



## Sangam Age

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### Introduction

- ❑ The period roughly between the **3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.** and **3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D.** in South India known as Sangam Period.
- ❑ Named after the Sangam academies held during that period under the patronage of the **Pandya kings** of Madurai.
- ❑ **Three Sangams** (Academy of Tamil poets) held in the ancient South India.
  - The **First Sangam**, held at **Madurai**.
  - The **Second Sangam** held at **Kapadapuram**.
  - The **Third Sangam** held at **Madurai**.

### Sources Giving Details of Sangam Age

- ❑ **Sangam Literature:** Includes Tolkappiyam (**considered the earliest of Tamil literary work**), Ettutogai (Eight Anthologies), Pattuppattu (Ten Idylls), Pathinenkilkanakku (eighteen works about ethics and morals), and two epics named – Silappathikaram and Manimegalai.
- ❑ **Other Sources:** The Greek authors like Megasthenes, Strabo, Pliny and Ptolemy; the Ashokan inscriptions; Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela of Kalinga.

### Political History of Sangam Period

South India, during the Sangam Age, was ruled by three dynasties-the Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas.

- ❑ **Cheras:** ruled over modern Kerala, Capital: Vanji; Royal emblem: Bow and arrow; ports of the west coast-Musiri and Tondi-were under their control. The greatest ruler of Cheras was **Senguttuvan, the Red Chera** or the Good Chera.
- ❑ **Cholas:** ruled over the Kaveri delta; Capital: Uraiyur; Puhar or Kaviripattinam was an alternative royal residence and chief port town; Royal emblem – Tiger; **King Karikala** was a famous king of the Sangam Cholas.

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- ❑ **Pandyas:** ruled from Madurai; Korkai – main port; Royal emblem – Fish. They patronized the Tamil Sangams.

### Sangam Polity and Administration

- ❑ **Hereditary monarchy** was the form of government.
- ❑ The king was assisted by a wide body of officials who were categorised into five councils: **ministers (amaichar), priests (anthanar), envoys (thuthar), military commanders (senapathi), and spies (orarr).**
- ❑ The **chief source of state's income was land revenue.**

### Sangam Society

- ❑ Tolkappiyam refers to the **five-fold division of lands** – Kurinji (hilly tracks), Mullai (pastoral), Marudam (agricultural), Neydal (coastal) and Palai (desert).
- ❑ Tolkappiyam also refers to **four castes** namely arasar (ruling class), anthanar, vanigar (carried on trade and commerce) and vellalar (agriculturists).

### Position of Women During Sangam Age

- ❑ Women had respect and allowed to pursue intellectual pursuits. There were **women poets like Avvaiyar, Nachchellaiyar, and Kakkaiapadiniyar** who flourished and contributed to Tamil literature.
- ❑ Women were allowed to choose their life partners.
- ❑ But, life of widows was miserable.

### Religion

- ❑ Primary deity: **Murugan.**
- ❑ The **Hero Stone or Nadu Kal worship** was significant and was erected in memory of the bravery shown by the warrior in battle.

### Economy of the Sangam Age

- ❑ **Agrarian economy:** rice was the main crop.
- ❑ **Handicraft** included weaving, metal works and carpentry, ship building and making of ornaments using beads, stones and ivory were in great demand in the internal and external trade.
- ❑ Cotton clothes woven at Uraiyur were in great demand in the western world.
- ❑ The port city of Puhar became an important place of foreign trade.

### End of Sangam Age

- ❑ The Sangam period slowly witnessed its decline towards the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D.
- ❑ The Kalabhras occupied the Tamil country

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□ The Kalabhras occupied the Tamil country between 300 AD to 600 AD.

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