of Tamil society.

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## CONCLUSION

The study has investigated the dialectic of film and politics, with emphasis on Dravidian politics in general, fan clubs in particular, through an analysis of celluloid personalities' fan clubs/associations [Rasigar Mantrams]. The Dravidian party merged with its social, cultural and political environment. The nature of this environment emerged as the catalyst of social, political reforms, through various cultural forms rooted in Tamil society.

In particular, cinema and cinema stars were used for influencing social transformation of the Dravidian part(y)ies. The earlier period of Tamil cinema was dominated by directors, script writers, lyricist, who persistently argued for socio-political change in Tamil Nadu. And whose scripts, songs and dialogues were geared to the party is various political strategies.

In the early 60's and 80's there was an increase in the focus on celluloid personalities through cinema and party politics. They were projected on the silver screen as charming generous and charged with an ideology representing characters like protectors of underprivileged poor, women and revolutionary leaders etc. The masses were unable to differentiate between the image and the real. Thus, the mass

expected, some one who could rescue them from their struggles and suffering meted out to them by the social system. Hence they wanted the patron himself and not a leader-like-patron.

This attraction ensured a steady mass following, particularly that of youth. This led them to establish organisational net-works for the patron, namely [Rasigar Mantrams] fan clubs/associations as pre-political organisation.

These organisation attempted to consolidate the mass support base, for patron's political entry. Therefore fan clubs/associations are considered to be federative wings for the partron's political party (if the patron is interested in political entry), providing favourable circumstances and political climate for the patrons. This led to a conversion from their role of cinematic idols into politicians with the support of fan clubs. MGR, Jayalalitha, Sivaji Ganesan, T. Rajender, K. Bhagiyaraj, are classical examples. But others those who are having large number of fan clubs, like Rajnikanth, Kamalahasan, Vijayakanth, Satiyaraj, Prabu, Sarath Kumar etc. have not disclosed their political interests. However most of their fans do not have uniform opinion on patron's entry into politics, because, irrespective of the patron's entry into politics fan clubs

office bearers get popular support from the local mass as well as local politicians. The study thus confirms, the hypothesis that fan clubs do not merely enhance the political identity of the patron but also lend the fans a certain political clout and authority.

The presentday fan clubs are also very much political in nature. However, today without the patron's clear political leanings most of them (patrons) claim a certain non-political identity. The actors themselves assume that taking up a politically non-partisan position could help them in their celluloid careers. Reasons may be :

- (i) No clear-cut political links with political parties;
- (ii) No, ideological background for the patron;
- (iii) No constructed image among the masses.
- (iv) Lack of co-ordination among the fan clubs and its member;
- (v) No, absolute control over fan club net-work
- (vi) No, political party however is today interested in encouraging or promoting celluloid personalities. But most political parties have used them (actors/actresses) at least temporarily. These

were things, MGR had exercised throughout his cinema and political career. His fan clubs and its members were very much rooted in the Dravidian ideology, and ofcourse MGR's careful image construction helped him in ascending the throne of power.

The other reason may be mushrooming political parties and organisations with various interests.

#### **CINEMA AS A MEDIUM OF POLITICAL PROPAGANDA**

In Tamil Nadu , Cinema has played a crucial role in the politics, which therefore cannot be separated from politics. Cinema has not been used merely for entertainment but it has been used as an important mass communicative medium. During the independence struggle it was used as a instrument of political propaganda, to spread the ideas of freedom and social reform to the common people.

#### **The Cinema, Cinematic personalities and politicians: a dialectic of political mobilization**

Now political leaders particularly Dravidian party leaders understood the medium and the common people's

attitudes towards the medium. They went a further step in propagating their ideologies through cinema and influencing the celluloid with a political construct. Of course, Dravidian ideologies have had positive responses from the common people. Politicians used the celluloid personalities for political mobilization to capture power, on the celluloid patron had charismatic appeal among the masses.

**The Union of Celluloid Patron and Fan clubs:**

**Precursor to political party formation**

The celluloid patron understood his mass appeal and strength of fan club net-works, which he had gained from cinema and the ideology based Dravidian party. This led him to form a new political party of his own and later ascending to power in the state. Witnessing his political success, other celluloid patrons and their fans aimed for the same{Political power} and formed new political parties or began associating with political parties.

**A Symbiosis of Fan Clubs, Politicians and Patrons:**

**Politician Gain as High Quotient**

The celluloid personalities witness the success and failure of patron's political efforts. They usually keep

away from party politics but fans use them for the purposes of their own, with local politicians.

Regarding, political and personal gains, the concern, fan clubs office bearers usually have, a personal contract with different politicians and government officials through which they could popularise themselves as well as the fan clubs. For politicians, spending money for fan club activities is an investment to attract the committed workers (enthusiastic fan club members) in electioneering and political campaign. This was very visible in the recent Tamil Nadu by-election May 1994. The congress candidate Karate Thiyagarajan aided and participated in various fan clubs function in the Mylapore Constituency. Fan club office bearers and members worked in the electoral campaign for his victory. More or less, other fan club also did the same.

If any particular candidate become an MLA or MP or get any position in any party, then there will be a lot of gain which would be used to consolidate their political power. For instance they help people in obtaining government's benefit benefits and loans, relief assistance etc. (It may be seen that the Tamils attitude of "giver" and "reciver" relationship is very much popular in Dravidian Parties.)



Apart from this, they also try to express the strength of their club, through wall posters, huge cut-outs and folk music, processions carry the picture box when the new movie release. Further, they conduct "Abishekam", "Deepa Araathi" with garlands and Pooja for patron's cut-out screen image. The same persons who inherit party positions, become MLA, Ministers, and Chairmen of Municipalities. This system of distribution of patronage prevails in Dravidian parties.

Here, the study finds a contradiction in the Dravidian party's principle of 'Periyar's Pagutharivu' -rationality and self respect. Attitude of fans-patrons, political leaders-followers hardly make any difference. It is interesting to note, that in the early period one of DMK's leader E.V.K. Sampath disputed with C.N. Annadurai and those who favoured celluloid personalities were given an extraordinary portrayal in the party. The reason for his break away from the party was the party's over dependence on celluloid personalities, and his belief that cinema will harm the youth and Tamil society. Moreover the principle of rationality was at stake. The fact remains that this form of celluloid politics fan club is justifiable in relation to Dravidian "rationality" in the dialectic of cinema and politics.

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3. Nakkervan (Tamil Weekly), Madras.
4. Jamini Cinema (Tamil), Madras.
5. Cinema Express (Tamil), Madras.
6. Thirai Cinema (Tamil), Madras.
7. Vanna Thirai (Tamil), Madras.
8. Rajni Style (Tamil), Madras.
9. Rajni Rasigan (Tamil), Madras.
10. Mayyam (Tamil), Madras.
11. Ungal Satiyaraj (Tamil), Madras.
12. Ungal Prabhu (Tamil), Madras.

**QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**FILM AND POLITICS OF TAMIL NADU : A STUDY OF FAN CLUBS.**

Centre for Political Studies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi-67.

Name:

Age/Sex:

Married/Unmarried

Qualifications :

Education : (a) Graduation (b) Hre-sec./High School  
(c) Primary (d) Uneducated

Work : (a) employed (b) Unemployed (c) Student

If employed specify the nature of job.

1. What is your pastime?  
(a) reading (b) listening music (c) cinema (d) politics  
(e) others.
2. How many times will you go for a movie in a given time?
3. Reason for watching movies....?  
(a) pastime (b) entertainment (c) actor/ actress  
(d) education (e) other reasons.
4. Which type of movies, you like to watch?  
(a) social (b) politics (c) historical (d) religious  
(e) others.
5. State whether the movies influenced you? yes/no  
specify the influences....
6. How many times will you watch the movie of a particular patron?
7. Name the fan club you belong to.....
8. Reasons for joining the fan clubs;  
(a) charisma of the patron  
(b) the cahracters, in which they act in the movie

- (c) their genorcity
  - (d) their personal life
  - (e) other reasons
9. What are the membership strength in the beginning? state whether increased/ decreased?
  10. Sources of income for the club?
  11. What are the Various works of the club?
  12. What is the basic objective of the club?
    - (a) Social welfare. (b) Political motive of the club.
    - (c) patron's poltical motive. (d) Other.
  13. Who is responsible for the Political decision of the club?
    - (a) Office bearer of the club. (b) Patron (c) Individual
    - (d) Con not say
  14. Do you velcome your patron's political entry? Yes/No
  15. If so, whether, she/he must start a new party or join any Party?
  16. Will you accept the political decision of Your favourite patron as it is?
  17. Do you want to keepaloof from the Politics of your fan club?
  18. Are you a member of the party your support.
  19. How will you expereess the political objective of your fan club?
    - (a) Public meeting (b) Plea for common cause (c) Agiteting for a common cause. (d) Other ways.
  20. Are there any clashes between Various fan clubs? If Yes, How?
  21. What is your club role during the time of clections?
  22. Are you satisfied about the present State/Central government functioning?
  23. Opinion about internal bickerings in D.M.K.?
  24. There are news about that, certain patron fan clubs are supporting one group of D.M.K., give your opinion.

### Chronological Order of Dravidian Parties

South Indian Liberal Federation in (later the Justice party)	1917
The Self-Respect League in	1925
The Dravida Kazhagam (DK) in	1944
The Dravida Munnetra kazhagam (DMK) in	1949
Tamil National Party in E.V.K. Sampath	1961
All Indian Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in	1972
Tamizhaga Munnetra Munnani (TMM) in	1988
MGR Makkal Munnetrakazhagam in	1989
Thayaga Marumalarchi Kazhagam (T.M.K.) in	1989
Marularchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) in	1994



Table - 1

STATISTICS AND ESTIMATES TOTAL NUMBER OF FILMS PRODUCED IN  
1986 & 1987

The central Board for Film Certification had certiferd 840 films in 1986. And ,806 in the year 1987. The breakup is as follows:

	1986	1987
Telugu	192	163
Hindi	159	150
Tamil	154	167
Malayalam	130	103
Kanada	59	88
Bengali	47	35
Bhojpuri	19	14
Orriya	17	9
Marathi	17	27
Gujarati	13	11
Assamese	11	8
Harayanvi	7	6
Punjabi	7	8
Bodo	2	0
Garhwali	1	3
Tulu	0	1
English	0	1
Brijbhasha	0	1
Rajasthani	0	4
Napali	0	6
Manipuri	1	0
Urdu	1	0
Avadhi	1	0
Sindhi	1	0
Karbi	1	0
Kumaoni	0	1
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Total	840	806
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Source: Amit Khanna\*  
Jag Mohan (Ed) 1989, Op cit.

Table - 2

## STATEWISE LIST OF CINEMA HOUSES (1987)

STATE	PERMANENT	TEMPORARY	MILITARY	TOTAL
Andaman & Nicobar	3	-	-	3
Andhra Pradesh	1632	843	12	2487
Arunachal Pradesh	3	-	-	3
Assam	143	51	-	194
Bihar	284	54	-	338
Chandigarh	8	-	-	8
DadraNagar Haveli	3	-	-	3
Gujarat	470	92	-	562
Haryana	103	13	-	116
Himachal Pradesh	24	2	-	26
Jammu & Kashmir	30	-	-	30
Karnataka	606	677	-	1280
Kerala	457	928	-	1385
Madhya Pradesh	425	101	-	526
Maharashtra	778	542	-	1320
Manipur	13	-	-	13
Meghalaya	10	-	-	10
Mezoram	2	-	-	2
Nagaland	6	-	-	6
Orissa	130	61	-	191
Pondichery	35	18	-	53
Punjab	181	10	-	191
Rajasthan]	232	39	-	271
Sikkim	3	-	-	3
Tamil Nadu	1432	786	2	2220
Tripura	6	-	-	6
Uttar Pradesh	763	139	-	902
West Bengal	463	213	-	676
Delhi	77	-	-	77
Goa, Daman & Diu	32	-	-	32
56 APO (Military)	-	-	41	41
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8354</b>	<b>4569</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>12978</b>

Source: AK

Table - 3

## ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF THE INDIAN FILM INDUSTRY : 1987

CAPITAL INVESTMENT (Estimated)  
(Excluding Film Departments of Central and State Governments)

Establishment	Total Number	Investment in each unit in lakhs of rupees (Average)	Total Investment in lakhs of rupees
Studios	75	1	75
Film Producing Units (Entertainment)	35000	20	70000
Film Producing Units (Documentary)	1000	2	2000
Distributors Units	3000	15	45000
Permanent Cinema	8354	15	125310
Touring Cinema	4569	1.5	6853
Laboratories	40	100	4000
Recording Studios	70	50	3500
Exportes Units	125	2	250
Importes Units	75	20	1500
Cine Machinery etc.	75	75	56
Manufacturers Units, Allied Arts, Crafts and Vocation	300	2.5	750
16mm Distribution Units (Feature Films)	150	20	300
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>259694</b>

N.B. Capital Investment in Production and Distribution Sectors based on aggregate Investment.

\* Excludes MPEAA members, NFDC, Sovexpofilm

Source: AK

Table - 4

TAX ON CINEMAS

(All figures estimated in Lakhs of Rupewes)

	Amount
Estimated box- office Gross collection:	10983
Estimated box -office Net collection :	58583
Estimated Entertainment Tax Collection:	51400
Estimated other Tax Collection:	100

Source: AK

**Table - 5**  
**EMPLOYMENT**

Establishment	Total Number	No. of persons Employed	Total No. of persons employed
Studios	75	100	7500
Film Producing Units (Entertainment)	3000	15	45000
Film Producing Units (Documentary)	1000	5	8500
Freelance Techicians	-		
Distributors Units	3000	15	4 000
Permanent Cinema	8354	15	125310
Touring Cinema	4569	1.5	6853
Laboratories	40	100	4000
Recording Studios	70	50	3500
Exportes Units	125	2	250
Importes Units	75	20	1500
Cine Machinery etc.	75	75	56
Manufacturers Units, Allied Arts, Crafts and Vocation	300	2.5	750
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