

The novel form of Tamil literature has been in existence only since around two centuries. Before that, the poetry form used to rule the roost for nearly two thousand years. Novel is a relatively new genre in Tamil literature but is very popular among the Tamil novel readers. The novel format was made popular by legendary writers like Kalki Krishnamurthy, Vai. Mu. Kothainayaki, Lakshmi, Na. Parthasarathy etc. The novel form has given us several others. The historic novels by Kalki, Akilan, Sandilyan and Na. Parthasarathy were enjoyed by the Tamil readers for their skillful depiction of the historic, social and cultural aspects of the bygone era. These novels are no less than priceless treasures for the Tamil people of even successive generations. Here is a bird's eye view of some of the famous historic novels. Historical novels by Kalki 'Ponniyin Selvan' is a novel set in the Chola period and brings out the social and political situation that prevailed during that era. The imaginary characters and events blend well into the historic events. He could even blend humour and satire into the actual events. His description of the kings and the wars they fought and their aspirations and dreams for their country and people. The stories were full of twists and turns that captured the imagination of the reading public. 'Sivagamiyin Sabhatham' is his masterpiece, romantic novel set in the Pallava dynasty's reign over south India. 'Parthiban Kanavu' is the story of Chola prince Vikkiran who fulfills the dream of his father Parthiban, the Chola king to re-establish the Chola kingdom and freeing it from the Pallava ruler Narasimha Varma Pallavan. Akilan's 'Kayalvizhi' is a gripping saga set in the Pandiya kingdom background. His other novels include 'Vengayin Maindhan', 'Kanni Maadam' and 'Vetri Thirunagar.' 'Vengayin Maindhan' has won the Sahitya Academy Award in 1963. 'Vetri Thirunagar' depicts the life of Viswanatha Nayaka of Vijaya Nagar who was the founder of the Nayakas. He played a major role in integrating the country. Na Parthasarathy Popularly known as 'Deepam' Parthasarathy, after the name of the Tamil magazine he edited, his novels 'Paandimaa Devi', 'Rani Mangammal' and 'Manipallavam' are very popular. Paandimaa Devi depicts the glorious Tamil culture and philosophy. The novel is a story of the Pandian ruler the third Rasa Simma Pandiyan. Vikkiran 'Vanthiyathevan Vaal' by Vikkiran is a novel set in Raja Raja Chola period. He has penned some interesting novels like 'Kulothungan Kanavu', 'Raja Rajan Sabhatham', 'Aalavai Arasi' and 'Vathapi Vijayam' which are very popular. Kovi Manisekaran 'Kollippaavai', 'Naaga Nandhini', 'Vengai Vanam', 'Sera Sooriyan' and 'Ilavarasi Mohanangi' are famous novels by Kovi. Manisekaran serialized in Tamil Magazines. Ra Ki Rangarajan 'Naan Krishnadevarayan' by Ra. Ki. Rangarajan is a story woven around Vijayanagaram and as seen by the king Krishnadeva Rayan. Sandilyan His novels are historic romance with lots of adventure laced into them. Most of them are set in the times of the Chola kingdom. His novels also describe the political situations prevailing in south India and the conflict with the other countries across the seas. 'Yavana Rani' is about a Greek Princess who is saved by Ilanchezhiyan, from the Chola Empire. 'Kadal Pura' is another novel about the army commander of Chola king Rajendra II and the princess of Sumatra. Tamil readers could read most of the historical novels serialized in Tamil weekly magazines. They were published as books later on.

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