

Date of Birth	:	20 <sup>th</sup> April 1975	Plot no 39, Aroma Garden,
Tel (Mobile)	:	(+91) 94441 76367	Auroville, Near Edayanchavadi village,
E-mail	:	<a href="mailto:sponnarasu@gmail.com">sponnarasu@gmail.com</a>	Vanur Taluk,
Passport no	:	L7611621	Pondicherry – 605110 India

#### Present position

- **Archive Project Leader** – Indian Institute of Technology – Madras (From July 2019)
- **Affiliated Researcher**, French Institute of Pondicherry

#### Scholarships & Awards

- Received funding from *Endangered Archives Programme* (British Library-Arcadia) for the project “EAP1160 - Documenting royalty through the changing political culture in Kongu Nadu, South India, 1400-1950”. August 2018- July 2019. (£15,792) <https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP1160>
- Invited to deliver seminar presentation at the Centre for Historical Anthropology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2017, **Hong Kong. (20000 HKD)** <http://www.ha.cuhk.edu.hk/Posters%202017/AoE%20Seminar%202017-09-25%20Ponnarasu.pdf>
- Received funding from *Endangered Archives Programme* (British Library-Arcadia) for the project “EAP 689 [Constituting a digital archive of Tamil agrarian history during the colonial period](#) – **Phase II**”, in [collaboration](#) with Dr. Zoe Headley. January 2014- December 2015. (£44,330)
- Received funding from *Endangered Archives Programme* (British Library-Arcadia) for the project “EAP 458 [Constituting a digital archive of Tamil agrarian history during the colonial period](#)”, in [collaboration](#) with Dr. Zoe Headley. July 2011- June 2013. (£42,032)
- [Doctoral scholarship](#) for Indian student. Department of Social Sciences, French Institute of Pondicherry (IFP), India. April 2011- March 2014. (**Rs. 9 Lakh**)
- Passed the ‘National Educational Test- Eligibility for Lectureship’, conducted by the University Grants Commission in June 2013.

#### Qualifications

- **PhD in Social Anthropology**, Dept. of Anthropology, Pondicherry University. Thesis title “*An ethnohistorical study of the Chieftains among the Kongu Vellala community in South India*”. April 2018.
- **M.A in Anthropology**, Dept. of Anthropology, University of Madras, Chennai. May 1998.

#### Publications and Dissertations

- Carswell G, De Neve G and S Ponnarasu. (2021). Good debts, bad debts: Microcredit and managing debt in rural south India. *Journal of Agrarian Change*.21:122–142
- Ponnarasu.S. Rituals and Sacred legitimacy: the receptacle of authority. *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, April 2021. (Under revision)

- Ponnarasu.S. Titles and territories: the political legacy of the Palaiyakkarar. *Eastern Anthropologist*, January 2022. (under revision)
- Ponnarasu.S. Jan 2017. *An ethnohistorical study of the Chieftains among the Kongu Vellala community in South India*. **Ph.D Thesis** submitted to the Pondicherry University.
- S.Ponnarasu and Thanuja Mummidi. 2016. Territory, caste and chieftain: An Ethnohistorical study of Kongu Nadu. *International Journal of Applied Research*. Volume 2, Issue 1 Part M
- Isabelle Guérin, S. Ponnarasu, G. Venkatasubramanian, Sébastien Michiels. (January) 2012. Ambiguities and Paradoxes of the Decent Work Deficit: Bonded Migrants in Tamil Nadu. In *Global Labour Journal*. Volume 3, Issue 1.
- Ponnarasu S. and Reddy, P.G. 2001. Economy of the Kadars: A study in Erumaiparai settlement of Coimbatore district, *Tamil Nadu*. S. In *Vanyajati*, XLVIII :3.
- Ponnarasu. S. 1998. Economic Organisation among the Kadars of Erumaparai settlement, *M.A. dissertation: based on fieldwork* in Anamalai hills, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu.
- Roesch M., Guerin I., Kumar S., Thanuja M., Venkatasubramanian, S Ponnarasu. 2006. Impact assessment of the Peblisa project in Tamil Nadu, *Report for the International Labour Organisation*, Pondicherry: French Institute of Pondicherry.
- Roesch M., Guerin I., Thanuja M., Venkatasubramanian, Ponnarasu. S. 2006. Labour force management in Nerkalam and Rice Mills in Tamil Nadu: a sector-based analysis, *Report for the International Labour Organisation*, Pondicherry: French Institute of Pondicherry.

#### Paper Presented at Conferences / Workshops

- *Legacy and authority through entangled temporalities: the palaiyakkarars and pattakkarars of South India*, presented the paper in the summer school Timescapes and Temporalities of the Global South, 31st of July until 3rd of August 2018 in Tübingen. **Germany**.
- *Legacy and memory: Royal photography in establishing authority*, presented the paper in the 25th European Conference on South Asian Studies (ECSAS), Panel 22 - Producing and Consuming Photography in South Asia (1840-1980), Paris 24 - 27 July 2018, **France**.
- *Documents, Rituals and the Lineage of Authority: the Legacy of the Palaiyakkarar (territorial governor) among the Tamils of South India and Digital Archive of Tamil Agrarian History (DATAH)* presented at the Centre for Historical Anthropology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2017, **Hong Kong, China**.
- *Territorial boundaries of caste: an ethnohistorical perspective on Kongu Nadu*, presented at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual International Tamil Studies Conference, 'In Many Worlds: Kudi/Kudiyurimai, Citizenship & Belonging'. May 17-18, 2014, University of Toronto, **Canada**.

- *Territorial boundaries of caste: an ethnohistorical perspective on Kongu Nadu*, presented at the 15th Workshop Young Researchers, Association Jeunes Etudes Indiennes – “Borders in South Asia: territories, identities, mobilizations”, 4th – 7th March 2013, Kolkata, **India**.
- *Caste, Land and Customs*, a film presented at the International Seminar on Documenting Through Film in Social Sciences. February 21-22, 2013, Pondicherry University and French Institute of Pondicherry. Pondicherry, **India**.
- *Dynamics in the social construction of Territorial identity: An ethnohistorical Study of Kongu Nadu*, presented at the Indian Anthropological Congress: 2013- Focal Theme: Anthropology and the Future of Humankind, February 14-16, 2013, Kannur University, Kerela, **India**.
- *Transformation and Continuation of Agrarian Power Structures: Ethnohistory of Kongu Nadu palayakkarars*, presented at the Research in Tamil Studies: A Platform for Dialogue, September 24 - 25, 2012, French Institute of Pondicherry, Pondicherry, **India**.
- *Reflections on Royal Lineages and History: A Case Study among the Palayakkarars of Kongu Nadu*, presented at the 7th Annual International Tamil Studies Conference, ‘Traces of the Past’. May 11 - 12, 2012, University of Toronto, **Canada**.
- *Over indebtedness and its effect on village economy of Pazhaverkadu region*, presented at a workshop on “Over indebtedness in fishing village economy”, French Institute of Pondicherry (IFP) on March 23, 2009. Pondicherry, with Roesch M., Venkatasubramanian. Pondicherry, **India**.
- *Aspects of Identity, Territory and Space among Folk Media Practitioners in Tamil Nadu*, presented at the International Indo-French Workshop on Identity and Territory in India, University of Calcutta, Kolkatta, 19-20 February 2003. **India**.

#### Research Experience

##### - Current research project

###### “Historical Archive of IIT Madras”

*Status:* Archive Project Leader

*Host Institution:* **Indian Institute of Technology - Madras**

*Project Head:* Dr Roland Wittje / Prof R. Nagarajan

*Dates:* Three Year (July 2019- June 2022)

##### - Own research project (s) -

###### “EAP1160 - Documenting royalty through the changing political culture in Kongu Nadu, South India, 1400-1950”. (£15,792)

*Status:* Principle Investigator

*Host Institution:* **Independent Researcher.**

*Project Head:* Dr Ponnarasu.S

*Dates:* One Year (August 2018- July 2019)

**Collective research projects -****EAP737 "Representing self and family. Preserving early Tamil studio portraiture"**

*Status:* Research Engineer

*Host Institution:* Department of Social Science, French Institute of Pondicherry.

*Project Head:* Dr Zoe Headley

*Dates:* Seven months (December 2015- June 2016)

**EAP689 "Constituting a digital archive of Tamil agrarian history during the colonial period - Phase II"**

*Status:* Co-Investigator

*Host Institution:* Department of Social Science, French Institute of Pondicherry.

*Project Head:* Dr Zoe Headley

*Dates:* Two year (January 2014- December 2015)

**EAP458 "Constituting a digital archive of Tamil agrarian history during the colonial period"**

*Status:* Co-Investigator

*Host Institution:* Department of Social Science, French Institute of Pondicherry.

*Project Head:* Dr Zoe Headley

*Dates:* Two year (July 2011-June 2013)

**EAP314 "Rescuing Tamil customary law: locating and copying endangered records of village judicial assemblies (1870-1940)"**

*Status:* Research Engineer

*Host Institution:* Department of Social Science, French Institute of Pondicherry.

*Project Head:* Dr Zoe Headley

*Dates:* One year (January 2010-December 2010)

**Transforming Livelihoods: work, migration and poverty in the Tiruppur garment cluster**

*Status:* Research Assistant

*Institution:* Department of Social Science, French Institute of Pondicherry.

*Project head:* Dr. Geert De Neve

*Dates:* Six months (July 2009 to December 2009)

**Rural Microfinance and Employment (RUME).**

*Status:* Research Engineer

*Institution:* Department of Social Science, French Institute of Pondicherry.

*Project head:* Dr. Isabelle Guerin (IRD)

*Dates:* 1 year (July 2008 to June 2009)

**Microfinance and debt bondage**

(part of the programme **Microfinance and socially sustainable development**)

*Status:* Research Assistant

*Institution:* Department of Social Science, French Institute of Pondicherry.

*Project head:* Dr. Isabelle Guerin

*Dates:* 2 years 10 months (August 2004 to June 2007)

**Folk Media for Communication and Dissemination of Developmental Information**

*Status:* Project Fellow

Institution: UGC Major Research Project, Department of Anthropology, University of Madras  
 Project head: Prof. M.A.Kalam  
 Dates: 2 years (February 2002 to February 2004)

**Mangrove conservation and management: resource management, subsistence and community's dependence (Pichavaram, Tamil Nadu)**

Status: Research Investigator  
 Institution: M.S.Swaminathan Foundation, Chennai  
 Project head: Dr. P. Tamizholi  
 Dates: 2 months (December 1997 and May 1998) and 1 ½ years (June 1999 to December 2000).

**Social and N.G.O. assessment of AIDS awareness (Chennai and Namakkal)**

Status: Research Investigator  
 Institution: Administrative Staff College of Hyderabad  
 Project head: Dr. B.V. Sharma  
 Dates: 2 months (June and July 1998)

- **Individual researchers** -

**The Konda Reddi perception of environment: exploring social organization, shifting cultivation and development intervention**

Status: Research Assistant  
 Researcher: Dr T Mummudi  
 Institution: Durham University (RAI Urgent Anthropology Postdoctoral Fellowship)  
 Dates: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2008. (10 months)

**Masculinity among the Tamils in Chennai**

Status: Research Assistant  
 Researcher: PhD scholar Martyn Rogers  
 Institution: Sussex University  
 Dates: 1 year (January 2001 to January 2002.)

**Seminars & Workshop organised**

- International Conference “Archiving the Contemporary: Memory, Technology, and People”. Indian Institute for Technology Madras, India, **6 - 8 April 2022**, with Dr. Roland Wittje, Kannan.M and Dr. Benedetta Zaccarello.
- DATAH - Exploring the Digital Archive Tamil Agrarian History 1650-1950 - French Institute of Pondicherry - 22-23-24 February 2017
- Experimental workshop on *Tamil Customary Law: Knowledge and Practice*, Pondicherry University and IFP on 14-15th of November 2011, with Dr. Zoe E. Headley and Prof. K. Rajan.
- Workshop on *Overindebtedness in fishing village economy*, French Institute of

Pondicherry (IFP) on March 23, 2009, Pondicherry, with ~~Reuben M., and~~  
Venkatasubramanian.

### Skills

- Anthropological research methods including participant observation, focus-group discussions and interviewing.
- Fieldwork experience among tribal and rural populations of south India.
- Fluency in Tamil and English (speak, read and write). Telugu (speak).
- Computer skills include Windows OS, MS-Office, and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).
- Skill to use the GPS for data collection and making maps using the ArcView GIS
- Skill in digitisation techniques of archival documents.
- Skill in Epigraphy (reading old Tamil scripts, taking Estumpage)

### Administrative Experience

- **Organisation of seminars, workshops and conferences.** I have been actively involved in the organisation of nine scientific events since September 1996 in coordination with the Department of Anthropology, University of Madras, the Department of Social Sciences, French Institute of Pondicherry and Department of Anthropology, Pondicherry University. This demanded working in a team comprising Postgraduate students, researchers and academic and administrative staff.

### Project funding & management

- **Co-investigating Project.** Received funding from *Endangered Archives Programme* (British Library-Arcadia) for the project “[Constituting a digital archive of Tamil agrarian history during the colonial period](#)” **Phase I (£42,032)** and **Phase II (£44,330)**, in collaboration with Dr. Zoe Headley. This major project ran for four years starting from **August 2011 to July 2013** and the phase II starting from **January 2014 till December 2015**. I co-investigated this project in the French Institute of Pondichery which is the host institution. Managing the field search for a team of four, organising the data collected, liaising with the funding body and the curator.
- **Investigating (own) Project.** Received funding from *Endangered Archives Programme* (British Library-Arcadia) for the project “EAP1160 - Documenting royalty through the changing political culture in Kongu Nadu, South India, 1400-1950”. **August 2018- July 2019. (£15,792)**. This pilot project will run for a year starting from August 2018 to July 2019. As a Principle Investigator of this project, managing the field search for a team of three, organising the data collected, liaising with the funding body and the curator.