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INTERNATIONAL  
CONGRESS  
ON  
KERALA STUDIES

# ABSTRACTS \*

Supplementary Volume

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**A B S T R A C T S**

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## A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA'S KWANGTUNG AND INDIA'S KERALA

Zhang Jun and Luo Zu dong

Both China's Kwangtung and India's Kerala are located at the southern tip of their respective countries and in tropical or sub-tropical zones. Both of them have many similar natural, geographic and social advantages. Unfortunately, for a long time, they have lagged behind economically and fallen into serious economic difficulties, although the problems of each are different. Now,

both of them are engaged in a drive to promote their economic development vigorously. What steps have they adopted to promote their economy? What results have they achieved so far? The paper attempts a comparative study of policies of economic promotion in the two regions, and attempts to highlight what they should learn from each other.

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## REFLECTIONS ON THE SOURCES OF AGRICULTURAL GROWTH IN KERALA

K. Pushpangadan

Studies on agricultural performance in Kerala show that it is now in transition: from a growth phase in the sixties and early seventies to stagnation in the late seventies and eighties. The question now facing the policy makers is: how to infuse growth in the sector? The paper attempts to answer this question. Before we answer the question, we need to know the 'stylised facts'. They are:

1. Existence of part-time farmers (Krishnan, 1991).
2. size of holding is very small and shows a downward trend (Krishnan, 1991);
3. Scarcity of both land and labour (Francis, 1993);
4. Growth rate of real (product) wage exceeds the growth rate of

productivity (Kannan and Pushpangadan, 1988);

5. Man days of employment available per worker per year has decreased (Krishnan, 1991); and
6. Technical innovation and its diffusion have not reflected in the growth rate of yield of major crops. (Pushpangadan, 1994).

The part-time farmers allocate their time between the main activity, mostly outside agriculture sector, and farming, the secondary activity. If the return from their time is higher in the main activity, the time allocated for agriculture is only the residual. In such a situation, they have no incentive for introducing the new technology which usually requires more time for its management. Without managerial input, the

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return from the new technology is subject to high uncertainty. Therefore, a risk adverse individual would shift from the new technology to the traditional method of cultivation. This may be a reason for area under paddy with high yielding variety (HYV) to come down in Kerala. Since this is only a secondary activity, there is also a tendency for minimising the use of labour, own as well as hired, for agricultural operations. For example, one could reduce the labour needed for weeding and manuring paddy. In such a situation, labour demanded for cultivation should come down. This hypothesis may not be valid for all the crops in Kerala.

There are several ways of overcoming the problem of part-time farming. One solution for the problem is to make institutional changes so that full-time farming can be encouraged. A first step would be the creation of rental markets for all inputs including land. The immediate effect of such a policy is to generate additional employment, direct and indirect, in the service sector. This has several effects on the system of cultivation. The rental market distributes the land efficiently for agricultural uses. The part-time farmers can either lease in land or lease it out. If the rental value of land is higher than the income from own-cultivation, the land would be leased out which would increase income of both owner and cultivator. This overcomes not only the smaller size of holding but also discourages keeping land fallow.

One crucial assumption in the growth model is that agriculture is profitable with the existing technology. But empirical evidence shows that productivity growth is not par with the growth in real wage. This would mean that the above institutional changes are only necessary but not sufficient for growth in agriculture. The profitability in agriculture increases only if cost minimising innovations are diffused

successfully. Such a technology depends on the factor endowment of the area. It is well known that there exists shortage of labour in agriculture along with very high unemployment among the educated. Moreover, Kerala has scarcity of land. Therefore, the appropriate technology for Kerala's agriculture should be both labour and land saving. The experience of Japanese agriculture will be useful for land-saving technology and US for labour saving technology. The main task in front of the policy makers is to develop a technology from the Japanese and US experience taking into consideration of the complex, diverse and risk-prone nature of our agriculture. the development of such a technology is the only source of long term growth in agriculture.

The innovation model which has served for industrial and green revolution in the countries like Japan and US has been tested for its validity in Kerala. There is no evidence to accept that it has any substantial impact on Kerala's agriculture (Pushpangadan, 1994). Therefore, the transfer of technology model of the traditional variety is a poor fit to our agro-climatic conditions. The dissenting voice has been recognised and recent years have seen attempts to develop alternative models of technology generation and diffusion. In this alternative model farmers' needs and priorities are put first and farmers participate in research and extension. 'But to achieve true participation, putting farmers' priorities first, facilitating their analysis, and supporting their experimentation, requires changes which are personal, professional and institutional (Pretty, 1994). The interaction of the scientists and farmers on location specific problems of agriculture is very much facilitated if the planning for agriculture growth becomes the responsibility of the local governments.

## PEPPER EXPORTS FROM INDIA

J.Omana

Pepper from Kerala has been internationally famous from ancient times. Of the major spices grown in the state namely pepper, ginger, turmeric, clove, nutmeg and cinnamon, pepper is the most important. Nearly 97 percent of the total area under pepper in India is within Kerala.

Pepper is used all over the world for as a preservative and for medicinal purposes. India exports all varieties of pepper-black pepper, white pepper and green pepper in dehydrated, frozen, free dried and brine. On an average pepper accounts for 50 percent of the quantity of total quantity of exports and around 70 percent of their value.

The most important feature of pepper export from India is its dramatic fluctuations overtime. For example, the value of exports declined from 23 crores in 1950-51 to less than 7 crores in 1954-55, and further to less than 3 crores in 1958-59.

By mid-sixties the value of exports crossed 10 crores of rupees. The peak year of export was in 1987-88 when the value of export crossed 240 crores.

Statistical analysis shows that the quantity exported and the unit value of exports contributed to these fluctuations. But the dominant factor has been the drastic fluctuations in the international price of pepper. The international price of pepper is very

sensitive to changes in the global supply.

With the growing liberalisation of world trade and structural adjustment policies that are implemented in the third world countries, it is likely that, competition in international market will escalate and price fluctuations may increase.

The price fluctuations have serious consequences for income and security of the pepper farmers and the healthy growth of pepper cultivation in Kerala.

The unit value of exports of pepper that had peaked at Rs.58.6/kg in 1987-88 prompted expansion of area under cultivation. But for the 3 years from 1991 the unit value of export had plunged to lower than Rs.35/Kg. The collapse of the prices and vine epidemic in the pepper gardens of Kerala have played havoc in the pepper economy. Low productivity of the pepper gardens, and relatively higher cost of cultivation constraints our international competitive strength.

There is an urgent need to draw up a comprehensive strategy to improve the agricultural practices and increase the productivity, to stabilise the price of pepper and improve the quality of exports. In this context this paper also undertake a brief critical review of the ongoing schemes and programmes.

## SCIENTIFIC APPROACHES FOR OPTIMISING RUBBER ECONOMY

M.R. Sethuraj

India produces 4,35,160 tonnes of natural rubber per annum against an annual consumption of 4,50,480 tonnes. India has been a net importer of natural rubber. Although we may pass through a transient period of self-sufficiency, our consumption is bound to surpass the production potential. A portion of the consumption will be exported as finished goods and the opportunities this country has in the export of finished rubber goods are extremely bright under the post-GATT scenario. In order to exploit this opportunity one of the aspects to be looked into is cost competitiveness. The rubber farmers in India have been enjoying a protected market but such protection can hardly sustain under a liberalised market economy. One of the important components of competitiveness in the industry is raw material cost and as such a professional approach in containing unit cost of production is becoming increasingly relevant in the new context. Efficiency in productivity can be achieved by using high yielding modern clones and by adopting low frequency tapping systems, increasing the tasks of tapper and by introducing the concept of productivity linked wage structure.

Different models have been worked out utilising documented data to examine the effect of various exploitation systems on productivity per unit area, productivity per labour and cost of production.

In view of the growing demand for natural rubber the country has to extend rubber cultivation to non-traditional areas. However, the potential productivity in areas thus selected should be of primary concern as the reduction in the operational costs per kilogram of rubber is from Rs. 17/kg at a yield level of 800 kg/ha to Rs. 7/kg at a yield level of 2500 kg/ha. Further for

producing one lakh tonne of natural rubber, the area required to be planted with rubber can be reduced from 1,33,333 ha at a yield level of 750 kg/ha to 40,000 ha at a yield level of 2500 kg/ha. Consequently, the investment requirement can also be reduced from Rs. 61,333 lakhs to Rs. 18,4000 lakhs.

The tapping task (i.e., number of trees a tapper has to tap) in India is one of the lowest in the world. It is computed that the harvest cost per kilogram can be reduced substantially from Rs. 12.37 with a tapping task of 300 to Rs. 10.97 with a tapping task of 450. The saving per hectare per annum by increasing the task from 300 to 450 is to the tune of Rs. 2100/ha. At the same time, a tapper gets additional earnings over and above what he earns for a tapping task of 300 @ Rs. 3.57 per day for a task of 350, Rs. 7.14 per day for a task of 400 and Rs. 10.71 per day for a task of 450. The number of labour displaced per hectare by increasing the task to 450 is only 0.17/day. Reducing the cost of production by increasing the tapping task can make the raw material more cost competitive and thus promote based industries with a competitive edge in the international market. It is computed that the labour displaced per hectare by increasing the tapping task to 450 can easily be absorbed in the industry as the natural rubber consumption required to compensate labour displaced by increasing the task to 450 is only 3.4 kg. Another method of enhancing the cost competitiveness is by reducing the tapping frequency. Even under such situations the labour displaced can be accommodated in rubber based industries which is expected to be accelerated because of the cost competitiveness achieved for the rubber produced.

## DETERMINANTS OF RATE OF INTEREST AND LOAN AMOUNT IN THE INFORMAL JEWEL LOAN MARKET OF KERALA

Sabu M. George

Recent theories on rural credit market in developing countries have noticed the importance of collateral price in determining the rate of interest as against the conventional neo-classical notion of risk of default. This approach is based on the assumption of undervaluation of collateral by the lender. But the most important characteristics of gold (22 carat jewels) collateral is that it is perfectly marketable and there is not significant difference in the valuation of collateral between lender and borrower. Moreover, gold is different from other (factor) general collateral. It serves only for securing principle and interest and hence, any kind of loss via default from the stock of gold would ultimately affect the income of the lender. Therefore, default is against the interest of the money lender. Once the assumption of forced default from the jewel loan market is relaxed, the crucial question is what determines the rate of interest and the loan amount in the informal jewel loan market? This study is an attempt to address these issues.

All India Debt and Investment Survey and data on advances made by Commercial banks and Co-operative banks against security reveal that the loans against gold (jewel loans) are wide spread in South India and Kerala in particular. Primary data on the credit markets in Kerala show that jewel loans are prominent in both formal and informal credit markets. However, certain operational difference can be observed. In the formal sector, the rate of interest and loan amount are regulated. While in the informal sector, the rate of

interest remain the same over long years and the loan amount is determined by the interplay of market force via gold price movements. It is also observed that defaults are negligible in both jewel loan markets. Therefore, we have attempted an alternative theoretical formulation of the duration of loan, rate of interest and loan amount in the informal jewel loan market.

Since Professional Money Lender (PML) doesn't have any mechanism to undervalue the collateral, his only objective is to maximise his income by advancing 'maximum' loan amount for a given price of gold. This 'maximum' loan amount is called theoretical L/P (the loan amount as a proportion of gold price), which is around half of the gold price. Hence, the rate of interest in the informal jewel loan market is crucially depending upon the time horizon that the lender has in mind. In nutshell, the duration of loan and rate of interest can be seen as inversely related. The primary data was collected from PMLs and tested for theoretical values. A comparison of the observed rate of interest with the average duration of loans (default cases reveal the time horizon the lender has in mind) reveal an inverse relationship between them. The regression result of the observed loan amount as a proportion of gold (L/P), exhibits no significant difference between the theoretical and observed L/P. Therefore, this study substantiates that in the informal jewel loan market PML offers half of the gold price as the loan amount and the loan amount moves along with the market price of gold.

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN COIR WORKERS IN KERALA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHIRAYINKIL

M.J.Javernes Beegom

## Introduction

The coir industry is one of the most important traditional industries in Kerala. It provides employment to the poor in the coastal areas of the state. It forms the second largest single source of non agricultural employment for the rural poor in Kerala. More than ninety percent of the workers in this industry are women. This paper is an attempt to describe the socio-economic status of the women who are engaged in coir yarn industry in Chirayinkil.

The production of coir drawn from the husk of coconut involves the following processes : (a) retting, (b) beating, (c) drying and cleaning and (d) spinning the coir yarn. The tasks of beating and spinning are mainly done by women.

Though the coir spinning industry is a cottage industry, capitalist production is prevails. Large employers buy raw husks and rett in their own vattams. Besides selling retted husks to small manufactures (perumkutis), they themselves employ labourers in large numbers for converting retted husks to yarn.

Despite the poor working conditions and low wages of women workers in the coir industry, the workers of this industry have been in the forefront of the trade union movement in Kerala. Chirayinkil Taluk Coir Workers Union was formed in 1941 under the presidency of T.K.Madhavan of Vakkom. Of the early women trade union activists, Kalimma, Janaki, Kousalli and Kamal deserve special mention. In the initial phase of the trade union struggle, women were unwilling to offer active support. For example, in Chirayinkil, many were Kudikidappukars and feared eviction. With land reforms, however, the participation of women in trade union struggles intensified. In the 1960s Chirayinkil was the scene of the most militant actions by women as the industry went into the throes of crisis.

The result of these struggles was the establishment of the cooperative sector, a welfare fund for coir workers,

special schemes for women coir workers and various schemes to revitalise the industry. Women have gained certain benefits such as minimum wages, loans for marriage, grants for building houses, etc. Special training programmes have been introduced to impart training in use of new technologies which significantly improve productivity.

However, the problems of the coir industry are more basic. Modernisation of the industry has became essential for the survival of the industry. However, without a proper perspective on the issues involved, modernisation can lead to displacement of lakhs of workers, especially women.

## Working Conditions

Working conditions in the industry are almost primitive. The beaters work in unhygienic conditions. They spend most of the day soaked as they work in with water and pith, without protection from the scorching heat or rain.

Spinners, on the other hand, are to some extent free from pith and water. However, even they are in constant contact with the wet fibre bundle as the spinner keeps the bundle under her left arm while spinning. In addition the spinner is constantly running between the ratt and endpost of the frame for thread making. In a day the spinner walks or runs 15-16 kms in the spinning yard.

There are no creches for children, and infants are kept along with the ratts. Young girls who work at the ratts also have to combine infant care.

For most of the coir workers and their children there is no noon-day meal. In the morning most have only rice meal. The evening meal is the only complete meal that they have. It is no wonder that many coir workers are gaunt old women by the age of thirty. Various occupational diseases - such as backache, prolapsed uterus, asthma and other respiratory diseases - are common.

## Members of the family perumkutis

Only among the small family

enterprises were conditions slightly better. Even in these household units discrimination in the distribution of food and preferential treatment for men was evident. Though subordinate, women have to shoulder a greater burden of responsibility.

### Education

The coir workers are mostly illiterate and are unable to send their children to schools. Even small girls who had not completed seven years of age had to engage in the work to supplement the income of the parents. Even the small

manufacturers (*perumkutis*) were not able to send their children to schools. They needed their children in *pakkalam* to rotate the wheel. The noonday meal scheme was an incentive to send children to school but could not be sustained due to economic pressures.

### Wage

Unemployment and under employment are the characteristic features of the coir workers. Coir women workers have the lowest wages (lower than agricultural wages) given the low productivity and high underemployment.

## EDUCATION AND FERTILITY : KERALA AND MADHYA PRADESH

19

D.Radha Devi

### Introduction

It is often argued, and with considerable truth, that female education is a major factor that will help to bring about a reduction in the level of fertility in any population, and recommendations are not lacking to promote education, particularly among women, as a measure to reduce fertility in developing countries.

The effect of education on fertility is mostly indirect and can take different paths. It raises the age at marriage because of the general practice of girls completing their education before marriage. More educated people will have a better knowledge and easy access to effective means of birth control. They also have a wider choice of extra familial roles which will conflict with child bearing. They will face higher opportunity costs in having children. Education also helps to change the attitude towards traditional norms and beliefs governing family size and quality of children. It makes them more rational and practical in their approach to life. Female education helps to improve the status of women and increase husband-wife communication. It imparts a sense of control over one's own destiny including child bearing. Education also helps to reduce infant and child mortality because of the increased knowledge about personal

## A COMPARISON OF TWO INDIAN STATES

and environmental hygiene, general health needs, besides the effect of improved standard of living and related matters.

But "education is by no means a homogeneous commodity" and its effect on fertility need not be same in all populations. Under such circumstances, there can be significant differences in the level of fertility of women with given levels of education.

Even though there is a tremendous amount of literature dealing with fertility - education relationship, it still remains to be seen whether the spread of formal education among females by itself will bring about a drastic change in their reproductive behaviour irrespective of the social milieu in which the women live. This is the focus of the present paper and the same is examined with the help of data from two states in India, viz, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh. These states have extremely different demographic and related characteristics. In 1990, among the major states in India, both the birth and death rates were the lowest in Kerala (19 and 5.9 respectively). Since detailed required data are not available for 1990 or even later it was decided to examine the 1981 census data. It is recognized that this data set can be criticized as fairly old in terms of fertility change. But these facts that the present paper's

aim is not to examine the fertility level as such in these two states, but to examine these fertility-education relationship from a theoretical point of view, it's felt that this comparatively old data should not present any serious problems. It should also be mentioned here that being estimations from census data they cannot be treated as actual fertility rates but should be viewed as broad trends.

### Findings

An examination of the educational composition of the currently married women in 1981 revealed that almost all rural women and slightly over half of urban women in Madhya Pradesh had no formal education compared to less than a third of rural and one-fifth of urban women in Kerala. In Madhya Pradesh even among literate women those who have gone beyond middle school is absolutely negligible, suggesting that female education is still not an accepted phenomenon in this state.

The fertility indices used for comparison in this paper are TFR (Total Fertility Rate), TMFR (Total Marital Fertility Rate), GFR (General fertility Rate) and GMFR (General Marital fertility rate). The data were examined separately for rural and urban areas.

In both the states, a clear negative relationship between education and fertility was noted irrespective of the place of residence. But all the fertility indices have shown that the level of fertility in Kerala is much lower than that in Madhya Pradesh at all levels of education. The contrast is so conspicuous that the illiterates in rural Kerala had the same level of fertility (TRRF & TMFR) as those with Graduate and above level of education in Madhya Pradesh. In urban areas the situation is slightly better where the illiterate urban Kerala women had a fertility comparable with that of women with matriculation and above but less than graduation level of education in Madhya Pradesh. As far as GFR and GMFR are concerned the illiterate Kerala women had fertility lower than those at any level of education in Madhya Pradesh.

In other words, the findings reveal that at any given level of education the

fertility is high in Madhya Pradesh compared to that in Kerala. In this context one wonders whether drastic changes can be expected in the fertility behaviour patterns of its members. These norms and values are set to satisfy the needs of a particular social, economic and demographic environment. Unless the environment changes to a large extent, the changes in the behaviour patterns, including fertility, due to the change of one parameter like education, is bound to be slow.

In Madhya Pradesh, the general environment is not yet conducive for fertility decline compared to that in Kerala. For example, the mean age at marriage for women in Madhya Pradesh in 1981 was 16.5 years as against 21.9 years in Kerala. Even at every level of education, women in Kerala married three years later, on an average, compared to their counterparts in Madhya Pradesh. In 1981, three-fourths of the women in Kerala were literate as against one-fifth in Madhya Pradesh. The proportion of population living below poverty line was about ten per cent more in Madhya Pradesh than in Kerala. The mortality rates also were not in favour of lowering fertility. The infant mortality rate and the expectation of life at birth, which reflect both the mortality situation and the health environment, also seem to encourage high fertility in Madhya Pradesh.

### Conclusion

The findings of this paper brings out more questions than answers like, if education per se is important in curtailing fertility, how is it possible for even illiterate women in Kerala to have fertility lower than that of highly educated in Madhya Pradesh? Or can education alone bring about changes in the deep rooted cultural values and norms in a society, set to suit a particular environment? The findings suggest that the reproductive behaviour of the women depends to a large extent on the environment in which they live, rather than on education alone. Perhaps more in-depth studies are required to understand the education-fertility relationship properly.

## TRENDS IN THE CHANGING FOOD HABITS OF DIABETIC PATIENTS IN KERALA

V.Usha

An assessment of the socio-economic and dietary habits of diabetic patients in Kerala was conducted. The present study indicated that the dietary pattern of the patients were very much changed from their traditional food habits. Mere diet counselling in a clinic will not help

Kerala Agricultural University, Vellanikkara.

## MORBIDITY PROFILE IN KERALA WITH RESPECT TO AGE, EDUCATION, GENDER AND INCOME

V.Raman Kutty and K.R.Thankappan.

Recently, new terms such as 'epidemiologic transition', 'health transition' etc have come into vogue to describe the changes in disease profile following the onset of the demographic transition. The focus of research in this area revolves around the following questions:

1. As death rates go down and the expectation of life goes up is there an increase in morbidity (illness load) ?
2. Can such an increase in morbidity be explained by the ageing of populations or is it independent ?
3. Can variations in morbidity experience of population over time and regions be explained by changes in the perceptions of the subjects alone?
4. Can we evolve an objective methodology to study morbidity changes over time and regions ? Kerala being one of the regions in the third world where the demographic as well as epidemiologic transition is well under way, the morbidity profile in Kerala is a topic of intense research. This paper is an attempt to reanalyse some of the available survey data with this perspective in mind.

In 1987 the KSSP organised a village health survey, with the objective of assessing the health status of the population of Kerala. The survey was conducted in the month of July 1987. For the sample, ten households from each panchayat in the state were selected by a process of systematic sampling. Thus the

them to improve their health conditions. Educating patient with regard to a modified diet suitable to their changing life styles and economic conditions is very important in controlling their disease.

sample consisted of 10010 household from 1001 panchayats. Of the schedules, on primary inspection 9940 were found to be fit for analysis: the rest were rejected.

The focus was on the incidence of illness in the household in the past two weeks, which was defined as acute illness, and the presence in the household of any person suffering from a disease or symptom complex for the last three months, which was defined as chronic illness. The emphasis was on the days of suffering and action taken rather than on the type of illness. A composite index was created representing the socio economic status position of each household and household divided into four categories depending on this. According to this, 14 per cent of households belonged to socio economic status class I (SES-I) (poorest), 49 % to SES-II, 29 % to SES-III and 8 % SES-IV (richest). Overall the reported prevalence of acute morbidity was 206.1/ 1000 persons in the period under coverage and reported prevalence of chronic morbidity in the preceding three month period 138.02/1000 persons. Symptom wise, fever was reported most frequently, 118.4/1000 or 54.6 percent of all sickness reported. Diarrhoeal symptoms were reported as high as 22/1000, or 10.2 percent of total illness load. Most other categories accounted for less than 5 percent of the total. The prominent among them being asthma, 2.4 percent.

Chronic sickness data showed that

chronic asthma headed the list with 16.5/1000 persons reporting it, or 11.27 per cent of total sickness. 11.8/1000 persons had hyper tension (8.05 per cent), 5/1000 persons reported heart disease (3.38 per cent) and 18.3 percent reported bone and joint symptoms (12.4 per cent). Diabetes constituted 2.3 per cent of total reported illness, and tuberculosis 4.27 percent. Re-analysis based on individual characteristics, such as gender, age, income as stated, and educational attainment showed that :

1. Illness reporting is highest at the extremes of age, i.e., below 5 years and after 60 years - this is the expected pattern.
2. As we go higher in the income scale acute illness prevalence comes down. The highest income category has reported the lowest illness rates.
3. Greater number of episodes are reported by females. Though the difference can be considered negligible

in the younger age groups there seems to be a pronounced difference after 60 years.

4. The higher the educational level achieved the lower seems to be illness prevalence.

5. This effect seems to persist in all income groups, except in the case of females in families with income above Rs 5000 per month, who report a very high prevalence of acute sickness.

6. Male female differences are generally low except in the category mentioned above. In the case of chronic sickness, the variation between income categories was minimal, but the proportion reporting becomes markedly higher as we cross the 60 year mark. Females above 60 report a higher prevalence of chronic sickness in all age groups, when compared to their male counterparts, but in the younger age groups the situation is slightly in their favour.

## EDUCATION AND EQUALITY

23

Joseph A. Thomas

The degree of intra and inter-generational mobility for schooling, occupational status and earnings are basic indices of the openness and justness of society. The very stability of democracy depends on the widespread perception of considerable possibilities for upward mobility. Education is considered an effective tool for achieving the above objectives as it is claimed to be a 'great equaliser'.

Efficiency of education as a policy variable in the equalisation of economic opportunities depends on the conceptualisation of education *per se*. Assumptions about labour market structures and process and the role of government intervention depending on those assumptions about labour market, also varies. Among them two extreme cases may be mentioned - of wage competition and job competition.

These cases are, however, useful mainly in the analysis of labour market dynamics in highly developed capitalist economies. Therefore, in the case of a structured society as is the case of India/Kerala, a different hypothesis

would be in order; in a structural society which undergoes a socio-economic transition in slow degrees, it is likely that even discriminatory subsidisation of education in favour of low income/backward communities would have only minimal positive impact. The benefits from the education system be it open to all classes and castes - would go largely to the higher income/caste groups, particularly benefits of the higher stages of the education system.

In the following sections, the above proposition is examined in the light of the experience of the Travancore society of the colonial period and of the Kerala society of the post-colonial period.

Till the establishment of the British hegemony and even during the first half of the nineteenth century Kerala society remained under the determining aspects of the caste system. In this set up facilities available for education for each community or group corresponded to their social status. The interlocking of agrarian and social hierarchy made it very difficult for any

group particularly at the lower rungs, to change the structural determinants. The advent of the British led to significant changes in land, juridical and social relations.

These transformations synergetically caused an increased demand for educated persons in the economy and supplied resources to the government and the public to conduct and organise educational activities on a sustained basis. In consequence, in a span of 35 years from 1865 to 1900 the number of schools increased from 12 to 1283 and the number of students from 855 to 83055.

The impact of these policy transformations did not reach simultaneously with equal force on all sections of society. It radically altered the power structure and class relations in Travancore. However, social institutions were slow to change. In the absence of a secular strong enough to articulate their interests the emerging classes rallied around their respective castes and communities. The emergence of the socio-religious movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the radical movements of a later period was its result. Despite their individual identities they had a common goal and theme of action - social reform and economic development; and education had a special role in their programme. The expansion in the educational facilities and the measures adopted by the government towards equalisation of educational and employment opportunities owe to a large extent to the struggles made by the subaltern communities.

In the first half of this century literacy rate in Travancore increased from 14.1 in 1901 to 54.6 in 1951; the number of educational institutions increased from 3683 in 1901 to 4086 in 1947 and scholars from 1.8 lakhs to 11 lakhs.

However the distribution of educational opportunities was far from equality. For instance, while the literacy rate of Brahmins in 1931 was 51.0, that of Nairs 35.5, of Exhavas 21.3 and Pulayas 3.3. Such differences may be observed in the community composition of enrolment as well. However, community-composition of enrolment has undergone significant changes over a long period of time, owing to the interaction of socio-

economic changes of the period. The position of high caste Hindus eroded considerably and that of christians and of certain subaltern castes improved. Interestingly the structural changes in the social and economic aspects are found to correspond to the changes in the distribution of educational opportunities. The two Hindu high caste communities (Brahmins and Nairs) which had enrolment rates higher than their proportion in total population together owned more than 40 per cent of the land area and more than 65 per cent of government jobs. On the other hand, the depressed communities among Hindus which accounted for about 12 per cent of the population, owned less than 2 per cent of the land, 1 per cent of government jobs and 3 per cent of enrolment in educational institutions. Two reasons for the low enrolment of backward/depressed community students may be offered. One is that the opportunity cost of education is higher for the backward/poor groups. A second, but related, reason is that returns from education were lower for them.

Despite all round educational progress and claim to 100 per cent literacy, community-differences in educational achievement persist. Though the proportion of SC ST enrolment in schools corresponds to their proportion in population, their rate of retention with the schools system was much lower than the state average despite affirmative action in the form of monetary incentives. Their performance at the matriculation and higher levels of examinations are far from adequate with the result that their proportions at the higher levels of education are less than their reserved quota of places. That is, a large section of the depressed community students seem unable to avail themselves of the opportunities even with affirmative action. On the contrary, majority of the opportunities in the higher education system seem to be enjoyed by students belonging to the better-off sections in the society.

The foregoing discussion shows that in a structural society, though have internalised principles meritocracy, socio-economic status of a community is a crucial determinant of its educational progress.

## CONCEPTUAL ERRORS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS IN LEARNING SELECT AREAS IN MODERN MATHEMATICS

S. Sarala

### Introduction

Mathematics learning depends on the formation of correct concepts and the ability to apply these concepts in different situations. Since the concepts are the premises and foundations for thinking the clarity and competence of concepts in specific areas of curriculum are extremely important for achievement in these areas. Mathematics is a sequential subject, the learning of concept depends on the previously learned concept, thus making a wider concept and this process goes on. Therefore proper understanding of the basic concepts and the ability to apply these concepts in different situations are extremely important for achievement. Since Mathematics is highly logical in nature, the occurrence of an error will always produce a more serious error than first in the next step, this process of accumulation of errors will be increased until they are located and rectified. Hence the identification and correction of errors of pupils is very important for the learning of mathematical concepts. Hence the need and the importance of the study.

### Major Hypothesis

The conceptual attainment of secondary school pupils in modern mathematics decreases as they pass on to higher objectives of instruction.

Secondary school pupils commit different types of errors in each concept in modern mathematics and among these certain errors will be common.

Conceptual errors of secondary school pupils in modern mathematics will be related to their intelligence, interest in mathematics and study habits.

### Objectives of the study

The major objectives are

- to study the attainment of the different concepts in Set, Trigonometry and Statistics at each

(cognitive objective level  
domain - Bloom's Taxonomy)

- to study the achievement of secondary school pupils in modern mathematics

- to study the general nature of the error scores of pupils in mathematics.
- to identify the different types of errors and common errors if any,
- to study the relationship between

- a. the error score and the intelligence
- b. the error score and the interest in mathematics
- c. the error score and the study habits

### Samples

The study has been conducted on a sample of 800 pupils from the secondary schools in Thiruvananthapuram Revenue District (Stratified random sampling).

### Tools used

1. Diagnostic test in (a) Set (b) Trigonometry (c) Statistics
2. Intelligence test
3. Interest inventory in mathematics
4. Study habits inventory in mathematics
5. Personal data sheet.

### Findings

1. The conceptual attainment of the pupils in each concepts decreases as they proceed to the higher objectives of instructions from knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis to evaluation (Bloom's Taxonomy)
2. For the total sample, the values of 'Mean', standard deviation, standard error of mean and standard deviation show that the attainment of pupils in mathematics is not at good level, but it is satisfactory.
3. Analysis of the error scores showed that the pupils have committed a large member of errors. (A.M. = 56.54, Median = 64.43) and the

distribution is negatively skewed indicating that there is clustering of scores at the right end of the distribution.

4. Different types of common errors are identified in each concepts.

5. There is highly significant negative correlation (.01 level) between intelligence and errors of pupils. That is as intelligence increases the chances of committing errors decreases to a marked extent.

6. There is no significant relation between errors and interest in mathematics.

7. There is a highly significant negative correlation (0.01 level) between errors and study habits of pupils in mathematics in the total sample. In sub

samples there is significantly negative relationships in eight cases and it is not significant in the remaining nine cases between the above two variables.

8. Conclusions based on the attainment of different concepts of each objective level are also drawn from the three topics and a sample is given below.

Out of the sixteen concepts studies from Sets, the attainment of the concepts is neither very poor nor very good. Attainment is poor in the cases of equivalent sets, complement of set, union of sets, difference of sets, and disjoint sets; it is satisfactory in subset, universal sets, Venn diagrams, equal sets and intersection of sets and it is good in finite set, infinite set, null set and singleton set.

## THE NEW WOMEN AS REVEALED THROUGH MALAYALAM FICTION

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M. Snehaprabha

The portrayal of woman in Malayalam literature has undergone a sea-change in the last hundred years since the publication of *Indulekha*. We shall try to examine in this paper the emergence of a 'new woman' in literature.

The rudiments of feminism could be seen in the first Malayalam novel itself, that is, in *Indulekha* by O. Chandu Menon. The heroine, a teenage girl, is English-educated and remarkably witty and intelligent, and has the courage to choose a life-partner on her own, an act unthinkable until recently. At the time of Chandu Menon's writing, the custom prevalent was that any Nair woman, whether married or not, was sexually available for Namboodiri men. Both polygamy and polyandry were prevalent. In such a context *Indulekha* daring to tease and send off the rich old Suri Namboodiri is an act of great defiance.

For years after, no such brilliant heroine appeared in Malayalam literature. Women were either portrayed as ineffectual angels or seducing beauties. Thakazhi, Kesavadev, Uroob, S.K. Pottakkat, and Vaikom Mohammed Basheer were all satisfied with women who played stereotyped roles of beloveds, mothers, sisters or wives. More attention was given to their physical charm and emotional exuberance than to their creative intellects. The heroine of Thakazhi's *Chemmeen*, Karuthamma, is only an emotional creature, torn by her divided loyalty to her husband and lover. The traditional myth about the chastity of a fisherman's wife haunts her and makes her guilty, leaving her no grip over her mind or her life. Thankamma in *Enippatikal* is a lusty woman who snares her lover but in the end he makes use of

her only as a ladder. In *Ummachu*, unlike in his other novels, Uroob presents a woman strong but selfish who silently approves of her husband's murderer and later on marries him. Only in one of his less-known novels does he probe into the consciousness of a thoughtful heroine. Basheer's heroines are mere feeble feminine characters except Suhara in *Balyakalasakhi*.

M.T. Vasudevan Nair, on the other hand, presented women as individuals. In *Rantamootham* he deconstructs the experience of Panchali who was compelled to be the wife of five men at a time. The whole story is reconstructed from the victimised woman's point of view. Vimala in *Manju* is a spinster endlessly waiting for her lover. In *Panchagni* a woman takes the role of a revolutionary who is then alienated from society as well as family.

The new woman, however, emerged only when women themselves started writing. The quest for freedom and identity of self were the main concern. *Agnisakshi*, a novel by Lalithambika Antharjanam was like a bomb-shell to the orthodox Namboodiri community, which practiced female seclusion. Thettikutty, the oppressed Namboodiri woman merged into Devi Balan, a social reformer, and later became Sumithrananda Saraswathi, the ascetic, worshipped by all. Women were no more treated as objects and their views on the world were listened to. A major contribution in this direction has been by Valsala, whose protagonists are independent women who are aware of their rights. Even the Varasyar in *Nellu* who belongs to the older generation has a strong will and perfect mental balance. In *Agneyam* she presents a heroine who is observant of the surrounding male-

dominated world and revolts against the injustices shown towards women. The exploitation of woman in traditional arranged marriages is a recurrent theme in her stories. The double burden of a working woman as the bread-winner and house-keeper is also sympathetically viewed by her.

Kamala Das is a genuine spokesman of radical freedom for woman. Marriage, the most accepted form of intimacy between the sexes, is bondage to her heroine. She sees the conjugal relationship as a master-slave bondage and she writes of "decolonising the female body". All female experiences are looked at from a feminist perspective and the conflict between the "feminine" and "feminist" is evident in most works.

Sara Thomas is a new voice who

stresses the importance of feminist writing. She points out that existing vocabulary is male-created and women often fail to express themselves by means of such diction. Her novel *Narmutippavava* tells the story of a twentieth century Brahmin widow who wishes to marry her lover but did not, owing to the invisible chains of convention.

Presentday women writers like Gracy and Ashitha are consciously striving to create a feminist space. Albert Camus remarked that "the role of a writer is not to identify with the makers of history but with its victims." Modern woman writers are trying to represent the side of physically or emotionally victimised women. Moreover, they are shaking off the ancient identity of victims and martyrs and claiming a space of their own.

## SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RADICALISM DURING THE PRE-CLASS CONSCIOUS PERIOD IN KERALA

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N. Sasidharan

For convenience of analysis the pre 1936 period is taken to be the pre-class consciousness period in the social and political history of Kerala. From 1860 A.D. the Travancore government initiated administrative modernisation. The large majority were not beneficiaries of state largesse. At the same time. The upper castes were the main beneficiaries of the budgetary resources of the state. Modernisation started the process of undermining the semi-feudal society. The various castes and communities from the 'Namboodiri' to the 'Pulaya' were trying to adapt to the changes. Each caste tried to effect modernisation and attempted to gain power by securing maximum government jobs. But they were largely convened by the non-Malayali Brahmins. The Syrian Christians gained worst from the introduction of 'cash economy.' Those who were subject to traditional discrimination organised themselves and started agitating for equality. At the same time, the major social groups allied together and started to agitate against the non-Malayali Brahmin domination. It assumed the form of the pioneering movement of the 'Malayali Sub Nationalism' - 'Malayali Memorial' of 1891.

Later part of the nineteenth century and early 20th century witnessed the renaissance movement initiated by Sree Narayana Guru, Chattambi Swamikal, Brahmananda Sivayogi and Vagbhadananda Guru. They stood for total change based on 'Humanism.' It effected radical changes among all social groups and was in essence anti-feudal in nature. The 'Civil Equality Movement,' the 'Temple Entry Agitations,' leading to the 'Vaikkom Satyagraha' and the 'Abstention Movement' were the major radical socio-political agitations which resulted from the new ferment. There were also anti-government agitations. But with the 'Temple Entry Proclamation' of 1936, the leaders of social radicalism almost stopped their anti-government campaigns and started supporting the government. They hesitated to carry forward the 'anti-feudal' traditions initiated by the great Gurus. But the working class of the depressed castes who were already awakened by the radical ideals of 'Equality and Freedom' left their caste loyalty and started accepting secular class movements that were being organised under CSP leadership. Thus casteism was slowly displaced by 'class-

consciousness.' Leaders who were involved in issues of social reforms like 'Temple Entry' gained the heritage of 'Social

Radicalism' before organising the workers and raising new demands of 'Political Radicalism.'

## ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN LITERACY MOVEMENT OF KERALA

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K.G.Karthikeyan\* and V.Rajam\*\*

Various voluntary organisations such as KSSP and KANFED have played a role in the recent literacy campaign for total literacy. In this paper we wish to highlight the role of library movement in the literacy campaign and more important by the crucial role that it could play in the post literacy phase. Kerala Granthasala Sangham celebrated Silver Jubilee Year as a year crusade against illiteracy. Many libraries served as the nodal centres for the recent literacy campaign.

In this brief summary of our paper we shall not present the discussion on the importance of 'Akshara Keralam'. Post literacy programme is as important as the literacy programme. Books for neoliterates is a key factor. In this context, libraries can play an important contribution. Libraries can be nodal centres for continuing education.

Mobile library units, special "Corner for farmers", Condensed Course of SSLC, Training in book binding and crafts exhibitions, and forums for discussions are some of the services offered by Granthasala Sangham Libraries. Mobile library services offered by using bell bicycles proved to be a successful venture in disseminating knowledge to every door steps. Mobile library vans were introduced by district library to deliver books to rural areas during Second Five Year Plan period.

Some of the Sangham Libraries have children's section. The children's books can be used by neoliterates. Books for

neoliterates can also be collected and made available for them.

Information services can be offered to employment/study opportunities. It proved to be very successful venture in Karnataka State. In our State, scope of these services are more because of the high educational background.

Granthalokam is a house journal published by Kerala granthasala sangham. Briefly and broadly, 'granthalokam' projects the image of sangham. It is mostly through this journal that Sangham speaks to affiliated libraries outlining its policies and day to day programmes. From time to time it makes known special privileges and grant facilities provided to member libraries.

Audio visual aids like TV offer excellent media for the creation of awareness among people. Lack of financial resources, shortage of competent and dedicated manpower resources to gear up these programmes, psychological and cultural barriers etc., seem to be impediments or problems confronted.

The enlightened interest among youth to participate literacy programme is to be properly used for continuing educational activities. The government has to take necessary steps to co-ordinate and mobilise resources in an integrated and well structured manner. This paper also assesses future prospects and suggest a strategy for implementing continuing education programme with the help of libraries.

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## STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OVER THE LABOUR PROCESS: CAPITAL - LABOUR RELATIONS IN KERALA'S BUILDING INDUSTRY

K.N. Harilal

In this paper our endeavour is to capture some important features of the contemporary labour process in the building industry of Kerala. We characterise the labour process in the industry as being in transition from a specific form of artisan production to the labour process characteristic of the capitalist mode of production. The evolution of commodity production in building in Kerala, however, has reached only a rudimentary stage of development. Speculative building, prefabrication, mechanisation of work, etc, are yet to make a significant presence. Further, the owner-customer tends to play a very important role in the building process. Buildings in Kerala are not generally produced first and then sold. Instead, in the present system of contractual arrangements, the act of selling takes place before the commencement of building. The contract system represents the initial phase of penetration of capital into the industry.

The growth of wage-labour relations and penetration of capital makes the building process a contested terrain. Workers in the contemporary industry are not bound by customs and traditions of the artisanal system. This necessitates alternative modes of control and management of the workforce by the employers. On the other hand, artisans in the industry cannot anymore hope to bank on the traditional practices of the trade or society to protect their interests. The workers are forced to evolve different forms of resistance to the capitalist domination of the labour process. In the present study our focus is on the mutually contradictory interests of the participants and their struggle for domination and resistance.

In section I, we discuss the emergence and spread of the contract system. Building in traditional Kerala was undertaken by means of direct employment of custom-bound artisans by owner-customers. Though some unskilled tasks were performed by members of the agricultural labour castes, the building craftsmen belonged mainly to the Viswakarma community.

However, these customs and traditions of the society were increasingly challenged by various social reform movements as the second half of the 19th century progressed. During this period, slavery and *uriyam*, the system of forced labour by which public works were executed in Travancore, were abolished. The consequent problems of supply, management and control of workers forced the PWD to promote the contract system.

Though wage labour relations became widespread, the direct employment of workers by owner-customers continued in the private sector, particularly in household-sector building activities, until recently. But with the building boom of the 1970s, the contract system has spread even to the household sector.

We have conducted a detailed survey of building sites in Trivandrum city to identify and examine the role of these intermediaries. The building process in the city is a complex operation involving different intermediaries, viz., a design team, contract managers, general contractors and activity contractors. First of all, the construction of buildings involves designing which is done now by formally trained professionals. Besides designing, the design team may also perform the function of contract management.

Apart from direct employment of workers which is by and large preferred in the household sector buildings, the owner can employ either a general contractor (lump-sum contract) or different activity contractors (prime contracts) to execute the work. All buildings in the public and private corporate sectors are constructed by employing general contractors. In the household sector the incidence of lump-sum contracts is associated with collective owners such as religious institutions, trusts, etc.

Though the general contractors make substantial investments in construction equipment, they subcontract most of the operations, at unit rates, to activity contractors. Thus, the most common and immediate employer of workers in the industry is the activity contractor who

recruits, supplies and supervises the workers. Easy entry makes the activity contractors' occupation highly competitive, forcing them to over exert the workers to survive in the industry. By subcontracting the work at unit rates, the general contractor not only ensures a fixed profit margin for himself but also shifts the problem of labour management to the activity contractors.

In section III, we examine the continuities and discontinuities in the nature of work. With the development of modern building process, workers are increasingly deprived of the mental skills, especially the designing skills, involved in the building process. Thus, we have noted an ongoing process of deakilling of workers and the consequent breakdown of the traditional apprenticeship system. However, apart from the introduction of modern construction materials and at scientific designing, the construction technology remains in its traditional moorings. Consequently, craft skills and hand-power continue to play a crucial role in the building process. It is the continued influence of craft-skills that renders the persistence

of lower forms of labour management strategies in the industry. The activity contractor, with his twin character of an experienced craftsman and an employer is eminently suited to perform the function of management and control of workers.

In section IV, we analyse the working-class responses to the changes in the organisation of production and the nature of work. We bring out the subtle interplay of caste and class factors in the development of the working-class movement in the industry. We trace the evolution from social reform movement to artisan caste unions and thence to secular artisanal unions to finally to specialised construction workers' unions.

The industry has a dismal record of implementation of labour welfare legislations. Eventhough it is too early to evaluate the performance of trade unions in the industry, their area-based organisational structure is not conducive to take up work placebased or employer-based demands and agitations. The main focus of the union activities was to force welfare interventions of government which are expected to make significant changes in the present situation.

## INPUT ROLE ON INSTITUTIONALISM AND THE TRAVANCORE PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT

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P.M.Thomas

The first half of the 20th Century witnessed the flourishing of the idea of institutionalism as a panacea for political ills, especially in Travancore. The princely state of Travancore, was a crucible for political experiments. Most of those experiments resulted in the establishment of new political institutions. It could be very interesting to sort out the factors behind the development of those institutions that had a direct significance for the general public. This paper studies the formation of the Travancore Public Service Department.

By 1884 most branches of Government administration were open to all without distinction of caste or creed.

By this time, intellectuals in Travancore began to propagate democratic ideals among the general population. They aggregated and consolidated popular

grievances and submitted them to the Maharaja in the form of 'Malayali Memorial'. It was the first movement organised by intellectuals and the first occasion on which the people united on a political issue in spite of their communal and caste differences. It was followed by the 'Ezhava Memorial' which pleaded for social equality. For an amicable settlement of popular grievances, the Maharaja broadened the structure of the Legislature and created a second chamber, the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly.

The intellectual awakening along with the introduction of a policy of universalised education further influenced the Government to evolve a clear and matter-of-fact recruitment policy. In 1915, preferential treatment towards educationally backward classes for public employment was granted.

Here popular attention turned to the reservation of employment for high caste Hindus. Since the Devaswom Department was attached to Land Revenue Department, non caste Hindus had been kept out. The possibility of separating Devaswom affairs from Land Revenue was dismissed by the Government. Members of the Legislative Assembly persistently questioned Government policy. Moreover, three communities of Travancore joined together to form the 'Civic Rights League', in 1919 to persuade the Government to bifurcate the Devaswom Department from the Land Revenue Department. The Government constituted the Devaswom separation committee. As per their Report, the Devaswom proclamation of April 12, 1922 was enacted, and the Government separated Devaswom from Land Revenue.

Now, the centre of attention of Legislative Council shifted its focus towards the uneven distribution of employment opportunities among various communities. As a result, in 1930, Government declared a well-balanced six-point recruitment policy in the Legislature. The new policy gave supremacy to merit over all other

considerations. They wanted a preferential treatment policy to candidates belonging to the least represented community. While the Executive favoured merit only as a recruitment criteria, the Legislature argued for communal considerations.

To solve all the problems amicably, the Maharaja constituted a committee. They applied a survey method to elicit public reactions on recruitment policy and invited further suggestions on it. At last they resolved that, for the maintenance of a balanced scheme of recruitment, an agency called the 'Public Service Commission' should be constituted.

Even after the commission submitted its Report, Government kept it in cold storage, which ultimately invited another protest movement, the "Abstention Movement".

On June 25, 1935 the Government issued the historic order constituting the Travancore Public Service Department. The democratic tendencies inherent in the movement for new institutions was an important influence the future course of events in the region.

## THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION IN KERALA

R.Chandrasekharan Nair

### Introduction

The concept of Public Service Commission is an adjunct of a modern State. The Institution exists under different appellations in all democratic countries. A few examples.

### The Public Service Commission in India - Historical Retrospect

It is a byproduct of Indian nationalism and the struggle for independence - Covenanted and Uncovenanted Service under the East India Company - Exclusion of Indians from the Covenanted Service - The Racial Policy of Cornwallis and the Charter Act of 1793 - Charter Act of 1833 offering certain theoretical consolation to Indians in the matter of employment in the higher services - Beginning of the open

competitive Examinations in 1855 by British Civil Service Commission - Unyielding attitude of the British Government to the Indian demand for Simultaneous Examinations in India - Recommendations of Islington Commission - E.S.Montagu's historic declaration in the House of Commons on 20th August, 1917 of 'increasing Association of Indians in every branch of Administration'. Section 38 of the Government of India Act providing for the establishment of a Public Service Commission in India - Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms - Recommendation for reservation of 33% of the superior posts in India for 'Natives' and Simultaneous Examination in India and England - Modalities for the establishment of a Public Service Commission under section 38 of the Government of India Act worked out by 'Lee' Committee - Establishment of a Public Service Commission for the first

time in India on October 1, 1926 under the Chairmanship of Sir Ross Barker. This was a modest beginning; yet the British members of the Indian Civil Service were infuriated and 433 of them resigned in 1927 - Government of India Act 1935 - under the Act the existing Public Service Commission was transformed into the Federal Public Service Commission. The Act also provided for setting up of Provincial Public Service Commissions - The provisions of this Act regarding the Public Service Commissions are the forerunners of the Provisions in Chapter II - Part XIV of the Constitution of India regarding the Public Service Commissions of free India.

#### Public Service Commission in Kerala

The origin of the Institution of Public Service Commission in the Constituent Parts of 'Kerala' viz. Malabar, Cochin and Travancore - Madras Service Commission is to be traced.

It has been noted already that the Public Service Commission in India are generally the byproduct of Indian nationalism and the struggle for India's freedom. In addition to these national questions, issues of social justice and representation of Backward Classes in the 'Services' forced the establishment of counterparts of Modern Public Service Commissions in the Madras province of British India and the Princely States of Travancore and Cochin - Though the Government of India Act 1919 did not provide for the establishment of Provincial Public Service Commissions, the Madras Province was the first to set up on its own under an Act of the Legislature an Institution akin to Public Service Commission under the appellation "Madras Service Commission". This was in 1930 ie. 7 years before the coming into force of the provisions of the 1935 Act (Part III) regarding Federal and Provincial Public Service Commissions. Thus the Malabar Region of Modern Kerala was the first among the three constituent to have an Institution somewhat similar to the modern Public Service Commission - The Madras PSC - The Madras Service Commission was rechristened as the Madras Public Service Commission in 1936 by an Act of the Provincial Legislature

Later developments - Reconstitution under section 264 of the Government of India Act 1935 w.e.f. 1/4/1937 - Further reconstitution under Article 315 of the Constitution of India w.e.f. 26th January 1950 - Malabar was within the jurisdiction of the Madras PSC till the formation of the Kerala State -

Public Service Commissioner for Travancore - Instituted on 14th June 1936 - This was the outcome of popular movements like 'Malayalee Memorial' and 'Nivarthama', the former for greater representation of 'Natives' in the services and the latter for the representation of Backward Classes therein - The Commissioner had only limited powers and functions and yet it was then hailed as a right step in the right direction.

Staff Selection Board of Cochin - Constituted in 1936 influenced by the developments in Travancore-Cochin Public Service Commission constituted under an Act of the Cochin Legislature in 1947. Travancore-Cochin Public Service Commission - With the integration of the States of Travancore and Cochin, a Travancore-Cochin Public Service Commission was constituted by an Ordinance issued by the Raj Pramukh - Functions of the Travancore-Cochin Public Service Commission were generally the same as those envisaged in the Government of India Act 1935 - After 26th January 1950, the Travancore-Cochin PSC started functioning as a constitutional body under the provisions of the Constitution - Reorganisation of States in 1956 and formation of the Kerala Public Service Commission by redesignation - Role in integration of services etc.

Development of the Kerala Public Service Commission over the years - Peculiar features - Present Reach and Range of its functions exceeding that of all other Public Service Commissions in India -

Constitution and powers and functions of the Public Service Commissions - Comparison in brief of the provisions of the Government of India Act 1935 and the provisions in Part II of Chapter XIV of the Constitution of India

A few suggestions for improvement of the constitutional instrumentality called Public Service Commissions. New Challenges -

## COMMUNALISM AND KERALA POLITICS

M.A.Baby

The following paper proposes to analyse the influence of communalism in Kerala politics against the backdrop of the development in Indian politics. The word 'communalism' is used here as a phenomenon where people on the basis of their sectarian religious considerations take an attitude of intolerance towards other religious beliefs and also extend their religious tenets to all social activities including politics. As opposed to communalism, secularism is defined as separation of religion from matters relating to the state, including politics and education. One should not confuse communalism with religiosity. Similarly one should not confuse secularism with either being irreligious or being friendly to all religions.

Casteism in the context of Kerala politics is very similar to communalism and they are often discussed together. Religious fundamentalism is another word which is usually used along with communalism. In the present paper, this term issued to mean rigid religious orthodoxy and the insistence of its observance in all spheres of social life in an irrational and obscurantist way.

The material basis for the sustenance of communalism, casteism and fundamentalism in India is in the fact that neither the British nor the ruling class after independence inflicted the fatal blow to feudalism as part of the process of bringing in capitalism. Even when India emerged as a relatively strong capitalist power during the four-and-a-half decades of independent India, precapitalist socio-economic structures continued to survive, and the same is manifested in politics in the form of communalism and religious fundamentalism.

The use and abuse of religious, communal and casteist feelings by British imperialism before 1947, as part of their divide and rule policy, and by the new ruling classes since independence, for their narrow political gains, reinforced the strength of communalism as a political phenomenon and gave them the taste of political profit, and a shortcut to power politics.

In the context of Kerala also,

casteism and communalism have strong historical roots. It is particularly true of the erstwhile Travancore-Cochin region. In spite of the fact that many significant advances have been achieved by the State in socio-cultural and political spheres over the years, the vise-like grip of communal forces of diverse varieties over the socio-political life is also becoming disturbingly significant year after year. Even though the lust for power of the Congress (I) and the resultant opportunist alliances of it with communal-casteist forces can be described as the major factor behind the present degeneration, would it be right to put the whole blame on the Congress alone?

The above questions deserve serious and sincere study by political activist and social scientists with a correct and frank historical analysis and introspection. The original sin of taking recourse to the dangerous gambit of exploiting communalism for narrow political ends in the modern history of Kerala was committed by the Congress during the days of the great Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the name of 'liberation struggle'. Following the 1960 elections, the Congress offered the office to the speaker of the Muslim League thereby inaugurating the era of communal political trade. Through this process, communalism succeeded in emerging as a crucial factor in determining the political prospects of the Left or the Congress. Citing various varieties of minority communalism and their increasing strength, majority communalism tried to grow during this period, in Kerala as well as on the national plane.

Majority and minority communalism are two sides of the same coin though majority communalism has been the biggest challenge. Both instigate and feed each other and provide justification for mutual existence. Having experienced the nefarious designs of communal and fundamentalist forces of different varieties and the havoc it caused in the political process by vitiating the society and disrupting the unity of the

masses, the CPI(M) with remarkable political courage in the mid-eighties decided to make a major change in the political line. It decided that in no circumstances would the CPI(M) directly or indirectly form an alliance or understanding with communal parties of any nature.

This courageous political initiative of the CPI(M) and the LDF had an electrifying impact not only within the state but throughout the country. As a result of this political line, All India Muslim League had to leave the LDF which was eventually merged with IUML of the UDF. A number of intellectuals, cultural personalities, freedom fighters and Gandhians expressed their sympathy towards this approach and helped greatly in the advance of the LDF. In the 1987 Assembly elections, surprising political analysts who predicted the confinement of the Left to the Opposition Benches for another term, the LDF emerged victorious and formed the first Left Democratic Front Government in Kerala without the shadow of any communal party. The durability of such an alliance was also proved by the fact that it could not be subverted half-way through as happened earlier. The bargaining power of the communalists has been reduced considerably as a result of this new line. This had its all-India impact too. The CPI(M) and the Left assumed remarkable prestige in evolving the political agenda at the national level. There are, no doubt, changes in the political situation within the state and at the all-India level since then, during the past one decade, but these changes are only further vindicating the correctness and relevance of the line of uncompromising fight against communalism. During this decade the threat from communal and religious fundamentalists has accentuated further as described in the Political Resolution of the CPI(M) adopted by the Fourteenth Party Congress held at Madras.

In Kerala during this time while the BJP, RSS combine continued their efforts to spread communal poison, Muslim communalism underwent a three-way split. Christian communal influences on various factions of the Kerala Congress also continues, even though not in the manner or intensity as in the case of Muslim communal parties. The damage that can be done by various other communal parties such as NDP and SRP, claiming the monopoly of Nair and Ezhava communities respectively, cannot be under-estimated in spite of their frequent fragmentation into groups and sub-groups on various

grounds.

The interesting phenomenon of different caste and communal parities and forces, who otherwise pose as if they in antagonistic opposition to each other, rallying together against the Left Democratic Forces has been witnessed by Keralites time and again. It goes to the credit of Congress that they have perfected the fine art of bringing together communal forces of all hues for temporary and imaginary electoral gains. The futility of such opportunistic alliance has been proved during the last elections in Kerala at Badagara and Beypore.

It is imperative on the part of each responsible political party to draw proper lessons from the above experience as well as from the results of the 1987 Assembly elections in Kerala. It is necessary because more and more sections of the people are becoming indifferent and pessimistic over the degeneration that is taking place in different spheres of social life in our country, beginning with politics. The impression that political parties are prepared to form any type of unprincipled alliance with even anti-national, disruptive and communal forces in pursuit of power, and poverty is identified with corruption, is gaining currency day by day. Criminalisation of politics and politicisation of criminals is the order of the day. With the communalisation of politics most of the time is wasted in petty squabbles and non-issues rather than in actual governance. A long term development perspective based on decentralisation and massive popular participation could not find its place in the political agenda of Kerala because communal casteist forces remain an obstacle before such initiatives as they are only interested in sharing the spoils of power and protecting vested interests.

The state of Kerala which has had a glorious tradition of social reform movements, an anti-imperialist national movement and Left democratic radical politics, is today caught by near-stagnation in most spheres of social life. In order to get out of this deadlock a frank and radical introspection is required by all concerned. The leadership has to come from political activists and social scientists. In the political sphere a pre-requisite for any effort towards developing a new political culture is related to dealing with the danger of communalism in politics. The eradication of their danger in fact could provide a healthy foundation for tackling the

problems of evolving a healthy macro-approach by the two political alliances in the form of extending critical support to each other on issues of overall development of Kerala in spite of political and ideological differences. The LDF, for the last one decade, has been consistently upholding the principled and courageous political line of strenuous struggle in defence of secularism. But it is a sad commentary on the conduct of the Congress, which boasts of having led the anti-imperialist struggle, that it stoops to the level of direct or indirect alliance with all types of communal forces in order to satisfy its insatiable greed for power and also to keep the Left Democratic Forces away from power. Will the rank and file of Congress undertake a sincere introspection with regard to the sinister implications of their irresponsible policies?

So far as dealing with various communal forces is concerned; a two-

pronged approach is necessary on the part of the secular and democratic forces. The masses who are being misled by the vested interests of the communal casteist leaders should realise that only by rallying behind non-communal parties the common problems of our society be solved, and education, employment, social and cultural advance, eradication of poverty and a sound and healthy environment be ensured in the society. However, it is essential that by words and deeds the ordinary masses of people, who may be religious or otherwise, should be convinced that the secular, democratic political forces would sincerely take care of all the genuine problems that people of different communities are faced with whether it is of a religious nature or of a socio-economic-cultural nature. It is in fact the failure in doing the above which is being exploited by the communal religious leaders for their nefarious designs.

## GENESIS OF SOCIAL CHANGE AMONG THE NADAR CASTE IN TRAVANCORE

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P. Sarojini:

The Nadars are one of the major communities in South Travancore. Though Tamil was originally the mother-tongue, Nadars of Travancore adopted Malayalam. The caste-title of 'Shanar' was changed to 'Nadar' by the Madras Government in 1921.

According to tradition, the Nadars belong to a group migrated from the North. Robert Caldwell considers that the Nadars are emigrants from the northern coast of Ceylon. Though Nadars claim a high social status according to their caste mythology, in practice they were reduced to the lowest rank in the social hierarchy. The Europeans found them in Travancore in a very backward state: "inferior to Sudras and superior to Parayas".

Nadars follow the patrilineal system of inheritance. Women have no right for paternal property but are, however, given dowries at a share of the time of their marriage. They also lay claim for could the property of their mothers.

The hereditary occupation of the

Nadars is toddy tapping from the palmyra trees and making jaggery. The climbers are called panaiyeris. But there were also many agriculturists or land owners and traders among them. They were experts in the art of Kalarippayattu also.

The Nadars among the castes most oppressed by higher caste Hindus. Social privileges were denied to them. They were not allowed to wear any clothing above the waist and not permitted to carry umbrellas or to wear shoes, sandals or gold ornaments or to carry pots of water on the hip or to build tiled houses above one storey in height or to milk cows. Like all other lower castes, the Nadar women were not allowed to cover the upper part of their body. They were allowed to wear only a single coarse cloth no lower than the knee nor higher than the waist. The Nadars were not allowed to enter public offices nor use public bridges and wells. Inter-dining was denied to them.

Influenced by Christianity and supported by the Christian missionaries,

the Nadars of South Travancore organised an agitation to get the privilege of covering the breasts of their women in the first half of the nineteenth century. This is known as the Upper Cloth Revolt.

Encouraged by the orders of Col. Munro, the then Resident of Travancore (1813 A.D.), the Nadar women began to wear the upper cloth. In 1858, however, the Nadar revolt suffered a setback. Hindu and Christian Nadars joined together and determined to fight to the last. The struggle between the Nadars and the higher castes lasted for a period of forty years. Both the

authorities and the higher castes had no other alternative but to bow before the strength and unity of the Nadars. At last, at the instigation of Resident General Cullen, the Raja of Travancore issued a Royal Proclamation on July 1859 established the right of Nadar women to wear clothes on the upper parts of their bodies.

After this success, Hindu Nadars agitated to gain the right to enter temples. This struggle also came to a successful conclusion with the Temple Entry Proclamation. It was through these struggles that Nadar caste associations emerged.

#### INTERNATIONAL PRICE REGULATION OF NATURAL RUBBER UNDER COLONIAL RULE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON THE RUBBER PLANTATIONS IN KERALA : A FEW OBSERVATIONS IN RETROSPECT

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K.Tharian George

The history of international price regulation of primary commodities is basically attempts to stabilise the prices at remunerative levels. Very often, the case for market intervention is, irrespective of its scope, is necessitated by the short term instability of prices of primary commodities exported from the developing countries (Corea, 1992). Though the background as well as the form and content of the regulatory measures varied across the commodities during different time periods, all the schemes were unique in terms of the primary objective. However, a detailed analysis of the political economy of the price stabilisation schemes which emerged during the inter-war years and the post war periods reveals one crucial difference viz., relative efficiency measured in terms of achievement of the objective and the policies pursued for the same. The schemes operated during the inter-war years had the active involvement and participation of the colonial powers as large companies based in these countries were controlling a substantial share of production and exports of the primary commodities (Barlow, 1978; George, 1984). Conversely, the post-war schemes witnessed growing conflicts between the producers and consumers for two important factors,

viz., (i) attainment of political independence by former colonies having a major share in the production and export of primary commodities and (ii) the consequent substantial reduction in the control of large metropolitan companies in the production and export of primary commodities. The post-war period also witnessed the collapse of many of these schemes and some were relegated to arrangements for consultation and data collection.

This paper is an attempt to highlight the three contributing factors behind a comparatively uninterrupted expansion of rubber cultivation in Kerala during the inter war years in the context of the operation of international price stabilisation schemes for rubber compared to the developments elsewhere. Accordingly, in the first part of the paper an evaluation of the schemes is attempted. In the second part, the three factors specific to Kerala are outlined.

The two regulatory schemes implemented during the period were the Stevenson Scheme (1922-1928) and the International Rubber Regulation Agreement (1934-1944). The genesis of the Stevenson Scheme was a steep fall in rubber prices to the extent of 76 per cent during the period between 1913-22 in the background of the first world war. The International Rubber Regulation Agreement (IRRA) was

made operative in 1934 to cushion the adverse effects of price slump since 1930 following the world economic recession. One major difference between the two schemes was that while the former was basically confined to British colonies of Malaya and Ceylon the IRRA was signed by Britain, Netherlands, France, India and Siam. The important instruments of both the schemes were restrictions on production and exports in achieving the primary objective of stabilizing the prices at remunerative levels in the short run. But the immaturity of the industry not only made restrictions particularly undesirable but also emphasised its inherent arbitrariness (Bauer, 1948). In a broader sense, both the schemes bore similar characteristics of other regulatory schemes evolved in the 1930's and operated with the main objective of protecting a high cost-profit structure through artificially maintained prices at the expense of expansion and modernisation. Very often, a major share of the resultant profits was repatriated to the centres from the colonies. Another important weakness of both the schemes was discrimination against small holdings through the procedures of allocating quotas (Barlow, 1978) and preventing the expansion and growth of this sector during the inter-war years.

Apart from socio-economic and agro-climatic conditions prevailed in the state of Kerala (George, 1988) favouring

the growth of rubber plantation industry there were three specific factors supplementing the expansion. In an operational sense, the three factors were rather indirect and benefiting the growth of Indian ownership in rubber plantations especially; smallholdings.

India was not covered under the Stevenson scheme and as a result there was a substantial increase in area and production between 1923-28. The estimated increase in area under smallholdings was around 2000 per cent (Haridasan, 1992). Though India was one of the signatories of IRRA, the conquest of Malaya and Java by Japan left India and Ceylon as the main sources of rubber supply to allied nations. From 1939 to 1946 there was an unprecedented expansion in area and since 1942 to 1946 the average rate of new planting was about 2100 hectares per annum compared to 362 hectares per annum during the period between 1935-38. Another important factor was the growth of indigenous rubber goods manufacturing sector since 1930's under the colonial patronage and the consequent rise in rubber prices since 1939. An important outcome of these developments specific to India was substantial increase in the share of Indian ownership including the smallholdings and in 1946 about 73 per cent of the area was under Indian control (Rubber Board; 1947). This situation is in sharp contrast to the status of the industry in Malaya and Netherlands East Indies.

#### MALABAR PEASANTRY UNDER COLONIAL RULE : A CASE STUDY OF MORAZHA INCIDENT 1940

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P. Mohandas

The Morazha incident of 1940 was an important event in the history of anti-imperialist struggle in Malabar. The background of the incident can be traced back to the rise of peasant and workers movements in Malabar under socialist leadership. The socialist wing that emerged within the Congress leadership spearheaded struggles of peasants and workers in different parts of Malabar. These struggles changed the course of the freedom struggle and gave it a new dimension. These changes were reflected in the Congress organisation as well.

The Bakkalam political conference of 1939 was the culmination of the cleavage between the right wing and the majority left wing of the K.P.C.C. The conference demanded the immediate removal of the ban on the Communist party. This was the first occasion that a Congress meeting passed such a resolution.

Though Communist party in Malabar had begun to function with in the Congress socialist party by the 1937 it was formally launched only in 1939 at a secret meeting at Pinarayi near Tellicherry. Its formation, though

secret, helped to strengthen the struggles of the peasants and workers. When the Communist party called for struggles to protest against the decision of British Government to make India a co-belligerent in the World War II these struggles reached their crescendo. An anti-war committee was organised under the leadership of K.P.R. Gopalan.

Anti-war rallies and meetings were organised under the leadership of this committee all over Malabar. Peasants and workers participated in large numbers in these meetings and protest rallies. In these struggles, peasants and workers raised the slogans of their specific problems and carried on their agitations in different parts of Malabar.

The Government began to suppress the struggles ruthlessly. The K.P.C.C. vehemently protested against it and called for the observance of 20th May 1940 as an anti-repression day. But the programme was postponed on receipt of telegraphic instructions from Gandhiji. However the committee decided to observe 21 July as anti-repression day to protest against the arrests of the Socialist leaders.

The K.P.C.C. meeting held on 8th September 1940 decided to observe 15th September as a protest day against statements made by Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India, and Lord Amri, Secretary of State for India. Though the authorities banned the observance of the protest day, the people defied the ban and held meetings in different parts of Malabar.

The protest meeting day observance in Chirakkal Taluk was held at Keecheri. It was a centre of peasant and trade union activities. When meeting was about to start the Sub Inspector of the locality served the ban order. So the leaders decided to change the venue from Keecheri to Morazha just across the boundary where ban order was not applicable.

When the meeting was started sub-inspector Kuttikrishna Menon who transcended his jurisdiction, arrived at the spot along with Taliparamba sub-inspector and Sub Magistrate. The sub-magistrate read out the ban order and Kuttikrishna Menon ordered the crowd to disperse immediately. This high handedness was defied by the people. The police resorted to firing the mob and people, though unarmed retaliated. As a result sub inspector Kuttikrishna Menon and one constable died on the spot. After this incident the police unleashed a reign of terror.

K.P.R. Gopalan was the key leader whose arrest was sought. He was arrested near Kadamberi where he had fallen ill.

The case was unprecedented one in the political history of Malabar. After the trial the Session judge arrived at the conclusion that there had been no preplanned attack on the sub inspector. However, the sessions court sentenced K.P.R. Gopalan for seven years rigorous imprisonment. Yet the Government authorities were not satisfied with this decision and an appeal was filed before the Madras High Court which pronounced death sentence to K.P.R. Gopalan.

This judgement because of its very nature threw Malabar into the vortex of a new political struggle. Both the right wing and left wing leaders condemned the death sentence. A large number of petitions and statements flowed from the leaders of various organisations and associations. The peasants and workers organised meetings, jathas, rallies, etc. Railway workers, Panchayat Boards, volunteer organisations, set their petition to commute the death sentence of K.P.R. More than 634 petitions were submitted within two weeks of the pronouncement of the judgement. Gandhiji, Nehru and other Indian leaders intervened and condemned the death sentence. In the British Parliament the communist leader Gallacher raised the issue. Finally the government was compelled to commute the death sentence of K.P.R. to life imprisonment.

The agitation to commute the death sentence was more powerful than the September agitation of K.P.C.C. Almost all sections of the people participated in one way or another. It had its echo in the other parts of the country also. This incident played a prominent role in the growth of political consciousness among the peasantry and workers of Malabar.

In analysing the Morazha incident the specific role played by mobs in political agitation has to be taken into account. What was the character of the mob? How much of the incident was spontaneous? What was the role of the trained volunteer squads in the confrontation. In such situations how are decisions made? Does the hierarchy of ideologically set organisations still hold in such situations? These are questions worth analysing in this context. Finally: where and when an emotionally changed demonstration assumes new characteristics as a mob and what the role that can be ascribed to mob in history?

## SHORT HISTORY OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT AMONG CASHEW WORKERS

P. Kesavan Nair

Towards the end of the third decade of this century the Freedom Movement gained a new momentum in Kerala. It was during this period that the All Kerala Trade Union Council and the Communist Party were formed. By that time Alleppey was a strong-hold of the working class. In 1938 the Travancore State Congress was formed. The State Congress decided to launch a direct action for the responsible government. This agitation transformed itself into a mass movement. There was a general awakening among the masses, especially among the working class. Kollam was in the grip of famine and unemployment.

The working conditions of the Cashew Workers were deplorable in that period. The leisure and the workers were treated as slaves. The cashew factories, where hundreds of women had been working, were without Urinals and Latrines. The rate of wages miserably low. Young women were sexually exploited. Mode of punishment was also crude and inhuman.

It was in this background that the trade union movement in the cashew industry was born. To protest against the inhuman conditions of the factories the workers of the 'Indian Nut Company' Kollam began a strike on 12th August 1938. Eventhough the strike was suppressed it inspired the workers in the other cashew factories. The indefinite strike took place in 1939 in the Musaliar Industries. The strike was a concerted action of 20000 workers against the dismissal of some male workers. Finally the management, yielded to the pressure of the striking workers and the dismissal was withdrawn.

After this historic strike the

workers felt the need of a trade union and in 1939 they organised, the 'Aghila Thiruvittamcore Kasuandi Thozhilali Union', the first trade union on Cashew workers.

In the early 40's daily wage rate of Cashew workers was very meagre and their living conditions were miserable.

It was this time that the Travancore Unit of the Communist Party took decision to send Com. M.N. Govindan Nair to Kollam to build up the party and trade union movement and M.N. felt the pliable conditions of the Cashew Workers and decided to organise them. With the help of local comrades he revived the activities of 'Aghila Thiruvittamcore Kasuandi Thozhilali Union' which was practically defunct at that time. Within a short span of time they succeeded in organising a militant trade union movement among cashew workers. Series of agitations launched by the union from 1942-46 for better working conditions won the heart of Cashew workers in the Central Travancore and that a very strong base for the Communist party.

The Trade union movement of Cashew workers was also an inseparable part of the freedom struggle in Travancore. It fought, along with other workers against the despotic ruler C.P. Ramaswami Ayer. In support of the Punnapra Vyalar riot 'Aghila Thiruvittamcore Kasuandi Thozhilali Union' gave a call for indefinite strike. Consequently on 26th October 1946 the union was banned and its office was sealed and records were confiscated. In October 1947 the ban on the union was lifted and it again plunged into trade union activities. Again in 1950 after the 'Sooranadu

'Incident' the union was declared illegal. During the period of the ban, cashew barons intensified their exploitation in the factories. It was also during this period that UTUC and INTUC was to divide the unity of the Cashew workers.

General Election in 1952 was an important land mark in the history of trade union movement in Kerala. Many trade union leaders were elected to assembly and parliament. The period that followed was conducive for the growth of trade union movement. E.M.S Government which came to power in 1957 gave a fillip to T.U. movement.

During 1960's and 1970's large number of factories were closed and thousands of employees were thrown out of employment. The employers started Kudivarappu and started factories in the border areas of Tamilnadu where the wages were very low. This resulted in further loss of employment. It was in this background that the Government of Kerala gave shape to 'Kerala Cashew Development Corporation' a public sector, in 1969. It has taken over 34 closed factories by the middle of 1970's. Later in the middle of 1980's 'Copex' was formed in the Co-operation sector.

Formation of CITU in 1970 was a turning point in the history of the Indian Working Class. Subsequently on 1st July 1970 Kerala's Cashew Workers Centre, the revolutionary trade union centre of the Cashew workers' was formed. It gave new hope and aspiration for the Cashew workers. Since the very inception it has been fighting for the unity of Cashew workers. It has waged many pitched battle against cashew barons in the last 25 years. Even during the dark days of emergency it fought helically against the policies of the

Government and the exploitation of Cashew processors. In 1986 it launched a historic struggle demanding full dearness allowance in the private sector irrespective of their trade union affiliations. Com. Parameswaran of Kunnathoor and Com. Viswanathan of Kottarakara are the martyrs of this struggle. Finally the agitation ended in success.

The LDF Government which came to power in 1987 reintroduced monopoly procurement of raw nuts to ensure remunerative price for the farmers and more working days for the workers. When the cashew industrialists adopted a recalcitrant stand in not reopening the factories, the government boldly took over 36 locked-out factories and resumed work. LDF Government raised the minimum wages of Cashew workers and introduced many welfare measures for them.

Now pursing the new economic policy of the Government of India UDF Government in Kerala has engaged in breaking the very foundation of K.S.C.D.C and CAPEX. Monopoly procurement of Cashew has completely failed. UDF Government have already given back the 36 cashew factories which were taken over by IDF Government to private sector following a Supreme Court verdict. The future of nearly 32000 workers in the Corporations is bleak.

Now the left trade unions in the cashew industry are engaged in a tough battle to save the public sector and for upholding the legitimate rights of the workers both in the public and private sectors. That battle against the policies of the UDF Government and the Cashew barons should be continued for which stronger and more united trade union movement of cashew workers should be built.

### TRADE UNION MOVEMENT - CHALLENGES: OLD AND NEW

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K.N Ravindranath

With the attainment of independence, Indian National Congress became the ruling party in India. It formulated the policy and plan framework for the capitalist development of the country.

As a result the bourgeois landlord classes were strengthened enormously and the big bourgeoisie rapidly grew in might and affluence. Trade Unions in this country have been functioning in the

above situation.

India's trade union movement has a pretty long history and tradition. In Kerala trade unions began to be organised as far back as the 1930s. It was exclusively the Left political movement that gave the initiative leadership to the formation of the trade union movement. Besides, taking up the many issues, born of employer-employee relations, in order to defend and protect working class interests, these trade unions also came forward to organise and rally workers for the goal of National Independence. But the Congress, even at that time had adopted an attitude of positively discouraging workers struggled. In the princely states also the Congress did not favour the workers in their participation in the struggle for democracy. On the other hand the Left Political leadership had adopted a very favourable attitude towards the workers movements.

This difference in the approaches of the Congress and the Left forces continued even after Independence. When the Congress became the ruling party, they formed a new central Trade Union organisation of their own. As a result, the All India Trade Union Congress was split and two central Trade Union Organizations came into existence - the A.I.T.U.C. and the I.N.T.U.C. The Congress gave currency to the idea and concept of 'Independent Trade Unionism'. Its content was that workers should confine themselves to meet their economic needs and demands and desist from political activities.

There is an allegation now against trade unions and workers by the bourgeois media that trade unions and workers are 'self centred and self seeking'; that they have no interest in the welfare of the Nation or those of the people.

But when workers and their Trade union organisations, reacting politically, begin to expose and resist the bourgeois policies, the bourgeois media take the field with another allegation - that labour unions are politically overladen; that this destroys the amiable atmosphere necessary in the employer-employee relations; that the Left policies are responsible for this and so on. Their aim is obvious - that workers and their trade unions should without demur accept and abide by the ideological-political stands that the bourgeoisie uphold.

There is another allegation raised by the capitalist classes and their representatives - that the workers organised in Trade unions exploit the

unorganised sections of the people using their organised might. It is only a very small percentage of India's industrial workforce which has taken membership in organised trade unions. The employers in this country are enormously more organised than workers. The FICCI, the Indian Merchants' Chamber are examples. Moreover these organizations are highly powerful and successful in influencing the central government authorities. For instance long before Manmohan Singh declared the policies of liberalisation and the New Economic Policy these organizations had demanded certain measures in the memoranda submitted to the Central Finance Minister. It was these same demands that later came as Rao government's first budget and other policy declarations. Another small instance can be seen in the strike resorted to by the private bus fleets owners in Kerala demanding hike in bus charges and the state government accepting their demand instantly. All these show that owners of capital are overwhelmingly more organised than workers and that they are able to exploit the whole people through the central and state governments on the basis of their organised might. Moreover workers organised in trade unions or otherwise are only victims of their exploitation.

The bourgeois ideologists further raise the allegations that the trade unions are totally unconcerned about the existence and growth of industry, that they adopt a negative attitude to productivity, hinder technological progress and so on. Anybody who takes the trouble to objectively scrutinise the positions adopted by the trade union organisations in Kerala during the last one decade will easily see through the hollowness of these allegations. The CITU has published several study reports concerning the important public sector industrial establishments in Kerala. Suggestions to run them efficiently and profitably have been incorporated in those study reports. With regard to productivity, it is a fact recognised and acknowledged by the concerned management themselves that the workers and their trade unions have played undeniably significant and substantial role in utilising more than hundred percent of the capacity of many a central and state public sector undertakings. The Hindustan Newsprint, Kerala Minerals and Metals are notable instances. The trade unions' approach to introduction of new technology is, by no means negative. But the trade unions do resist unilateral introduction of new technology.

The liberalization measures and the New economic policy measures being implemented by Rao administration are negating even the achievements of post independence period. As a result of these measures there is a deindustrialization process set in motion in the important sector. The invasion of multinational monopolies has thrown open the way for the imposition of their domination over the national economy. The trade unions are on a nation wide

resistance struggle against these policies and measures. The Left Trade Unions, especially, are making all out efforts to rally together all workers and all organisations irrespective of their political affiliations and preferences in this struggle. At the same time the Trade union organisations also give strong support to the struggle launched by farmers and agricultural labourers for land reforms and for remunerative prizes to agricultural produce.

### EVOLUTION OF THE RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE IN KERALA

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T.S. Balagopalan, Prabhu & A. Achyuthan

The different phases in the evolution of the structure and form of residential architecture can be traced in the contemporary habitat scene of Kerala. Kerala still has a few food-gathering tribes (Kadar, Uralis and Malapandarams) of prehistoric technology who built wind-shields or rudimentary huts of reeds and leaves in the wilderness. In areas prone to attack by elephants, the tribals also built houses atop trees. Huts on spikes are also seen, but very rarely. The primitive models of house forms, huts with bamboo frames and thatched with leaves in circular or square shape, are also rare. However, the memory of such forms is retained in the form of temples. According to Ananda Coomaraswamy, the Indian temple had its genesis in the primitive huts and such rudimentary forms are today seen only in Kerala. Circular temples, for example, representing this stylistic development are extremely rare in other parts of India and unknown even in the civil architecture of Kerala. Elementary square shrines also incorporate the memory of the earliest forms of huts with their corner pillars, solitary doors and caged roofs (*panjara* or *kudam*).

The rectangular house form also had an ancient origin. It may be traced to the early Vedic period or the primordial shed of Dravidian culture. Rectangular halls with gable ends were known in all early civilizations, but its evolution into a well-ordered structural and spatial system was a development unique to Kerala. Two texts critical in this

development were *Manusyalya Candrika* and *Vastuvidya*, complied in the 15th century which deal with the theory, canons and practices of domestic architecture.

Domestic architecture evolved from the construction of ritual halls (or *salas*) as outlined in the puranic texts. The basic *sala*, the *Prachina Vamsala* of *agni sacrifices*, for example, has a number of bamboo poles fixed to the ground supporting a bamboo ridge (*vamsam*). On either side of these central poles are short poles supporting bressumers (*chuzhika*). Bamboo rafters span the ridge and the bressumers to form the roof frame. It is roofed by palm leaf or thatching and cladding of the sides are by beaten bamboo. This simple structure, however, underwent a significant change in the process of avoiding the central row of column by bending the ridge. The sloping hip rafters and the other rafters joining at the ridge and could now support the ridge even the end column of the ridge. The sala thus becomes completely free from the internal columns. The characteristic Kerala roof with its bent ridge, mini-gable ends, and sloping rafters supporting the ridge forming a space frame entirely supported on the peripheral bressumers was thus evolved. But the memory of the poles at the gable ends was retained by the two end fenials (*stupi*) which adorned the roof frame as a terminating feature.

With the change in the structural system of the roof the emphasis shifted from the ridge to the wall plate. In

earlier works the size of a sala was given in terms of the length of the ridge (*vamsam* or *monthayam*). Now the wall place (*uttaram*) became the prime element of the roof. The basic architecture formula of Kerala house design is the one by which the perimeter of the *uttaram* is computed from the desired ridge length (*ishta deerkham*). As the entire roof load was transferred to the periphery by this roof construction technique, the perimeter of the building and not its area became the prime dimensional descriptor of the building. Here only the external walls were load bearing and the internal walls were partitions, and could be changed to suit other parametric requirements. Thus canons of wall thickness etc., were applicable to external walls, and internal walls were of varying thickness.

For any given area, the perimeter is a good indicator of the space efficiency. Standard values were prescribed by sages like Daksha and Garga as limiting values for proportion for domestic buildings, given the division of internal space. In Kerala these ratios were adhered to in order to bring efficiency and economy in construction. The width to length ratios of the central core house (*thaipura*) was however made with more elongation when it was being expanded by additional corridors (*alindam*) to evolve a system in which the house became more efficient with expansion and approached the prescribed ratios. This provided flexibility of house forms to suit the needs of nucleated and joint families.

The orientation of a house in any of the cardinal directions to benefit from wind, solar radiation, rain, view or access was also central to house construction. But the orientation was specifically identified by an architectural formula called *yoni*. According to *yoni* concept, the prime dimension (perimeter) divided by 8 yielded an integer remainder, 1 to 8, indicative of the 8 directions (1,3,5,7 indicating east, south, west and north, and 2,4,6,8 for southeast, southwest, northeast and northwest) of its position with respect to the focal point in the plot. Of these only the odd numbers of the *yoni* were acceptable. The *yoni* formula ensured that a building of a specific orientation had a specific set of perimeters and restricted the acceptable perimeters of building into four dimensional sets corresponding to four orientations.

The dimensional grouping was a major step in building standardisation, a

concept which is being increasingly accepted as a solution to mass housing. Dimensional standardisation was achieved by dividing the four dimensional sets into five set-groups linked to the life cycle, childhood, adolescence, youth, old age and death. This standardisation was applied to the entire construction in a systems approach. From the perimeter of the building, the width for optimum configuration was determined. The height of the plinth and the walls, the size of the roof members, the thickness and depth of floor beams were all expressed in terms, of the width of the building by a proportionate system. These proportions were pragmatically evolved from considerations of the strength and stability of the structure over years of observation. Remembered by rote and passed on from one generation to another, these proportions were followed with the rigidity of *tachusastra*, the science of carpentry. The standardised form of the structure was safe, stable and durable and able to serve more than one generation of its dwellers.

Once perfected, the house form was used as a module for space articulation to evolve larger complexes. The basic unit of *sala* was arranged around the courtyard to form combined *salas* (*slishtasala*) with two (*dwisala*) three (*thrisala*) or fully enclosed four (*chatussala*) wings. The courtyarded house plan of *chatussala* is seen in most ancient cultures, it is much elaborated in the classic texts of *Brihat Samhita*, *Mayamatha*, etc. But nowhere did it evolve fully as a unified spatial and structural system suited to climate and socio-cultural set up as in Kerala. At least nine specific forms of *nalukettu* (*chathussala*) with the characteristic of each *sala* preserved in their dimensions are described in texts like *Manushyalaya Candrika*. Each of these had more than one design solution. The basic form of *nalukettu* also expanded to form multi-courtyarded blocks like those of 2,3 or 4 yards by ingenious design solutions not seen elsewhere in India. This was a stylistic development wherein the design process outgrew the canons and adopted an analytical approach. This trend continued until the 19th century when socio-political changes interrupted cultural development.

The evolution of the Kerala house was a gradual and systematic process with appropriate utilisation of available material, adapted to the regional climate and above all incorporating innovative ideas and techniques. The most important contribution of this system was the

creation of skills in masonry, carpentry, finishing work, joining and computational techniques, which continue to be living arts. Kerala has perhaps a unique culture which gave emphasis to domestic construction as much as to temple construction. The treatises of *Vastusastra*, the science of traditional domestic construction, such as *Manushyalaya Candrika*, incorporated all this knowledge in a concise manner for the benefit of all concerned with this art. The text, written in technical Sanskrit, was popular with Brahmin acharyas, as well as with the *silpis* of lower tiers. It was taught as a text in all Gurukulas of traditional craftsmen.

Some of the principles of residential architecture of Kerala, such as its holistic approach, its logical procedures, canonical rules of proportions, standardisation of elements, adaptation to local materials,

flexibility to suit varying requirements, etc., have much significance for all times. In fact, these concepts properly understood could be effectively integrated with the analytical approach of modern experimental sciences and synthesised with the new technology, modern materials and emerging cultural trends. This requires:

- i. an inquiry into the traditional sciences with an open mind;
- ii. a critical evaluation of old practices from the new point of modern science;
- iii. an investigation of the possibility of synthesis;
- iv. the coming together of traditional and modern practitioners for fruitful dialogue devoid of mutual distrust; and
- v. the introduction of *Vastusastra* in the curriculum of modern professional education.

## THE POLITICAL ART AND THE MARKING OF RADICALS: IDENTIFYING THE CRISIS WITHIN THE NATIONAL MAINSTREAM AND KERALA

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Shivaji K. Panikkar

The paper is an attempt in demarcating three parallel areas of modern Indian art development: first, the direction within the Right wing political purpose; second, the above in contradistinction with the Left wing trajectory and the third, consideration of the above two categories and the search for alternative praxis of the Radical collective. This perspective entails imperatively that art ceases to be considered in isolation from other human endeavours.

I choose to contrast the self conscious revolutionary marking of Indian Radical Painters and Sculptors Association from among the large heterogeneous artistic mainstream of Modern Indian art so as to facilitate a focused vision which could provide a vantage point in appraising the national and regional art manifestations in their totality. This short lived collective and "movement" which functioned during 1985-89, affected the mainstream art situation only minimally. The impact of the group was limited within the small circle of artists and critics. However, the failure of the group in generating an ongoing

'movement' and 'people's participation' as per its aspirations need not detain us from discussing the validity of the specific ideological vantage.

The revivalist movement of the first four decades of this century did adhere to a stylistic ideology related to the Right wing political purposes. The theoretical framework for tradition and revivalism invented by E.B. Havell, Ananda Coomaraswami and Abanindranath Tagore, perceived the aspects of past art and its contemporary purpose in a way that essentially negated the possibility of any meaningful contact between the individual's creativity and the real socio-political contradictions in the society. The sentimentality in themes and the facile stylistic grid of Revivalism fell short of dynamism, though it went a long way in invigorating the false pride of the Hindu bourgeoisie in their past culture as superior to that of the westernized elite class.

The revivalistic kitsch extends its bearing upon the later decades in revised forms of expression. The Tantric and the folksy/tribal linguistic jargons or the

general trend of appropriating symbols and motifs and techniques of traditional forms prevalent in the K.C.S. Panicker initiated South Indian mainstream, assume authenticity and validity from this invented tradition, while also trying to come to terms with the international trends, thus availing legitimacy from both. The fundamental shortcomings of such art trends is their lack of concern for and incapability in bringing to the fore the actual life experiences and bypassing of the disquieting tragedies of our time.

The non-commitment to a radical ideology at any point in the last fifty years of modernity in visual art is glaring. It is specifically only the so called "progressive" tendencies of different kinds that have been promoted through institutional apparatuses. As a result, our modernity could at no point become genuinely a voice to reinforce any kind of subaltern partisan ideology. Even as an attempt, the only exception from this ongoing trend is to be credited to the Indian Radical Painters and Sculptors Association. Since artists themselves characterised their ideological point of vantage as "progressive" in the 1940's and 1950's, which even while functioning as a counterpart of the western avant-garde in certain respects, was largely within the definition of the ruling party's "progressive" developmental political programme for the nation. But the artists did not totally conform to the dominant politics, since progressivism also meant 'freedom' from the state. At the same time artist groups in regional centres were making 'space' for their art practice. Regionalism has been a dominant feature of Indian Art since then. However, these artist groups did not consider any alternative programmes of radicalism outside of what was defined by the national and regional art academies, the art schools and private galleries.

Our Socialist/communist trajectories in art, which began in Bengal during the early 1940s in the ambience of the great famine with the works of artists like Somnath Hore, Zainul Abudin and Chittaprasad, also did not generate any sparks of radical art practice, since the flood of international modernist language and the break-up of the communist party preempted the incipient potential in achieving a politically positive praxis. This can be seen as a result of the search for a more autonomous existentialist, spiritualized position and consequently there evolved a language

that was celebrative of a sublime visual valency, based on personal sensual assimilation of pure nature. In Somnath Hore, pessimism/sentimentality deriving from the historical tragedy of the Bengal famine, persisted, while he romantically held on to the tragic mode. Perhaps, this can be favourably read as a resistance against the amnesia which capitalism entails.

From the early 1970's, the markings of Baroda school with an avant-garde intention became an immediately relevant point of departure for the Radical collective. The eclectic thinking and experimentation in the direction of a conscious synthesis of diverse elements in the pictorial language had been the most absorbing aspect of the Baroda school. This neo-narrative trend also explored a greater sense of confidence in incorporating elements from varied Indian and western linguistic tradition including the popular and the hybrid. The awareness of the fact that art languages functioning at all times have been syncretistic and impure, virtually the long standing struggle for achieving the so called "Indianness" and from there on the artist was in a position to view the "Western" linguistic material with a grounded subjectivity.

The Radical group questions the attribution of radicalism to their figurative/narrative predecessors. Though the group got themselves named as the Indian Radical Painters and Sculptors Association only during February 1989, the initial coming together is to be traced back to the 2nd half of the 1970's. This is located within the context of highly agitated political climate of the Emergency and post-emergency times in Kerala.

The origin is located within the heterogeneous student community at Trivandrum College of Fine Arts who were getting together continuously for striking against the infrastructural shortcomings of this institution. The formation of the group with a specific ideological view point and a definite shape took place in Baroda with the exhibition titled "Questions and Dialogue" at the Faculty of Fine Arts, during March 1987. In 1989 the group put up a demonstration against the "Timeless Art" exhibition and auction by the Sothebys and brought out a pamphlet criticising the commercialisation of art and artists.

This historically valid Radical collective and movement was possibly the only serious attempt within the historical evolution of Modern Indian art

practices in terms of resistance, intervention and an alternative search in theory and praxis. The Radical collective could be discussed as an experience in radical struggle, an effort to break away from the established notions of social space for art practice. The dialectical process of functioning "within" and "without" of society assumes complex problems while arriving at a politically valid praxis.

The Radical movement did not have a project for achieving a singular language/content formation for its artists. The choice of the specific sources drawn from the world of art and life had been determined broadly by the ideological premise of art in a historical context and this filter was made up of affirmative concern and faith in humanism.

### AREA STUDIES COLLECTION - A NEGLECTED ASPECT OF LIBRARIES IN KERALA

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N. Sukumaran Nair

The paper discusses the need for organising a comprehensive collection pertaining to all aspects of Kerala. This can be called 'Kerala Studies Collection'. Documents on the scientific studies carried out in Kerala, documents dealing with various other aspects of the State and the documents produced within the State should form the core collection. This collection should

consist of books, periodicals, news papers and similar documents and nonbook materials representing every discipline. The paper also deals with the scope of such a collection and the difficulties encountered in the acquisition, processing and maintenance. After evaluating the existing set up it proposes a model for building up such a collection.

Kerala University Library, Thiruvananthapuram.

### SURVEY OF STUDIES IN FINE ARTS OF KERALA

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V. Shoba Menon

When we consider an overall view of Indian Art History, it is doubtful if this total number of significant sources for it would exceed a few hundred, the case with in the studies in Fine Arts of Kerala. There has been a quickening of interest in Indian Art and its history in the last few decades. But analytical works on Indian Art History, especially the art history of Kerala, examining cultural movements and social cross currents are yet conspicuously absent.

The visual history of Kerala starts from pre-historic sites such as Edakkal

caves with engravings on rock, Marayur cave paintings and some burial sites. With the arrival of Jains and Buddhists to the state, we have few cave temples with the images of Buddha, and Jain Tirthankara and their consorts. The arrival of these religion to the state are said to be at the time of King Asoka, according to some inscriptions found in Tamil Nadu. Though these religions have resulted in massive, monumental structures all over India, we cannot find that kind of construction activity in Kerala, may be due to the lack of

suitable circumstances in the land. What remains as solid evidence of Buddhism are few sculptures of Budha, rather in a crude form. But Jainism has more prevalent examples all over the state. One such important site is Chitaral cave temple near Thiruvananthapuram District.

The first published note on these Jain caves and Budha images came in the year 1906 by Shri. Naga Aiya in the Travancore State Manyal Vol. I. But a detailed study was conducted by Shri. T.A. Gopinatha Rao published in 1908, on the topic, "Jaina and Budha Vestiges in Travancore", in Travancore Archaeological series Volume II, part II. He was the first Indian to write on Indian Iconography in the whole history of Indian Art.

From 8th century onwards, we have a history of temple architecture built in stone and brick having small shrines, evolving into multiple structures having several storeys in appearance. And these structures have a place in the idea that was related to agriculture and productivity of our society.

In the case of sculptures, though earlier specimens are in stone, we are less mastered in the art of stone carving compared to wood carving where we have masterly craftsmanship.

The large employment of wood in the construction and decoration of all kinds of buildings of Hindus, Muslims and Christians in Kerala is sufficiently accounted for, by the abundant supply of timber available in the forests till the last century. And it is neither the result of any Jain influence nor any connection with Nepal or Tibet as stated by Mr. Fergusson.

Kerala has a colourful mural painting tradition narrating the stories of Mahabharatha, Ramayana and also depicting the figures of deities on the walls of palaces, temples and churches. In the case of Muslim architecture, the painting is limited to floral, arabesque designs and geometrical patterns.

Along with these religious classical art tradition, we practice many ritual art forms appears as tribal and folk, such as Kalamezhuth, Theyyam, Thira, Mudiyettu, Tolppavakuthu, etc., of which the number exceeds hundred.

In Kerala, it was the Bhagavati cult (Bhagavati Kavukal), which is more prevalent among the locals. The primordial energy of mother goddess (Amma daivam) in malevolent and benevolent forms permeates in the every nook and corner of our villages. These myths have different meanings, different functions at different places and in different levels.

Another peculiarity of Kerala is that, Nagaraja/Naga Yakshi sculptures are found in abundance, they being worshipped as the guardian of wealth and land.

The pictorial analysis of these sculptures, paintings, Tolppavakkuth, Kalamezhuth, Theyyam and other dance forms shows that all these art forms are inter-related in its presentation. Another important fact is that our culture is a living tradition, always changing but carrying the same archetypes, therefore, not making any frozen moments of the past.

This paper points to literature bears on the subject.

Travancore Information and Listner; Travancore, Malabar, Kochi State manuals, Gazetteers, Archaeological series, etc., from 1900 to 1950 contain articles and valuable information about archaeological discoveries and translations of inscriptions related to the subject.

V.S. Chitra and T.N. Sreenivasan jointly wrote a book on Cochin Murals in 1940. J.H. Cousins as part of his job as cultural advisor to the state, made genuine efforts to reveal the ancient frescoes in Travancore.

A significant survey on the 'Arts and Crafts of Kerala' was done by Stella Kramarisch, Vasudeva Poduval, J.H. Cousins in the early sixties.

Sivaramamurthy's book 'South Indian Mural Painting' Contains a chapter on Kerala murals. A documentation of temple architecture of Kerala is available from the book "Temple arts of Kerala" by Bermier R.N., Published in 1982. A recent book by Kapila Vatsyayan on "The Arts of Kerala Kshetra" is a detailed study of the different art forms of Kerala from Kathakali to Mural painting.

The reassertion of Indian cultural values for the promotion of tourism resulted in a different reading of folk art forms. In Kerala there is an awakening of interest in the studies of folk art forms in the last few years. As a result of this interest unlike the static visual arts, a large number of published materials are available touching various aspects of production and conceptions of performing arts.

The middle of the 19th century was the beginning of an orgy of foreignism introduced by the British rule in India, which pervaded every phase and aspect of Indian life.

So the twentieth century, modern art scene of Kerala got a vigour in the hands of Raja Ravi Varma. Many people talked about him. Still the controversies and discussions are going on in the news media.

Modern art movements under the leadership of Shri.K.C.S.Panikar has been a subject of discussion for some scholars. Kesari Balakrishna Pillai made efforts to study modern art along with his contributions in the sphere of Malayalam literature. The present situation of contemporary art scene has acquired a place in the press in the form

of art columns by regular columnists. A problem with most of these are, they merely make documents. A true conception on the evaluation of visual arts with consideration to causative elements in other manifestations of social life will lead us to a better understanding of our culture. This aspect is absent in many of the referred studies.

### SCULPTURE, POETRY AND KADAMMANITTA

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Soman

Human response to social environment expresses itself in various forms; sculpture and poetry are two of them. When blended thoughtfully they complement one another and create a wider space for potential social expression. Thus, the sculptural interpretation of poetry in Kadamanitta village of Kerala reinforces

the relationship between poetry and the people of the village. The enthusiasm and involvement of the people and institutions of the village add yet another dimension to the relationship between poetry and the people. The collective response of the people transforms apt into social activity.

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### M. GOVINDAN - THE TURNING POINT

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L.Rita Unnikrishnan

All the modern trends since 1950 have found their echo in the cultural arena of Kerala. Behind or in front of all such achievement stands M. Govindan. The unique aspect about him was that one could never separate his life and words. The central theme of his philosophy is man. Man should be the measure of any philosophical formulation or evaluation and he should not be measured in the framework of a philosophy, however great it might be. His contribution to the world of philosophy is that instead of measuring man using the yardstick of doctrine, we have to use the yardstick that fits in with each individual. His approach was a realistic one based on the real communion between man and man. Those who refuse to make compromise at the cost of freedom are alienated. Govindan's

'humanism' played a significant role in the intellectual advancement of such individuals. The resultant strong bond of these lone individuals helped modern Malayalam tradition to become more socially relevant than those of other parts of India.

Books and periodicals are the necessary means of cultural renaissance. The established media become inadequate to get across the theme when it is a new message. Hence the relevance of the 'Little Magazines' inaugurated by Govindan. The English and Malayalam editions of 'Sameeksha' mark the golden age of little magazine movement in India. Every original piece of creative writing in modern Malayalam can be traced to the influence of Govindan and his 'Sameeksha'. His ideological contention

that the core of renaissance is the individual's original thinking and free expression has long been talked about. Thanks to Govindan, the fraternity emerging out of interaction between individuals and unfolding the essence of the human being led on to genuine and original creative endeavour.

To be a slave to one's thought, however great it might be, is the negation of man's essence and freedom. One has to imbibe the diverse philosophical thoughts and cultural trends according to one's conscience and independent thinking. This line of approach that brooks no compromise between word and deed became a turning point in Malayalam culture. It is a philosophical commonplace to say that at the centre of independent thinking is the contrast between the gross aspects of authority and the fine ones of ideas. Govindan went deep to the roots and organic milieu of the term revolution and endeavoured to widen still the limitless horizons of revolution and draw human civilization closer to man. He rendered it as a natural transition rather than institutionalisation or propaganda. A true revolutionary always is an individual who is brave enough to cast aside populism. In fact the term radicalism is more fitting than revolution in the context of M. Govindan.

Govindan repudiates all forms of concentration of power which is a potent force in social context. Modern nationalism pays homage to diverse forms of power. Therefore Govindan questions nationalism that stands in the way of human freedom. The question he raised was not who should wield power or where it should concentrate, but he sought to check and prevent this concentration in any socio-political process.

Govindan, the poet deserves special mention. His poetic diction and symbols call for intensive study in the light of the broad dravidian culture. In diverse ways these poems have brought forth far reaching changes in Malayalam poetry. His essays, letters and correspondence reflect a rare philosophical dimension of creative poetic genius. He was even wakeful not to indulge in pedantism. Symbols, myths and images harnessed to the expression of ideas make his prose style different.

Finally, it is not proper to look at his words as scriptures or slogans and portray him as an icon. Govindan himself tried to put an end to such rituals. Truly independent individuals are rare and solitary. Yet they are the ones who contribute to and direct history. Govindan's life was an enactment of this eternal truth.

## IMPACT OF SOLID WASTES ON FLOODING IN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM CITY

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O.V.Thomas

Inadequate drainage is responsible for the recurrent floods in the capital city of Thiruvananthapuram. There are several factors contributing to inadequate drainage. The most visible cause is the insufficient draining capacity of the main drainage channels at the downstream end. The name of the channel itself, "Amayizhanchan Thodu", gives some indication of the low velocity of flow in the channel. There has been encroachment on the banks of the drainage channel, which became silted due to the slow velocity of flow of water and deposits of soil on the sides of the channel. Attempts to restore the original cross-section of the channel by desilting the

channel were hampered by resistance from encroachers. After 1993, the flood tail-end of the drainage system has been cleared and floods during the current year have been prevented.

Another important reason for the reduction in the capacity of the drainage system is the growing problem of improper disposal of solid wastes. With changing life-styles the amount of domestic solid wastes per capita has been increasing over the years. With the growth in the number of dwelling houses in the city, the growth of the volume of garbage calls for serious consideration of schemes for its disposal.

Solid wastes choke the drains from the start of the drainage system near

households. The garbage collection machinery of the Corporation does not get a chance to handle the garbage that is directly deposited in the drains. Wherever they exist, the choked drains fail to rain and waste water which, in turn, spill over to the roads eroding earthen berms. The eroded soil aggravates the drainage problem, choking even larger drainage channels downstream.

The ideal method for reducing the problem created by garbage is to utilise it usefully, for instance, to produce cooking gas. The city corporation can profitably promote the construction of such cooking-gas plants by providing subsidies and training workers to construct them. An awareness campaign regarding proper garbage handling methods is also important.

The decreasing area of vegetation reduces the retention time for rain water to find its way to the drainage system. This puts an increasing load on the system. The reclamation of low-lying areas further strains the balancing capacity of the drainage system.

The maintenance of side-drains and pavements can be undertaken by voluntary groups. This would prevent erosion of soil from the roads and thus improve drainage. Improvement in traffic conditions on the road will be another major benefit. Local bodies can guide such voluntary work by providing technical information and some implements wherever required. The widely scattered area of such activity and its simple nature renders it advantageous for local people to handle it.