Velayutham Saravanan is engaged with economic and environmental history and his area of study pertaining to South India encompasses the late eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries besides the contemporary period. With interdisciplinary research interests, he has made significant contributions to the fields of economic history, environmental history, agrarian history, history of water conflicts, history of Scheduled Tribes problems, labour issues, and human rights, etc. His published works demonstrate a consistent multidisciplinary approach to understand the political economy of Tamil Nadu in particular and South India in general, with contemporary relevance. He has published books, *Colonialism, Environment and Tribals in South India, 1792-1947* (2017) by Routledge, *Environmental History and Tribals in Modern India* (2018) by Palgrave Macmillan, *Water and the Environmental History of Modern India* (2020) by Bloomsbury; and *Environmental History of Modern India: Land, Population, Technology and Development* (2022) by Bloomsbury. He has contributed a number of research articles both in national and international journals viz., *Modern Asian Studies (MAS)*, *South Asia Research (SAR)*, *Environment and History (E&H)*, *International Forestry Review (IFR)*, *The International Journal of Human Rights (IJHR)*, *Journal of Forest Economics (JFE)*, *Indian Economic and Social History Review (IESHR)*, *Indian Economic Journal (IEJ)*, *Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics (IJAEE)*, *Indian Journal of Labour Economics (IJLE)*, *Artha Vijnana, Review of Development and Change (RDC)*, *Journal of Social and Economic Development (JSED)*, *Economic and Political Weekly (EPW)*, *Contemporary Perspectives: History and Sociology of South Asia*, *Asian Economic Review*, *Mainstream, Social Change, Social Action, Man and Development, Frontier*, etc. Precisely, he has published more than 70 research articles both in national and international journals and presented more than 55 articles in various seminars conducted at national and
international level both of historical and contemporary periods. He also delivered several invited lectures in different universities like University of Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University, University of Pondicherry and Ambedkar University. Currently, his research is focused on environmental issues of contemporary period.

Books


Journal Editor (2015-2019)

Journal Articles


33. (1999) Tribal Revolts in India with reference to Salem and Baramahal Districts of Madras Presidency during the late 18th Century', *Artha Vijnana*, XLI (1), 1999, pp.67-81;

**Articles in Edited books**


Book Reviews


Papers/ Lectures presented at Conferences / Seminars

Memorial Lecture


Endowment Lecture


Keynote Address

64. (2010) `Environmental History and Marginal groups (1800-1947): Commercialisation of forests and Decline of Marginal groups Livelihood’ Keynote address delivered at the National Seminar on Multiple Marginalities and Environment: Conceptualising

Special invited Lectures


66. (2017) `Environment and Development in Contemporary India’ delivered at 120th Orientation Programme held at Academic Staff College, JMI, New Delhi, November, 16.

67. (2017) `Environmental Issues in Contemporary India’ delivered at 119th Orientation Programme held at Academic Staff College, JMI, New Delhi, August, 8.

68. (2014) `Eminent domain, Environment and Livelihood’ delivered at the Summer Programme held at Academic Staff College. JMI, New Delhi, April 21.

69. (2014) `Land Acquisition Policies in India: origin, development and its impact on Environment and Livelihood’ delivered at the 2nd Refresher Course in Global Studies, held at Academic Staff College. Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, April 25.


71. (2013) `Understanding the Environmental History: Issues and Problems’ Special address delivered at the Alumni meeting of Department of Economics, Urumu Dhanalakshmi College, Tiruchirappalli, April 21.

72. (2013) `Environmental issues and challenges’ delivered at the 104th 4-Week Orientation Programme held at Academic Staff College. JMI, New Delhi, April 16.


74. (2012) `Colonialism and Environment during Pre-Forest Act (1800-1878)’ delivered at the 9th Refresher Course in Economics held at Academic Staff College. JMI, New Delhi, July 20.


77. (2012) ‘Colonialism and Environment in India during the pre-Forest Act period, 1800-1878’ delivered at the Department of History, University of Pondicherry, Pondicherry, March 5.

78. (2011) ‘Historical Data Sources and Its Relevance for Social Science Research’ delivered for the M.Phil Students, Department of Economics, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi, in December 29.

79. (2011) ‘Environment: A Historical Perspective’ delivered for the 8th Refresher Course in Economics at the Academic Staff College, organized by the Department of Economics, Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi, September 16.

80. (2011) ‘Data Sources for Social Science Research’ presented at the School of Interdisciplinary and Trans-Disciplinary Studies, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi, in April, 26.

81. (2011) ‘Colonialism and Environment in India’ presented at the School of Interdisciplinary and Trans-Disciplinary Studies, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi, in April, 18.


83. (2010) Invited lecture on ‘Forest and Environment’ delivered for the Refresher Course of Geography & Environmental Studies at the Academic Staff College, organized by the Department of Geography, Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi, January 29.

84. (2008) Invited lecture on ‘Environmental History of India: Commercialisation or Conservation during the colonial and post-colonial experiences, 1800-2005’ delivered for the Refresher Course in Environmental Studies for College Teachers, at the
Department of Environmental Biology, Faculty of Science, University of Delhi, Delhi, March 8.


86. (1999) Invited lecture on the Problems of Tribals in Tamil Nadu, at the Kolli Hills, on the 19th July, by the Tamil Nadu Tribal Association.

87. (1998) Invited lecture delivered on the Economic Conditions of Tribals in Tamil Nadu, on 23rd September, during the III State Conference of the Tamil Nadu Tribal Association, held at Sathyamangalam, Erode.

Papers/ Lectures presented at Conferences / Seminars


104. (2005) `Reinterpretation of Tribal Movements in south India’ invited paper presented (in absence) at the International Seminar on Reinterpreting Adivasi (Indigenous Peoples) Movements in south Asia, held at the Graduate Centre in the School of Humanities, and Graduate Centre in the School of Social Sciences and Cultural Studies, at the University of Sussex on 21-23 March 2005


109. (2003) `Globalisation and Non-Farm Employment in Andhra Pradesh’ presented at the **Rural Employment with Focus on Non-Farm Sector**, held at the National Institute of Rural development (NIRD), Hyderabad, in December 6-7.


**Occasional Papers**


**Working Papers**


**Reports**


**a). Administrative Positions**

1) Director, Centre for Jawaharlal Nehru Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia
From November 14, 2015 – 2020 now: Serving as a Director, Centre for Jawaharlal Nehru Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

a. Administrative responsibilities including assigning the responsibilities to the faculties and discharging duties of drawing and disbursing officer, Superintend of Examination, Chairman of Question Paper Setting Committee, Chairman of Question Paper Moderation Committee, Chairman of Evaluation Committee, Chairman of the Viva-Voce Committee for the M.Phil. and Ph.D. programmes and other administrative activities.

2) **Director, School of Interdisciplinary and Trans-Disciplinary Studies (SOITS)**

From February 1, 2011 – July 31, 2012: Served as a Director, School of Interdisciplinary and Trans-Disciplinary Studies (SOITS), Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi. The Director’s responsibilities can be broadly classified into five categories.

a. Administrative responsibilities including assigning the responsibilities to the faculties and discharging duties of drawing and disbursing officer, Superintend of Examination, Chairman of Question Paper Setting Committee, Chairman of Question Paper Moderation Committee, Chairman of Evaluation Committee, Chairman of the Viva-Voce Committee for the Face-to-Face programmes, and other administrative activities.

b. In addition to this, to develop the ODL programmes, various activities are involved in getting the administrative approval, identifying experts, conducting the expert committee meetings, etc.

c. As a Chairman, the Director has to organize the School Council Meeting, Doctoral Committee Meeting, and School Board Meeting regularly. In addition to this, as Director has to attended Academic Committee Meeting, Director’s Meeting regularly and provide information for the various other committees like Research Council Standing Committee, Finance Committee, Annual Report, etc.

d. As a Director, I Coordinated the faculty members from School of Humanities (SOH), School of Social Sciences (SOSS) and National Centre for Innovations in Distance Education (NCIDE) of the IGNOU that is offering various programmes both face-to-
face and open and distance learning mode through the School. Further, the School is facilitating various certificate programs, diplomas, post-graduate courses, master of philosophy and doctor of philosophy collaborating with the other institutions viz., Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti (New Delhi), National Council of Rural Institute (Hyderabad), Sri Aurobindo Centre for Advanced Research (Pondicherry), Chinmaya International Foundation (Cochin), International Centre for Integral Studies (New Delhi), Indian Institute of Astrophysics (Bangaluru), Bhasha Research and Publication Centre (Vadordora), and Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group (Kolkata). The coordination activities multi-faceted – organizing joint coordination committee meeting, Doctoral Committee Meeting, ensuring the registration, collecting fee, disbursing identity card, disbursing the mark-sheet, evaluation methodology, etc.

e. As a Director, chaired several seminar presentations, conferences not only for the external expert but also student seminar presentation during this period.

2. From March 2007–November 14, 2015: Acting as an Officiating Director, Centre for Jawaharlal Nehru Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia.

**Editor of the Journal**

1. Since January 2016 to 2019: **Editor, History and Sociology of South Asia** published by Sage Publications, New Delhi

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS**

I have been doing extensive research on the different topics of Economics' pertaining to the issues of both historical (eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries) and contemporary periods. I have widely contributed towards economic history, environmental history, agrarian history, rural economics, development economics, problems of Scheduled Castes and Tribes', issues of women and children in unorganized / informal sector, labour economics, history of water conflicts and on subjects of human rights. I have published around 60 research articles both in national and international journals. I have also presented 36 articles in various seminars conducted at national and international level. In addition to this, I have submitted 7 reports (5
independently) of which 3 were submitted to International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and one to the International Labour Organization (ILO). Thus, my mite of contribution towards research activities and dissemination of knowledge in the relevant period can be broadly classified into the eleven following categories:

i) Economic History:

Existing literature on the economic history of eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries have not focused enough on the economic history of the tribals in general and the Madras Presidency in particular. The debates and contentions over the matter suggest that the economic history and the subsequent literature of that region, community and non-market (tribal) aspect has to be studied yet. Considering this, I have been studying on these issues for the colonial as well as contemporary periods. I have published an article titled, 'Tribal Revolts in India with reference to Salem and Baramahal Districts of Madras Presidency during the late 18th Century', in *Artha Vijnana*, which proved to be one of the pioneering contributions for the late eighteenth-century economic history. Another article entitled, `Commercial Crops, Alienation of Common Property Resources and Change in Tribal Economy in the Shervaroy hills of Madras Presidency during the colonial period', in *Review of Development and Change*, deals with the origin and development of the property rights in the tribal areas of Madras Presidency. Most significant is the article titled, `Tribal Land Alienation in Madras Presidency during the Colonial period: 1792-1947` in *Review of Development and Change*. It discusses about the alienation issues both from external and internal factors point of view, in a historical perspective. One of my articles, `Economic History of Tamil Nadu: Living Conditions of Scheduled Castes during the Post-Independence Period, 1947-2007` *Indian Economic Journal*, Vol.57 (1), pp.57-82. Another paper, `Economic History of Information and Communication Technologies in India: Digital Divide among Rural-Urban, Income categories and Social Groups, 1947-2007` presented at the conference. These are the some of the important contributions made towards the economic history in general and unexplored areas in particular, in the time frames of late eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

ii. Environmental History:
Existing scholarships on the environmental history literature also have neglected not only the Madras Presidency but also ignored certain other crucial issues. Further, the scholarship has focused largely on the post-forest act period only. To fill the lacuna, I have studied the environmental history of the Madras Presidency and contributed towards the environmental history literature as well. For example, Richard H Grove has published a book entitled Green Imperialism, in which he claimed that in the Madras Presidency, environmental policy was strongly shaped by the colonial government during the early nineteenth century. Whereas, I contested his claim and argued that although they have discussed about the consequences of the deforestation and environment, it has not been practiced until the introduction of the Madras Forest Act 1882, during which commercialization of the forest was strongly emphasized by the colonial government.

iii. Agrarian History:

The available agrarian history literature suggests that until the last quarter of the nineteenth century colonial agrarian policy had only envisaged the expansion of commercialisation of agriculture by linking to the world trade besides amassment of land revenue. In other words, early colonial agrarian policy was unsystematic and totally ignorant of Indian conditions. The East India Company had either absolutely neglected or never prepared a consistent policy framework to address the issues pertaining to the Indian agrarian system. In fact, the issues concerning to agriculture was administered by the Governor in Council and Boards of the Province / Presidency and treated as an `Indian subject'. Until the late nineteenth century, `there were only "regulation" framed at different times and in different parts of British India. Such "codes" as were found to exist dealt only with the administration of the land revenue, not its principles or policies.' Neglect of farmers' welfare during the colonial regime was appalling and the ryots were forced to pay more land revenue regardless of their conditions and natural calamities. Some of the studies have observed the decline of agrarian economy in the Madras Presidency in the nineteenth century differed only on the causes. Those who have protested against the high rate of land revenue viz., Mittadars and farmers were imprisoned for a long period. Farmers were even tortured for non-payment of land revenue in the different parts of Madras Presidency. A series of revolts/unrests erupted in different parts of the country during the colonial period. Further the agrarian history literature suggests that the colonial agrarian policy is yet to be reconstructed for the early nineteenth century in general and in particular for the tribal areas. Further it says, even the available literatures have their focus on the second half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries. Besides, the urban and arable parts of landscape being the domain of most of the studies, the non-arable forests, pastorals and mountains have failed to get adequate attention that they deserve. Given the scenario, I have published an article, `Agrarian Economy of Tribals in Madras Presidency: 1872-1947,' South Asia Research, Vol.26 (1) pp.63-85 and another article, `Agrarian policies in the tribal areas of Madras Presidency during the pre- survey and settlement period, 1792-1872, Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics Vol.65 (2), pp.261-76.

iv Political Economy

v. Scheduled Tribes:

Both economic history and environmental history literatures, particularly of Madras Presidency have not focused on the tribal issues in an historical perspective. Considering this, I have concentrated on the tribal problems in the historical limelight from the late eighteenth century to till the twentieth century. I have made an analytical study on how the traditional rights of tribals over the common property resources were restricted through the different forest acts, tribal land alienation, factors behind tribal revolt, impact of coffee plantations on tribals, impact of post-colonial measures and socio-economic development measures for the tribals, and transformation from the subsistence economy to that of commercialisation of the tribal economy and its relevance. In the process of analyzing the tribal issues from historical point of view, I have also studied their problems for the contemporary period. For instance: ‘Scheduled Tribes Bill, 2005: Why Forest Rights and not Land?’ *Mainstream*, Vol.43 (3), 2005, pp.22-23; ‘Political Economy of Recognition of Forest Rights Act, 2006: Conflict between Environment and Tribal Development’, *South Asia Research*, Vol.29 (2), 2009.

vi. Scheduled Castes:

I have also been advocating on the issues and problems of Scheduled Castes and the role of government and impacts of Social Movements for their enlistment and upgradation not only for the contemporary modern period but also that of the colonial era. For instance: ‘Dalits and Failure of Governance in Tamil Nadu’, *Frontier*, Vol.32, No.7, 1999, pp.5-8; ‘Social Transformation and Caste Conflict in a Village in Tamil Nadu’, *Social Change: Issues and Perspective*, Vol.31, No.4, 70-75; ‘Political Revival of Casteism in Tamil Nadu’, *Social Change: Issues and Perspectives*, Vol.32, Nos.3-4, pp.143-50; ‘Some thoughts of
vii. Water Conflicts:

I have been working on the water conflicts both from historical and contemporary point of view. Main focus of my work is on the analysis of the competing demand for water among the different stakeholders – agriculture, industry and domestic sectors. Urging demand for water in a certain river basin and the emergence of conflicts, role of politicians, judiciary, and communities has been attempted historically. In this respect, I have come out with an article, `Historical Perspectives on Conflicts over Domestic and Industrial Supply in the Bhavani and Noyyal River Basins, Tamil Nadu', (co-authored with Paul Appasamy) in edited book *Rethinking the Mosaic: Investigations into Local Water Management*. In addition, on the emerging conflicts within the agricultural sector due to the technological transformation and the role of acts and administrations are also the focus areas of my study. In this regard, I have published an interesting article, `Technological Transformation and Water Conflicts in the Bhavani River Basin of Tamil Nadu 1930-1970’ in the *Environment and History* (journal from Cambridge, UK). Another article, `Competing Demand for Water in Tamil Nadu: Urbanisation, Industrialisation and Environmental damages in the Bhavani and Noyyal river Basins, 1880s-2000s’ *Journal of Social and Economic Development*, Vol.9, No.2, 2007. In addition to that I have also published an article pertaining to the linking rivers, `Linking the Rivers: Nightmare or Lasting Solutions?’ *Man and Development*, Vol.26, No.3, 2004, pp.79-88.

viii. Women and Child Labour Issues in Unorganised / Informal Sector:
I have been working on the women workers and their problems in the unorganised sector. For example, the problems of women workers in Beedi industries are my focal area at present. I have been delving into some crucial points like the various forms of exploitations involved, availability of social security measures, impact of acts/policies, role of trade union movements both in rural and urban areas, in the sector. I have published some significant articles on these issues: `Impact of Social Security Initiatives in Unorganised Sector: The case of Women Beedi Workers in Rural Areas of Tamil Nadu’, Indian Journal of Labour Economics, Vol.44, No.4, pp.621-632; ‘Women’s Employment and Reduction of Child Labour: Beedi Workers in Rural Tamil Nadu’, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.37, No.52, pp.5205-14; ‘Globalisation and Women Employment in Beedi Industry in Urban Tamil Nadu’ in Globalisation and the work-place - Implications for India, 2006 in ed book; `Women Vegetable Vendors in the Madras City: An Economic Analysis’(co-authored with M.Atchi Reddy) presented at the Fourth Conference of Indian Political Economy Association held at the University of Hyderabad, 1995. Another article ‘Child Labour in Tamil Nadu: Legal and Policy initiatives during the post-Independence period, 1947-2007’ presented at the workshop on Enslaved Innocence: Child Labour in India, organized by the Centre for Jawaharlal Nehru Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, March 14-15, 2008.

ix. Globalisation Impact

In the globalisation process, I am interested to work on the impact of dalits, tribals and informal/unorganised sector issues and environmental consequences. I have carried out research on beedi workers and published some articles in the context of globalisation. I am very much interested to work on the environmental issues in the context of globalisation. I have published few articles related to these aspects. ´Economic Reforms and Tribals in Tamil Nadu: 1991-2003’ Social Action, Vol.56 (1), 2006, pp.25-39; ´Globalisation and Women Employment in Beedi Industry in Urban Tamil Nadu’ in Globalisation and the work-place - Implications for India, 2006, in edited book.

x. Human Rights

I have been working on the human rights related issues particularly focusing on the marginal groups and gender. I have published an article, ´Terrorising Tribals: Nexus

**xi. Economic Reforms**

I have been working on the economic reforms related issues particularly focusing on the fiscal related issues. I have published an article, `Popular Politics and Fiscal Crisis in Tamil Nadu’ *Contemporary Perspectives: History and Sociology of South Asia*, Vol.1, No.2, pp. 173-185.

**xii. Information and Communication Technology**

In the information age, I have been working on the information and communication technology and its impact in the rural areas and among the different social groups as well as income groups particularly during the post-Independence period.

**xiii. Land Acquisition Act in India: Impact of Environment and Livelihood, 1824-2013**

Land acquisition for the public purpose led to threat not only to the private land owner’s livelihood options but also to the ecology and environment since the early nineteenth century, particularly during the post-independence period. To acquire the land resources for the public purposes, a separate act was enacted at the Presidency level since the early nineteenth century. Later, during the mid-nineteenth century, to acquire the land for public purposes a common act was enacted for the whole country. Subsequently, several provisions were introduced in the Act, in the subsequent decades. The Land Acquisition Act 1894 was a comprehensive act that was extensively used to acquire lands for the various development activities. However, the colonial government has exercised only in a limited extent because of its limited development activities until the mid-twentieth century. Unlike the colonial government, the post-colonial government gave priorities for the various developmental programmes in different plan periods. Consequently, this act was
extensively used to acquire the land during the last six decades. At the same time, the amendments made in the Land Acquisition Act as well as Indian Company Act has made serious consequences on acquisition of lands and became a sombre threat not only for private land owners but also to the ecologically and environmentally important common property lands. On the top of all, until recently there is no displacement and rehabilitation policy resulted the farmers has to forgo their assets without any alternative options. Further, the government provided the compensation based on the registration of land sale value whereas actual market rate was many-fold higher. In addition to that the ‘real estate’ construction company further aggravated these problems, particularly during the last three decades. Precisely, this paper argues that the amendments made in the land acquisition act as well as in the companies act without an appropriate compensation and rehabilitation or without considering the actual value of the land resulted in a conflict between the state and farmers in different parts of the country during the last three decades.

Precisely, I have carried out in-depth research, both in the historical studies and field experiences on different relevant issues either independently or jointly. Besides, I have submitted several independent research reports and monographs. Precisely, these are some of my contributions, carried sincerely towards the socio-economic and cultural aspects of community development and advancement of academics in pursuit of higher level of enlightenment. I would like to continue to work on these areas in future.

He has delivered one of the prestigious Vera Anstey Memorial Lecture, viz., `Economic History of Tamil Nadu: Living Conditions of Scheduled Castes during the Post-Independence Period, 1947-2007’ at the 91st Annual Conference of Indian Economic Association (IEA), Udaipur, 2008. He also served as a Professor and Director at the School of Interdisciplinary and Trans-Disciplinary Studies (SOITS), Indira Gandhi National Open University (Central University), New Delhi (2011-12).

Earlier, he was with the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi, Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), Hyderabad and the Giri Institute of Development Studies (GIDS), Lucknow. Awarded Ph.D. in Economics by the University of Hyderabad, he was educated at the University of Madras, Chennai, (M.Phil.) and
Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli (M.A). Precisely, he has published more than 60 research articles both in national and international journals and presented more than 40 articles in various seminars conducted at national and international level both of historical and contemporary periods. He also refereed articles for several journals like *Environment and History* (White Horse Press), *Conservation and Society* (Medknow Publications), *Society & Natural Resources* (Routledge), *Journal of Historical Geography* (Elsevier), *Artha Vijnana* (Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics), *Manpower Journal* (Institute of Applied Manpower Research), etc. and evaluated thesis for several universities like University of Madras, Bharathidasan University, University of Hyderabad etc. He also delivered several invited lectures in different universities like Jawaharlal Nehru University, University of Delhi, University of Madras, Pondicherry University and Ambedkar University.

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