

Government Arts & Science College

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# RESEARCH JOURNAL

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Editor

**Dr. Priya Pilicode**



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## EDITORIAL

As we present this edition of our college journal, we are thrilled to offer a diverse collection of research articles, reflecting the depth and variety of academic work taking place within our institution. Unlike previous editions, this journal does not adhere to a singular theme, symbolizing the rich academic diversity of our contributors. We are proud to showcase these articles, which span a wide range of topics and disciplines, in both English and Malayalam.

We begin with an article that explores the '**Historical Roots of the Kerala Model of Development**' by **Dr. K. GopalanKutty**, which delves into how Kerala achieved remarkable social development without economic prosperity, a model that continues to intrigue social scientists worldwide. Following this, **Sunny M Kapikkad**, a renowned writer and social activist, offers an insightful analysis of the '**Vaikom Struggle**' and its historical significance through the contributions of **Thanthai Periyar**'.

Shifting to the realm of temple history, **Akshara and P S Manojkumar** present a study on the '**Property, Management and Affiliations: Temple Lands in the Princely State of Cochin in the 19th century**', focusing on the economic reforms brought in by **ShaktanThampuran** and **Col. Munroe**. In the context of modern education, **Dr.Mallika M G** examines the '**Social Exclusion in the Era of Education Technology in India**', exploring the digital divide and offering policy recommendations to address inequalities.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is reflected in two studies: **Dr. Suresh Babu PA's** '**Disproportionate Burden of a Pandemic: A Gender Disaggregated Enquiry**', which highlights the disproportionate effect on women, and **Dr.Kabeer K.T.'s** exploration of the '**Job and Health Status of Internal Migrants in Kerala During COVID-19**', shedding light on the vulnerabilities of migrant workers in the state.

In healthcare, **Geetha C.** provides an insightful look into the evolution of healthcare systems from asylums to modern medical care in her study titled '**A Study on Care and Cure**'. Meanwhile, **Dr. Priya Pilicode** presents an intriguing case study on '**Gandhian Constructive Programme and the Making of a 'New India**', focusing on **Swami AnandaThirtha's** contributions to nation-building.

## Editorial

Adding to the richness of this edition, **Chinju M.** offers a unique perspective on '**Deciphering the Wayanad Culture**', analyzing the complex relationship between migration and the biosphere. **Sahira M. K.** takes us further back in time with her article on '**Kerala Inscriptions and Issues in Their Decipherment**', emphasizing the challenges in understanding Kerala's epigraphic history. **Sruthi S.** brings attention to local political movements with her case study titled '**Political Movements and Social Change: A Case Study of Kurumbranad Taluk**', offering insights into how grassroots movements have shaped social change.

**K.T. Kunhikannan**, Director of KeluEttan Study and Research Centre, Kozhikode, presents a thought-provoking piece in Malayalam titled '**PashurakshaRashtriyathinte Charithravum Pratyayashastravum**', which critically examines the history and politics behind the rise of cow protection movements and associated violence in contemporary India.

Following this, **Ravi K.P.** delves into the discourse surrounding Dalit literature with his work '**Dalit Sahithya Vyavaharam**', which addresses the complexities and significant contributions of Dalit authors in shaping literary traditions.

Finally, **Soniya E. Pa** offers a detailed exploration of women's labor and advancements in her article '**Thozhilum Stree Munnettangalum**', shedding light on gendered labor dynamics and the progress of women in the workforce.

We hope this edition encourages you to reflect on the vast range of academic inquiry presented here. Each article, though unique in its focus, represents the collective pursuit of knowledge and understanding. Whether in English or Malayalam, each piece offers something valuable to our readers, and we are confident you will find much to ponder within these pages.

Calicut

**Priya Pilicode**

# **Historical Roots of the Kerala Model of Development**

**Dr. K GopalanKutty**

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Kerala has attracted the attention of social scientists world-wide for its high living standards without attaining economic prosperity. This has been called the 'Kerala Model' of development. This is not a political statement: nor it is a self engratulatory claim. Some Development experts have, however, voiced their disagreement with the use of the term 'model'. Some others are happy with the term 'development experience'. Without raising a semantic debate over the term or to see whether it is a discriminating description or a normative comment, it has to be made clear that the term model is used here in a general sense as a representation of reality. It is not a model in the sense of it being something which has been visualised, planned and development. It is also doubt full whether it is a model for others, in the sense of its capacity for replication elsewhere. So, the term is not used here to assed its potentiality for emulation. The sustainability of the 'model' is also under threat – from within and without. if many things are left unsaid and many questions left unanswered, our only defence is that one should not expect a 'model' to explain everything.

It is widely accepted that due to economic progress and industrialisation, the per capita income of a country increased and as a result, the standard of living of the people also increases. Improvement in the living standard of the people, can thus come about only through rapid industrialisation and economic progress. It is this assumption that Kerala has proved wrong Kerala's Per capita income is lower than the all-India average, which itself is not very high. The kind of industrialisation and agricultural development that states like Haryana and Punjab witnessed has not taken place in Kerala. But Kerala's Indicators of social development, high literacy especially female literacy, low rate of infant mortality, low rate of population growth, greater life expectancy and so on are remarkable and comparable to many of the developed nations. (Statistical details are not provided for greater readability).

## Historical Roots of the Kerala Model of Development

The basic question that has to be raised is: How deep Kerala achieve indicators of social development that are comparable to those of the so called first world country? The fact that Kerala has been transformed from a poor state burdened with caste conflict, poverty and deprivation into a social democratic state with indicators of social development comparable to the first world countries has been accepted by the all. To some Kerala is a paradox and an enigma. At the outset we have to make it clear that it is not an enigma or puzzle but one which could be explained. As this achievement has great significance we should look at the problem positively.

Kerala occupies only 1.18% of total land area of India. Its population only 4% of India's total population. Its population distribution according to religion with 57% Hindus 23% Muslims 19.5% Christians and the rest Jains, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Animist and even a handful of Sens, make it one of the most religiously diverse in the world. Such socio geographical profile some scholars have argued is not conducive for rapid economic growth. We argue in this paper that Kerala's achievement has to be understood historically.

Kerala was marked by extreme caste rigidities in the 'pre modern' period this so cold lower cast were denied access to public road and ponds. There were to change due to several developments the details of which need not be presented here. Sufficient to say that they were not the gift of enlightened rulers or liberal minded of colonial masters. The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed several contestations and popular protest leading to governmental interventions such intervention in turn set a process of transformation.

To initiate a discussion we set a part the 'Kerala Model' thus: it is characterised by

1. A high material quality of life indicators, coinciding with low per capita income
2. A set of wealth and resources re distribution programmes and
3. High level of political participation and social activism.

Such achievements are the result of major political, social and economic transmission which have rule in Kerala history. Some of the digits of these achievements are

- a. Enhanced social conditions, especially alleviation of poverty and deprivation and
- b. Reduction in both spatial and gender gap that is between rural and urban areas, between males and females.

Two more points have to be made. Kerala's achievements are her 'own' in the sense that it was made without outside help and secondly it



was not based on the mobilization of foreign capital within an authoritarian frame work. It is also not based on any model of either development or modernisation be it in the erst while Soviet Union, people republic of China, Cuba or Costa Rica. It is in this sense, its own.

Historically Kerala has been exposed to trade due, in part, to the commercial nature of its agricultural crops. This necessitated some knowledge of arithmetic, accountancy and logic literacy. Portuguese sources inform us that the Samoothiri had scribes who took down the transaction that went on between visitors, foreigner indigenous and the Samoothiri. Such practices presuppose a pre-colonial literacy which however cannot be quantified. During the colonial period Travancore was opened for investment in plantations. The penetration of colonial capital was followed by state investment. This was partly facilitated by the centralisation process initiated by Marthanda Varma. State investment took place in transport, market networks and communication. Such developments of infrastructural facilities lead to the extension of area under rice cultivation. The pandarampattam proclamation of 1865 granted ownership right to small cultivators. Land revenue system developed. For handling such and other administrative affairs, a bureaucracy was required. Opportunities for the educated, especially in the form of sarkar jobs, increased. Social reform movement which emerged in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century have to be viewed in this back ground

Social reform in Kerala, generally had two aspects one internal and other external. Internally the reformers ought to change some of the practices which were seen as out dated and hampering the development of a social group. Externally the reformers protect against social exclusions and practices which favoured some social groups, even effort aimed at internal reform like the wearing of cloth lead to tension as they were perceived as symbols of operation by those who were denied it by conventions and as a threat to the status quo by those who had such a right. Effort to heavy tax on women who wore cloths covering their upper body were resisted. Public demands were raised as part of social reform. The success of the protest movements leads to a rupture of traditional ties and social structure. Access to public roads and ponds and educational institutions for all were secured and this in turn lead to no discriminatory practices and greater equality in religions and social life.

All the reform leaders recognized the value of education and promoted it. They sought to remove the impediments in the universalization of education. Oppression by conservatives to the granting of education to lower caste people and to give were squarely faced. Ayyankali organised

## Historical Roots of the Kerala Model of Development

one of the first strike action of agricultural labourers in 1914 when his attempt to get a Dalit girl admitted to a government school in Ooruttambalam(NeyyatinkaraThaluk) led to violent classes and burning of the school. When the strike paralysed agricultural work, the government was forced to intervene: Three features mark this historic event:

- a. Demand for education without discrimination (which later become a right to education)
- b. Protest against caste and gender-based discrimination and
- c. Elements of class struggle.

SreeNarayana Guru, one of the greatest social reformers of modern Kerala, prescribed education and industry to his followers. At the first meeting of SNDP Yogam, Dr.Palpu stated that "in our country there must be no man or women without primary education" as without it there would be no permanent civilised prosperity. What does education do? In answer Amartya Sen list four things:

1. It makes people better informed, more skilled and more enlightened
2. It expands economic opportunities
3. It influences the power balance in society and
4. The changes in power balance leads to other indirect effects like women empowerment, greater access to health by less privileged people etc.

This Emphasis on women's education facilitated later movements for mass literacy. The old wisdom that 'literate women have literate children' can be referred to in this context.

Political organisations have also played a not so insignificant role in spreading literacy. Reading rooms were opened both in towns and rural areas. They were opened first by nationalists (ten named after nationalist leaders) and later by socialist and communists. Some were for labourers as the name ThozhilalyVayanasala opened in Chochi in 1934 denotes. Night classes were held in reading rooms for the labouring classes where people ingregated and discussed on a variety of subjects. The reading rooms also provided venue for the meetings of congress and later communist organisations and primary school teachers, workers and peasants in their effort at unionisation. Summer schools and other programmes of political education led to increase in literacy, greater political awareness and through them to greater political activism by the people. It also led to the democratization of the society.

The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century also witnessed social and political mobilization and people intervention in public affairs. The Malayali Memorial of 1891 and the Ezhava Memorial of 1896 were efforts to ensure jobs for

the 'sons of the soil' and to gain social justice. Such efforts had a deep impact on the society. In the 1890's a memorandum was submitted to the Queen Mother on the deplorable state of health and hygiene and the disabilities suffered by women. As a result, a hospital for women was set up in Thiruvananthapuram. Later a woman student was provided with a scholarship to study abroad and on her return, a maternity ward was added to the hospital and she was put in charge of it. Gilbert Slater, the first Professor of Economics at the university of Madras wrote that in the Maharaja College, Thiruvananthapuram (new women's college) women students formed one fifth of the total strength in the 1920's and that Nair and Syrian Christian girls formed a sizable number of students in Stella Maris College and Madras Christian College. The educated women in Travancore formed their own association, The Lady Graduate Association and in 1927 pressurised the government to end unemployment among well qualified women. Demands for job reservation for women were made.

Kerala's achievement in family planning have been spectacular This too had its historical roots. A demand for family planning arose in Travancore in 1915 and a memorandum was submitted. In Malabar, a similar demand was made, a little later. The District Board in 1934 demanded that money be set a part for family planning campaigns. Again in 1938, the demand was reiterated, but C. Rajagopalachari, the then Chief Minister of Madras State, rejected the appeal, saying that it was a wasteful expenditure. However, the perspective guiding the people were different. The District Boards, under leftist control, were concerned about the health of the women labourers and wanted family planning measures be initiated for ensuring better health for women labourers. The resolution passed in the meeting specifically mentioned this.

Mention has already been made of social reform movement striving to abolish disabilities and to provide social justice. Public action led to State intervention through social legislation, leading to alterations in inheritance rights, marriage laws and rules of family organisation. By abolishing age old practices and altering traditional power structures such measures made the ground fertile for the emergence of radical politics.

Transformation of pre capitalist relations of production and land landlordism released people from social and cultural bondage. Land legislation played a crucial role in this transformation. The transformation of agrarian relations could be regarded as a foundational feature of the Kerala Model, it would be a mistake to treat land legislation as gift of enlightened and liberal rules. Efforts to gain security of tenure began, especially in Malabar, in the closing decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A detailed

## Historical Roots of the Kerala Model of Development

history of agrarian legislation need not be given. What is important is the public debate about the need for reform and the mobilization efforts to secure it. The Malabar Tenancy Act of 1929 was a result of such mobilization, ably supported by nationalist periodicals and organisations. The appointment of a tenancy Committee in 1939 was in response to large scale mobilization of peasants. Apart from pressurising the government to enact land legislation, there were 'direct action' by the peasants which did not seek judicial or State intervention. The stopping of age-old feudal levies called 'Akramapirivukal' was one such. Peasant mobilisation did not stop with the attainment of independence but continued after. In the 1950 's and 60', land legislation granted security of tenure to tenants, cancelled arrears of rent and vested the rights of the land lords with the government. Secondly it granted homesteads (Kudikidappu) to the rural poor by giving ownership right to occupants. Thirdly it limited land ownership and distributed surplus land to the landless. Land legislation thus ended the Janmy system, gave protection to tenants, provided homesteads to thousands of landless peasants and reduced concentration of landholding. Such measures went a long way in poverty alleviation. All these in turn greatly contributed to the determination of the Kerala Model.

My intention in presenting my views are not motivated by any romanticised notion of the past to say, as one of the character of a popular novel 'my granddad had an elephant' Not at all. I only wanted to point out that many of the achievement of Kerala about which we are justifiably proud of, have their roots in the past and that it was public action which led to legislation and social transformation. The ideas of reform were raised through various organisation of a cultural, social and political kind, through State Council and Popular Assembly through they were not constituted on the basis of adult franchise and had limited legislative powers and through pamphlets and columns of newspapers and periodicals. To these could be added public meetings, demonstrations, strikes and such agitations which were 'propaganda through action'. These continued after India attained independence. Any discussion of the Kerala Model, I would submit, should take these into consideration. It could also be noted that certain marginalised groups like the fisher folk and the indigenous people (Adivasis) who were not effectively mobilized in the pre independence period were not beneficiaries of the Kerala Model and their problems were not adequately addressed even after the formation of the Kerala State.

I should also make it clear that by public I do not mean an undifferentiated whole or a homogenous group. I would argue that cohesiveness of such 'public' was made possible through an ideology, be it

national, socialist or communist. For reasons of time and space I do not wish to elaborate on the ideological moorings of public action.

Though Kerala Model took its final shape in the 1950's and 60's I have not touched on the mobilization efforts either by the state or by political and socio-cultural organisations in the post-independence period. Nor have I raised questions regarding the replicability and more importantly, the sustainability of the model. These require separate papers. Globalization, liberalisation, economic stagnancy and neo liberal policies are posing threats to the Kerala Model. I would end my paper by nothing that the transformation of the society through public action, a salient feature of the Kerala Model, is still relevant.

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# **Vaikom Struggle: Historical Significance of Thanthai Periyar**

**Sunny M Kapikkad**

Writer and Social Activist

On the banks of Vembanad Lake, Vaikom is a small town in Kerala. It is situated on the north of the old princely state of Travancore and 20 kms South to today's Kochi City. It is with the bahujan protest of 1924-25, which lasted for more than one and the half years that Vaikom, came to all India's attention. This protest was by Ezhavas (OBC) and Pulayas (SC) of Vaikom and its suburbs and by leaders of national and social reform movements. The demand of this protest was for people of all communities to walk freely through the path around Vaikom Shiva temple. The road outside the temple wall was under the public works department, still a board stating no entry for untouchables was placed at the road itself. The protest at Vaikom was against this.

This struggle in Vaikom for the right to walk has a long history to narrate. In that most important one is Dalavaakkulam incident, which happened in 1806. Then about 200s of Ezhava youth attempted to walk through public roads and enter temple, they were attacked by Travancore's cavalry. Many were killed and their dead bodies were cremated in a pond near the eastern entry of Vaikom Shiva temple. As a consequence, Ezhavas were massively attacked and many families had to flee. This massacre and genocide of Ezhavas is known in Kerala history as Dalavaakkulam incident.

Before the beginning of Vaikom Satyagraha in 1924, the Ezhavas and Pulayas who were natives of Vaikom planned another struggle. They collectively decided to enter the forbidden public roads of Vaikom as a procession on March 1st 1924. It is when the preparation for this procession was going on, that some leaders of State Congress interfered. They abandoned this organised movement and instead began individualistic Satyagraha under the instruction of Gandhi. Without any reasons these satyagrahis were severely attacked by savarna caste Hindus. Gandhi was anxious not about the attacks but about self-control of Satyagrahis. The position of Gandhi was to stop Satyagraha if they cannot refrain from responding to any such violent attacks. So, from historical records without any doubt it can be clearly stated that Vaikom Satyagraha was not a naturally

occurred one but established through the interference of State Congress in the organised struggle of native avarnas, with the benedictions of Gandhi.

Gandhi was so irrefutable and unquestionable that all oppositions and differences of opinion became insignificant. When Vaikom Satyagraha started people of different castes and religions became part of it. Vaikom Satyagraha is the only struggle in which Sree Narayana Guru, one of the chief architects of Kerala renaissance, was directly involved. His monastery was used by satyagrahis as their office. It is there the Akali dals from Punjab opened their free mess. People like George Joseph, Sebastian, Matthew Kuruvila was directly part of Satyagraha. Swamy Sragthanatha, the leader of Arya Samaj camped at Vaikom and became part of the struggle. Under the leadership of Janab Abdul Rahman, strike forces from Kollam reached Vaikom on foot. The liberal Congress leaders from Tamil Nâdu and Kerala led the Satyagraha movement. In support of the struggle Sri Lankan youth provided financial assistance. Four women in leadership of Gomti came from Kannur to participate in this struggle. It is in this phase, when the struggle became powerful with the support of people of various castes and religions, women and youth that Gandhi who is a self-proclaimed *Sanathana* Hindu interfered in the struggle. Gandhi stands in Vaikom Satyagraha still remains as unexplainable enigma for Gandhi devotees.

Gandhi wrote a letter to the Satyagraha committee expressing his anger about non-Hindus including Christians Muslims and Akali dals participating and financially aiding the strike against Brahmin priests. He asked whether such organised struggle against the priests will end untouchability or whether the priests voluntarily take decisions in favour of Satyagraha. In this letter Gandhi clearly and openly supported the Brahmin priests and objected Satyagraha leaders and fighters. Satyagraha committee might have completely and mercilessly rejected this stance, if it is from anyone else other than Gandhi. Gandhi cancelled the decision that AICC should pay an amount of rupees 1000 to the Satyagraha committee every month. He forcefully banned the non-Hindus in participating in the struggle. Thus, the interventions of Gandhi orphaned the large civil rights movement that had grown up in Vaikom.

It is in this desperate situation, that the Satyagraha committee sent letters and telegrams to EVR asking him to take the leadership of Vaikom Satyagraha. He himself has noted that he came to Vaikom not voluntarily but under the request of satyagrahis. When EVR reached Vaikom with Nagammal and Kannammal, Satyagraha was going on without any vigour. First thing he did was to make clear the intentions of the Satyagraha. He

## Vaikom Struggle : Historical Significance...

asserted that the goal of the Satyagraha was not to attain *moksha* by worshipping *Vaikkattappa*, instead the strike aims at establishing the right of every human being to walk through the path which is accessible even to dog, cat, and pig. This proclamation spread like wildfire across Vaikom. Hundreds of people with aroused self-respect flocked to the strike ground. Thus, the lost support of Bahujan's was regaining. To make this support more collective and organised ThanthaiPeriyar organised the number of meetings from Vaikom to Thiruvananthapuram.

In a meeting at Cherthala he suggested that more women should participate in the Satyagraha and then under the leadership of the women rupees 101 was collected and donated. Despite Gandhi's ban, thousands of rupees were donated from Tamil Nadu. Even Rajaji donated money. Tamil people got more active and energized after ThanthaiPeriyar took the leadership. This proves the love and veneration that Tamil people had for him. Vaikom struggle became stronger under the leadership of Periyar. The authorities sensing the danger arrested and jailed ThanthaiPeriyar. By this time the Brahmin priests of Vaikom were embarrassing themselves by performing a *Shatrushamara Homa* and trying to get rid of Periyar. It is in this context that Gandhi's visit to Vaikom should be analysed.

Gandhi visited Vaikom on 10th March 1925. This time, he visited the Indamthuruthimana, the customary owners of Vaikom temple and had a discussion with Devan Neelakandan Namboothiri. What they discussed and what was its benefit is clear from the disgraceful return of Gandhi. But what is more important is the two messages that Gandhi gave to Travancoreans through this visit. First one is that how powerful a leader I am, I am just a Vaisya, in caste, who follow the command, even of a local Brahmin and sits in courtyard outside Brahmin home. And the second message is more dangerous that this visit asserted that to walk through the road under public works department, requires the permission of the priests of Indamthuruthimana. Thus, Gandhi in other way helped the attempts of Brahmins and Brahmin trust to prove that the forbidden roads belong to the temple, which otherwise they tried to prove through fake documents.

Gandhi's second visit was as a guest of the royal court, but the mission was to broker an end to the satyagraha struggle. The queen and Divan of Travancore had no enough courage to face ThanthaiPeriyar who was the leader of Vaikom struggle. They felt Gandhi as the right person to stoop Periyar. But Gandhi was not even ethical enough to inform the Queen that Periyar was now leading the struggle and that it would be appropriate to talk to him. Half heard half unheard he reached Travancore. The right to walk through the streets would be granted but there should be no demand



to enter temple that was the intention of the palace. Gandhi signed a weird contract which ultimately trash the goals of the Satyagraha and protects the objectives of Brahmin priests. Another road will be made for untouchables and other ponds will be made for Brahmin priest and another road and door will be made for them to enter temple, these are some of the conditions in that weird contract.

Gandhi even attempted to the defame Sree Narayana Guru and George Joseph. When Guru realized about the abandoned state of satyagrahis and attack on them, he made a statement asking the satyagrahis to overcome all kind of prohibitions , to enter temple and to drink *payasam* kept there. Guru was not ready to put human dignity at the feet of brahmin priests. About the statement of Guru, Gandhi wrote in Young India that an untouchable monk in Travancore is calling for a riot and attempting to destroy the strike. Gandhi even wrote in Young India that George Joseph who was convinced of his participation in Vaikom Satyagraha as a non-Hindu is wrong, asked Gandhi for forgiveness. George Joseph gives a reply to this in a public meeting on May 1st 1925. George Joseph stated that as a citizen I have done the right thing and I have not apologized to anyone and I do not intend to.

Gandhi did not ask Periyar to withdraw from Satyagraha only because he did not have the courage to face ThanthaiPeriyar who had revived the Vaikom Satyagraha movement which Gandhi had deftly crushed. Even if Gandhi asked Pariyar, he would never have withdrawn the strike. Because for him, the Satyagraha was for truth and justice. So not any force in the world could dissuade him. Still attempts were made to push him back using prominent leaders of Tamil Nâdu Congress committee. Not at any stage of Vaikom Satyagraha PeriyardeniedGandhi. However, the interventions of the two have different dimensions and meanings and philosophical content. Let's conclude the article mentioning that difference as well.

What was the societal concept of Gandhi when he declared Vaikom struggle as the homely affair of Hindus. Certainly, it was that of hegemonic caste system. What is the message given by Gandhiji when he says that untouchability is a sin but never understand it as a social crime? Sin as a concept can only be explained in religious terms and remission is something that can be attained only through the change in human conscience. But if we understand untouchability as social crime then it can be explained using terms of modern law and science. Gandhi could not do this because he was a *Sanatana* Hindu. For Gandhi Vaikom struggle was just struggle by the subjects. His Social concept was based on *Varna ashrama Dharma*. His conception of man is one of attaining *Brahmania*. In effect, Gandhi oppressed

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what Vaikom Satyagraha tried to open to the future, using his social and human concepts.

But Thanthai Periyar? He asked that should a man not walk on a path that a cat, a dog, a worm or a pig can walk on? Is a man not worth a worm here? Human concept behind this is of egalitarianism. The concept that all human being should live with equal rights. This concept never came from Hindu tradition but it's roots can be traced out in Dravida traditions. Individual rights are defined within citizenship. In such a concept untouchability appears not as a Sin but as a social crime. Historical position of Periyar is the way of progress from the subject to the citizenship. Individual with rights and society with sense of equality are doors to future. The Historical significance of Thanthai Periyar is that he again wide opened the doors of enlightenment to the society, which was once slammed by Gandhi, the *sanathana Hindu*.

# **Property, Management and Affiliations: Temple Lands in the Princely State of Cochin in 19<sup>th</sup> c.**

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## **Abstract:**

The present study is an attempt to trace out the attempts made by the rulers of the State of Cochin during the late decades of 18<sup>th</sup> and early decades of 19<sup>th</sup> centuries to revamp the economic situations of the state which was literally shattered by the invasions of Zamorins and the military movements of the Mysore rulers. The attempts made by Shaktan Thampuran and Col. Munroe is specially focused.

## **Key Words:**

Cochin, Temples, Devaswom, Sanketam, Paddy

18<sup>th</sup> century witnessed some serious political and economic transitions in the region of Keralam with the emergence of Venad as a major state, the attempts of Cochin to register its power, the collapse of power of Zamorins with the arrival of the Mysorean rulers and finally the beginning of the British suzerainty. The present study focuses the socio- economic situations in the Cochin State in the final decades of 18<sup>th</sup> century and initial decades of 19<sup>th</sup> century. It gives special attention to the developments in Thrissivaperur district of State of Cochin in the socio- economic domain. The attempts made by the administrators to overcome the revenue shortages by expanding paddy cultivation and ordering the agriculture and revenue administration under renovated temples is analysed. The logic of the establishment of Thrissur Pooram by Sakthan Thampuran is viewed in the background of the socio- economic situations. The study also attempts to trace out the contexts and processes of the establishment of Devaswom in the State of Cochin. Thus the study intends to look at the socio- economic scenario of the State

of Cochin in the period mentioned, and the processes through which the administrators attempted to modernise the revenue administration of the State.

### **Temples and Devaswoms**

Temples were the central feature of the socio- economic, political and cultural structure of pre- modern Kerala. These institutions were the most important centres of resource mobilization and redistribution. The temples are to be seen as the centre of vast arena of properties- especially the cultivable wetland, where the management of these resources were decided and materialized. Thus, in the pre- modern period, these institutions weren't merely place of worship but the centre of economic and political activities. Each temple was thus the centre of Devaswom. In this context what actually the Devaswom was, is to be understood. Devaswoms were independent corporations which exercised spiritual authority in their respective *Sanketams* or domains.<sup>1</sup> C Achutha Menon traces out the nature of Devaswoms and the socio- political and economic power wielded by the administrators of Sanketams.

The general control over the temples and their domains was vested in a body of Uralars or trustees, who were generally Gramani Namburis, a class of military Brahmans not privileged to read or recite Vedas, but the executive authority was generally exercised by chiefs elected and consecrated by certain bodies of Vedic Namburis called Yogams. These ecclesiastical heads enjoyed the powers of Naduvazhi chiefs, including those of life and death, over the people living in the Sanketams, but their powers were to some extent limited by the general control of Uralars and Yogams. Whether these corporations derived their authority from the sovereign of undivided Kerala or whether it was wrested from or conceded by the rajahs who ruled over Kerala after its dismemberment is not known, but there can be no doubt that the Rajahs practically exercised little or no authority over the temples and their Sanketams.<sup>2</sup>

Achutha Menon also traces the nature of affiliations which the Sanketams maintain with the political authorities. He notes as follows:

In the course of time, however, the religious corporations appear to have been driven to the necessity of invoking the protection or aid of the Rajahs owing probably to internal dissensions or to the aggressiveness of neighbouring chiefs, and they accordingly conferred on the rajahs, not always on those within whose territories the Sanketams lay, the Koyma or chiefship over the Devaswoms or certain concerns of theirs.<sup>3</sup>

It is also noteworthy that though they maintained political affiliations, accepting the Koyma of certain Rajahs, these temple corporations maintained

their authority in all domains till the middle of 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>4</sup>

### **Sanketams**

What exactly the nature of Sanketam, how it was administered and what was the nature of affiliation it had with political authorities are to be understood. A file which can be traced in the Central Archives, Thiruvananthapuram contains the questionnaire and the answers with respect to the Sanketams. It contains an interview of the learned Brahmin scholars regarding the various aspects of Sanketams.<sup>5</sup> It says:

Sanketam is a village domain, upon which the kings have no authority and duties to perform. There are two types of Sanketams: (1) Temple Sanketams and (2) Janma Sanketams. The first category is the one which is owned by the temples and the second category is the one owned by the Brahmins. The right and duty to perform the revenue administration of Sanketam is vested upon the Uralas and the Koyma (protector) selected by the people belonging to the Sanketams. The kings, who have the right to rule over the territories upon which the Sanketam is situated, have no rights over the Uralas and the Kutiyans of the Sanketam. He cannot exercise any authority as suzerain of the territory. Only if, the concerned king is selected as the protector of the Sanketam, he can exercise the powers over the properties and Kutiyans. Even in the matters of law and order, the king of the territory upon which the Sanketam is instituted, has no right unless he is the protector of the Sanketam. The kings who violate these Sanketam rules and exercise their power upon the Sanketam arbitrarily will be forced to perform penance and repentance. For the protection performed by the Kings as Koymas, they will be awarded with Rajabhogams, which may vary from yearly fixed donations to the share of collection in the Sanketams. For the administration of Janmasanketams Koyma alone was instituted. But for the Temple Sanketams, Koyma, Akakoyma and Samudayam were instituted. It is the duty of these authorities to perform the administration of revenue, law and order, property, etc.<sup>6</sup>

Thus it can be understood that the Devaswom and Sanketams which were the major arena of resource production had their own mechanisms to administer the entire processes of revenue administration. The kings of the territories upon which the Devaswoms and Sanketams were situated had no right over the revenue administration over the Devaswom and Sanketam. Only the Koyma agreed by the Sanketis had the right to perform the suzerainty over the Devaswom and Sanketam. The right to appoint the Akakoyma and Samudayam officers, who were assigned with the function to administer the Devaswom and Sanketam too were vested upon the

protector selected by the Sanketis.

The rulers of the territories upon which the Sanketams and Devaswoms are situated had no rights upon the administration of the Sanketam and Devaswom properties. They didn't have any benefits from the vast resources generated from the temple properties, if they are not the protector of these institutions.

With these features of resource administration in mind, if we look at the situation of the State of Cochin, we can easily trace out the resource crunch faced by the administrators of Cochin. For a better understanding, the affiliations of wealthy Devaswoms and sanketams in the State of Cochin are to be traced out.

### **Devaswoms of Cochin**

There were many Devaswoms in the territory of Cochin which were generally classified into two. They were (1) those whose income and expenditure form part of the general income of the state and (2) those Devaswoms whose income was treated as a separate fund and the expenditure for the temples were met from that fund.<sup>7</sup>

There were 148 Devaswoms of the former class and 11 of the latter. Apart from these there were 99 temples which were subsidiary to the most important of the former class.<sup>8</sup> Both classes of temples were built and endowed by private individuals and managed by hereditary Uralars who collected the revenue and disposed of them as they deemed it.<sup>9</sup>

Some of the important Devaswoms existed during the period were: Peruvanam, Tripayar, Venganellur, Tanikudam, Malamakavu, Vannerakoyipilli, Pathirikkattuakvu, Maruthur, Pothani, Kothakulangara, Chottanikkara.<sup>10</sup>

Peruvanam, Vadakkumnathan and Koodalmanikyam temples were some of the temples which played dominant role in shaping the administrative and socio-economic history of Cochin State.

Among these, Peruvanam was the wealthiest Devaswom of that period. Peruvanam was one of the largest and best endowed in the State. Peruvanam temple was the only temple over which the Thiruvithamkur, Cochin and the Zamorins of Kozhikode had the control.<sup>11</sup>

It is necessary to point out that its management formed the subject matter of one of the disputes between Cochin and Travancore.<sup>12</sup> The reason for the dispute was on the right to collect the revenue of the temple endowments under Peruvanam Devaswom. These rights were vested upon the Travancore treasury.<sup>13</sup>

This Devaswom was formerly under the management of a Brahman

functionary, designated Yogathiripad, elected and consecrated by the Nambudiri yogam of Peruvanam. He was the one who managed the affairs of the Devaswom through certain uralars.<sup>14</sup>

Another important Devaswom at that period was Vadakkumnathan Devaswom at Trichur. They owned lands in several parts of territory. The Vadhyar, the Swamiyars and several Brahmins were the heads of Trichur Devaswom. They were the body which collected revenues.<sup>15</sup> A modified committee of Namboodiri Brahmins looked after the Devaswom land, properties and other temple related matters. The committee was known as Yogam. The administration had been under the management of a Yogathiripadu elected and consecrated by the Namboodiri Yogam of Trichur.<sup>16</sup>

Trichur was one of the important centres of Namboodiri Brahmins. The power was centred in their hands during the days prior to the reign of Sakthan Thampuran. Up to the period of Sakthan Thampuran the ultimate power was vested upon them and that they were considered as the owners and decision makers.<sup>17</sup> They enjoyed complete autonomy. Vadakkumnathan temple was considered as one of the major income source for Brahmins of Trichur in that period. They earned huge wealth from this temple.

In both Peruvanam and Vadakkumnathan, the rule of yogathiri was in force. The Yogathiri was the delegate of prominent Namboothiris. He is considered to be the overseer of spiritual and earthly matters.

After selecting a Namboothiri as Yogathiri, he will become the supreme authority of the Sanketam. Yogathiri was thus made as an ideal person of the society. Yogathiris are selected only from among the Brahmin class.

The ceremony for selecting yogathiri is known as 'Yogathiri Avarothanam'. Once Yogathiri was selected, he became the largest power centre as far as the Sanketam is concerned. Devaswom matter was also under the control of Yogathiri. All others who were connected with temple will be under Yogathiri including the king.<sup>18</sup>

Another important source of wealth apart was Irinjalakkuda Koodalmanikyam temple. This was also a huge centre of wealth at that period. Nedumbilli Namboothiris were the head of Irinjalakkuda village. They had special privilege in the priesthood and murajapam of Travancore rulers. Because of this prominence they were bestowed with, they had great commitment towards Travancore state.

Like Peruvanam village, Irinjalakkuda village also had commitment towards Travancore state and the revenue of these villages was transferred in to Travancore treasury. The head of Koodalmanikyam temple was known as Tachudayakaimal, who was ritually solemnised under the leadership of Travancore Kings in their territory.<sup>19</sup> The uralars of the temple were nine

Namboodiri families and as temple was a gramakshethra, they were only its trustees. However, the granthavaris show that they have been exercising some kind of proprietorship in the temple, and amongst these the most important was the agreement of 1342 AD by which they granted to the Raja of Onattuakra the right of installing the Tachudaya kaimal.

The Tachudaya Kaimal means person with principles. The kaimal is a category which comes under the 18 Nair groups.<sup>20</sup> Through rituals the person belonging to Kaimal caste was assigned with Brahmin Varna.<sup>21</sup> Tachudaya Kaimal enjoyed many privileges. They have complete authority over temple administration. Kaimal had to follow celibacy like Brahmin tantric. He can enter into the temple and use the public roads. In older times, the right to the office of tachudayakaimal was vested on four families which were latter scattered into different parts like Trivandrum, Kollam, Chirayankizhu and Karthikapilly.<sup>22</sup> The Thachudaya kaimal was considered as a royal figure, thus the king and the Brahmins were requested to carry the doly of the Kaimal, who was considered a God figure.

The complete supervision of Koodalmanikyam temple was under Travancore after 1760. During the time of Tippu's attack, both Cochin and Travancore were quarrelling with each other. Thus, the two powers came into a peace treaty in 1760. As part of this, koodalmanikyam temple came under the supervision of Travancore. These power transformations led to several tensions between these two States.<sup>23</sup>

These temples played a prominent role in the administrative, political and economic spheres in the territory of Cochin State. Yogathiri and Tachudaya Kaimal had enormous powers. Since they played key role in temple administration, they have also influenced the dominant society to a greater extent. King of the territory had only nominal powers in the domains where they exercised powers at that period. The affiliation of most of these temples was vested with Travancore and the revenue from these temples. Though the temples were situated in the State of Cochin, the revenue flew to Travancore. These situations created tensions within the territory between temple administrators and the territorial administrators and grew as disputes between the States of Cochin and Travancore.

Though the wealthiest temples at that period existed in the territory of Cochin State, due to the flow of revenue to Travancore as a result of the Sanketam- Rakshapurusha/ Koyma affiliation, the economy of Old Cochin was pathetic. Adding to these situations were, the new alliances of certain Uralas and Sanketams with the Zamorins, after the last attack by them on Thrissur and partial take over in 1762.<sup>24</sup> To overcome these hazards there were attempts on the parts of the administrators of Cochin. Several minor



Devaswoms were taken over by the State citing the mismanagement and incompetency of the Uralars.<sup>25</sup>

### **The Impact of Zamorin's Attack on Thrissur**

Sakthan Thampuran came to power soon after the Zamorins left Cochin. Thus he had to revamp the scars inflicted upon the State of Cochin, especially Thrissur by the Zamorins. Thrissur was in a pathetic situation after the loot and burning of Sanketam and habitats by the people of Zamorins. The tussles between the Rulers of Cochin and the Zamorins had a long history. It began with the dispute over the treaty signed among the Cochin and Portuguese. This signing of treaty displeased the Zamorins and he demanded the withdrawal of Cochin from it, which the rulers of Cochin refused. Infuriated by the action of Cochin, the Zamorins attacked Cochin in 1503 with the support of Edappalli Rajah. The Zamorin was set back from Cochin with the help of Portuguese.<sup>26</sup> Again in the period of 1660- 61 Zamorins intervened in the succession dispute in Cochin. The long history of these interventions by the Zamorins which began in 1503, reached its zenith by 1756. With the support and invitation of the Brahmin landed magnet Padinjattedam Namboothiri, Zamorin attacked Thrissur and made it the seat of his territories in Cochin region. Though the control of Cochin was regained by the Rajahs of Cochin in 1758, the Zamorins attacked the region again within a couple of years.

By the time the Zamorins left Cochin and their seat in central Kerala, Thrissur, the State of Cochin was impoverished mainly by four factors. 1. The constant attacks by Zamorin and resultant shifts of power in the region 2. The burden of the cost of wars released to Travancore for their help against Zamorins 3. The demands from the Rajahs of Travancore and the Dutch for the territories within the territorial limits of Cochin for their association and help in the war against the Zamorins 4. The plunder and destruction by the people of Zamorins All these wars, treaties, costs of wars till 1763, the year in which Zamorins were finally pushed out from the territories of Cochin had deeply wounded the economic and political situations of the State of Cochin.<sup>27</sup> Apart from these were the dissents and shifts of allegiances of many of the Sanketams towards Travancore and Zamorins.<sup>28</sup>

### **Saktan Thampuran in the Administrative Ranks**

After the Zamorins quit Thrissur in 1762, the administrators had to renovate the entire town as the Zamorins had literally ransacked and destroyed the town.<sup>29</sup> It was in this period that Sakthan Thampuran emerged as the new power centre in the State of Cochin. Though he was not the

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Rajah of Cochin during that period, he actively participated and guided the rebuilding of Cochin.

In 1762, for the convenience of revenue administration the state of Cochin was divided into ten Kovilakathumvathukkal and these were placed under karyakkar. The Kovilakathumvathukkals were further divided into Pravarttis. These pravarttis formed the units of administration and were under parvatyakarans assisted by Menons.<sup>30</sup> The Kovilakathumvathukkals were grouped as Vadakkemukham and Thekkemukham and were kept under Sarvadhikaryakkar. The head of administration was Valiya Sarvadhikaryakkar.<sup>31</sup> A state structure with bureaucratic strata was emerging in the State of Cochin from 1762. This incurred additional financial burdens upon the state. The necessity to maintain such a state structure compelled the administrators to levy a regular tax. This began in 1763.<sup>32</sup>

Along with these, there were attempts to bring in the Vadakkunnathan Devaswom under the control of the rulers. As an initial step, the people who lost houses in the plunder and burning of Zamorins were permitted to live inside the Vadakkunnathan temple for three months. For the people who lost houses, the Rajah of Cochin spent around 181530 panams, for rehabilitation.<sup>33</sup> As a part of final takeover, Pathayikkara Nambuthiri, the then Yogathirippad was removed from the post. Expulsion of Pathayikkara Nambuthiri from the post of Yogathirippad was also the termination of that office.<sup>34</sup>

The activities were important from the point of view of the termination of the brahmanical highhandedness in the matters of the temple and sanketham. Hitherto, the region was treated as a Brahmin village where the highhandedness of the Brahmins was felt. The intervention of Sakthan Thampuran changed the situation. The expulsion of Yogathirippad and the punishment inflicted upon the nambuthiri Brahmins who participated in the conspiracy favouring the Zamorin put an end to the age old domination of the Brahmins in the region.

These situations didn't last long. On 18<sup>th</sup> September 1776 the Mysorean troops under Sirdar Khan marched to Thrissur. Cochin was made a subservient ally to Hyder Ali and he maintained friendly relationship with Cochin. But his son Tipu who had designs to bring Travancore under his control, and designed to attack the state of Travancore marched through the territories of Cochin which inflicted serious damages to the revamping atmosphere of Cochin.<sup>35</sup>

### **Trissur pooram**

Another important reform introduced by Sakthan Thampuran was

Trissur pooram. Pooram is an old name existed in Kerala for annual festivals in Temples. Thrissur pooram is considered as the brainchild of Sakthan Thampuran. Thiruvambady and Paramekkavu are the main participants of Trissur pooram. Shaktan Thampuran divided the temples in to two groups. One group consisted of Thiruvambady, Kanimangalam, Laloor, Ayyanthole and Neithalakkavu temple while the other group consisted of Paramekkavu, Karamukku, Chembukkavu, Choorakkottukavu and Panamukkampilly.<sup>36</sup> Due to some reasons panamukkampilly was not a participant in Trissur pooram now.<sup>37</sup> Trissur pooram is the festival conducted by two desams, Thiruvambady and Paramekkavu in Thekkinkadu maidan. But it was not a spiritual festival. We cannot see as much spiritual rituals and customs in Trissur pooram. It was a great platform for traders. People from different parts came into Trissur at that time and Thekkinkadu became a full-fledged market during the time of Pooram.<sup>38</sup>

All temples which participated in Pooram were surrounded by paddy fields at that time. An important ritual practised during the time of Trissur pooram was Parayedupp. Para is a very common offering in temples and people also place paras in homes as part of donating paddy, paddy products etc. to the temples. Paddy thus collected was owned by the State during the period of Sakthan Thampuran.

### **The Formation of Devaswom Department**

As noted elsewhere, Devaswoms were independent corporations which exercised spiritual authority in their respective *Sanketams* or domains.<sup>39</sup> These Devaswoms were maintained by the Uralas and they were protected by the ruler selected by them as Koyma or Rakshapurusha.

In the period after Sakthan Thampuran, the relations between the British and the State of Cochin became worse. After the rebellion of Paliyath Achan was put off and the new chapters of resident rule began with the appointment of Colonel Munroe as Resident. The state of affairs in Cochin during the period when Munroe assumed the office was very pathetic. Achutha Menon puts it as follows:

The nayars as had hitherto followed arms as a profession now found their occupation gone and many of them formed themselves into small bands of dakaits and highwaymen and terrorised over the people throughout the State. Government officers of all grades became corrupt and mercenary and preyed upon the country as lawlessly as the professional dakaits themselves... on the part of the people, complaint was useless, redress hopeless; they had only one remedy and that was bribery... To crown all, the state was financially in a hopeless state of embarrassment. The total

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annual income of the state was only about five lakhs of rupees, out of which a subsidy of 23/4 lakhs had to be paid annually to the company and a war indemnity of 6 lakhs in instalments so that there were hardly anything left for the maintenance of the royal family and the payment of the administrative establishments.<sup>40</sup>

What Colonel Muroe had to rectify and redress was these state of affairs. In this situation Munroe decided to take the administration and with the sanction of the Madras Government and approval of Rajah of Cochin he assumed the office of Divan in June 1812.<sup>41</sup> As the Divan of Travancore, he was aware of what all matters his immediate attention was to fall. But unlike in Travancore, Devaswom was the last arena in which he paid his attention. But his engagements with the Devaswoms in Travancore were very popular. Nagam Aiya puts it as follows:

The Devaswams or religious institutions next engaged his attention. These institutions were ill managed, the revenues from them being in most cases diverted from their proper uses or misappropriated by the trustees for their own private use... Colonel Munroe, on the recommendations of a committee of learned Brahmins, allotted upon a large and liberal scale allowances for the due performance of religious and other ceremonies at all the pagodas and secured to the people adequate prices for the articles supplied for the use of those establishments, in place of the arbitrary exactions to which they were formerly been subjected on that score. New rules were framed for their management and the institutions themselves brought directly under the control of the sircar. The result was that the temples and the charities assumed were better managed and the state gained an addition to its revenues.<sup>42</sup>

The total number of Devaswom in Cochin State was 308.<sup>43</sup> The situation of the Devaswom administration in Cochin was no better than those in Travancore. A survey on the affairs of the temple administration and management of Devaswom lands by the uralars showed the pathetic state of affairs. When the report was submitted to the Rajah of Cochin, with recommendations to establish a Devaswom department as in Travancore, permission was granted to establish a Devaswom department as was done by the ruler of Travancore for the betterment of the situations. The letter to col Munroe states as follows:

It is stated that you understand that the officers of the devaswom belonging to us do not conduct poojas in the temples properly that the temple funds are being mismanaged, that in Travancore the temples are incorporated and that a pathivu is fixed and money are paid monthly for poojas, etc that consequently the poojas etc. are conducted satisfactorily

and that it would be better to make similar arrangements in regard to the temples here also. I am very much pleased with the proposal.<sup>44</sup>

The letter addressed to Munroe states the gradation of temples and the affiliation of the Rajah to those in the State of Cochin. It says:

In this state there are temples belonging to us exclusively, some belonging to Uralars of which we have kaima sthanom and some others in which we are one of the Uralars as well as kaima.<sup>45</sup>

Only temple for which the rajah was asking excuses for its independent status was the Thripunithura Temple. The sentimental attachment the royal family has with that temple is stated in the letter.

Thripunithura temple is one belonging to the ooralas. The title of one of the ooralas has escheated to us and we are one of the ooralars and kaima of the temple. The affairs of that temple are managed by a committee. It is not usual to bring in to our accounts, the accounts of the above temple in the times of our ancestors. As this family is indebted in many ways to the above temple it will be better to manage the temple affairs as before and it will be a matter of regret if other arrangements are made in regard to the same.<sup>46</sup>

Accordingly arrangements were made to establish a Devaswom department excluding the Tripunithura temple, taking into consideration the request of the Rajah.<sup>47</sup> A devaswom committee was established to look into the affairs of the temples and hooknamah was issued assigning the duties were issued.<sup>48</sup> Narayanapillai, Valiya Melezhuth and Mathiyath Thani Nampoothiri were the members of Devaswom Committee to inspect and report on the state of affairs in the temples administration by Uralars.<sup>49</sup>

The hooknamah insisted the uralars to be accountable to the government and that the works and duties to be performed as per directions. It also insisted the devaswom accounts to be produced before the government.<sup>50</sup> The directions in the hooknamah were as follows:

1. The pattalis etc. who manage the affairs of the respective devaswoms should receive from the chilavu, muthalpidi the required sum of money as per the pathivu now prepared by them and should have all the daily poojas and all the monthly and annual festivals such as ulsavams regularly performed in due time... prepare and submit masantha variolas (monthly accounts) one to the Huzur and another to the Taluq.
2. For the paddy and money required for each Devaswom bills will be prepared in the Huzur and handed over to the Chilavu Muthal pidicarar and the money paid from the treasury. The Devaswom ofiicers should receive the amounts from the Muthalpidi after giving receipts for the same.

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3. Variolas should be prepared for the gold and silver ornaments of the Devaswoms and copper brass etc. vessels, silk and other clothes etc. and one variola should be submitted to the Huzur and another to H.H
4. Variolas should be prepared and submitted one to the Taluq every 5 days of the offering in the temple (made by pilgrims) such as gold silver money sandal pepper gingelly etc.
5. Variolas should be prepared and submitted every month one to the Huzur and another to the Taluq of the increase and decrease in the number of cows, bulls, goats etc. belonging to the respective Devaswoms.
6. Variolas should be prepared and submitted to the Devaswom, kuttaram, kalapad etc. buildings giving the number tiled and the number tatched.
7. As hitherto the Devaswom officers used to raise money by noortgaging the Devaswom niloms and parambas and demising them on kanom byn pledging the Devaswom vessels and to incur expenditure as they pleased, such unauthorised tax should not in future be committed and if anybody commit such act they will be brought to the Huzur and punished as the deserved
8. The elephants retained into Devaswoms for processions of the idol should be hired out marriages etc. and money received without sanction.
9. The pattalies sambadhies and karaimahs etc. should take care of the ornaments, vessels etc. of the Devaswoms during night without being stolen away by their negligence and if not( ie if any theft happens by their negligence) the value of the things stolen will have to be paid by the said persons. The affairs should be made to the HUZUR and taluk kariakar from time to time.<sup>51</sup>

On the basis of flooding complaint regarding the misutilization of funds and defrauding the Devaswom properties, Col. Munroe recommend that "the lands and parambas belonging to the devaswom be incorporated with the pandaravaka properties, and that the pooja and other expenses be met from the treasury funds"<sup>52</sup>. There were also attempts on the part of the government to curb the power of the Warriem by redefining its status, which was traditionally associated with the temple administration. It says:

...the karigar or other officers of which are appointed by the sirkar, properly belong to it. He says that the difference between the woraim and sirkar pagodas is very well known. The sirkar nominates the officers of its own pagodas and although an allowance does not constitute any right to

the lands etc. belonging to them. There appears therefore to have been some mistake in orders we have received from the colonel on the subject of the pagoda committee. You will immediately in conformity to the colonel's intentions restore to all the wariam pagoda the lands which have been by the sirkar and you will also continue the allowances which have hitherto been made to them by the sirkar. This will not prevent you however from examining the documents and papers of each pagoda, for these are many which may call themselves Wariom, in fact they belong to the sirkar.<sup>53</sup>

On the basis of the orders distinguishing the Sirkar temples with the temples of Uralars, there happened series of engagements between the government and the temple proprietors. The distinction was also an assurance that the uralar temples won't be amalgamated with Sirkar temples.<sup>54</sup> On the basis of this distinction, several Uralars filed complaints against amalgamating the Devaswoms with sirkar temples. One of the classical examples was the petition filed by the Uralars of the Peruvanam temple. Their claim was that the temple is an Urala temple and there is no logic in amalgamating the temple with the sirkar temples and that they were forced to produce their accounts before the Committee. Orders were issued by Col. Munroe to verify documents to detect the nature of the peruvanam temple. The enquiry report says:

...the yogakkar ( authorities) has given a written statement to the effect that the perumanam devaswom was the property of the three gramams ( committee of Brahmins) in Malabar- Chowara Permanam nad Irinjalakkuda ... on the death of yogathiripad who was formerly installed as manager of the Devaswom, the sirkar appointed a person to look after the Devaswom affairs and he was so looking after, the yogakars would complain of, on this instance too, the Devaswom was incorporated into the sirkar without their permission... it was found out that the sirkar was annually paying an amount of 900 and old famous fanams (over Rs 250).

The government was annulling the claims of the Brahmin uralars regarding the ownership of the temples stating and presenting the evidences of grants those temples receive from the government. Orders were issued for the proper management of the temple properties and directions were issued to this effect.

It is to be noted that there were earnest attempts on the part of Col. Munroe and the Rajah of Cochin to make the uralars accountable and to make the administration of the Devaswoms beneficial to the state. The documents themselves speak that the Devaswom Department and the committee assigned with the duties of inspection and reporting on the affairs of temples and the management of land and benefits from the temple

properties was an attempt to curb the powers enjoyed by the Brahmins as temple managers and to bring them under the authority of the state.

## Conclusion

The socio-economic political condition of Cochin State passed through different stages in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Series of invasions by Zamorins which was followed by the invasion of the Mysorean rulers had shattered the state of Cochin. Shaktan Thampuran took the initiative to rebuild the state by accumulating and managing the resources. Important devaswoms were targeted by him and the highhandedness of the Brahmins was curbed by him. After the reign of Shaktan Thampuran, during the period of Col. Munroe in the office as Resident Diwan of Cochin, on the request of the Raja of Cochin the Devaswom Department was formed. The establishment of Devaswom Department in the state of Cochin modelling the office established in Travancore was an important step in the history of temple management and the management of the properties owned by the Devaswoms.

## Notes and References (Endnotes)

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<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 418-419.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.* p. 420.

<sup>5</sup>Bundle No 2: C No:15166, Central Archives, Thiruvananthapuram.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup>Letter from P Rajagopalachari Divan of Cochin to F A Nicholsan, Ag Resident in Travancore and Cochin dated 10<sup>th</sup> April 1899. Ref on C 770.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>C. Achyuta Menon, *op.cit.*, p509.

<sup>12</sup>Letter from P Rajagopalachari Divan of Cochin to F A Nicholsan, Ag Resident in Travancore and Cochin dated 10<sup>th</sup> April 1899. Ref on C 770.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup>C. Achyuta Menon, *op.cit.*

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.* p. 511.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.* p. 419.



<sup>17</sup>Puthezhath Ramanmenon, *Thrissur- Trichur*, H&C Publishing House, Thrissur, 2020 (Reprint), p.40.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.* p. 41.

<sup>19</sup>C. Achyuta Menon, *op.cit.*, p. 496.

<sup>20</sup>Vaikom Vivekanandan, *Koodal Manikyam kshethravum Avasaanathe Thachudayakaimalum*, Nandini Printers, Thiruvananthapuram, 2011, p. 1.

<sup>21</sup>*Unninamboothiri*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 1930 Sept. 19, pp.3-4.

<sup>22</sup>Vaikom Vivekanandan, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>23</sup>C. Achyuta Menon, *op.cit.*, p. 419.

<sup>24</sup>T R Venugopalan, *Sampathum Adhikaravum: Thrissuril Ninnulla Oru Kazhcha*, Current Books, Thrissur, 2017, p.78.

<sup>25</sup>C. Achyuta Menon, *op.cit.*, p.420.

<sup>26</sup>T R Venugopalan, *op.cit.*, p.70.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.* p.73.

<sup>28</sup>C. Achyuta Menon, *op.cit.*, pp.418- 419.

<sup>29</sup>T R Venugopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

<sup>30</sup>C. Achyuta Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.* p.152.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup>S Rajendu, *Vadakkunnathan Devaswam Granthavari*, Vallathol Vidyapeerham, Sukapuram, 2021, p. 23.

<sup>34</sup>T R Venugopalan, *op. cit.* p.200.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 88-94., C. Achyuta Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 165- 166.

<sup>36</sup>Pooram Files, Paramakkavu Devaswom Archives.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup>C. Achyuta Menon, *op.cit.*, p.418.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.* pp.188- 189.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup>V Nagam Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual Vol I*, Gazeteers Department, Thiruvananthapuram, 1999, p. 464.

<sup>43</sup>Letter from Nanjappaya to Captain Blacker dtd 18<sup>th</sup> Karkadagam 990.

<sup>44</sup>Letter from H H The Raja to Colonel Munro dtd 9<sup>th</sup> kumbhom 989

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup>Letter from Colonel Munroe to Captain Blacker.Dated 13<sup>th</sup> Kumbham 989.

<sup>48</sup>Captain Blackers Memo to Narayanapillai, Valiya Melezhuth and Mathiyath Thani Nampoothiri dated 10 Mithunam 989.

Property, Management and Affiliations: Temple Lands...

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup>Hooknamah prepared for the guidance of the Devaswom officers, State of Cochin, 989.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup>Letter From col. Munro to H.H the Raja of Cochin, dtd 15<sup>th</sup> kumbom  
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<sup>53</sup>Letter from captain Blacker to Nanjappaya dtd 25<sup>th</sup> mIthunam 990

<sup>54</sup>Letter from Nanjappaya to Captain Blacker dtd 18<sup>th</sup> Karkadagam  
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# **Social Exclusion in the Era of Education Technology in India**

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## **Introduction:**

In the diverse landscape of higher education in India, the issue of social exclusion remains a persistent challenge. Historically, higher education has been marred by disparities stemming from factors such as caste, class, gender, and geographic location. While strides have been made towards inclusivity, significant gaps persist, hindering equitable access and opportunities for all. The emergence of education technology (EdTech) in recent years has promised transformative potential in addressing these entrenched inequalities. With its ability to transcend traditional barriers of time, space, and resources, EdTech presents an unprecedented opportunity to democratize access to higher education and foster inclusive learning environments.

However, the intersection of social exclusion and higher education in India requires a nuanced understanding. Despite the proliferation of EdTech solutions, their impact on marginalized communities and their ability to bridge the existing divides remains uncertain. Moreover, the digital divide persists, with marginalized groups often lacking access to the necessary infrastructure, connectivity, and digital literacy required to fully harness the benefits of EdTech.

Against this backdrop, exploring strategies to address social exclusion in higher education within the context of EdTech becomes imperative. This entails not only leveraging technological innovations to widen access but also dismantling systemic barriers, fostering diversity, and nurturing inclusive practices within educational institutions.

In this discourse, it is essential to examine the multifaceted dimensions of social exclusion in higher education and interrogate the potential of EdTech as a catalyst for change. By critically assessing existing frameworks, policies, and initiatives, stakeholders can collaboratively devise holistic approaches that empower marginalized communities, promote equity, and realize the transformative promise of education technology in India's higher education

landscape.

As we all know that Education technology (EdTech) encompasses the use of technological tools, resources, and platforms to enhance teaching and learning experiences, has the potential to revolutionize education by providing access to knowledge, personalized learning experiences, and innovative instructional methods. However, while EdTech has the capacity to democratize education and bridge gaps, it also presents challenges related to social exclusion. Social exclusion in the context of EdTech refers to the disparities in access to technology and digital resources among different socio-economic groups, geographical regions, and marginalized communities. The article aims to depict the actual condition of educational disparities existing in India and provide recommendations to policymakers to overcome the issue of social exclusion.

Digital divide refers to "the gap between individuals, households, businesses and geographic areas at different socio-economic levels with regard to their opportunities to access information and communication technologies (ICTs) and to their use of the internet for a wide variety of activities." It reflects various differences among and within countries(Oxfam India 2022)." There are two contrasting theoretical perspectives on the digital divide. The technological diffusion normalization model expects that technological expansion might be slow but eventually follow a normalization pathway and ICTs will take root in all countries and segments of society. The stratification model of diffusion of technologies, in contrast, posits that privileged social groups and developed countries will maintain their edge in the digital economy even as the digital uptake increases worldwide, thereby maintaining digital disparities. The UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed has even claimed that the digital divide has the potential to be the "new face of inequality"(Oxfam India, 2022).

### **Context of the study**

There are studies analysed the concept of digital divide such as Van Dijk's(2006) explores the concept of the digital divide from a socio-economic perspective. He examines how factors such as income, education, occupation, and geographical location contribute to uneven access to digital technologies. Van Dijk's research typically underscores the importance of addressing structural inequalities to bridge the digital divide effectively. He highlights that mere access to technology does not guarantee digital inclusion; rather, socio-economic factors play a crucial role in shaping individuals' digital capabilities and opportunities. (Warschauer, 2003)focuses on the relationship between technology, education, and socio-economic development. He emphasizes the need to move beyond simplistic notions

of the digital divide solely as a matter of access to hardware and internet connectivity. Instead, Warschauer advocates for a broader understanding that encompasses digital literacy, skills development, and meaningful usage of technology. His research often highlights the role of education in empowering individuals to navigate digital spaces and participate more fully in the knowledge economy.

Some of the scholars have interrogated the assumptions underlying the integration of education technology, cautioning against techno-centric approaches that may exacerbate existing inequalities (Selwyn, 2010; Williamson, 2017). Studies have shown that marginalized communities, including those based on caste, class, and gender, and rural-urban divides, face heightened risks of social exclusion in the digital age (Gurumurthy, 2019; Selwyn, 2004).

Policy analyses have examined government initiatives, institutional strategies, and funding mechanisms aimed at promoting digital inclusion and addressing social exclusion in higher education (UNESCO, 2020; Ministry of Education, Government of India).

Some studies found that the use of mobile phones appears to act as a striking tool that may give economic empowerment to women at the household level in Pakistan in many ways. The use of mobile phones has brought socioeconomic implications for a developing country like Pakistan, where women need to empower themselves to add their share to the national economy (Azra Batool, 2018)

The term 'digital divide' initially referred to gaps in access to a computer. When the internet diffused rapidly into society and became a primary type of computing, the term shifted to encompass gaps in not only computer but also internet access. Early research on the digital divide focused mainly on a binary classification of physical access. Theories of internet adoption have recognized this limitation and an increasing number of researchers have argued that more attention should be paid to social, psychological, and cultural backgrounds (van Deursen & van Dijk, 2011)

Vaidehi Rajam, A. Bheemeshwar Reddy, Sudatta Banerjee (2021) paper examines the issue of digital divide in India, focusing specifically on disparities based on caste, given the significant socioeconomic differences among various caste groups. It notes the increasing importance of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in accessing essential services like education and health. Using nationally representative survey data, the study analyzes two levels of digital divide: first-level (ownership of computer and access to the Internet) and second-level (individual skills to use computer and the Internet) disparities between disadvantaged caste groups and others. It also explores the socioeconomic factors contributing to these divides

through a non-linear decomposition method. The findings reveal substantial first-level and second-level digital divides between disadvantaged caste groups and others in India. The study suggests that historical socioeconomic deprivation of disadvantaged caste groups underpins the caste-based digital divide. More than half of this gap can be attributed to differences in educational attainment and income levels between the disadvantaged caste groups and others. Overall, the paper underscores the urgent need to address educational and income inequalities among different caste groups in India to bridge the digital divide effectively. By addressing these root causes, policymakers can work towards creating a more inclusive digital environment where all segments of society have equitable access to ICTs and the opportunities they offer for socioeconomic advancement. Though there are a number of studies which discussed the issues of digital divide, there is no such study which analysed the element of social exclusion in education especially higher education by using the latest data. Hence the present study analyses the differences in educational attainment and income levels between disadvantaged caste groups and others by using periodic labour force data 2022-23.

### **Statement of the Problem**

“As we all know, after COVID-19, ‘education technology’ has become a common term in the teaching and learning process. While reviewing the literature, I found that numerous studies address the issue of the digital divide in the era of educational technology. To tackle the problem of social exclusion stemming from the introduction of educational technology, it’s essential to understand the current disparities in educational attainment among different socio-economic groups in India. We need to identify which sections of society are excluded from education, especially higher education. Education up to higher secondary level is included in the Right to Education Act, but are all individuals receiving educational facilities equally? Is there any divide in education based on social class or religion? Is there any digital divide exist in India? What policies are needed to reduce the issue of social exclusion due to the introduction of educational technology in India? To answer these questions, this study aims to achieve the following objectives:”

### **Objectives**

1. Analyze the status of education for different social groups and religious groups in India.
2. Analyze the condition of digital divide in India
3. Give policy recommendations to solve the issue of social exclusion while incorporating technology in education.

## **Methodology**

The approach of the study is quantitative in nature. It uses secondary data from "Digital Divide India Inequality Report 2022" ,VaidehiRajam, A. Bheemeshwar Reddy, Sudatta Banerjee(2021), Survey,B.(2023) BaSE (2023) and Periodic labour force unit level data for the year 2022-23, NSSO 61<sup>st</sup> round unit level data for the analysis. Periodic labour force data provides the details of education status for different social groups in India, SC, ST, OBC and others along with religious groups like Hindu, Muslim, Christian communities. The study used percentages for comparison and chi square for checking the association of social class and education attainment. For understanding the status of digital divide the study reviewed the reports mentioned above.

The study had not taken any primary data for the analysis. For a detailed analysis of the digital divide in education we need to take primary data. The quantitative approach may not provide the actual issues in the detailed manner as like a qualitative analysis. These are the limitations of the study

## **AN ANALYSIS OF THE STATUS OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUPS IN INDIA**

Education is widely recognized as a crucial pathway to social mobility, economic prosperity, and personal fulfillment. However, in India, the journey towards higher education is marked by persistent disparities and barriers that disproportionately affect marginalized communities. Despite efforts to expand access and promote inclusivity, social exclusion remains a significant challenge within the higher education system. These disparities can exacerbate existing inequalities in education and widen the gap between privileged and disadvantaged groups. This article seeks to explore the complex dynamics of social exclusion in higher education in India, drawing insights from empirical data and theories of social exclusion. By examining trends and patterns in educational attainment across different social groups, we aim to highlight the structural inequalities and systemic barriers that hinder equitable access to higher education.

The data from NSSO 61<sup>st</sup> round for the period of 2004-05 and Periodic labour force data for the year 2022-23 provide valuable insights into the educational landscape in India, revealing disparities in educational attainment among various social groups. By analyzing these trends, we can better understand the extent of social exclusion within the higher education system and its implications for individuals and society at large.

**An analysis of the social difference in education attainment in India**

This session analyses the extend of social difference in educational attainment in India during the time period 2004—4 to 2022-23.

**Table 1**  
**Education status of individuals in 2022-23 and 2004-05**

<b>Educational status</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2022-23</b>
Illiterate	40.3	27.2
literature without formal education	2.4	0.6
Below secondary	42.1	43.8
Middle	11.5	19.9
Graduation and above	3.8	8.6

**Table 2**  
**Educational attainment of different social classes (percent) 2004-05 and 2022-23**

<b>Education status</b>	<b>2004-05</b>				<b>2022-23</b>			
	<b>ST</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>OBC</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>ST</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>OBC</b>	<b>General</b>
illiterate	53.3	49.0	42.1	28.6	34.0	30.9	27.0	22.9
literature without formal education	2.9	2.3	2.3	2.4	0.9	0.7	0.5	0.6
below secondary	37.3	40.1	42.9	43.5	47.3	44.9	43.4	42.4
Middle school	5.2	7.1	10.3	17.7	14.2	17.9	21.0	21.1
graduation and above	1.2	1.5	2.4	7.8	3.6	5.6	8.1	12.9
Total percentage	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Periodic Labour force data 20222-23 unit level data &Mallika(2012)



**Table 3**  
**Distribution of different educational category in different social classes in 2004-05 and 2022-23**

Education status	2004-05				2022-23				Total
	ST	SC	OBC	General	ST	SC	OBC	General	
illiterate	11.2	24.0	43.1	21.8	11.1	21.5	43.3	24.0	100
literature without formal education	10.3	19.1	40.1	30.5	13.8	21.7	36.4	28.2	100
below secondary	7.5	18.8	41.9	31.8	9.6	19.4	43.3	27.7	100
Middle school	3.8	12.2	36.8	47.1	6.4	17.1	46.1	30.4	100
graduation and above	2.6	7.6	25.9	63.8	3.8	12.3	41.2	42.8	100
Post graduate	1.8	6.1	24.4	67.7	3.0	11.4	37.9	47.7	100
Percentage of each social class in total individuals	8.4	19.7	41.2	30.7	8.9	18.9	43.7	28.5	100

Source: Periodic Labour force data 20222-23 unit level data & Mallika(2012)

The data from 2004-05 and 2022-23 provides critical insights into the educational disparities among different social groups in India. In 2004-05, marginalized communities such as Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Scheduled Castes (SC) exhibited lower levels of educational attainment compared to Other Backward Classes (OBC) and others. Similarly, in 2022-23, while improvements were noted, STs and SCs continued to face challenges in accessing higher education compared to OBCs and others. These disparities underscore the prevalence of social exclusion in higher education, where certain social groups are systematically disadvantaged in accessing and succeeding within the system. The data also highlights the persistence of educational inequalities over time, despite efforts to promote inclusivity and diversity.

The data reflects a notable improvement in overall educational attainment over the 19-year period. While the percentage of illiterate individuals has decreased significantly, there has been an increase in the percentage of individuals attaining higher levels of education, particularly those with graduation and above qualifications (table 1). In both years, the data indicates disparities in educational attainment across social classes, with SCs, STs, and OBCs lagging behind the general category. Notably, there has been a positive trend in educational attainment across all social

classes from 2004-05 to 2022-23. The percentage of individuals with graduation and above qualifications has increased across all social classes, indicating greater access to higher education opportunities.

The distribution of educational categories within social classes provides insights into the dynamics of social exclusion and access to higher education. In 2004-05, there were disparities in access to higher education among different social classes, with lower percentages of individuals from marginalized communities attaining higher education qualifications. However, in 2022-23, there has been a significant improvement in the distribution of higher education qualifications across social classes especially among OBC. The percentage of individuals with graduation and above qualifications has increased, for all social classes; still there is wide disparity in educated persons when compared to their population proportion particularly among SCs, and STs. In 2004-05, though the percentage of general category is only 30.7 percent, 63.8 percent of higher educated are from this category, while total population of ST was 8.4 percent in total, the percent of higher educated was only 2.6 percent. The same trend had seen in the case of SC and OBC. While considering the achievement during these 19 years, the OBC gained more progress when compared to SC and ST.

**Association of social class in determining educational attainment: statistical analysis**

**Table 4**  
**educationcategory \* Social Group Crosstabulation 2022-23 data**  
**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	89404480.511 <sup>a</sup>	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	90724614.148	12	.000
N of Valid Cases	4892793327		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.55E+6.

Pearson Chi-Square test statistic measures the discrepancy between the observed frequencies in the cross tabulation table and the frequencies that would be expected if there were no relationship between education category and social group. A higher Pearson Chi-Square value indicates a stronger association between the variables. Likelihood Ratio is another test statistic used to assess the goodness of fit between the observed

frequencies and the expected frequencies under the null hypothesis. The p-values associated with both tests are extremely small (close to 0), indicating that the observed association between education category and social group is statistically significant.

The significant p-values suggest that there is indeed a relationship between education category and social group. In other words, the educational attainment of individuals varies significantly across different social groups. The note about expected counts informs that none of the cells have an expected count less than 5, which is a common criterion for the validity of Chi-Square tests. This indicates that the statistical analysis is reliable and valid.

The significant association between education category and social group underscores the presence of disparities in educational attainment among different social groups. It highlights the need for targeted interventions and policies aimed at addressing inequities and promoting equal access to education across all segments of society.

In summary, the Chi-Square test results provide strong evidence of a relationship between education category and social group, emphasizing the importance of addressing educational disparities and promoting inclusivity in educational opportunities.

**Religion and its impact on education**

**Table : 5**

**Religion and education 20-35 age category 2022-23  
(major religions)**

Education status	Hindu	Muslim	Christian
Less than graduation	75.1%	91.2%	69.0%
Graduation and above	24.9%	8.8%	31.0%

Source: Periodic Labour force data 2022-23 unit level data

**Table: 6**

**Religion and education all age category 2022-23  
(major religions)**

	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	All individuals
Less than graduation	90.4%	96.9%	86.6%	91.4%
Graduation and above	9.6%	3.1%	13.4%	8.6%

Source: Periodic Labour force data 2022-23 unit level data

**Table : 7**  
**Social difference in education a comparison with major Religious groups in India all age category 2022-23)**

	Hindu		Muslim		Christian	
	Less educated	Higher educated	Less educated	Higher educated	Less educated	Higher educated
	Row N %	Row N %	Row N %	Row N %	Row N %	Row N %
ST	96.9%	3.1%	97.6%	2.4%	92.6%	7.4%
SC	94.5%	5.5%	100.0%	0.0%	93.3%	6.7%
OBC	91.1%	8.9%	95.9%	4.1%	86.9%	13.1%
others	81.6%	18.4%	97.6%	2.4%	79.8%	20.2%

Source: Periodic Labour force data 20222-23 unit level data

The provided data presents the distribution of individuals from different social groups, categorized by religion (Hindu, Muslim, Christian), based on their educational attainment levels (less educated vs. higher educated). Here’s an interpretation of the data:

Among Hindus from Scheduled Tribes, 96.9% are less educated, while 3.1% are higher educated. While among Muslims from Scheduled Tribes, 97.6% are less educated, while 2.4% are higher educated. Among Christians 92.6% are less educated, while 7.4% are higher educated.

In the case of SC, Hindu 5.5% are higher educated, while this zero in the case of Muslims, while that of Christian, this percentage was 6.7 percent.

In the case of Hindu OBC 8.9% are higher educated; among Muslims this was 4.1% and among Christian this 13.1% are higher educated.

Among others for Hindus, 18.4% are higher educated, this is only 2.4 for Muslim others and 20.2 for Christian other category

Across all social groups and religions, a higher proportion of individuals are less educated compared to those who are higher educated. In most cases, the percentage of less educated individuals is higher among Muslims compared to Hindus and Christians within the same social group. The data clearly shows that there may be variations in educational attainment levels among different social groups, with certain groups exhibiting higher rates of higher education compared to others. The disparities in educational attainment levels among various social groups highlight the need for targeted interventions and policies to address barriers to education and promote equitable access to educational opportunities across different religious and

social categories. The disparities in educational attainment across different social groups and religions underscore the importance of addressing systemic barriers and promoting inclusive educational policies to ensure equitable access to higher education for all segments of society.

## **EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL DIVIDE IN INDIA**

The digital divide can be broadly categorized into three levels (Ragnedda and Kreitem, 2018, Scheerder et al., 2017). The first-level digital divide refers to the divide that is measured through access to ICTs (i.e., having a computer and access to the Internet) and is expressed as a binary outcome. The second-level digital divide refers to the gap in digital skills required to use computer and the Internet. The third-level digital divide measures "inequalities in the capacities to get the technology(Rajam et al., 2021). This session analyses the extend of digital divide in between social groups and between gender. Present study had not collected primary data, it collects data mainly from two sources one is ASER 2023 for analyzing gender differences and Rajan et al, 2021 for understanding digital divide in between social classes(Rajam et al., 2021) and (Survey, 2023)

### **Digital divide in between genders**

The ASER 2023 Report, "Beyond Basics", focuses on digital access and possibilities for youth in India. Here's a summary of the data and variables used in the study:The study is based on a survey of about 35,000 youth aged 14-18 years from 28 districts spread across 26 states. While not nationally representative, the sample size and geographical spread provide a general picture of the rural population in India.

### **Key Variables and Data Points**

The report provides data on the availability and use of smartphones among the youth. For instance, close to 90% of the 14-18 age group reported having a smartphone at home, and more than 90% reported being able to use such a device.

The report highlights differences in digital access and skills between males and females. For example, males are more likely to have their own smartphone than females (43.7% vs. 19.8%). The report includes data on the ability of youth to perform digital tasks on a smartphone, like setting an alarm, browsing for information, using Google Maps, and finding YouTube videos. The survey also collected data on the use of social media and knowledge of online safety features among the youth. This report combines

both self-reported questionnaire data and direct assessments of digital skills. This approach provides a comprehensive view of both the access to digital devices and the actual skills to use them effectively. The report emphasizes the digital divide in access and skills, with particular attention to gender disparities. It also connects these findings to broader educational and socio-economic contexts.

Overall, the ASER 2023 Report offers valuable insights into the digital divide among youth in India, highlighting the disparities in digital access and skills, particularly between genders. This data is crucial for understanding the current state of digital literacy and for guiding policies and initiatives aimed at bridging the digital divide in India.

The ASER 2023 Report provides detailed data on the digital divide in India across social classes and genders. Here are some key findings from the report that highlight this divide:

### **Gender Differences**

There is a noticeable difference in smartphone availability and use between males and females. For example, in the age group 14-18, 95.2% of males and 94.2% of females have a smartphone at home. However, 72.9% of males can use a smartphone, compared to only 62.0% of females. Additionally, 43.7% of males have their own smartphone, whereas only 19.8% of females do. The ability to perform digital tasks on a smartphone varies significantly between males and females. In tasks like browsing for information, using Google Maps, and finding YouTube videos, males generally outperform females. For instance, in using Google Maps, 48.9% of males could perform the task, compared to just 25.3% of females (Table 42).

When it comes to using smartphones for educational activities, there is a divide as well. For example, 67.1% of males and 62.0% of females who could bring a smartphone to do digital tasks have used it for some educational activities during the reference week.

There is a gender disparity in social media usage and awareness of online safety features. Approximately 93.4% of males and 87.8% of females used social media in the reference week, but fewer females are aware of safety features like blocking/reporting a profile or making a profile private.

### Gender difference in technology usage

Figure 4: Primary possessor of smartphones across urban and rural households

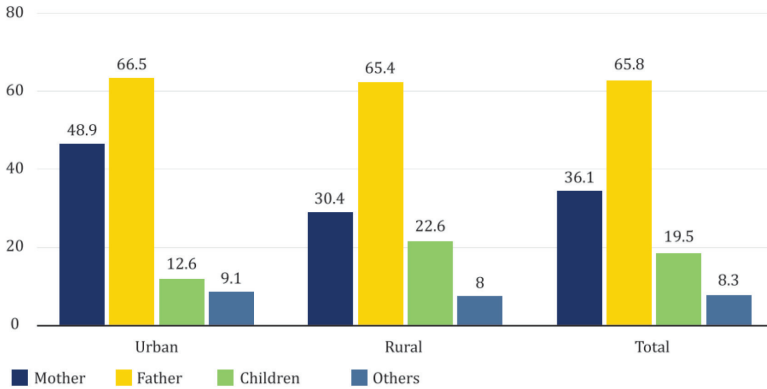
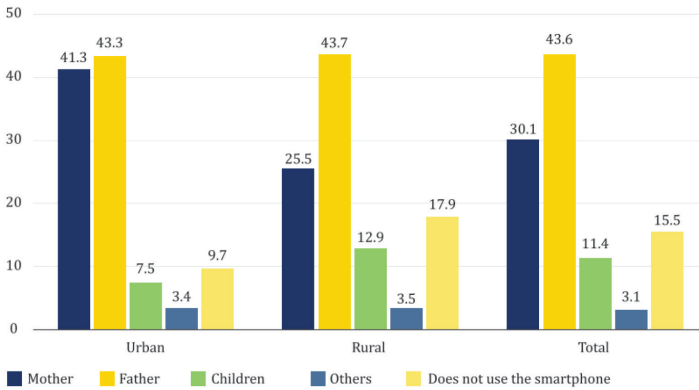
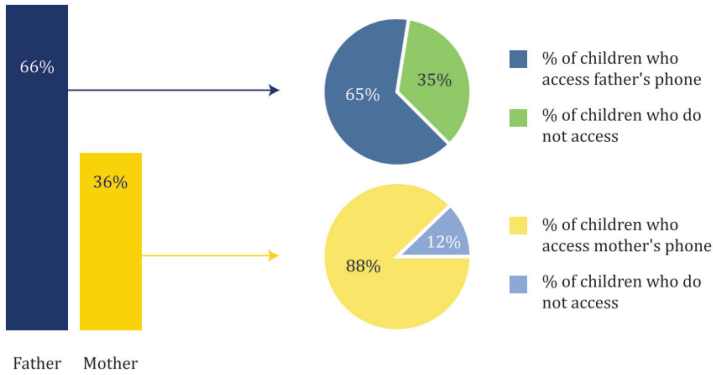


Figure 9: Proportion of children who use smartphones and the household members whose device was used across urban and rural households



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Figure 10: Proportion of children who use their mother's/father's phone when their mother/father is the primary possessor of the smartphone



Source:(Survey, 2023)

As part of the survey process, the study team asked youth whether they could bring a smartphone – their own, a family member’s, or a neighbour’s – to do these tasks. During the process of piloting the tools, it is noted that using a familiar phone provided an added level of comfort and allowed youth to focus on the task at hand rather than on the device. Hence, only those youth who were able to bring a smartphone were asked to do the digital tasks. Overall, more than two thirds of the sample could do so. But when examining the proportion of males and females who were able to access a smartphone for the short time the gap is considerable – 73% of sampled males could do so, versus 62% of the females. If it is assumed that the youth who could not bring a smartphone had low access to the technology, and were therefore unlikely to have solved this question correctly, this means that of the sample overall, 36% males and just 16% females in the 14-18 age group were able to use Google Maps to figure out the time it would take to reach the district bus stand. When examining familiarity with smart phones, it initially seems that both male and female youth have sufficient exposure to the technology. Approximately 95% of males and 90% of females reported knowing how to use a Smartphone, indicating a small gap of only 5 percentage points between the two genders. However, the understanding of “knowing how to use a Smartphone” differs significantly between males and females. For instance, males were more than twice as likely as females to own their own Smartphone, implying that they likely spend more time using the device and engage in a wider range of tasks with it. This observation is supported by ASER data on Smartphone usage: while similar proportions of male and female youth reported using



smart phones for education-related tasks and social media during the previous week, males were twice as likely as females to have ever used a Smartphone for online services such as bill payments or ticket bookings (38% of males compared to 19% of females). Ownership of a personal Smartphone also allows for unsupervised use for non-educational or work-related tasks. Survey data reinforces this notion, revealing that males were significantly more likely than females to use smart phones for entertainment purposes (e.g., 69% of males versus 46% of females reported playing games on a Smartphone in the week before the survey). In essence, although Smartphone technology has proliferated in rural India in recent years, these findings clearly demonstrate that girls and young women have notably less access to it compared to their male counterparts

These findings indicate a significant digital divide in India across gender lines, with males generally having better access to and proficiency with digital devices and the internet compared to females. This divide can have implications for educational and economic opportunities, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to bridge this gap.

### **Digital divide in between social classes**

The document titled "Explaining Caste-based Digital Divide in India" provides a comprehensive analysis of the digital divide in India, focusing on the disparities among different caste groups. Here are some key points from the analysis:

The study uses data from the Household Social Consumption: Education survey conducted by the National Sample Survey, Government of India, between July 2017 and June 2018. This survey is nationally representative and provides detailed information on various socioeconomic and demographic characteristics, including access to and use of computers and the Internet.

The paper categorizes the digital divide into three levels: First-level digital divide; to access to ICTs, measured through having a computer and Internet access. Second-level digital divide; the gap in digital skills required to use a computer and the Internet and the third-level digital divide involves inequalities in the benefits gained from accessing and using the Internet.

The paper highlights caste as a significant factor contributing to the digital divide in India. Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC) are identified as disadvantaged groups, facing historical socio-economic discrimination. This discrimination is evident in their access to digital technologies.

The study found that the digital divide is largely explained by socio-

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economic disparities between different caste groups. Education and income levels emerge as the most significant factors contributing to the digital divide.

Rajam et al., (2021) found that all the disadvantaged caste groups show poor access in computer ownership rate, Internet access rate, computer literacy rate, Internet literacy rate and Internet use rate in India. Only 14.1% of the STs have access to the Internet as compared to 41.1% of individuals from the other group. Differences in the computer literacy rate across the caste groups are also pronounced, with only 11.2% of STs and 13.5% of SCs knowing how to use a computer. The same statistic for OBCs is 18.9%. However, the corresponding figure for the others is 31.2%. Compared to STs, SCs, and OBCs, the others are more affluent and better educated. For example, mean years of schooling for others is 9.3, whereas the same for STs and SCs is just around 7 years; and, it is 7.8 years for OBCs. A much higher proportion of others live in urban areas as compared to SC and ST individuals. For instance, 45% of other individuals live in urban areas with better access to digital infrastructure. The corresponding percentage for ST individuals is only 12.4%. The lower socioeconomic position of the disadvantaged caste groups is also reflected in their occupational distribution. For example, 19.7% of SC individuals belong to the category of 'casual workers in agriculture households' which is considered as a last resort in terms of occupation because of the poor working conditions and low wages. On the contrary, the corresponding share for the others is only 5.8%. Clearly, the overall socioeconomic status of the Others is significantly better than the rest of the caste groups.

(Rajam et al., 2021) found that probit regression estimates indicate that there are substantial gaps in outcome variables between others, and each of the disadvantaged caste groups (SCs, STs, and OBCs). In other words, probit analysis confirms that caste-based digital divide, measured using different indicators, persists despite controlling for other socioeconomic and demographic variables in the model. Tewathia et al., 2020 also found that caste is an important predictor of access to ICTs in India. Educational attainment of individuals is one of the important factors that are associated with the individual's access to Internet and computer literacy. The estimates indicate that there is a significant gender based digital gap between males and females. Females are less likely to use the Internet and be computer literate as compared to men. Living in urban areas is associated with better digital outcomes. In other words, there is a considerable rural-urban digital gap in India (Rajam et al., 2021).

The study found that the differences in the educational attainments of individuals from Others and each of the disadvantaged caste groups is the most critical factor that explains gaps in computer literacy rate between

them. For example, nearly half of the total gap in the computer literacy rate between Others and ST individuals is explained by differences in their educational attainment. The contribution of income is important in explaining the gap in the computer literacy rate between Others and each of the disadvantaged caste groups. Per capita income explains more than one-fourth of the total gap between Other and SC individuals. If OBCs had the same income as the Others, the gap in computer literacy rate between the Others and OBC individuals would decrease by 29.3%. Other covariates, like the occupation of the head of household and individual's place of residence, also contribute to the gap between the Others and the rest of the caste groups. The state to which an individual belongs explains a tiny proportion of the gap. The negative sign of age shows that the gap between Others and STs in computer literacy rate would be 7 percentage points higher if STs had a similar age distribution as the Others (Rajam et al., 2021).

In summary, the document provides a thorough examination of the caste-based digital divide in India, emphasizing the need for targeted policy interventions to address socio-economic disparities that contribute to this divide. After reviewing these two articles, it is evident that there is digital divide in education especially between social class and between genders. Moreover, it is found that major portion of the digital divide in between social class can be explained by the difference in educational attainment. And hence the next session of this chapter analyses, extend of social exclusion in the educational attainment by using 2022-23 periodic labour force data.

### **Policy Implications**

There is need for address this digital divide, it is crucial to focus on improving the educational and income levels of the disadvantaged caste groups. Policies should aim at increasing access to education and economic opportunities for these groups, which in turn could help bridge the digital gap.

### **Policy recommendations:**

Education technology (EdTech) encompasses the use of technological tools, resources, and platforms to enhance teaching and learning experiences. It has the potential to revolutionize education by providing access to knowledge, personalized learning experiences, and innovative instructional methods. However, while EdTech has the capacity to democratize education and bridge gaps, it also presents challenges related to social exclusion. Social exclusion in the context of EdTech refers to the

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disparities in access to technology and digital resources among different socio-economic groups, geographical regions, and marginalized communities. These disparities can exacerbate existing inequalities in education and widen the gap between privileged and disadvantaged groups. Policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders should understand the challenges and opportunities surrounding the integration of technology in education, particularly in addressing social exclusion. Policy makers should be acutely aware of the challenges in education technology (EdTech) in the area of inclusive growth due to several key reasons like its potential to widen educational opportunities and promote inclusive growth by providing access to quality education regardless of geographical location, socio-economic status, or physical abilities. However, without careful consideration, there's a risk that certain groups may be left behind due to unequal access to technology and digital resources. Policy makers need to be aware of these disparities and work to bridge the digital divide to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to benefit from EdTech. Inclusive growth relies on a skilled and adaptable workforce. EdTech can play a crucial role in developing the skills needed for the jobs of the future, including digital literacy, critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration. However, there are challenges in ensuring that EdTech tools and resources are accessible and effective for all learners, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Policy makers must address these challenges to ensure that EdTech initiatives contribute to the development of a diverse and inclusive workforce. Inclusive growth requires addressing learning gaps and ensuring that all students have the opportunity to reach their full potential. EdTech has the potential to personalize learning experiences and provide targeted support to students with diverse learning needs. However, there are challenges in ensuring that EdTech solutions are inclusive and accessible to students with disabilities, language barriers, or other learning challenges. Policy makers must prioritize investments in inclusive EdTech solutions and support professional development for educators to effectively meet the needs of all learners. Inclusive growth goes beyond economic prosperity to encompass social inclusion and civic participation. EdTech can empower individuals to become active participants in their communities and engage in lifelong learning opportunities. However, there are challenges in promoting digital citizenship, online safety, and responsible use of technology, particularly among vulnerable populations. Policy makers must prioritize initiatives that promote digital literacy, online safety, and digital rights to ensure that all citizens can participate fully in the digital society. Inclusive growth requires fostering an environment that supports innovation and entrepreneurship. EdTech has the potential to spur innovation in education, create new economic opportunities, and empower individuals to become

creators rather than just consumers of technology. However, there are challenges in ensuring that the benefits of EdTech innovation are accessible and inclusive for all entrepreneurs, including those from underrepresented groups. Policy makers must create supportive ecosystems that encourage diversity and inclusion in EdTech entrepreneurship and provide access to funding, mentorship, and networking opportunities.

In conclusion, policy makers play a critical role in addressing the challenges and opportunities in education technology to promote inclusive growth. By prioritizing investments in equitable access to EdTech, supporting the development of relevant skills, addressing learning gaps, promoting digital citizenship, and fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, policy makers can ensure that EdTech contributes to a more inclusive and prosperous society

### **Conclusion:**

This article has critically examined the landscape of social exclusion in higher education in India within the context of education technology. Through a thorough analysis of secondary data, it has highlighted the persistent digital divide along the lines of social class and gender. Despite the potential of education technology to democratize access, it is evident that historical and systemic inequalities continue to manifest in the digital realm. This underscores the urgent need for nuanced policy interventions that not only address technological disparities but also consider the broader socio-economic factors contributing to educational exclusion.

### **Policy Recommendations:**

1. Develop and implement policies to make digital devices and internet access more affordable and accessible, especially in rural and marginalized communities.
2. Introduce comprehensive digital literacy programs across all levels of education to equip students with the necessary skills to effectively use technology.
3. Encourage the development of inclusive EdTech solutions that cater to diverse learning needs and cultural contexts.
4. Focus on targeted schemes to uplift historically marginalized groups, including special scholarships, mentorship programs, and community-based educational initiatives.
5. Regularly conduct research to monitor the impact of education technology on different social groups and adjust policies accordingly.
6. Foster collaborations between the government, private sector, and NGOs to expand the reach and efficacy of educational technologies.

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7. Enhance teacher training programs to include modules on using EdTech tools effectively in diverse classroom settings.

8. Invest in the development of robust educational infrastructure, particularly in remote and under-served areas.

9. Incorporate modules in the curriculum that promote cultural sensitivity and social awareness among students.

In conclusion, while the advent of education technology brings forth new opportunities, it also poses significant challenges in the context of social exclusion. It is imperative that interventions in the educational sector are designed with a deep understanding of these complexities. The goal should be to create an inclusive educational landscape where technology acts as a bridge, not a barrier, for learners from all walks of life.

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# **Disproportionate Burden of a Pandemic: A Gender Disaggregated Enquiry**

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## **Abstract**

The impact of the pandemic is not gender-neutral. It falls heavily on women than men. This study makes an enquiry of reasons for this disproportionality and its extent during the pandemic COVID- 19. The first question was studied by doing library research where articles of a similar kind were reviewed. The second part of the study analysed the extent of disproportionality by using the secondary data published by UNWOMEN on this issue.

## **Introduction**

An unprecedented pandemic, COVID 19, has sent mankind into a tizzy. Virtually, no person in the world left without feeling the pinch of pandemic stress during this period. Millions have lost their livelihood. Economic activities came to a standstill for months in almost all countries. The people, the government and the corporates are still on their warpath to overcome the strains the pandemic has leftover their lives. Pandemic like adversities always put the vulnerable groups in a fix than the better endowed. Children, women, aged like susceptible groups were hard hit during the lethal pandemic periods of Spanish flu, Zika, plague etc. The mortality of women aged between 15 and 49 due to the Spanish flu epidemic was 4.9 per thousand, but that of pregnant women was between 5.3 and 5.7 per thousand. These were the findings of studies performed in the USA, where it was found that compared to non-pregnant women; pregnant women had a 50 per cent higher chance of developing pneumonic complications. If pneumonia had developed, such women were 50 per cent more likely to die (REID, 2005). The epidemics often reverts the biological and physiological

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female survival advantage. The societal conditions, gender inequities in access to resources, welfare and protection, inequalities in exposure to points of contagion born out of gendered roles etc. increase the mortality of women during the pandemic period than normal period. It points to the existence of certain kinds of structural inequalities and vulnerabilities hidden from view in 'normal times' (Curtis, 2021). During the time of the pandemic, the duty of nursing the affected normally falls on women. During almost all outbreaks, women provide the majority of care to the ill voluntarily in their homes at great risk and cost to themselves (*Gender Matters in Responding to Major Disease Outbreaks like Ebola - World*, n.d.). When plague wreaked havoc in the city of London, during the bleak months of 1665, the duty of nursing the affected invariably fell to women. Individual parishes were expected to enforce city-wide Plague Orders, which stipulated that two women be appointed to serve as 'keepers' (or nurses) to those found to be infected (*Women of the Plague*, n.d.). "The Black Death period of 1349–51, as well as recurring plagues in the 100 years up to 1450, often had a sex-selective effect—killing more women than in non-plague years" (Curtis & Roosen, 2017). Gender role influences exposure to infectious agents and the treatment the affected gets. Besides, it decides the frequency and intensity of infection (World Health Organization, 2007)

Pandemic at any period, though it happened in the 15<sup>th</sup> century or this 21<sup>st</sup> century, is gender-biased and it has its special reasons and extent from time to time, country to country and period to period. It is in this context the issue of gender bias of the new pandemic COVID 19 becomes important and this paper attempts an enquiry into the reasons and extent and pattern of the impact of COVID 19 on women. The reasons were identified through library research and the extent of the disproportionality of impact was studied by using secondary data analysis.

### **Why do women more prone to the epidemics?**

The influence of sex and gender on epidemics was an issue of discussion for several years. Sex is the biological characteristic of men and women and it is proven that these differences influence the susceptibility to an infectious disease. "Anatomical and hormonal differences between males and females can influence the infectious disease process" (World Health Organization, 2007). When social practices assign different roles to this biologically determined sex, it becomes gender and gender roles also influence the susceptibility and exposure to an infectious disease. While addressing the issue of sex and gender in epidemic-prone infectious diseases the WHO study conducted in 2007 segregates five main reasons for gender



bias of a disease. They are: 1) time spent at home and away from home, 2) Responsibility for caring for the sick, 3) Care for livestock, 4) Access to health care and 5) Scientific knowledge about treatment.

Biological factors also make women vulnerable. Pregnant people are at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 when compared to non-pregnant people (*Pregnant and Recently Pregnant People*, 2021). Epidemic times exert psychological pressure on women rather than men. Pregnant women and girls interviewed in Brazil during the Zika virus pandemic reported that they often suffered anxiety and uncertainty during the pandemic related to the possibility of getting Zika during their pregnancies. (*Neglected and Unprotected*, 2017)

Accessibility to health care is another dilemma most of the women in low-income countries have to face. When the men and material of the health care system concentrate on the prevention and eradication of pandemic, the pregnant and other weak get little medical attention that they require regularly. The field studies conducted by Human Rights Watch in Brazil during the Zika Virus pandemic proves it. (*Neglected and Unprotected*, 2017) A pandemic may change the life of a mother laborious if it leads to pregnancy-related complications and affects the neonatal. During the Zika outbreak, In Brazil, more than 2,600 children were born with microcephaly and other complications who required long-term support and care. "Their primary caregivers are very often women whose lives are profoundly changed by having children with disabilities without receiving the full support they need from the government and society. Mothers raising children with Zika syndrome told Human Rights Watch they faced obstacles in accessing adequate information and support both at the time of delivery, and as their children grew and developed". (*Neglected and Unprotected*, 2017)

Almost all studies related to the impact of the pandemic on women unanimously prove that lockdown like measures adopted during the pandemic exacerbate domestic violence against women. "The lockdown exacerbated the factors contributing to domestic violence, severely limited survivors' ability to seek help and redress, and placed severe burdens on providers seeking to intervene and respond to survivors." ("An Ongoing Pandemic," 2015) The findings of a study conducted surveying 374 adults suggest that during the COVID pandemic, the efforts to control the virus dramatically increased Intimate Partner Violence. (Cannon et al., 2021)

The economic impacts of a pandemic like crisis fall heavily on the women workers of informal sectors. The large exodus of migrant workers experienced in India immediately after the announcement of lockdown on

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24<sup>th</sup> March 2020 exposed the pathetic condition of migrant workers of India, the majority of them are working in informal sectors. Their exodus to their home situated kilometres and kilometres away from their workplace by walk was the bitter outcome of their haplessness. Women and children in the group were the most suffered of that lockdown resultant migrant exodus. Among developing and emerging economies, India's informal sector is the largest. It is estimated that informal workers make up nearly 90% of India's labour force, and among women who work, more than 90% work in the informal economy (Bonnet et al 2019). In the informal sector, the wage to women is less than men across work and states in India. They lack adequate access to markets, formal sources of credit, and have limited bargaining power to improve their working conditions and earnings. In India, these women belong primarily to socially disadvantaged castes and communities, which exacerbate inequities and push them towards high risk of poverty.

Recent research of Initiative for What Works to Advance Women and Girls in the Economy (IWWAGE - is an initiative of LEAD, an action-oriented research centre of IFMR Society (a not-for-profit society registered under the Societies Act) for evaluating their long-running programmes of working with women in the informal economy in West Bengal and Jharkhand during COVID time explains the economic consequences the pandemic spilt upon women of informal sectors. In West Bengal, their sample consists of women engaged in rolling beedis and 71% of the respondents reported that their contractors either stopped or was giving significantly fewer orders. The domestic workers they surveyed reported salary cuts and 33% reported the loss of jobs during lockdown months. In Jharkhand, the surveyed women construction workers were found not registered with any welfare board and hence didn't get any relief packages (*SEWA-Report.Pdf*, n.d.)

The pandemic has exacerbated the miseries of tribal people too. Tribal people of India heavily depend on the collection and sale of forest products to meet their livelihood. Moreover, they live with their day to day earnings and living out of past savings is least in them. Here also women are more prone to pandemic upset. "Adivasi women depend on minor forest products, which include timber, forest medicine, herbs, honey, gooseberry, tree gum, and fruits that give them livelihood. During the summer season, this is a major source of income for the tribal women. But, due to the lockdown, the weekly markets got closed and the Adivasi women were left with no earnings". "Even for a hand wash one requires a good amount of water, whereas the tribal women have to walk miles to collect water for drinking and household purposes". ("COVID-19 Pandemic and Tribal Women in Nanded District of Maharashtra," 2021)

During distresses, women lose jobs faster than men and when the economy recovers it is again women who fail to re-join fast in the labour force. "In terms of economic opportunity, it has been seen that more women lost jobs compared to men and fewer have been able to re-join labour force. ("COVID-19 and Women's Labour Crisis," 2021)

A McKinsey study says that women make up 39 per cent of global employment but account for 54 per cent of overall job loss during COVID-19. The study finds the increasing burden of unpaid care taken by women as the reason for this disproportionate effect on women. The analysis of McKinsey during COVID lockdowns shows that female jobs are 19% more at risk than males simply because women are mainly working in those sectors which are more negatively affected by the COVID-19 crisis. Moreover, the crisis has thrown a disproportionate impact on female entrepreneurship.

The above review of literature unravels several reasons for the asymmetrical impact of a pandemic on women. More than biological differences, gender roles played by women are the leading reasons for this discrepancy. Among them, the caretaker role played by the women in families causes a vigorous disproportionate impact on women during pandemics. The economic impact of a distressing time on women was exacerbated by her high presence in the informal sector, forced migration, lack of adequate access to economic opportunities like market, credit etc., the discrepancy in wages, limited bargaining power and the employment of women in highly negatively affected sectors.

### **The extent of the disproportion of epidemic burden**

The UNWOMEN has conducted Rapid Gender Assessments (RGA) between March 2020 and March 2021 in at least 52 countries to know how COVID-19 was impacting women and men. The RGA focused on five areas of concern: 1) economic activities and resources; 2) unpaid domestic and care work; 3) access to goods and services; 4) emotional and physical wellbeing, and 5) relief measures. The assessment collected information on various variables under each area of concern. The present study has picked very relevant six variables from them and analysed them to know the extent of the disproportionality of COVID-19 between women and men in nine countries of Asia and the Pacific. The following tables are prepared from the said data.

**Table-1**  
**Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19**

Countries	% of respondents lost job		% of respondents reported a decrease in hours worked		% of respondents reported an increase in at least 3 domestic activities	
	(1)		(2)		(3)	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Afghanistan	16	16	35	62	40	18
Bangladesh	21	22	47	30	26	18
Cambodia	36	14	54	63	15	12
Indonesia	35	24	43	55	27	12
Maldives	16	14	75	66	27	19
Nepal	23	38	67	66	35	32
Pakistan	29	46	43	47	23	14
Philippines	13	14	51	39	32	52
Thailand	28	21	76	66	32	27
<b>Average</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>23</b>

Source: Prepared from the data available at <https://data.unwomen.org/rga>

Variables (1) and (2) represents access to economic resources during the pandemic and on average, the loss is more or less the same across gender. In countries like Cambodia, Indonesia Pakistan and Thailand the loss of a job is higher than average for women. In Nepal and Pakistan, the job loss is higher than average for men. In the case of a decrease in jobs, Nepal, Maldives and Thailand responses show higher than average for both genders.

Almost all studies on the impact of the pandemic on women unanimously accept the fact that the domestic activities undertaken disproportionately by the women is the root cause of most of the miseries of women during the pandemic. In that sense, the variable (3) is much important and the average proves the disproportionality too. The increase in domestic activity due to pandemic is higher in women than men. Except for the Philippines, in all other countries, the data shows and proves this disproportionality which unfavours women.

**Table - 2**  
**Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19**

Countries	% of respondents reported access to medical facilities is more difficult		% of respondents whose psychological, mental and emotional health is affected		% of respondents who received cash relief from Govt.	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Afghanistan	82	77	89	86	5	7
Bangladesh	48	46	80	79	6	11
Cambodia	30	37	60	59	0	3
Indonesia	40	50	68	57	16	29
Maldives	47	47	74	68	6	12
Nepal	47	48	78	67	3	4
Pakistan	49	46	73	76	3	14
Philippines	39	61	79	87	16	32
Thailand	39	33	88	83	13	9
<b>Average</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>

Source: Prepared from the data available at <https://data.unwomen.org/rga>

The access to medical facilities is more or less the same across gender but it was reported high for both gender in Afghanistan. The mental health of both genders was severely affected during the pandemic and the impact is slightly higher for women. In the case of relief distribution, the difference is visible. Relief distribution in the form of cash is less among these countries and only 13% of men and 8% of women got relief in cash on an average in these countries. More than its limited coverage, its gender discrimination is more worrisome.

The absolute difference, the difference between women and men is then taken to get more clarity in the extent of disproportionality. The following table represents the data.

**Table -3**  
**Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19**

Countries	Deprivation of Job	Disproportionate Domestic Burden	Deprivation of Medical Access	Deprived Mental Health	Discriminated Official Care
Afghanistan	0	22	5	3	2
Bangladesh	-1	8	2	1	5
Cambodia	22	3	-7	1	3
Indonesia	11	15	-10	11	13
Maldives	2	8	0	6	6
Nepal	-15	3	-1	11	1
Pakistan	-17	9	3	-3	11
Philippines	-1	-20	-22	-8	16
Thailand	7	5	6	5	-4

Source: Prepared from the data available at <https://data.unwomen.org/rga>

The five areas of concern; 1) economic activities and resources; 2) unpaid domestic and care work; 3) access to goods and services; 4) emotional and physical wellbeing, and 5) relief measures, are represented by five variables; 1) deprivation of job, 2) disproportionate domestic burden, 3) deprivation of medical facilities, 4) deprived mental health and 5) discriminated official care, respectively. The absolute difference between women and men are taken for each variable except for the last one where the difference between men and women is taken. The positive sign shows that women are discriminated whereas the negative sign indicates that men are discriminated. The state of the disproportion or discrimination in five variables across nine countries is represented by 45 data cells of the above table. Out of which 12 cells show negative signs whereas the rest 33 cells bear positive signs. The above table in that sense approves the wide prevalence of disproportionality of burden during the pandemic time. Except for the Philippines in all other countries, the disproportionality is against women.

The library research is done in the first part and the secondary data analysis of the later part uphold the view that the impact of pandemics is not gender-neutral. It affects women badly than men counterparts. The socio-economic factors that determined gender roles are the main reasons for this disproportionality and a comprehensive and paradigm restructuring of these roles will only help to remove this disproportionality.

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# **Pandemics and Internal Migrants: Job and Health Status of the Internal Migrants of Kerala During Covid-19**

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## **Abstract**

*This paper examines the impact of the pandemic Covid-19 on the internal migrants working in the southern Indian state, Kerala. The unexpected spread of the pandemic has brought insecurity in the employment and concerns on the health of internal migrant working in different states of India. The consecutive lockdowns and resulted labour market disequilibrium had affected the regular job and social interactions of internal migrants. As the Kerala working labour force contains more than 26 percent as internal migrant workers, studies related to this vulnerable group during Covid-19 pandemic would give us some insights. This paper tries to shed light in to the life of internal migrants working in the micro, small and medium firms of Kerala during Covid-19 pandemic in terms of their health and income. Primary data regarding the income and health status of internal migrants working in micro, small and medium firms were collected for this study. By analyzing the survey data it was seen that income of the internal migrants have been decreased drastically due to Covid-19 related factors where as the health concern of the migrants working in the manufacturing units of the state were not that much serious as it was observed in the other states of India. The measures taken by the Government of Kerala to promote the social security of the migrant workers has reduced the distress of migrant workers during the national lockdown.*

## **Key words:**

Pandemic, internal migrants, interstate migrants, lockdown

## **Introduction**

The deplorable conditions of internal migrants have been seen in India at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. The rapid spread of the



pandemic had blocked all the commercial and economic activities of the country and resulted in to the wide spread panic among the people especially on internal migrants. According to the 2011 Census, there were 450 million internal migrants in India by the 'Place of Last Residence' and thus it accounts for the 37.7 per cent of the total population of the country (Registrar General of India 2011). Based on the census trends, it is estimated that about 600 million internal migrants would be there in the country in 2020. Among this, one-third are interstate and inter-district migrants which accounts to 200 million, and within this 200 million, two-thirds are estimated to be migrant workers that roughly constitute 140 million (Gupta 2020). Migrant workers are the most vulnerable sections of the society in times of emergencies and pandemic. Some of the 272 million international migrants worldwide are more vulnerable than others because of personal, social, situational and structural factors. Their vulnerabilities may be exacerbated in crisis situations, as it is the case with the COVID-19 pandemic (Migration fact sheet No.6- IOM, 2021).

As far as India is concerned a significant number of migrant workers are temporary or seasonal migrants. Studies observed that with 21 out of every 1000 migrants classified as a temporary or seasonal migrants in 2007–08 (Keshri and Bhagat 2013). It showed that the bulk of these migrants also hail from marginalized sections of the country and these migrants are involved in the informal sector employment, making them some of the most vulnerable working groups, which further exclude them from social security benefits and even basic rights at the workplace (Srivastava and Sutradhar 2016). The features of internal migration and particularly their underestimation on the part of the central and state governments came to light with the onset of the pandemic and specifically the policy response towards it (IrudayaRajan, S., Sivakumar, P. &Srinivasan, A. 2020). Kerala as it characterizes a peculiar flow of out migration and in migration of labour across the countries and the states. The literature and various estimates on the internal migration of the state observed that a large population from the north and north eastern part of India have moved to this tiny state with hopes and dreams due to push and pull impulses, while their work status, living status and social space have to be addressed and researched to strengthen the production and social space in the state. This study tries to examine the status of internal migrants working in Kerala in the midst of Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Background of the Study**

While going through the literature on the migration phenomenon of the state, it is apparent that a circular pattern is visible in the migration flow of Kerala. The unique pattern of labour movement in the state could

be termed as 'migration paradox' as it establishes a phenomenon which causes people to migrate from the origin to other nations due to unemployment and in turn the flow of internal migrants from different destinations to the origin due to the employment opportunities created by the outmigration (Kabeer and Abdulla, 2021). An interesting paradox of Kerala model of development is high external migration of the people from the state to the other countries and in turn, high internal migration towards the state from the other regions of the country in response to the employment opportunities created by this outmigration. This phenomenon of migration may be termed as "migration paradox" and this paradox is evolved in the state due to the vacuum created by the external migrants and the increased remittances from them to the state. The labour market of Kerala is characterised by the paradoxical coexistence of high unemployment rate and high demand for labour (Nair, 1997).

As per the estimation of Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation (GIFT), Thiruvananthapuram, in 2013, the volume of internal migrants or Domestic Migrant Labourers (DML) was 2.5 million in the year 2013. Assuming that the estimation is rigorous and extrapolating when taking into account the net annual addition of migrants, possible growth in migration rate, as well as accounting for the migration from the neighbouring states, Kerala was expected to have 3.5 to 4 million inter-state migrant workers in 2018 (Narayana, C. S. Venkiteswaran, 2013). The estimated figure state that the size of internal migrants in the state population comes to around 12 percent and its volume is high in many districts like Ernakulam, Palakkad, and Kozhikode. A contemporary study by JajatiKeshariParida, submitted to the Kerala state planning board in March 2021, has estimated the stock of internal migrants as 31.4 lakhs. It is noted that the growth rate of temporary migration has been rising, whereas the growth rate of permanent migration is declining in Kerala. The growth rate of temporary migration was about 6.5 percent per annum during the year 2005-06. This growth rate increased to about 9 percent during 2017-18. On the other hand, the growth rate of permanent migration declined from 7.7 percent to about 4 percent per annum during 2005-06 and 2017-18. The rising temporary migration from other states is mainly because of the increasing demand for these workers in Kerala, particularly for the low-skilled jobs (JajatiKeshariParida, 2021). The report has projected the number of interstate migrants in Kerala for 2025 and 2030 based on the growth rates of interstate migration. From the given trend, it is estimated that the total number of migrants in Kerala will be 45.7 lakhs by the year 2025 and 55.9 lakhs by the year 2030.

Situating the internal migrants in the midst of a pandemic like Covid-19 has greater relevance as this vulnerable group has 26 percent in the total working labour force of the state. Internal migrants had undergone a miserable life during Covid-19 pandemic all over the country while the gravity

of their sufferings was different from the state to state. In these circumstances, present paper tries to make an insight on the job and health security of internal migrants working in the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) of the Kerala. Therefore, the focus of the study is on the following objectives.

- 1) To understand the health status and the health concerns of internal migrants during Covid-19 pandemic and
- 2) To understand the income and employment related issues of the internal migrants during Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Data and Methodology of the study**

The empirical analysis of the study is based on primary data collected from the inter-state migrants working in the MSMEs of Ernakulam and Kozhikode district of Kerala by administering a structured interview schedule. Ernakulam and Kozhikode are the two districts in Kerala having higher number of internal migrant working in different sectors. From these districts two industrial clusters namely; plywood and footwear are taken as the sample population for the study. Industrial clustering was done by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) for enhancing the productivity and competitiveness as well as capacity building of small enterprises in the state. Major clusters are there in the areas of wood, plywood, furniture, plastic, rubber, rice mill, printers, footwear, textile ethnic food, agriculture implements and general engineering. For the present study sample data are collected from the plywood cluster of Ernakulam district and footwear cluster of Kozhikode district.

A multi stage random sampling technique is used to select sufficient number of sample from these clusters. Firstly, these clusters are grouped into small, micro and medium industries on the basis of their registration and from each cluster five micro units, three small and one medium industry are identified as sample units by using simple random techniques. A sample of 450 inter-state migrants is selected as sample for the present study and out of which 225 samples are taken from plywood cluster of Ernakulam district and 225 samples are taken from the footwear cluster of Kozhikode district. Each cluster has small, micro and medium enterprises and from each enterprise a sample of 75 migrants are identified randomly and taken as sample for the study. In the Likert scale 1 stands for strongly disagree or highly dissatisfactory, and 2 for disagree or dissatisfy, where as 3 stands for uncertain or neutral. On the other hand 4 stands for agree or satisfactory and 5 for strongly agree or highly satisfactory. The reliability of Likert scale is tested and validated using Cronbach's alpha tests.

## **Discussion of the Result**

The domestic migrant workers of Kerala mainly come from neighboring states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and other long distant northern states like West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Orissa and North Eastern states (Economic Review 2018-Kerala state Planning Board). For the present study, data of migrants were collected from the MSMEs of the sample areas and the state wise number of migrant labourers says that the plywood firms encompass more migrant labourers from Assam and Orissa as these people have previous connection with timber and related works. It is also seen that migrant labourers from Bihar are seen more in the footwear firms and followed by labourers from UP and Assam. An interesting observation from the survey was on the migrant labourers of West Bengal. It is seen that only 12.9 percent migrant labourers from West Bengal are engaged in the works of MSMEs even though their number is high in the total domestic migrant labourers of the state. With regard to the distribution of migrant worker from different States of India, it is seen that out of the total inter-state migrant workers, 41 per cent are from West Bengal followed by Assam (14 per cent) and Odisha (11 per cent) (Economic Review 2018-Kerala state Planning Board). It is observed that most of the migrants from West Bengal are engaged in the construction sector and their presence is comparatively less in the MSMEs of the state.

## **Health and Income Status of the Internal Migrants during Covid-19 Pandemic**

COVID-19 outbreak had turned into a human crisis due to mass departure of migrant workers from cities in several states to their villages. Migrant workers constitute quite a large proportion of vulnerable population and they suffer from the casualties of pandemics when compared to any other section of people. In this part, we look in to effects of epidemics COVID-19 on the income and health of migrant workers. This paper analyses the health and income status of the internal migrants during Covid-19 in the state. The first part of the paper looks in to the health related aspects of internal migrants and the second part discusses the job and income security of migrant workers. The effect of Covid-19 pandemic on the physical, social and mental health of internal migrants is discussed here to get an insight on the life of the migrants in the state.

### **Part-I: Pandemic and the health of internal migrants**

Literature related to the work life of internal migrants reveal that social protection and health care of the migrant workers are totally neglected in India. Studies reveal that a significant number of them live in unhealthy conditions facing various health related risks. Inadequate access to

healthcare services for migrant workers at the destinations increases the health vulnerabilities of them and causing for the potential spread of the diseases among them. Migrant workers always miss good work environment and therefore, they need special provisions to ensure adequate amount of facilities including access to health services, accommodation and clean sanitation facilities. The lack of access to basic health services and provision of lack of social security for interstate migrant workers raises serious concerns about their health. This study has observed the health status of internal migrants in the midst of Covid-19 pandemic and tried to assess the impact of pandemic on the health of the migrants working in different MSME firms. Table 1:1 explains how the pandemic was affected on the health of migrants.

**Table 1.1**  
**Health related issues of internal migrants**

Health related issues of internal migrants	Responses of Migrants									
	Plywood			Footwear			Total			
	Always	Often	Not at all	Always	Often	Not at all	Always	Often	Not at all	
Affected with Covid-19 disease	15 (6.66%)	0 (0%)	210 (93.3%)	12 (5.33%)	0 (0%)	213 (94.6%)	27 (6%)	0 (0%)	423 (94%)	450 (100%)
Concern over health issues during pandemic	21 (9.33%)	154 (68.4%)	50 (22.22%)	10 (4.44%)	2 (0.88%)	213 (94.6%)	31 (6.88%)	156 (34.6%)	263 (58.44%)	450 (100%)
Concern over medical expenses during pandemic	31 (6.88%)	145 (64.44%)	49 (21.77%)	10 (4.44%)	10 (4.44%)	205 (91.1%)	41 (9.11%)	155 (34.4%)	254 (56.44%)	450 (100%)
Issues with proper medical treatment	25 (11.11%)	80 (35.55%)	120 (53.33%)	5 (2.22%)	10 (4.44%)	210 (93.33%)	30 (8%)	90 (20%)	330 (73.33%)	450 (100%)
Problems in visiting PHCs	10 (4.44%)	75 (33.33%)	140 (62.22%)	6 (2.66%)	15 (6.66%)	204 (90.66%)	16 (3.55%)	90 (20%)	344 (76.4%)	450 (100%)
Problems faced to get free treatment from private hospital	7 (3.11%)	107 (47.55%)	111 (49.33%)	11 (4.88%)	139 (61.77%)	75 (33.33%)	18 (4%)	246 (54.6%)	186 (41.33%)	450 (100%)

Source: Field survey

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A detailed survey was conducted among internal migrants working in the plywood and footwear industries of the state. Altogether, we will be able to see from the table 1.1 that Covid-19 pandemic has not affected the internal migrants of the state at an extent which was expected by us with regard to health related aspects of migrants. It is observed that internal migrants in Kerala are safer while comparing with the migrant workers of other states. From the survey, it was observed that only 6 percent of migrant workers were affected with Covid-19 virus and 94 per cent of migrants were safe in the state. It is also observed that majority of migrants were expressed less concern over health issues and medical expenses. It is seen that 73.33 percent of migrants did not face problem with medical treatment as it is freely available in public health centres. Interestingly, migrant workers working in medium footwear firms expressed less concern over their health issues as the firms provide them ESI and insurance services. It is again observed from the table 1.1 that almost all the internal migrants working in the footwear firms responded positively to their health concerns during pandemic as they got better care from their firms especially to the workers of medium firms while the migrant workers of plywood firms showed more concern over their health issues as most of the plywood firms treat them as unorganised workers.

It is also seen that migrants do not have problem to visit public health centres run by government and 76.4 percent of migrants do not see problem in receiving free treatment from there. Benoy Peter et al; (2020) observed that Kerala's experience to promote the welfare of migrant workers in the state offers important lessons for the inclusion of migrant workers in India and the government has played a very crucial role in alleviating the distress of migrant workers through policy measures at state level, it has enumerated and was directly involved in providing food and other services. Studies conducted during Covid-19 pandemic observed that government efforts to mitigate the problems of internal migrants might have helped them to feel safe in the state.

### **Pandemic and the social and psychological life of internal migrants**

The COVID-19 pandemic has upset the daily routine of every working class due to lockdown measures laid down by most of the states and of course, it has hit the social life of internal migrants everywhere in the country. Many of the internal migrants either lost their regular job or met with a reduction in the monthly income due to lock-down. This has increased the vulnerability of migrants with regard to their socio-economic and psychological life. It is observed that migrants have always been vulnerable to various psychological and physical health issues and the ongoing pandemic further extended their distress and increased the physical and mental health

concerns (Kabeer and Abdulla, 2021). Studies say that uncertainty about the duration of lockdown, eagerness to travel and meet their family, fear of being abandoned or deserted by their employers, insecurity over income and job etc; had created a panic situation in the life of internal migrants. This part of the paper analyses how the pandemic has influenced the mental health and social life of migrants in the Kerala state with reference to the migrant workers of MSMEs. Various questions regarding the mental health and social life of migrants were asked in the survey and the summary of the survey is given in the table 1.2.

**Table 1.2:**  
**Social and psychological life of internal migrants during Covid-19 pandemic**

Psycho-social dimensions	Responses of Migrants									
	Plywood			Footwear			Total			
	Always	Often	Not at all	Always	Often	Not at all	Always	Often	Not at all	
Panic during lock-down	7 (3.11%)	154 (68.4%)	64 (28.4%)	0 (0%)	2 (0.88%)	223 (99.3%)	7 (1.55%)	156 (34.66%)	287 (63.77%)	450 (100%)
Faced discrimination from local community	2 (0.88%)	120 (53.3%)	103 (45.77%)	0 (0%)	2 (0.88%)	223 (99.3%)	2 (0.44%)	122 (27.11%)	326 (72.44%)	450 (100%)
Felt safety during lock-down	74 (32.88%)	147 (65.3%)	4 (1.77%)	220 (97.7%)	5 (2.22%)	5 (2.22%)	294 (65.33%)	152 (33.77%)	4 (0.88%)	450 (100%)
My family was afraid of me during pandemic	80 (35.55%)	100 (44.44%)	45 (20%)	60 (26.66%)	140 (62.22%)	25 (11.11%)	140 (31.11%)	240 (53.33%)	70 (15.55%)	450 (100%)
Faced humiliation from social media hype at the onset of pandemic	2 (0.88%)	133 (59.11%)	90 (40%)	0 (0%)	79 (35.1%)	146 (64.88%)	2 (0.44%)	236 (52.44%)	212 (47.11%)	450 (100%)
We are afraid of our group living	5 (2.22%)	130 (57.77%)	90 (40%)	6 (2.66%)	75 (33.33%)	144 (64%)	11 (2.44%)	205 (45.55%)	234 (52%)	450 (100%)

Source: Field survey

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Table 1.2 gives us detailed information regarding the socio-psychological dimensions of internal migrant's life and by which we could assess the social and mental status of migrant workers during pandemic. From the table it is observed that only 1.55 percent of migrants were panic due to the uncertainty and hypes created by the pandemic whereas majority of the migrants were not panic in the midst of pandemic and lockdown. Problems of feeling loneliness and fear of family are some of the mental issues that migrants often face during health causality. It is also observed from the table that internal migrant's family seems to be not panic as their family member is being safe here in Kerala during pandemic. Another issue often faced by the migrants is social discrimination and humiliation from local community. But it is also seen from the table that only 2 migrants felt discrimination during lock down where as 72.44 percent of the migrants did not face any type of discrimination from local community. There was a great concern about group living of the migrants at the onset of pandemic but these migrants were less worried about their group living and it seems that this group living might have helped the internal migrants in reducing their tensions and mental agonies during lockdown and related problems.

It is again observed from the table 1.2 that majority of internal migrants felt safety during lock down as they received free food from community kitchen and also other helps from their sponsors during lock down. Data from the table also shows comparatively better status for migrant workers working in the footwear firms as these firms provide better work environment for the migrant workers. Provision of ESI, provident fund, better accommodation etc. seen in the medium footwear firms might have helped the migrant workers to lead a panic free life during lockdowns. Apart from government initiatives, the collective efforts of the volunteers, activists, Civil Society Organisations, corporate entities, employers, contractors and neighbourhood societies to support migrants in the pandemic has become an amazing model of extending help to the vulnerable. The social media groups were also created at the national level to facilitate interstate support for migrant workers (Benoy Peter, 2020). From these discussions, it could be conclude that the state's concern in the welfare of the interstate migrant workers is reflected in the socio-psychological life of migrants working here.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, the Kerala government's intervention to help the migrant workers in the state was reasonably inclusive and appreciable. The state's effective response to workers' distress during the lockdown emanates from its overall disaster preparedness and resilience achieved from confronting two consecutive state-wide natural disasters and a public health emergency in the immediate past (Benoy Peter, 2020)...



Kerala is the first Indian state to enact a social security scheme for migrant workers (Srivastava 2020). Free food provided through community kitchens and other facilities to migrant workers is wonderful model of state Government. The Department of Local Self-Government on 20 March 2020 issued a detailed order that to be carried out for the preventive measures in the midst of Covid-19 pandemic. Studies conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic observed that government and other agencies’ intervention has positively affected the living condition of internal migrants in the state. The combined efforts by the government and other agencies helped the internal migrants to feel safe in the state. In the present study internal migrants were asked certain questions regarding government interventions and its responses are shown in the table 1.4.

**Table 1.3:  
Government intervention during lockdown and responses of internal migrants.**

Government Intervention	Responses of Migrants									
	Plywood			Footwear			Total			
	Always	Often	Not at all	Always	Often	Not at all	Always	Often	Not at all	
Got Govt. assistance and support in one or another way	2 (0.88%)	207 (90%)	16 (7.11%)	21 (9.33%)	203 (90.22%)	1 (0.44%)	23 (5.11%)	410 (91.11%)	17 (3.77%)	450 (100%)
Got food kit and food from community kitchen	3 (1.33%)	202 (89.77%)	20 (8.88%)	2 (0.88%)	212 (94.22%)	11 (4.88%)	5 (1.11%)	414 (92%)	31 (6.88%)	450 (100%)
Got correct and free medical treatment from Govt. hospitals	10 (4.44%)	206 (91.55%)	9 (4%)	78 (34.66%)	145 (64.44%)	2 (0.88%)	88 (19.55%)	351 (78%)	11 (2.44%)	450 (100%)
Got financial help from LSGs	0 (0%)	27 (12%)	198 (88%)	11 (4.88%)	75 (33.33%)	139 (61.77%)	11 (2.44%)	102 (22.66%)	337 (74.88%)	450 (100%)
Got free vaccination from Kerala	100 (44.44%)	0 (0%)	125 (55.55%)	125 (55.55%)	0 (0%)	100 (44.44%)	225 (50%)	0 (0%)	225 (50%)	450 (100%)
Health personnels used to visit our dwelling place	64 (28.44%)	154 (68.44%)	7 (3.11%)	75 (33.33%)	110 (48.88%)	40 (17.77%)	139 (30.88%)	264 (58.66%)	47 (10.44%)	450 (100%)

Source: Field survey

## Pandemics and Internal Migrants: Job and Health...

In the present analysis Government intervention is understood in terms of government assistance and support, provision of free food through community kitchen, free medical treatments, financial help from local self governments, free vaccination, visit of health personnels etc. Table 1.3 shows the responses of internal migrants towards government interventions during lock downs. From the table it is seen that 91 percent of migrant workers were indifferent with regard to government support and they received support "often" in one or another way during lockdowns. It is also seen that majority of migrant workers often received free food kit and food from community kitchen and only 4.88 percent of migrants got free food from community kitchen. It is again noticed that 74.8 percent of migrants did not get any financial help from LSGs while 50 percent of them received one or two free dose of Covid-19 vaccination. During Covid-19 lockdowns the health personnels used to visit various dwelling places of migrant workers to give them medical advices. The present study tried to look in to the matter and found that only 30.8 percent migrant workers got help from health personnels. It was observed from the survey that the domestic migrant workers working in different MSMEs used to get basic necessary goods during lockdowns either from their sponsor or from the owner of the firms. Therefore, the MSME workers especially in the medium small and medium firms might have not gone for government help as they are experiencing better work environment in the firms.

### **Part II: Pandemic and the Economic Life of the Internal Migrants**

According to the early estimates, tens of millions of migrant workers were left unemployed in India by the end of March 2020 due to the lockdown (Al-Jazeera, 2020). Many of the migrant workers have returned to their villages as they lost their job during lock down. As most of the internal migrants are working in unorganized sector, it is difficult to assess the actual economic impact created by pandemic. The lockdown implemented in the state has resulted in an unprecedented loss of employment in all sectors of the economy and the impact of the lockdown was most severe in the case of self-employed and casual workers. Based on the loss of GSDP for the various sectors and considering the distribution of workers to various sectors, it feels that the 69 days lockdown has pushed more than two third of self employed and casual workers to acute unemployment, financial crisis, indebtedness and economic distress (Prakash, 2021). Covid-19 pandemic has created an unimaginable disequilibrium in the labour market of the state and the distortions and complexities of this labour market mismatch will continue for long term. Various studies conducted during pandemic observed a big fall in the income for labourers working in the unorganized sector and this fall of income is severe in the case of internal migrants working in the construction and service sectors. As we know, the internal migrants are most vulnerable section of the working class in the state, a study on the

impact of pandemic on their employment and income is made here. Table 1.4 shows the various economic aspects which are assessed to understand the effect of Covid-19 pandemic on internal migrants.

**Table: 1:5**  
**Economic impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the internal migrants**

Economic Dimensions	Responses of Migrants									
	Plywood			Footwear			Total			
	Always	Often	Not at all	Always	Often	Not at all	Always	Often	Not at all	
Job opportunities decreased due to pandemic	110 (48.88%)	115 (51.11%)	0 (0%)	70 (31.11%)	150 (66.66%)	5 (2.22%)	180 (40%)	265 (58.88%)	5 (1.11%)	450 (0%)
Pandemic reduced salary/wage	34 (15.11%)	188 (83.55%)	3 (1.33%)	2 (0.88%)	12 (5.33%)	211 (93.77%)	36 (8%)	200 (44.44%)	214 (47.55%)	450 (100%)
Pandemic caused economic insecurity	136 (60.44%)	83 (36.8%)	6 (2.66%)	30 (13.33%)	164 (72.88%)	31 (13.77%)	166 (36.88%)	247 (54.88%)	37 (8.22%)	450 (100%)
Financial help obtained from sponsor during lock-down	15 (6.66%)	190 (84.44%)	20 (8.88%)	76 (33.77%)	140 (62.22%)	9 (4%)	91 (20.22%)	330 (73.33%)	29 (6.44%)	450 (100%)
Pandemic affected my job	115 (51.11%)	103 (45.77%)	7 (3.11%)	75 (33.33%)	79 (35.11%)	71 (31.55%)	82 (18.22%)	182 (40.44%)	186 (41.33%)	450 (100%)
Got salary during lock down	1 (0.44%)	105 (46.66%)	119 (52.88%)	79 (35.11%)	12 (5.33%)	134 (59.55%)	80 (17.77%)	117 (26%)	253 (56.22%)	450 (100%)
Sponsor provided free food during lockdown	26 (11.55%)	191 (84.88%)	8 (3.55%)	220 (97.77%)	4 (1.77%)	1 (0.44%)	246 (54.66%)	195 (43.33%)	9 (2%)	450 (100%)
Sponsor provided free accommodation during lockdown	50 (22.22%)	107 (47.55%)	68 (30.22%)	222 (98.66%)	3 (1.33%)	0 (0%)	272 (60.44%)	110 (24.44%)	68 (15.11%)	450 (100%)
Pandemic has reduced the income	160 (71.11%)	65 (28.88%)	0 (0%)	80 (35.55%)	140 (62.22%)	5 (2.22%)	240 (53.33%)	205 (45.55%)	5 (1.11%)	0 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

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Economic impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the internal migrants are analysed here in terms of job opportunities, job security, change in income, provision of financial help, food and accommodation in the midst of Covid-19 havoc and consecutive lockdowns. From the table 1.4, it is observed that Covid-19 pandemic has really affected the economic life of the migrants in terms of their income and employment. It is seen from the table that 99 percent of migrants faced a decrease in their employment opportunities and also in their income. It is also seen that pandemic has reduced the wage or salary of the migrants especially in the case of workers who are working in the plywood firms but the reduction in the salary was not clearly seen in the case of footwear firms as these firms are providing comparatively better work environments for migrants. Pandemic has decreased the job opportunities available for migrants in the state and which resulted to the decrease in their income. It is also observed from the table that 30 percent of migrants always faced economic insecurity and 57 percent of migrants often faced economic insecurity due to irregular employment during covid-19 and therefore, it clear from the table that pandemic has caused to reduce the income of 99 percent of internal migrant workers.. It is also seen that majority of migrant worker's economic life is negatively affected with Covid-19 pandemic. It is again observed from the table that the pandemic has negatively affected in the job of 60 percent of migrants and the salary was not got available for 56 percent of migrants during lockdowns. An interesting observation is that medium firms have provided food and accommodation freely to its migrant workers during lockdowns and the data show that the medium firms of footwear industry have become a wonderful model in the provision of shelters to its domestic migrant workers.

### **Conclusion**

Government of Kerala is trying for social inclusion of migrants to mitigate the problem faced by them in their day today work life in the state. Measures like Interstate Migrant Workers Welfare Scheme-2010 (ISMWWS), ApnaGhar Housing Scheme, Aawaz Insurance Scheme etc; are some of the programmes groomed for them. The health concerns of the migrants during pandemic have been reduced by the strong interventions of government. Community kitchen for food, intervention by local self government for the welfare of migrants, group counseling to migrants by experts, special vaccination camps for migrants etc; are examples of strong government interventions in this regard. More over local community of Kerala also have extended their help to meet the immediate requirements of migrants. Voluntary organisations had identified the deserving group of migrants and

provided food and other items during lock-down at local level. The measures taken by the Government of Kerala to promote the social security of the migrant workers has reduced the distress of migrant workers during the national lockdown.

This paper has tried to shed light in to the life of internal migrants staying in Kerala during Covid-19 pandemic in terms of their health and income. By analyzing the survey data it was seen that the income of the internal migrants have been decreased due to Covid-19 related factors where as the health concern of the migrants are not that much serious as it was observed in the other states of India. Findings from the study say that the state's concern in the welfare of the interstate migrant workers is reflected in the socio-psychological life of migrant labourers working here. The internal migrant workers have seen Kerala as a wonderful destination for their better prospects as the state provide them better work environment. Many of the internal migrant workers left the state immediately after the declaration of the first lockdown but after a short period they started coming back to the state due to the increasing demand from the state's labour market. Covid-19 pandemic was a challenging situation to all governments and the governments have learnt great lessons from this pandemic. Based on the lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have to propose more robust measures for the better future of internal migrants. It should include inclusive employment, health and social security measures.

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# **A Study on Care and Cure: From the Asylum to Modern Health Care System**

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## **Abstract**

The History of disease and Medicine is of no doubt a history of social development and improvement in the existing knowledge system of the world at that point of time. The Dark Age witnessed the worst treatment from the society towards those who were affected by diseases. Any disease or deformity was said to be the curse of God. The age of Renaissance and awakening shifted the then existing beliefs and thoughts. The course of change from baseless beliefs to empirical knowledge towards diseases and patients can be considered as the foundation of the Modern medical system which is purely dependent on scientific knowledge and reasoning. The enhancement of duties of State from protecting the boundaries to the welfare of citizens added importance to health and Medicine. Establishment of Asylums, formation of Hospitals, medical education, development of Science and Technology ...etc. combined together formed an effective health care system to care and cure the patients affected with diseases. It is important to chalk out the course of development of such a health care system under the supervision of the State can be considered as a product of social development and hence the history of diseases and health care system should be given importance while discussing human progress.

The Sun in the dawn of Renaissance spread the light of humanity, reason and scientific knowledge that propelled the whole world to a more civilized society. The dirt of dark ages more or less washed away in the current of disupliftment. Everything changed in such a way as to refresh and make more perfect than before. Each and every aspect of human life viz daily life, aesthetic sense, language and literature, art and architecture and all the disciplines of knowledge reflected the new stream of thought. Diseases and Medicine, treatment and cure shifted its course of philosophy of illness and its cause from sin to science. This had a far reaching impact on diseases

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treatment and on patient. Today we have most modern facilities that provide solution to a problem related to health, whether it is an old type of disease like Leprosy or an immediate challenge to the existence of humanity, like any infectious disease presence." The Renaissance was a period of reawakening, of rediscovery of the values and attitudes of the pre-Christian Greeks".<sup>1</sup> The whole world was turning and moving forward in a right path of freedom and equality. No doubt, the innovative thoughts, creativity and the paradigm shift in spheres of thought also changed the world of suppressed and neglected sections of the society. Here we can see these changes in the case of lunatics, crippled and unwanted people.

One, who is interested to explore the development of human society, can see its unity of a group and diverse nature of different groups that were formed at different periods of history as it progressed. And this process still continues. It is obvious that the grouping processes or the division of society was based on one among the following criteria like position in the society or what work one is doing or colour of skin etc. and or sometimes the geographical area where he or she lives .Wealth and power too played a significant role in the on going process of categorisation into different social units. But if we search for the place of individuals who were different from common people in form and behaviour or in any other manner but not included in the above categories is also becomes a unique group. Deformity, madness, inertia, was some of the features that become basis for this grouping. Now we are going to discuss of this particular group of people and the history of the plight of them in the society focusing our attention especially on asylums, a type of institutions for the above mentioned group. These institutions are called lunatic asylums.

Madness was one of the astonishing and fearful human nature that people wonder at the manifestations of this illness. Fear, anxiety, violence, self-injury, attacking others etc.....are not a normal pattern of behaviour. Such deviations from so called normality of ordinary people were considered very differently until the emergence of psychiatry or psychology as a discipline. But now we think about madness as Pascal explain it as "Men are so necessarily mad, that not to be mad would amount to another form of madness." or Dostoevsky, in his diary of a writer: "It is not by confining one's neighbor that one is convinced of one's own sanity."<sup>2</sup> , In the beginning of fifteenth century the criminal madmen were sent away from their places by the authorities from their jurisdiction to save the people from them. This exclusion was considered as a normal practice at that time. Both cure and exclusion were seen practiced in the European cities-some are sent to hospitals and some others were confined in jails but still many of them



were expelled from the cities,

The classical study of Foucault, the French philosopher "Madness and Civilization" is an in-depth study about the formation of asylum practices and its developmental stages as an institution in Europe. In his study he begins with classical confinement. Exclusion and purification was strategy adopted by the society where the insane and unwanted persons were abandoned or excluded from the society so as to protect or purify the society from the threat or infection or danger caused by the presence of such individuals. In the seventeenth century France those who were economically unproductive to the society like wanderers, beggars, unemployed were also kept in custody in a particular place where they had made to work in economically productive activities like weaving. This practice was being supported by law and with the support of philanthropist, is widely called confinement. Workhouses, Lazar houses (France), Correction houses, and prisons were places to utilize the inmates for economically productive works. No doubt all the inmates in these institutions were belonged to the weaker section of the society, including pensioners, infected patients etc., In Paris Hospital General, an institution for keeping idle people for making them work and earn was built. It is believed that the poor, if they are continue as idlers would cause more and more evils, and to avoid this they have to work and earn for themselves and for the entrepreneur who shared his profit with the hospital general.<sup>3</sup>

The art and literature provides vivid imagery experiences of the pathetic conditions of madmen and women kept confined .The following are some of the works Foucault refer in his work as evidence for his arguments. "Madmen were the Dance of Death in the Cimetiere des Innocents doubtless dates from the first years of the fifteenth century, the one in the Chaise-Dieu was probably composed around 1460; and it was in 1485 that Guyot Merchant published his Danse macabre. These sixty years, certainly, were dominated by all this grinning imagery of Death. And it was in 1497 it was translated into Latin. In the very last years of the century Hieronymus Bosch painted his Ship of Fools. The Praise of Folly dates from 1509 on fined in the holylocus of a miracle"<sup>4</sup>

"In the history of madness, two events indicate this change with a singular clarity: 1657, the creation of the Hospital General and the "great confinement" of the poor; 1794, the liberation of the chained inmates of Bicetre" Philippe Pinel a French physician took a more kind, less cruel approach to the treatment of insane persons. His interventions were different in many aspects from that of classical confinement. He is most famous being committed pioneer and advocate of humanitarian methods in the

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treatment of mentally ill, and for the development of a mode of psychological therapy known as moral treatment. William Tuke was another English philanthropist who used the method moral treatment for the cure of persons with mental disorders. Both strengthened a humanitarian approach and allowed more liberty to the inmates of these institutions and for the treatment of lunatics, Though the Church and religion accused the insane and wanderers and designed punishments for them, the political decisions were more sympathetic. Now that Pinel and Tuke had a different treatment of religion, for cure the insane in the asylum. "Religion must not be the moral substratum of life in the asylum, but purely and simply a medical object: Religious opinions in a hospital for the insane must be considered only in a strictly medical relation"<sup>5</sup>. This was purely a positive change in the use of religious beliefs for the treatment of madness.

Why a mad man is so violent or what is the cause of inertia of another lunatic?. From the middle ages it was considered as a result of the spirit that made them to act in such a way, and the prime cause of their disordered behaviour. But now in the asylum the cause of bodily reaction had been reckoned as the result of certain chemical reactions taking place in the body at the time of unexpected actions from those affected with mental illness. Here there is a slot for treatment using chemicals in the form of medicine. So the role of doctor and patient becomes an important part in the treatment plan in asylums.<sup>6</sup>

Psychiatric treatment has a strong basis on mind body relationship of a subject affected with mental illness. The earlier methods of treatment of a person, though it considered mind body relationship in an entirely different way such as bodily punishment for the purification of mind, now it turned into a more reasonable way. A more reasonable approach was being adopted in the case of inmates of asylums as far as religion is concerned.

The last quarter of nineteenth century witnessed increased number of asylums and the number of inmates also increased .But the awareness about madness, the advancement of science and technology, the enlightenment of social life created a dramatic change in the attitude of people which lead to deinstitutionalization -a movement that lead to keep and care insane people in the family by providing psychological support and psychiatric medicine to the patients. However we have psychiatric hospitals for the treatment of psychological disorders.

### **India and asylums**

In India at the time of British rule and from the time of English East India Company various types of institutions were established for the

treatment and to protect the British soldiers from infectious diseases. The history of European model asylums in India dates back from such institutions. Nandini Bhattacharya explains in her work 'Contagion and Enclaves' 'There were many ideological, political, military and medical reasons for hill stations in tropical colonies. The urgency of the question of the Europeans' long-term survival in the tropics engaged medical discourses in Britain as well as in the tropical colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries<sup>7</sup>.

In colonial India several types of institutions had been established for the treatment of infectious diseases. After the 1857 revolt the number of British soldiers were being increased and as a result more institutions were established for the health care and protection of them. Biswamoy Pati and Mark Harrison in their work, 'The Social History of Health and Medicine In Colonial India' states that "The history of British specialist institutions for the mentally ill in Bengal began during the second half of the eighteenth century<sup>8</sup>. 'Various 'native lunatic asylums' that had been established during the first decades of the nineteenth century in the different districts of Bengal province, at Rasapagla, Patna, Murshidabad, Bareilly, Benares and Dakha"<sup>9</sup>.

Debjani Das in the article 'Gender and insanity: situating asylums in nineteenth century Bengal' refers 'The Western medical practice and the medical care of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was primarily meant for the maintenance of the army's troops<sup>10</sup>. The natives were less cared in these institutions run by the British, though they were well aware of the experience they had in Europe, they compromised such principles for the sake of their racial pride. Biswamoy Pati mentioned in the article 'Confining 'lunatics': the Cuttack Asylum c.1864-1906' that the Cuttack asylum was an institution where various forms of reforms and experiments had been taken place by the British authorities to improve the conditions of the asylum and the inmates of it.<sup>11</sup>

"Leprosy And colonialism Suriname under Dutch rule', Stephen Snelders describes the experience and knowledge of Europeans on confinement as a method of care and treatment for infectious diseases and practice of institutions like lunatic asylum ,made use of preventing and protecting themselves and the natives in the colonies . 'Compulsory segregation policies began in Suriname in the second half of the eighteenth century and anticipated global developments in the age of imperialism. The policies took the form of a 'Great Confinement' (to borrow a phrase from Michel Foucault) in the decades between 1830 and 1860'.<sup>12</sup>.

## Conclusion

In the middle ages Madness counted as a result of sin committed

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and is the curse of divine forces as punishment, and hence they were treated brutally by others, sometimes as an act they believed would cure the madmen from the cursed state he is in .They were given punishment so as to purify the mad and also to purify the society from mad people. Exclusion was another method adopted by administrators supported by Church. Later confinement proved a more acceptable strategy to protect, control and care the lunatics. The classical confinement was also an uncivilized practice because the patients were made to suffer to get rid of the curse affected them .The family considered an insane member as a disgrace to it .The asylums were a place for patients where they get liberty, care and medical treatment in the later half of eighteenth century.Pinel and Tuke proved more humanitarian and reasonable approach in the treatment of inmates of lunatic asylums. Though the number of patients increased with the increased number of asylums after 1950s.Later psychiatric hospitals were established in place of asylums. Deinstitutionalization advocated freedom and rehabilitation of the lunatics in the society where they lived .Thanks to Renaissance ideologies and modern science and psychiatric treatment methods .The mental patients are now supposed to be treated as one who is affected with any other diseases that hinder ones social life.

### Endnotes (Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup>Lyons and Carnahan, *Man and Civilization*, Chicago,1965.p-304

<sup>2</sup>Foucault Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, Routledge, London, 1961.p-3.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.p-6

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.p-15

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.p-254

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.p-159

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.p-159. Bhattacharya Nandini,*Contagion and Enclaves,Tropical medicine in Colonial India*, Liverpool University press,Liverpool,2012.p-17

<sup>8</sup>PatiBiswamoy and Harrison Mark,Edi., *The Social History Of Health and Medicine in Colonial India*, Routledge,New york,2009.p-129

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.p-130

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p.196.

<sup>11</sup>Snelders Stephen, *Leprosy and Colonialism Suriname under Dutch*

# **Gandhian Constructive Programme and the Making of a 'New India': Swami AnandaThirtha-A Case Study (Malabar 1905-1987)**

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I will be happy if the poor Harijans get minimum respect when they ask for basic necessities.<sup>1</sup>

-Swami AnandaThirtha

This is the famous statement of Swami AnandaThirtha, a Gandhian nationalist social reformer of Malabar. This paper is an attempt to evaluate the works of this Gandhian nationalist on the background of Gandhian constructive programme. Gandhian constructive programmes unfortunately has not attained the attention of academic scholars it deserved. This paper is a humble effort in this direction.

Social and cultural changes do not automatically accompany political change. More than anybody else Gandhi understood this. His efforts in this direction were ably assisted by Gandhian followers in different regions in the country. They often kept a low profile and so did not gain much public or even academic attention. In this paper, an effort is made to place in historical perspective the life and works of Swami AnandaThirtha.

The caste hierarchy and the related atrocities are very much part of the Kerala society. Caste as a segmentary system means that people view themselves as belonging to units of different orders in different contexts.<sup>2</sup> Hierarchic gradation, social and other inequalities, endogamy, restrictions on dining, and the lack of freedom regarding the choice of vocation were the principal features of the caste system.<sup>3</sup> Caste system had divided the society into mutually exclusive social groups and prevented social fusion more than any other social institution in the world.

The social system of Malabar in the 19th century was well-entrenched in the principle of caste and kinship. Caste system as an institution created separation and segmentation in the part of each and every section of Malabar society. In the lower strata of the caste-based society were the depressed

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castes like *PulayasarCherumars*, *Parayas*, *Nayadis* etc.<sup>4</sup> They were subjected to exploitation and humiliation by the upper classes. As agricultural workers, they were systematically excluded from all positions of power and prestige.

The *Cherumas* were the people who were directly involved in the agricultural operations.<sup>5</sup> They tilled the land without having any kind of right over it. They did not have a life of their own. Their entire life was depended on the masters.<sup>6</sup> The *Parayas*, another important depressed class, were outcastes. In some places they were utilised in agriculture, but generally their occupation was basket making and the, making of bamboo mats. The lowest race of people in Malabar was known by the name *Nayadis* or hunters and their condition were not it was said, 'better than the two legged animals.'<sup>7</sup> The lower-caste children had no right of education and woman could not wear ornaments or even the jacket.<sup>8</sup>

Untouchability (pollution by touch) was the most venomous evil of the Hindu society. Untouchability was not a separate institution; it was a corollary of the institution of the caste system. It was the most inhuman form of social oppression.<sup>9</sup> The members of polluting castes had to keep themselves at the prescribed distances from those of upper castes.<sup>10</sup> Samuel Mateer wrote, "The *Pulayad* dwellings are miserable huts formed of sticks cut out of the woods, with walls of reed or mud and thatched with grass or cocoa leaf, situated on mounds in their centre, to be out of the way of polluting respectable people."<sup>11</sup> The lower castes were not only 'untouchables' but they were 'unapproachables' also. The oppressed classes were not allowed to use many of the roads, public buildings and government schools. They were completely banned from entering the temples which were administered by the upper castes.

As Ambedkar observes, important feature of caste is graded inequality. Caste being a hierarchical system he used the simile of a pyramid to describe it. That pyramid attributes reverence for those who are going higher to the top and imposes contempt for those going down to the bottom.<sup>12</sup> The Brahmins and *Nairs* enjoyed a higher social position. They were the 'colonial salarits' as described by Seema Alavi.<sup>13</sup> The colonial salarits was dominated by the savarna castes from its inception. They were able to make use of the employment opportunities afforded by the British administration.<sup>14</sup> *Thiyyas*, a majority caste in Malabar<sup>15</sup> were also included in this category, which were socially backward but attained English education and job opportunities with the interaction with colonial modernity.<sup>16</sup>

They were denied admission to the roads in proximity to the temples and the houses of Caste Hindus. They were denied admission to palaces, schools and places of public resorts. They did not have the permission for temple entry. The temple entry was allowed according to caste hierarchy. This division is common in almost all part of the Kerala.

The Brahmins were a minority, forming a 3 % as per the 1931 population. The Depressed Classes constituted 12%. But literacy rates were inverse proportion with 90% of Brahmins having literacy and 1% of Depressed Classes. The following table brings this out.

### Population of Malabar by Literacy in 1931

	Total Population		No. of Literate	
	M	F	M	F
Depressed Classes	174417	185406	3004	548
Brahmins	30583	29929	20502	8211
Other Hindus	908563	974756	272535	89197
Malabar	1716138	1817806		

Source: M.W.M. Yeats, *Census of India, 1931*, Vol. 14, Madras, Part. 2, Govt. Press, Calcutta, 1932, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

## II

Malabar was the nerve centre of national movement in Kerala. People in Malabar were very much watchful of and influenced by the political developments outside the province. The growth of Indian National Congress and its political activities were represented in Malabar by the educated middle classes.<sup>17</sup> The national movement was stronger in Malabar than the Princely States of Travancore and Cochin where the lower caste movements were stronger.<sup>18</sup>

In Malabar, organised political activities began only in the second decade of the 20th century. The fourth Malabar district political conference held at Badagara in May 1919 under the presidency of K.P. Raman Menon dealt with the important political developments with a special reference to the needs of Malabar.<sup>19</sup> The leaders of the national movement in Malabar realised the evil effects of the caste system and untouchability. They found that it was a major obstacle to political activity. The nationalists adopted concrete programmes to fight these social evils.<sup>20</sup>

An important step taken by the early nationalist to challenge caste discrimination was organising *Panthibhojanam* or interdining.<sup>21</sup> The nationalists also fought against the denial of accessibility to public spaces for untouchables. For example, the roads near to the Calicut Tali temple was closed to the polluting castes stating that there entry will turn the place polluting. To break the existing elite conventions the nationalists leaders like K.P. Kesava Menon, K. Madhavan Nair and Manjeri Rama Iyyer walked

through the road near to the Tali temple, along with C. Krishnan who was a Thiyya and a group of men belonging to various lower castes.<sup>22</sup> It encouraged common people to be bold enough to walk through the road near Tali temple and even remove the board on the road prohibiting the lower castes 'entry.'<sup>23</sup>

The year 1919 witnessed the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi as the leader of the Indian National movement.<sup>24</sup> Gandhian constructive works were the promotion of khadi and spinning, national education and Hindu-Muslim unity, the struggle against untouchability and the boycott of foreign cloth.<sup>25</sup> It was multi-faceted in its content.

The nationalist agitation against untouchability and other social evils acquired a sense of direction during the Gandhian era.<sup>26</sup> Gandhi correctly perceived the political importance of the struggle against untouchability. According to him Swaraj was not attainable without the removal of untouchability.

Gandhi believed that untouchability was essentially and exclusively a problem of caste Hindus and the untouchables were merely their helpless victims. Untouchability was a 'sin' against God and man and a poison slowly eating into the very vitals of Hinduism. Untouchability is a gross violation of human spirit. Though Gandhi vehemently attacked untouchability, he defended the caste system.<sup>27</sup>

Soon Malabar also plunged in to the vortex of an active movement inspired and led by Mahatma Gandhi. The brutal suppression of the Malabar rebellion and the withdrawal of Non-cooperation movement in February 1922 weakened the political struggle in Malabar for a while. They now began to involve more and more into social constructive activities. The Congress workers now turned towards the propagation of Khadi and anti-untouchability campaigns. The second Conference of the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee held at Palakkad in 1923 under the presidency of Sarojini Naidu, was crucial in this development. The Conference passed a resolution urging its members not to practise untouchability.<sup>28</sup>

The Congress meetings held after the Conference gave importance to organise movements for the eradication of untouchability. The inter-dining organised at the Palakkad Conference provoked the orthodox Brahmins of Kalpathi village. For example, T.R. Krishnaswamy Iyer, one of the important leaders who had organized the inter-dining, along with his wife, were excommunicated from their community. Also, with this intention in mind he established the Sabari Asram in Akathethara near Olavakkode.<sup>29</sup>

In December 1923 the All India Congress Committee (AICC) was held at Kakinada under the presidency of Maulana Muhammed Ali.<sup>30</sup> The



Kakinada session of the Congress passed a resolution on the initiative of T.K. Madhavan to take proper steps for the eradication of untouchability in the country.<sup>31</sup>

After the Kakinada session of the Congress, KPCC decided to take concrete steps for the eradication of untouchability. Vaikom Satyagraha was the turning point in the temple entry movement.<sup>32</sup> It marked the introduction of temple entry movement in an organizational nature in Kerala. The Satyagraha formally began on 30 March 1924.<sup>33</sup> Gandhi himself came down and made a pact which allowed entry into roads on three sides except for the one on eastern side.<sup>34</sup> The success of Vaikom Satyagraha gave strength to the social reform activities in Kerala.

For the next five years, the demands never took the form of an organized agitation. The demand for entering the upper caste temples arose formally for the first time during the Guruvayur Satyagraha (1931). The agitation began on the 1 November 1931 and it demanded entry for untouchables into the Guruvayur temple and also called for the abolition of untouchability.<sup>35</sup> This movement again was organized by the Indian National Congress and was led by leaders like K. Kelappan, Mannath Padmanabhan and A.K. Gopalan.<sup>36</sup> It is worth noting that this movement was organized and led by upper caste Hindus.<sup>37</sup> The movement did not yield any immediate result. But, it went a long way in abolishing the evil practices of untouchability and created an atmosphere favourable to temple entry. This is reflected in the referendum conducted after the satyagraha was called off in which an overwhelming majority favoured temple entry.<sup>38</sup> The movement had created an impetus for social change through out the country.

The compromising attitude of the Congress, suspension of Civil Disobedience movement, etc., disillusioned the younger elements in the Congress. They lost faith in the Gandhian forms of struggle. It was in this background that the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) was formed in Malabar in May 1934. It was formed in a meeting of socialists at Calicut Town Hall with C.K. Govindan Nair as president and P. Krishna Pillai as secretary.<sup>39</sup>

The Party began to organize peasants, workers, school teachers and other sections of the society. They organised struggles for better working condition, better pay, etc. The communists gave stress on anti-colonial and anti-feudal struggles. As Manali Desai observes, the sharp caste-class divide between tenants and landlords provided a ready basis for tenant rebellions. The state's strengthening of Landlord power increased this potential.<sup>40</sup> Though they gave prime concern to anti-imperialist struggle and economic issues than social inequality, their activities gradually weakened the caste barriers and untouchability.

The Congress Nationalists were not ready to shoulder the responsibilities with the depressed castes. They excluded them from the leadership of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. The orthodox section in the Congress opposed the coming of lower caste people in the leadership of such organizations. This policy weakened the interaction between the two sections.

### III

Gandhian national movement addressed the caste issues. But it did not resolve the problem and so it was only partially solved. Political independence did not bring in social justice. State initiated various programmes. But still cultural and social issues were not addressed. In the case of caste disparities, the division of pre-independence or post-independence gets blurred. Caste system continues to exist along with its associated disabilities in our society.

In this context, we have to study the contributions of Ananda Thirtha to the upliftment of the lower class people in Malabar. He was a Gandhian Nationalist and social reformer. He participated in the Salt satyagraha at Vedaranyam with C. Rajagopalachari.

Swami AnandaThirtha was born at Thalassery on 2 January 1905 in a GowdaSaraswatha Brahmin family to RamachandraRao and Devubhai. He studied in Brennen College, Thalassery. He attained his BA Honors in Physics from Madras Presidential College with second class in 1926.<sup>41</sup> He was thus eligible for a respectable job under the British. But he chose a different and more hazardous path.

After his studies, he entered into the national movement. As per the advice of C. Rajagopalachari, he joined the Sabari Ashram in 1926 which was founded by Krishna SwamyIyyar. Gandhi advised him to take up the task of upliftment of the downtrodden classes. He went to Sivagiri in 1928. SreenarayanaGuru consecrated him as Swami AnandaThirtha and he was the last disciple of Guru.<sup>42</sup> In 1930 he participated in the salt satyagrahawith Rajagopalachari at Vedaranyam. After this, he was arrested and imprisoned at Vellore Jail. By the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, he was released from prison.<sup>43</sup> After returning to home, he started a satyagraha camp at Thalassery. His main concern was eradication of untouchability.

He became the defender of the rights of the down trodden. He raised the banner of revolt against casteism in Malabar. He selected Payyanur as his battleground following an incident at Kandoth, Payyanur which shocked everyone. In 1931 a procession consisting of 64 patriots led by T. SubramanyamThirumump, AK Gopalan, P. Krishna Pillai and K.A. Keraleeyan

to spread the message of Guruvayur Satyagraha (1931) was attacked brutally at Kandoth by a large mob including women with arms.<sup>44</sup> A.K. Gopalan and Keraleeyan were thought to be dead in the attack. There was a path forbidden to Dalits passing near Kandoth temple, a *Thiyya* temple. This incident was known as '*Kandothekuruvati*'.<sup>45</sup>

Hearing about the brutal attack, AnandaThirtha reached Payyanur which was at the time a centre of casteism. At that time members belonging to lower castes were not allowed to pass through main pathways, and they were deprived admission to temples and other public places. They were the main work force. But they were treated as animals. Even their presence within a distance of 64 feet from caste Hindus invited grave punishment.<sup>46</sup>

Swami understood that the rights of the oppressed cannot be gained without imparting proper education to them. All schools closed their doors to Dalit students. On 21 November 1931 he established SreeNarayanaVidyalaya for the oppressed in Payyanur in North Malabar near Payyanur temple. Caste Hindus raised many objections and hence he had to shift the school thrice. Swami intended to house the School in a permanent site by purchasing some land. Finally he tried to purchase some land in Moorikkovval near Payyannur from the money he got after selling his ancestral house in Thalassery. But the land owner was not ready to sell the land as it was for setting up a school for the depressed classes. Finally Swami prompted a patriotic Muslim to purchase the land for him.<sup>47</sup>

Here he started the School which has been a boon to many students who could have otherwise withered away by doing menial jobs for caste Hindus.<sup>48</sup> This soon grew into an Ashram, an abode where lower caste children could reside and attend school. They were imparted the lessons of health and hygiene. He raised many students who could have wasted their life in their home village, at SreeNarayanaVidyalaya to get respectable Government jobs.<sup>49</sup> Gandhi visited the Ashram on 12 January 1934 and planted a mango tree to commemorate his visit.<sup>50</sup>

In addition, he prompted Dalit students to enrol themselves in the neighbouring schools like schools in Payyannur, Kandoth, Annur, Vellur, Kunhimangalam, Cherukunnu, Pappinisseri, Varanamkodu etc. Education was not an end in itself. It was also a means to Government job.<sup>51</sup> However, the authorities were not willing to admit them. It was after persistent efforts by AnandaThirtha that they could be enrolled to schools.

Another method AnandaThirtha adopted was to give upper caste names to lower caste people. He also gave upper caste suffixes like Sharma, Nambiar, Marar, Poduval etc. to lower caste people; thereby rebuking the caste practices.<sup>52</sup> However he did not go against religion as he saw the

lower caste people as members of Hindu religion. The Pulayas are Panchamas or Adiravidas of the Hindu Society. They own Hinduism as their original religion. They worship the same god as the Hindus in the same fashion, he noted in a memorandum submitted to the Minister for Home Affairs in 1956.<sup>53</sup>

To eradicate caste, he started in Kannur in 1933 *Jathi Nashini Sabha* literally annihilation of caste. Its slogan was "*Jathi Nashippikkal Navayuga Dharmam*" (It is the duty of the new age to destroy caste) Members of the Sabha were forbidden from using caste suffixes in their names. The Sabha promoted inter caste dining and inter caste marriages.<sup>54</sup>

Ananda Thirtha's main programme is temple entry to the lower caste people. But it was not on the basis of devotion to God. His famous statement was, "God is omnipresent. So I never go to temples in search of God. Temples are institutes that preserve untouchability. So I go there to seek if untouchability is installed there and if so to destroy it."<sup>55</sup> He tried to enter the temples with Dalit students. His temple entry movements were mainly in Aneekara Kavu in Kunhimangalam, Parassinikadavu Muthappan temple, Thalassery Jagannatha Temple<sup>56</sup> etc.<sup>57</sup> Though temple entry was favoured as per legislation, many temples were not open to lower castes in practice.<sup>58</sup>

His temple entry programmes started in the 1930s and continued till his death. He led many processions with Dalits to temples for entry. He was greatly opposed and even subjected to physical assault pointing out the prejudices of caste feelings nourished by certain groups in the caste society. In 1971, he was brutally attacked for leading the Dalits to the Durgadevi temple in Agalappady near Kasaragod. He led a Koraga tribal man to the temple. Next day, a group of Youngsters brutally attacked, leaving him unconscious. In 1982 he was brutally attacked by the caste Hindus at Guruvayur temple and was severely wounded. After this incident, he was laid up ill. It led to his death in 1987.

Apart from temple entry, acts of untouchability were opposed by Ananda Thirtha. He questioned the discriminatory practices against the lower castes. He marched with the depressed through all forbidden roads. He was brutally attacked by caste Hindus.

Apart from directly intervening to oppose practices of untouchability and discrimination, he used official courts and state apparatus as instruments of social reform. Swami filed many cases on untouchability and temple entry. For example, cases were filed against Barber's who refused their services to lower castes, against Hotel owners who indulged in discriminatory practices like supply of tea to lower caste people in coconut shell, compelled them to clean their tumblers after having the tea, refusal to supply tea to the

Koragas, to keep separate tumblers to the lower caste people and denial of temple entry etc.<sup>59</sup> He sent numerous letters to politicians, members of Parliament, and other officials drawing their attention to such specific instances of discriminatory practices. This was in addition to the memorandum submitted to the ministers.<sup>60</sup>

Ananda Thirtha realised the importance of economic empowerment of lower caste people. For this he insisted Government jobs are necessary. In 1946, Ananda Thirtha wrote a letter to the then Prime Minister of Madras which had shown the deteriorated position of the pulayas of Malabar. The recruitment of Harijans in the police department would infuse strength and hope among them. The only Harijan Police Sub-Inspector for Malabar was recruited in 1939. Since then none had applied, for it was difficult for anyone to fulfill all the conditions fully.<sup>61</sup> So he requested some relaxation in the matter of their recruitment to service.<sup>62</sup>

Ananda Thirtha's works were classified into two phases. One in the Pre-Independence period and in the Independence period. During the pre-independence period, he participated in the national movement and at the same time mainly fought against untouchability. He was an advocate of colonial modernity. He used colonial education and colonial courts to fight against untouchability. He was a revolutionary saint.<sup>63</sup>

Attainment of independence did not make any attitudinal changes. As it is clear from public opposition when giving land to the Dalits for making burial ground in the 1930s and 1970s.<sup>64</sup> He realised that political freedom did not bring social equality in the society. So he continued his fight against casteism in independent India also.<sup>65</sup> In 1960, he went to Koduvayur in Palghat district and took bath in a tank in the Kuthiravattam estate with lower caste people.<sup>66</sup> It was a public well. The caste Hindus objected it.<sup>67</sup> It reminds the Mahad Satyagraha of Ambedkar. On 20 March 1927 Ambedkar and thousands of Depressed caste people marched to the Chowder tank near Mahad and drank water from the tank. The contradiction is that Ambedkar would have done it in the Pre-independence period. Ananda Thirtha's efforts revealed the existence and cruelty of caste system in the present social structure of Kerala.

Lower class people considered Ananda Thirtha as their protector. Many people approached him against caste persecution and other injustices.<sup>68</sup> In a letter to Ananda Thirtha, a Pulaya woman, Ponakkacheri Pallichy requested Swami to redress her grievance related to an unmarried mother. C. Chami, a lower class man approached Swami to redress a complaint about the fake case charged by the local police against him.<sup>69</sup> Another petition was sent by Kanicherry Kannan whose properties were encroached

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by the landlord.<sup>70</sup>

His work was not confined to Payyannur alone. Swami went to Wayanad, South Canara and Tamilnadu to fight for the cause of Dalits and Adivasis.

He was a nationalist. But his ways were different from the official leadership of the Indian National Congress. After the Kandoth incident of 1931, he withdrew from active politics. On 20 July 1942, he wrote a letter to C.R. Kammath stating that he decided to withdraw from active politics.<sup>71</sup> Some of the activities of the Congress workers created frustration to him. During the District Board Election in 1939, as a part of campaigning at Payyannur, a procession was planned to be organised. But it was cancelled when some Dalits participated in the procession. Such activities created wrath in the mind of Ananda Thirtha. He wrote a letter to Gandhi. Gandhi replied that 'if it is correct, shameful'. Besides, Gandhi published an article in Harijan on this issue.<sup>72</sup>

He served as the president of Malabar district Harijan Service Society. But there were difference of opinion between Swami and the official leadership of the Society. As a part of Gandhian constructive programme, they did not accept any kind of confrontations with the Caste Hindus and they opposed Ananda Thirtha's attempt of filing cases on untouchability.<sup>73</sup> So in 1959, he resigned from the society.

### Conclusion

Democracy and the creation of a new India were not automatically attained with the attainment of freedom. True democracy requires 'social justice' and the removal of caste disabilities. Governmental programmes were not enough to ensure this and it requires people like Ananda Thirtha. His works were the extension of Gandhian programme on eradication of untouchability.

Constructive programme was an important aspect of Gandhian nationalism. It kept the movement alive when there were no agitational programmes. It also created a cadre of full time dedicated activists. However their numbers were limited. Gandhi entertained the belief that untouchability can be eradicated through a 'change of mind' on the part of caste Hindus. He entrusted the task of Harijan uplift to Caste Hindus. He continued to proclaim his adherence to a varnasrama of his own interpretation. As Irfan Habib observes, Gandhi was trying to target untouchability and so bring the poorest of the poor into the national movement without provoking the other castes, who constituted the majority.<sup>74</sup>

In a caste ridden society, co-ordination of values are not possible. So

the social reforms necessitated the intervention of nation state, its structures and systems. Ananda Thirtha used courts and state apparatus as an instrument for social reform. He strongly believed that those who follow or observe caste discrimination has to be strictly punished under law. Though a Gandhian follower, he did not believe the Gandhian ideology of 'change of mind' of Savarnas which leads to the eradication of untouchability. He provided a new perspective to the constructive programme by making it more dynamic and practical than ideological.

In Malabar, the organisations of other sections like workers, peasants and teachers after the formation of Congress Socialist Party in 1934 led to the movements of caste reform lose their momentum. The Congress Nationalists launched the movements against untouchability and other social evils as part of the freedom struggle. But they failed to introduce a concrete programme for the social and economic uplift of the depressed castes. So Ananda Thirtha struggled as a one man army for erradicating caste barriers across the many realms of society. Here Antonio Gramsci's observation on the influence of individuals in the historical process of society is relevant. Gramsci remarks, 'Individuals play an important role in the internal structure of the community and it depends on its relation with other communities.'<sup>75</sup>

### Notes & References (Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup>Swami Ananda Thirtha, *Smaranakal* (Memoirs), Manuscript collected from Library, Sree Narayana Vidyalaya, Payyannur (Hereafter SVP)

<sup>2</sup>M.N. Srinivas, *Social Change in Modern India*, New Delhi, 1997, p. 120.

<sup>3</sup>A.R. Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism* (1948), Popular Prakasham, Bombay, 1991, p. 246.

<sup>4</sup>C A Innes, *Malabar Gazetteer* (1908), State Editor, Kerala Gazetteers, Thiruvananthapuram, 1997, pp. 133-135.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>6</sup>Samuel Mateer, *A Native Life in Travancore* (1883), Asian Education Services, New Delhi, 1991, pp. 33-40; Thikkotiyan, *Arangukanatha Nadan* (Autobiography), (Mal.), (1991), Current Books, Trissur, 1996, p.156.

<sup>7</sup>C A Innes, *Op. Cit.*, p. 135.

<sup>8</sup>Abbe J.A. Dubois, *Hindu Manners Customs and Ceremonies*, Oxford, 1897, p. 56.

<sup>9</sup>P. Bhaskaranunni, *Pathombatham Noottandile Keralam* (Mal.), (1988), Kerala Sahithya Academy, Trissur, 2012, pp.145-146.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>Samuel Mateer, *A Native Life in Travancore* (1883), Asian Education

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Services, New Delhi, 1991, pp. 41.

<sup>12</sup>B. R. Ambedkar, 'Annihilation of Caste' (1936), in *Collected Works of B.R. Ambedkar*, Vol. 1, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India, New Delhi, 2014.

<sup>13</sup>In the 19<sup>th</sup> century an articulate class or social group had come into existence as a result of colonial transformation all over the subcontinent. Seema Alavi called this class as Salarit which consisted of those who had received modern education that equipped them for employment in the state apparatus at various levels, as scribes and functionaries; Hamza Alavi & John Hans, *Sociology of Developing Societies, South Asia*, Mac Millan, London, 1989, p. 225.

<sup>14</sup>P.J. Cherian, *Perspectives on Kerala History*, Vol.2, Part 2, Kerala Gazetteers, Trivandrum, 1999, p.441.

<sup>15</sup>William Logan, *Malabar* (1887), Charithram Publications, Trivandrum, 1981, p. 146.

<sup>16</sup>K.K.N. Kurup, *Modern Kerala: Studies in Social and Agrarian Relations*, New Delhi, 1988, pp. 89-90.

<sup>17</sup>P.K.K. Menon, *The History of the Freedom Movement in Kerala*, Vol. 2, Department of Cultural Publications, Trivandrum, 1972, p. xvii.

<sup>18</sup>Manali Desai, *State Formation and Radical Democracy in India*, Routledge, New York, 2017, p. 45.

<sup>19</sup>P.K.K. Menon, *Op. Cit.*, p. 96.

<sup>20</sup>K.P. Kesavamenon, *Kazhinja Kalam* (Autobiography), (Mal.), Mathrubhumi, Kozhikode, 1969, p.44; A.K. Gopalan, *Kerala: Past and Present*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1959, p.32.

<sup>21</sup>*Panthibhojanam* was first organized by Sahodharan Ayyappan at Cherayi on 29 May 1917. Such efforts were opposed by caste Hindus. P Suresh, *Matham Venda Manushyanu: Sahodharan Ayyappan* (Mal.), Insight Publishers, Calicut, 2001.

<sup>22</sup>K.P. Kesavamenon, *Op. Cit.*, p.44.

<sup>23</sup>P.K.K. Menon, *Op. Cit.*, p.137; C. K. Moosath, *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan* (Mal.), D.C Books, Kottayam, 1982, p. 74.

<sup>24</sup>Bipan Chandra et. al., *India's Struggle for independence* (1988), Penguin Books, New Delhi, 1989, pp. 245-46.

<sup>25</sup>M.K. Gandhi, *Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place*, www.Mkgandhi.org

<sup>26</sup>From its birth in 1885 until 1917, the Indian National Congress deliberately avoided social issues. In the second session of the Congress which held at Calcutta in 1886, Dadabhai Naoroji stated that Congress was a political body to represent to our rulers our political aspirations, not to



discuss social reforms. In the eleventh session at Poona in 1895, Tilak and extremists discarded the idea of social conference; Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, *Nationalist Movement in India: A Reader* (2009), OUP, New Delhi, 2014, p. 219.

<sup>27</sup>P.K.K. Menon, *Op. Cit.*, p. 137.

<sup>28</sup>A.K. Pillai, *Keralavum Congressum* (Mal.), Trivandrum, 1935, p.235; P.K.K. Menon, *Op. Cit.*, p. 137.

<sup>29</sup>When Gandhi toured Kerala in 1927 visited the Ashram and planted a tree there. N. Gopalakrishnan Nair, *T.R. Krishna Swamy* (Mal.), The State Institute of Languages, Trivandrum, 2012, p. 45.

<sup>30</sup>V.R.Menon (Ed.), *Mathrubhumi Charitram* (Mal.), Vol.1, Mathrubhumi, Kozhikode, 1973, p. 115.

<sup>31</sup>A.K. Pillai, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 292-93.

<sup>32</sup>The demands for temple entry began to be expressed in the late 1910s. C Raman Thampi, a retired High court judge referred to this idea in 1917; T.K. Ravindran, *Vaikom Satyagraha and Gandhi*, Srinarayana Institute of Social and Cultural Development, Trissur, 1975, p. 47. T.K. Madhavan also wrote about the question of temple entry in December 1917 and this issue was discussed at a meeting of the SNDP Yogam; Koji Kawashima, *Missionaries and a Hindu State: Travancore 1858-1936*, OUP, Mumbai, 1998, p. 175.

<sup>33</sup>C. K. Moosath, *Op. Cit.*, pp.66-69.

<sup>34</sup> P. Narayanan Nair, *AraNoottiloode* (Autobiography), (Mal.), Kerala SahityaAcaemy, Trissur, 1999, p.51; For Details, See Mary Elizabeth King, *Gandhian Non-Violent Struggle and Untouchability in South India*, OUP, Mumbai, 2015.

<sup>35</sup>V.R.Menon (Ed.), *Op. Cit.*, pp. 422-26.

<sup>36</sup>For details, See A. K. Gopalan's Autobiography, *EnteJeevitha Katha* (Mal.), Kottayam, 1975, pp. 36-39.

<sup>37</sup>M.P. Manmadhan, *Kelappan* (Biography) (Mal.), Trivandrum, 1984, pp. 172-173.

<sup>38</sup>K. Gopalankutty, 'Rise and Growth of the Communist Party in Malabar', *Unpublished M Phil Dissertation*, CHS, JNU, New Delhi, 1977.

<sup>39</sup>T.V.Krishnan, *Sakhavu* (Biography) (Mal.), Mathrubhumi, Kozhikode, 2007, pp. 38-39.

<sup>40</sup>Manali Desai, *Op. Cit.*, p.45; K. Gopalankutty, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>41</sup>He was a brilliant student. He received Grigg scholarship in SSLC. A. M. Ayirookkuzhiyil, *Untouchability-Gandhian Solution on Trial*, (Biography), (Tr. By K.C.Varghese, *Swami Anada Theerthan Jeevithavum Pravarthikalum* (Mal.), Chintha, Trivandrum, 2018, p. 22.

<sup>42</sup>T.V. Vasumitran Engineer, *Sreenaryana Guruswamikalute Anthima Shishyan Swami Ananda Thirthan* (Biography), (Mal.), Thalassery, 2019, p. 29.

<sup>43</sup>Ravindran Kalathil, *Soorya Thejas Swami Ananda Thirthante Jeevitha Pathakal* (Biography), (Mal.), Chalakkara Palloor Samyuktha Sangham, Chalakkara, P.?, Y.?, p.51.

<sup>44</sup>A.K. Gopalan, *Op. Cit.*, p.36; T.V.Krishnan, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 38-39.

<sup>45</sup>A.K. Gopalan, *Op. Cit.*, p.36.

<sup>46</sup>PotheriKunhambu'sSaraswathyVijayam depicted the deteriorated position of the depressed castes in Malabar. This novel was written in 1892. PotheriKunhambu, *SaraswathyVijayam* (1892), D C Books, Kottayam, 2004.

<sup>47</sup>Swami Ananda Thirtha, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>48</sup>M. Swaminathan, *Sreenarayana Vidyalaya Jeevithathilekkoru Etha Nottam* (Memoirs), (Mal.), in 'Ananda Theertham', *Smaranika* (Memoirs), Payyannur Sree Narayana Vidyalaya, 2017, p.231. Swaminathan was a former student of Sree Narayana Vidyalaya in 1934.

<sup>49</sup>K.Govindan, *Sreenarayana Vidyalayathile Jeevithavum AthuVazhi JeevithathilUndaya Nettangalum* (Memoirs), (Mal.), in 'Ananda Theertham', *Op. Cit.*, p.231. He was a former student of Sree Narayana Vidyalaya from 1955-58.

<sup>50</sup>In the visitor's book, Gandhi wrote a comment on his visit. Swami Ananda Thirtha, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>51</sup>Narayani, *Ormmakal Olimangathe* (Memoirs), (Mal.), in 'Ananda Theertham', *Op. Cit.*, p.231. Narayani was a former student of Sree Narayana Vidyalaya in 1934.

<sup>52</sup>Swami Ananda Thirtha, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>53</sup>*Memorandum* to the Minister for Home Affairs, New Delhi, Swami Ananda Thirtha dated 7 December 1956, SVP.

<sup>54</sup>A. M. Ayirookkuzhiyil, *Op. Cit.*, pp.47-48.

<sup>55</sup>Swami Ananda Thirtha, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>56</sup>It was founded by Sreenarayana Guru in 1908. But its authorities not allowed the lower caste to enter the temple. Besides, there was a board was installed, 'No entry to Non-Hindus'. Swami conducted a satyagraha to remove this board.

<sup>57</sup>E.M. Ashraf, *Ore Oru Jeevitham: Swami Anada Thirtharute Jeevithavum Charitavum* (Biography), (Mal.), Lipi, Kozhikode, 2011, Pp. 53-54.

<sup>58</sup>Letters collected from SVP.

<sup>59</sup>*Extracts* from the list of cases filed by Swami Ananda Thirtha from 1969-73, SVP.

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup>*Memorandum* to Prime Minister of Madras, Swami Ananda Thirtha dated 3 October 1946, SVP.

<sup>62</sup>According to the census of 1951, the Sceduled Caste population in Malabar was 392, 800. But their educational status was very low. *Census Handbook*, 1951, Malabar District, Govt. Press, Madras, 1953.

<sup>63</sup>MoyarathSankaran, *Autobiography* (Mal.), Chinthra, Trivandrum, 2012, p. 23.

<sup>64</sup>In 1937, Government granted land to the Pulaya community for making a burial ground. But conservatives opposed and sent petitions. This process continued in 1970s also when land was given to the Pulayas of Kattampally in Chirakkal for burial ground in 1972. The events repeated. Caste Hindus came with oppositions. For More Details, See File No. RDS 15485/44 Dated 23-2-46 & RDS4927/74 Dated 22-4-83, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

<sup>65</sup>*Petition* to the Inspector General of Police, Madras, Swami Ananda Thirtha dated 22 August 1956, SVP.

<sup>66</sup>It reminds theMahad Satyagraha of Ambedkar. On 20 March 1927 Ambedkar and thousands of lower class people marched to the Chowder tank near Mahad and drank water from the tank.

<sup>67</sup>*Letter* of AnandaThirtha to the Manager, Koduvayur Estate, Palghat dated 15 May 1960, SVP.

<sup>68</sup>*A Complaint Letter* raised by PonakkacheriPallichi to Swami AnandaThirtha on 24 November 1956, SVP.

<sup>69</sup>*A Complaint Letter* raised by C. Chami to Swami AnandaThirtha on 21 July 1956, SVP.

<sup>70</sup>A complaint letter raised by KanicherryKannan to Swami AnandaThirtha on 26 March 1956, Collected from Library, Sree Narayana Vidyalaya, Payyannur.

<sup>71</sup>*A Letter* to R. C. Kammath, Swami AnandaThirtha on 20 July 1942, SVP.

<sup>72</sup>Swami Ananda Thirtha, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>73</sup>*Correspondences* between Shyamji Sunder Das and Ananda Thirtha, dated 28 May 1958, 18 December 1958 & 9 April 1959, SVP.

<sup>74</sup>IrfanHabib, *The National Movement: Studies in Ideology and History* (2011), Tulika, New Delhi, 2013, p.12.

<sup>75</sup>Antonio Gramsci & G T Plahanov, *Charitrathil Vyakthikalkkulla Pank* (Role of individuals in History) (Translation in Mal.), Progress Publication, Calicut, 2004, p.36.

# **Deciphering The Wayandan Culture: A Symbiotic Analysis on Migration and Biosphere**

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## **Introduction**

Migration is the movement of organisms from one place to another in search of the most compatible habitat, in-order to satisfy their basic necessities so as to live and multiply in a healthy manner. The process of migration can be seen in all living organisms transcending the complexity of its formation. For example, we can observe plants slowly migrating from an inhabitable zone to more appropriate area due to global warming and climate change. This is why some plants that were not found normally in a region now show their presence in such areas. Various birds and animals also do migration according to their needs. Thus, human beings' part of this nature also performs migration.

Phenomenon is defined as a fact or a situation that is observed to exist or happen or simply as "an observable fact". Migration of mankind can be traced back to the hunter-gather period. This is why migration can be considered as a phenomenon. During their initial period they moved from place to another in search of their food. They chased behind their food source from one place to another and stayed there until their abundant source of food got depleted to a lower limit that the source cannot satisfy their nutritional needs any more.

This sort of migration of living beings is limited to a narrow strip of area comprising land, air and water, where these three components co-exist in such a manner that it can support and sustain life on earth, which is broadly known as "biosphere"<sup>1</sup>. Biosphere can be considered as both macroscopic and microscopic. Biosphere in a totality comprises of all natural process and phenomena, at the same time the character of natural forces such as temperature, wind, rain, surface water availability, humidity, soil type, vegetation, fauna of various regions differs from each other. Based on

the variation on the components of biosphere different ecosystems are functioning all over the earth from poles to desert. India is considered as a subcontinent due to its diverse climatic zones. Indian subcontinent has two major climatic types' mainly tropical monsoon<sup>2</sup> and tropical wet and dry climate<sup>3</sup>.

Regions that include in tropical wet climate are orographic regions of Western Ghats and in the foot hills of Eastern Himalayas<sup>4</sup>. Kerala lying on the Western side of Western Ghats have tropical monsoon climate. The physiography of Kerala is divided into three based on the mean height from the sea level. They are as follows.

1. High land > 76m
2. Mid land 7.6 to 76m
3. Low land < 7.6 m<sup>5</sup>

The district Wayanad belongs to the high land physiography of Kerala and is the largest plateau in Kerala. Altitude of the district reaches up to 2133.6 m<sup>6</sup>. Western, Northern and Southern regions of Wayanad is covered with mountains of various heights; some of them are as follows *Banasura*, *Vellarimala*, *Elambileri*. Of this *Vellari mala* is the highest(2244.5m) and also known by the name camel's hump<sup>7</sup>. Eastern side of the district is slanted and merged with the Mysore plateau. The middle of the district is covered small hills separated from each other with paddy fields<sup>8</sup>.

This hill district was primarily inhabited by aboriginals namely *Mullukurumars*, *Ooralikurumars*, *TheenKurumars*, *Paniyas*, *Adiyars*, *Kurichyars*, *Kattunaykars* etc. They relied mainly on *Punam* cultivation<sup>9</sup>(shifting cultivation or slash and burn agriculture). In this form of agriculture, they cleared a patch of forest land and cultivated the land until the productivity of the soil reduced. Then they move into next patch of land leaving behind the former land to regain its vegetation and fertility. This process gave the nature ample time to regain its lost health. Some communities relied on hunting and gathering also. To perform *Punam* cultivation vast stretch of freely available land was a prerequisite.

Pressure on land was very less during the period as the Wayanad region was sparsely populated. So tribal people carry out shifting cultivation without much complications. They also collected wild forest produce and exchanged it with the people of plains. Cardamom was a highly demanded product from Wayanad during the period<sup>10</sup>. Small and admirably aromatic property Wayanadan cardamom made it attractive in the market<sup>11</sup>. The health and productivity of Wayanadan forest was good and the aboriginal community depended on it for their basic necessities. Thus, they developed an independent and isolated culture of their own. Evidences of nature worship

and development of script less language and community ownership of land etc are examples.

Most of the communities have their own style of house building. The house of *Paniyas* was known as *padi* while that of *Kurumas* were known as *Kudis*<sup>12</sup>. In order to make houses they used locally available materials like bamboo, straw, wood and clay. Most of the members of the community were well versed in the construction of houses. Use of clay and bamboo regulated the temperature in the houses, there by helped them to fight against the harsh climate of Wayanad. *Eerumadam* (shelters made on the trees at considerable heights) was used to get rid of elephants. Their cuisine is mainly based on ragi and aromatic rice called *gandhakasalai* and *jeeraka salai rice*<sup>13</sup>.

### **Out-comes of Jain migration to Wayanad**

Jain community from Karnataka migrated to this terrain by around 8<sup>th</sup> century. They were the first to introduce settled agriculture in Wayanad. This brought big changes to the area. Settled agriculture increased pressure on land. Jains introduced irrigation system in Wayanad, they made many ponds and *chiras* along their settlements some of them are situated in Nambiarkunnu, Meenangadi, Panamaram etc<sup>14</sup>. Water was important for them to cultivate as they do not till the land, to get a soft substratum for sowing and growth of plants in the initial stage, they used water as medium to wet the soil above normal to get a soft soil medium without disturbing the soil microbes and other living beings. Jain settlements concentrated over the fertile bank of Kabani River. Slowly native community also adapted the new agricultural practice under the influence of Jain community.

Settled agriculture paved the way to individual ownership of land, which was a new custom to the native people. Gradually native people start losing their control over land. As discussed earlier, people here had only community ownership of land and practice of *Punam* cultivation. They were not at all aware about the recoding of land they owned. They were also totally unaware about the new changes happening in their neighbourhood brought by the migrants. This along with new and advanced knowledge of that time made Jain community to prosper in the terrain. They also disseminated new culture, language, festivals and food habits in Wayanad. Jains celebrate Diwali and Paryushana festivals<sup>15</sup>. They were also the first to introduce the concept of ahimsa and vegetarianism here in the plateau.

As they practiced and propagated ahimsa, Jains did not indulge in heavy tilled agriculture<sup>16</sup>. Though they were the first to introduce Coffee in Wayanad. Instead, they adopted the way of natural farming were tilling and

use of herbicides and other manures are not used. Once they sowed, they left it to nature for its growth and maturity. This concept of natural farming is getting wide spread acceptance in the modern-day world. Jain community not only comprised of agriculturalists, there were merchants and traders among them. These traders and merchants popularised the products of Wayanad to the outside world.

Until the arrival of Muslims in Wayanad Jains acted as the link between the people of high land with that of plains, which can be concluded from the wealth accrued on them in due course of period. Critical observation of various economies and societies irrespective of time period shows that the merchants and trading community of a society will be the wealthiest and well-off community. Existence of a vibrant and enthusiastic trading community is a prerequisite for a society or country to market its most sophisticated products of that time to the rest of the world. Only when these two exist complementary to each other, the particular product and the region that produced get in prime attention from world and the money will flow towards that region and the country become more powerful than other nations until new sophisticated products take the place.

Vibrant trading community also leads to rise of powerful kingdoms in long run. We have epigraphic evidence from Edakkal caves as read by Dr. Hultzsch says that Kudumbiyil family under the ruler Vishnu Varaman ruled the region and it is said to be the first rulers reported in Malabar<sup>17</sup>. From the above discussion we can reach to an observation that the Kudumbiyil and Veda Kingdom could have been under strong support of Jain trading community. It is also understood that the headquarters of kingdom and the rich influential trader's community co-exist each other in that region. This trend can be seen even now in the current scenario. Same pattern worked out in Wayanad also. The headquarters of Veda kings supposed to be in Pakkam region is surrounded by Jain-Taraka community who were rich traders of the time.

### **Nair migration and cultural exchange**

By around the mid of 12<sup>th</sup> century Veda King was overthrown by the combined force of Kottayam and Kurumbranad<sup>18</sup>. The after effect of this replacement was the Nair migration from Kottayam region. They came and settled in various parts of Wayanad as per the direction of Kottayam King. Nairs who migrated as per the direction of the King were entrusted with different Desams to look after. They became the Desavazhis in the long run. Thus, Brahmanical religion reached the hill district. This migration and associated settlements led to a reordering of the Wayanad biosphere as a

whole. Both the natives and Jain community had its impacts. It may be during this period the Jainism in Wayanad had got the first strong stroke.

As the Brahmanical order practised caste system and observed the concept of purity they kept distance from other inmates of Wayanad. Along with this they came with new needs and agricultural practises. Both these ended up in the clearing of forest. This resulted in the disturbance of existing ecosystem. Major cultural impact of Nair settlement in Wayanad was the introduction Marumakkathayam system in the hill terrain. All communities one way or other assimilated the Marumakkathayam system into their day-to-day life. Cultural practices of Kurichya community now have great similarity with that of Nair community. Both these communities observe purity and pollution concepts. New building style was introduced in the terrain that was familiar in the plains of Malabar. Since the Nairs observed the concept of purity, they were unable to make direct contact with the natives. So, Muslims of the plains of Malabar took the link between the Nairs and the natives. Thus, Muslim Traders initiated their presence in Wayanad.

Land was taken from native tribes. Paniya and Adiya community worked in the fields of Jenmi throughout the year. To an extent they were treated as property of the Jenmi and were transferred along with the land, when a land transaction occurred<sup>19</sup>. Bondage with a Jenmi was a life-long commitment. That is from birth to death, these communities were enslaved and it was to an extent turned as a hereditary practice. A child born to Paniya or Adiya tribe, that child automatically bonded to the Jenmi under whom the child's parents were bonded.

Aryanisation of most of the deities occurred in due course of time. This happened to the Jain community also. Nair migration to the region and the followed Aryanisation of their deities made them destitute on their soil.

Other major change occurred was after the arrival of British Colonialists. They made laws, which prohibited free and uninterrupted entry of tribal community into the forest. Large tract of land was converted into plantations. This impacted the life of people who completely relied on forest. Britishers also changed the virgin forests into monoculture forest. Tea and coffee plantation in Wayanad are examples.

The diversity that once Wayanad biome exhibited reduced. Basic nature of the forests changed permanently. New groups of people started their way to Wayanad. This changed the cropping pattern and food style of the terrain. Tapioca, arecanut, banana cultivation etc changed the nutrition pattern of people. Productivity of the forest decreased considerably.

New language slag pronged the region that led to the formation of a



hybrid language. At the same time the natives with their language turned to a linguistic minority in the district. Linguistic difference stood hindrance to the natives from getting formal education. Migration during 1930's changed the environment and culture of this hill district.

## Conclusion

Wayanad being a rugged region stood isolated from other parts of Malabar. Due to the undulated and oppressing climate the population of Wayanad was very less for many centuries. Thus, Wayanad processed a unique biosphere that nurtured the development of tribal culture in tandem with the biome. As it was sparsely populated, Wayanad witnessed different phases of migration. These migrations led to formation of a hybrid culture in the terrain. Environment was transformed according to the new needs that reduced the productivity and diversity. This resulted in change in the life style of tribal community. They were compelled to change according to the newly arrived people. Migration process always have tendency that migrants come and settle to a new region with the motive of betterment of life. They in most cases will possess updated technology of the time using which they will tame the new environment and subjugate the existing community physically, mentally and materially. It can be concluded that migration phenomena will result in cultural admixtures and will bring change to immediate biome and biosphere.

## EndNotes (Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Gregory Vogt, *The biosphere: The realm of life*, Twenty first century books, 2006, p.8.

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<sup>3</sup> Farooq, O. (2002), "*India's Heat Wave Tragedy*", BBC News (published 17 May 2002), retrieved 1 October 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Chouhan, T. S. (1992), *Desertification in the World and Its Control*, Scientific Publishers, 1992, p.7

<sup>5</sup> Kerala State Council for Science Technology and Environment, Environment Report Kerala – 2007 - Land Environment, Wet Lands of Kerala & Environmental Health, 2007, Thiruvananthapuram, p.3.

<sup>6</sup> C A Innes I C S, *Malabar Gazatteer*, Kerala Gazette Department, Thiruvananthapuram, 1997, p.500

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 501

<sup>11</sup> O K Johnny, *WayanadRekhakal*, Mathrubhoomi Books, Calicut, 2010,p.67.

<sup>12</sup> K Anoop Thankachan, *Transformation of Agriculture and Environment in Wayanad (1882-2013)*, Department of History, University of Calicut, 2020, p. 108.

<sup>13</sup> O K Johnny, *WayanadRekhakal*, Mathrubhoomi Books, Calicut, 2010, p. 110

<sup>14</sup> C T Sasi (Principal Investigator), *Rediscovering Jain Tradition in Wayanad*, Minor research project in History submitted to UGC, Department of History, Govt College, Kalpetta, 2014-15, p.38.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*,p.33.

<sup>17</sup> C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad People and its tradition*, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi 2011, p.9.

<sup>18</sup> O K Johnny, *Wayanad Rekhakal*, Mathrubhoomi Books, Calicut, 2010, p. 56.

<sup>19</sup> C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad People and its tradition*, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi 2011, p.125.

# **Kerala Inscriptions and Issues in their Decipherment**

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The growth of the regional consciousness of a united Kerala resulted in investigations into a united Kerala culture. A number of literary works belonging to the pre-modern period were compiled, edited, and printed, which included the works of medieval poets like Cherussery, Niranam poets, Ezhuthachan, Poonthaanam, and KunjanNambiar, besides several ChampuPrabandhas and other works. There were also attempts to publish records and annals of various places and personalities, such as the annual Kerala Society Papers published from Thiruvananthapuram.<sup>1</sup> Similarly exhaustive hunt for archaeological relics and inscriptions were also initiated, that were published by the then Travancore and Cochin states as well as from Malabar district. Possibilities for writing the history of Kerala before the coming of Europeans began to open up with the discovery of inscriptions.<sup>2</sup>

A large number of inscriptions belonging to the pre-Portuguese period have been published and, secondly, the view that the history is chiefly the story of royal wars and the dynastic rivalry has changed. Nothing short of a revolution has been accomplished by the newly discovered sources, mainly epigraphical in character. It is now clear that the inscriptions of Kerala are not unhistorical though it is true that they fail to yield as much political history as those from other parts of India.<sup>3</sup> The source materials at present may not be described as plentiful but they are sufficient to form the basis of historical analysis in the case of Kerala history.

To know about the history of Kerala, there are more than 200 inscriptions, including stone inscriptions and copper plates, which have been copied and published by many people over time from the walls of 118 temples including 116 temples and 2 churches in Kerala from Kasaragod to Kanyakumari.<sup>4</sup> Among these, there are a total of 150 inscriptions in stone and copper belonging to Cera period.<sup>5</sup> Others are inscriptions from Venad, Cochin, Ay kingdom, Pandya – Cola inscriptions during the Cera period etc. Eight types of scripts and almost as many languages can be found in these

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inscriptions.<sup>6</sup>Most of these inscriptions of Kerala are in old Malayalam language engraved on stone in the *Vattezhuthu* script and belong to the period between the ninth and twelfth centuries CE.<sup>7</sup>

Kerala is not a very rich area in terms of epigraphic records when compared to the neighbouring states of Tamilnadu and Karnataka. While the Tamil and Kannada inscriptions are available in several thousands, Kerala has only a few hundreds of them.<sup>8</sup>The real difficulty is not so much in the scarcity of materials as in the obscurity and chronological uncertainty of old Malayalam inscriptions.<sup>9</sup>There were many problems in deciphering, interpreting and dating the existing sources and identifying them as relevant to a particular period of the history of Kerala.<sup>10</sup>

In the arena of epigraphical studies, the researchers are generally facing certain problems, some of them are briefly described below:

Among the significant problems palaeographical and linguistic problems are very much important. As the writing material of the records, the stone and the copper plates, withers away due to wind and rain and destroyed due to vandalism most of the records were not well maintained and they are falling in ruins. As a result, the observer cannot find the distinctive forms of the letters prevalent in the age concerned.<sup>11</sup>The appearance of different letters being similar leads to difficulty in reading.<sup>12</sup>*Vattezhuthu*, *Kolezhuthu* and *Malayanma* are the three varieties of scripts existed in Kerala. The form for 'Pa' 'Na' 'Ma' & 'Ya' in *Kolezhuthu*, were in many cases very much alike and was a source of difficulty in deciphering.<sup>13</sup>



'Pa' 'Na' 'Ma' & 'Ya' respectively in *Kolezhuthu*

The new scratches on the writing material, the similarity of different letters and the ancient language that did not lend itself to translation hindered the study of inscriptions. Also, there are archaic words in the ancient Malayalam language that are not used today<sup>14</sup>. There are some words that have been lost due to the ravages of time. To understand all of them and to read the inscriptions correctly knowledge of the scripts and languages is essential. That is why pioneer epigraphists in Kerala were linguists like Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai.<sup>15</sup>

Second set of problem is related with dating. As per the rules of the

*Dharmasastras*, the date should be shown in every inscription.<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, most of the inscriptions in Kerala were dated. But the method of dating was different in each inscription. Some of them recorded the regnal year of the then ruler, for example, *Chokkur* inscription of Perumal ruler Kotha Ravi Varma (917-942 C. E.). According to this inscription, it dated on the 15<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Kotha Ravi Varma (932 C.E.).<sup>17</sup> The earliest inscription in south India which is found dated in the *Kali* era specifying the number of days is the *Parthivapuram* Copper plates (Huzur Office Plates) of the Ay King Karunandadakkan (875-885 C. E.).<sup>18</sup> The number of days given here is 14,44,087 which works out to 7<sup>th</sup> July 866 C. E.<sup>19</sup>

The *Mampalli* plate of Sri Vallabhan Kotha of Venad (974 C. E.) is the first available record dated in the *Kollam* era (149).<sup>20</sup> An important epigraphical record dated 14<sup>th</sup> *meenam* in the year 320 of the *Puduvaipu* has been obtained from the *Paliyam* house in Chennamangalam in erstwhile Cochin State. It records an agreement between the Raja of Cochin and the Dutch east India Company in 1665.<sup>21</sup>

One of the special features of Kerala inscriptions is that the reigning year of the then ruler was not mentioned directly but was divided. For example, *Thrikkodithanam* inscription of Baskararavi Varma (962-1021 C. E.), recorded the reigning year of Baskararavi as 6 & 7, which is the 13<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Baskararavi Varma (975 C. E.).<sup>22</sup> *Thripparangottu* temple record of Kotha Ravi Varma, recorded the reigning year of Kotha Ravi as 23 & 4, which means inscriptions issued on the 27<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Kotha Ravi Varma (910 C. E.).<sup>23</sup>

It is often difficult to determine the actual date of the inscriptions using the data given in the inscriptions, such as regnal years of the ruler, *Kollam* era, *Kaliyuga* era, Astronomical data etc. In many cases, the details of the dates quoted in dated records contain errors owing to mistakes in the calculation of astronomical data either by the person responsible for the records or by the astronomers on whom they depended.<sup>24</sup> Since the modern year is confused with the regnal year of the ruler, we have to look for other evidences and use logic to make the correct chronology. According to MGS Narayanan, he has used these types of materials for fixing the date of the *Paliyam* copper plates of Ay King Vikramadithya Varaguna to 898 C. E.<sup>25</sup> (Before that, Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai dated it back to 929 C. E.)

Another important problem faced by the epigraphists who are engaged in the writing of Kerala history is the absence of *Prasastis*.<sup>26</sup> The historical introduction called *Prasasti*, containing the dynastic myths, royal genealogy and accounts of the achievements of the donor and his ancestors,<sup>27</sup> does not appear in Kerala inscriptions. It is true that in the case of the neighbouring

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kingdoms of the Pandyas and Colas, the *Prasastis* are of immense help in tracing political history and fixing the chronology and the order of succession.<sup>28</sup> Even in the absence of such *prasastis*, which provide genealogical and chronological details, we attempted to write history of Kerala and succeeded to a certain extent but they are incomplete and fragmentary.

Kerala has fewer royal decrees than those of its neighbouring countries. The great majority of Kerala inscriptions are not royal grants or charters but resolutions of village assemblies or their executive committees. They often use the King's name and regnal year in referring to the date.<sup>29</sup> These records are not concerned with political history but they deal with matters related to worship and temple management, temple property, tax, rent, donation, etc. Though they provide only meagre information on political history, they supply plenty of materials for a study of local administration, social and economic conditions and temple organization and temple culture.<sup>30</sup>

In Kerala, the stone inscriptions are usually found on the granite base or granite pillars of temple buildings or on separate slabs erected in the country and or built into the floor or wall or door-frame. They are distributed all over Kerala and they mostly come from worshipping temples in centres with continuous habitation, when they form an integral part of the building, they serve an additional purpose by showing that the structure itself is not later than the inscription. As pointed out earlier, their position in open places in public institutions, i.e., religious centres which commanded the loyalty of the people through centuries, place them almost above suspicion. The reliability of records belonging to this group has been further confirmed by their mutual relationship and the correspondence of internal evidence. Scholars have rightly been warned about the possibility of copper plates in private custody turning out into forgeries and a few forged copper plate grants are known to students of Indian history.<sup>31</sup>

Only a limited number of inscriptions are available in the case of Kerala. Some of them are often incomplete. This can happen in many ways, sometimes it happened due to the ravages of time or other reasons, such as peeling or dusting.<sup>32</sup> In some cases, people fixed half the inscription in cement without understanding the significance of inscriptions.<sup>33</sup> Inscriptions are not historical documents written for history students. They are declarations to contemporaries about certain conditions and arrangement in society. As a proclamation to contemporaries, many well-known aspects may have been omitted or hinted at.<sup>34</sup> Such fallibility in the inscriptions is very serious. In such cases, one way is to compare it with other known

documents. Another way is to complete the concepts with recognized theories and assumptions.<sup>35</sup>

Often illiterate and semi-illiterate stone cutters or gold smiths were entrusted with the task of engraving records on stone or copper plates, and this fact accounts for the numerous errors noticed in several epigraphs.<sup>36</sup> Mistakes committed by the scribes and engravers of inscriptions often lead to difficulties of interpretation and to controversies.<sup>37</sup>

In short, it is well known that in the case of ancient South Indian States epigraphy and archaeology form the most reliable sources of information.<sup>38</sup> In Kerala, there are only a few inscriptions left. The primary problem is not the lack of inscriptions as it is the obscurity and chronological uncertainty of inscriptions, as well as the lack of machinery to collect and publish them with technical expertise. There were many problems in deciphering, interpreting and dating the existing sources and identifying them as relevant to a particular period of the history of Kerala. The first problem is related to Palaeography and linguistics. Accurate reading can only be done by someone who has good knowledge of the scripts and the languages and has the historical knowledge to place them in their proper historical context. New scratches also interfere with reading. A variety of dating methods and miscalculations of astronomical data hamper an accurate chronology. The absence of *prasastis* like those of the Cola-Pandya Kings hinders tracing political history and fixing the chronology and order of succession in the history of Kerala. Lack of royal grants impedes the understanding of the political history of the dynasties that existed in Kerala. Mistakes committed by the scribes and engravers of inscriptions often lead to difficulties in reading inscriptions.

Inscriptions are often not in place that are convenient for us. In most cases, inscriptions are found not in the easily reached places, some of them have gathered most or found on the upper part of the walls of the pillars. Absence of sunlight in the Sanctum sanctorum or the inner rooms of the worshipping centres are also creating some difficulties in their deciphering. It may also be mouldy. Scratches and letter fading are common.<sup>39</sup> The scribbles are deciphered using inscriptions issued in neighbouring countries belonging to that period and other available evidences. Today, modern facilities and digital cameras all help us to solve many problems.<sup>40</sup> The pioneers of epigraphy in Kerala started to read inscriptions at a time when none of these facilities existed. With all these limitations, the epigraphists read the available inscriptions and used them to reconstruct Kerala history.

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<sup>3</sup>M.G.S. Narayanan, *Perumals of Kerala*, Cosmo Books, Thrissur, 2018.p.42.

<sup>4</sup>Puthusseri Ramachandran, *Kerala Charithrathinte Adishana Rekhakal, (Mal.)*, State institute of Languages, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015.p.xii.

<sup>5</sup>M.G.S. Narayanan, *Op. Cit.*

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<sup>8</sup>M.R. Raghava Varrier, (Ed.), *Kerala Archaeological Series*, Dept. of Archaeology, Thiruvananthapuram, 2010.p.52.

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<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>K. Satya Murty, *Text book of Indian Epigraphy*, Low Price Publications, Delhi, 1992.p.11.

<sup>12</sup>Interview with Prof. M.G.S. Narayanan, by E. Sreejith, See *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, Issue no. 29, Sep. 30 – Oct.6 2012.p.41.

<sup>13</sup>M.R. Raghava Varrier, *Pracheenalipipatanam, (Mal.)*, SPCS, Kottayam, 2019. p. 49. See L.A. Ravi Varma, *Pracheena Kerala Lipikal, (Mal.)*, Kerala Sahithya Academy, Thrissur, 1971.

<sup>14</sup>Interview with M.G.S. Narayanan, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>15</sup> '*CeraSamrajyamOnpathumPathumNoottandukalil*' by Prof. Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai, is a concise history of Perumals of Mahodayapuram. He was able to group the early inscriptions accordingly to their time sequence and identified the rulers up to the beginning of the 12th century as the Cera Perumals of Mahodayapuram.

<sup>16</sup>V.R. Parameswaran Pillai, *Silalikhitha Vijnaneeyam*, State Language Institute, Thiruvananthapuram, 1978. p.69.

<sup>17</sup>*Swasti Sree. Kkokotai Iravikkuch Chellaninte Yandu Pathinainju*"

<sup>18</sup>A. Sreedharamenon, *A Survey of Kerala History*, D.C.Books, Kottayam, 2016. p. 44.

<sup>19</sup>*Swasti Sree. Kaliyukakkottu Naal Pathinaanku Nooraayirathu Naarpathu Onpathinaayirathu Enpathu Ezhu Chentanaal*"

<sup>20</sup>*Swasti Sree. Kollanthonti Noottunarpathonpathamandu*"

<sup>21</sup>A. Sreedhara Menon, *Op. Cit.*,p. 46. "*Puthuvappathu 320aamathu medamatham*"



<sup>22</sup>"Thiruvadikkuchellaaninte Aaraamaandaikkethirezhaamaandu"

<sup>23</sup> "Swasti Sree. Kokkothai Iravikkuchellaa Nintayaandu Irupaththu Moontaamaandai K'kethir Naalaamaandu"

<sup>24</sup>D.C. Sircar, *Indian Epigraphy*, Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi, 1965. p.23.

<sup>25</sup>Interview with M.G.S. Narayanan, *Op. Cit.*, p.39.

<sup>26</sup>Recently, a *prasasti* (eulogy) has been discovered from Kurumathur near Areakode in Malappuram district. The record eulogises the Perumal Rajashekhara and is important because it provides a reliable date concerning the reign of the king. This the only one of its kind to be obtained from Kerala.

<sup>27</sup>M.G.S. Narayanan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 44.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>32</sup>Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varrier, *Kerala Charithram Part I (Mal)*, Vallathol Vidyapeedam, Malappuram, 2017. p.42.

<sup>33</sup>Interview with M.G.S. Narayanan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 41.

<sup>34</sup>Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varrier, *Kerala Charithram, (Mal)*, *Op. Cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*,p.42.

<sup>36</sup>D.C. Sircar, *Op. Cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup>M.G.S. Narayanan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 41.

<sup>39</sup>Interview with M.G.S. Narayanan, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*

# **Political Movements and Social Change: A Case Study of Kurumbranad Taluk**

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The significant political movements in Kerala which owed their origin to the interplay of local forces and in the process acquired the character of purely local agitations with their focus on issues of local importance. The specialty of Kerala culture was composite culture, that developed itself by through the centuries and invested its people with an outlook noted for its catholicity and tolerance offers a partial explanation for this phenomenon. The Sanskrit culture and tradition ruled here centuries. So it may lead to prevent the low class movement like Dravidian movement of Tamilnadu here. The popular agitations aimed at achieving basic political and social objectives have had a decisive role in shaping the socio-political landscape of modern Kerala. It should not be assumed that such agitations were a phenomenon peculiar to the modern age in its history. Laterally Kerala experienced an intellectual revolution or renaissance which changed the outlook of the people. In spite of caste and religion, the economic issue leads the social order. The political movement in Kerala also is a part of socio-reform movement.

Kurumbranad is the southern taluk of north Malabar and formed with Chirakkal, Kottayam and the Old Tellicherry. The sandy strip of coconut land along the coast is boader, and for a few miles inland the country is less hilly and broken. Kurumbranad was bordered by Akalapuzha in the east, Nairanithod in north, Arabian Sea in west, and Korapuzha in the south<sup>1</sup>. The specialty of this place was that there were many agricultural labors and tenants. Famous for its trade, the place attracted attention with arrival of Vasco da Gama.<sup>2</sup>

## **Caste mobilization and Political movement**

A major function of the caste system was to sort people into categories of wealth and status in a highly unequal way and then to provide social and

religious justification for that inequality. Untouchables lived in extreme poverty in outlying colonies. They had no political rights and were considered disgusting and immoral in their behavior by the higher castes. Here started many social mobilizations against caste system, before the coming of national movement<sup>3</sup>. Caste reformers also fought for the rights of lower-caste people to dress as they pleased and to walk the roads without harassment by higher-caste persons. The nationalist and class movement that followed in Kerala were thus an extension of the initial struggle against primordial ties like cast. While anti caste movement had taken up radical and secular stances on vital issues like civic right and casteist oppression, they had, in the end, also led to communalism of political space thanks to the maneuverings of their elitist leadership<sup>4</sup>. The radical changes occurred in the social life of Malabar because of the structural changes of economy of that time, more fundamentally a transition from caste base society to a class based society.

The social condition of Kurumbranad was very deplorable during the period of MoyarathSankaran. In his autobiography, he describes his uncle's inquired about the caste of the person who accompanied him in a public function. The success of conferences during this period was reckoned by the number of Hindus who joined the congress<sup>5</sup>. To show spread the national movement in grass root level, that is, the character Ramer mentioned by writer *U K Kumaran* in his novel *ThakshankuunuSwaroopam* is an illiterate freedom fighter belonging to a backward community. He got social status, while many higher class people recognize and respect him as a freedom fighter. People of the region seen him as counterpart of Gandhiji.<sup>6</sup>

Mitavadi, the Bible of thiyya was against national movement, The high class section of Thiyya community were not interested in being a part of civil disobedience movement, some government officials and lawyers, who were close contact with British like Butlers, took pro- British Stance. But latterly the Thiyyas showed their attitude towards national movement by the request of congress leader P Achuthan. And as well as it is the incapability of Congress to brought them under, because of majority of Thiyya caste were, small farmers, tenants and agricultural labours. Congress never took any program to make them as a part of national movement.<sup>7</sup> However they voluntarily understand the ideology of nationalism and made part of it. Then the 45% of arrested volunteer of congress were belonging to this community.<sup>8</sup>

Some Muslims also stayed away from civil disobedience movement, The reason for this kind of backsliding of the Muslims is the mishaps they experienced as a part of the riots of 1921, as well as the special law made by government also kept away them from this. Only a minority known as

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national Muslim were part of the movement.<sup>9</sup>

### **Role of National movement in Education**

As the movement spread, literacy became a major component in the strategy of awakening worker and low-caste consciousness. The spread of Western education helped to bring about a radical social change. The emergences of educated middle class bring radical changes in the socio cultural system of Kerala and they were bound to create tension with traditional social and caste structure. By the Madras government report of 1920- 23 the elementary education could be provided free. To create District Educational Councils for direct control elementary education. It shows that governmentthe ensure to provide free education to all.<sup>10</sup>

DevadarPunarudharanaSangham founded by V K Nayanar gave free education for all poor people. And he made an imaginary village, made all facilities in it. The political leaders impart literacy program along with their activity<sup>11</sup>. They thought that to make the people illiterate, thus they can convey their ideology as well as the existing situation to the people. In Kurumbranad region many Kudipalikkodam which provide education for lower caste, Ezhuthupalli for village head man military retainers, apart from this they also got learning like martial arts wrestling etc. and government sponsored educational institutions were established as well the Evangelical Missionaries made a vital role in education of Malabar.

### **The Impact of Political Movement in AgrarianRelation**

The relations between the landlord and tenant and led to serious disturbances which marred the peace of the district. Malabar had highest percentage of tenancy, the most complex land system and the worst form of landlordism. There were two stages in tenancy movement in Malabar – one from 1910 to1930s led by upper strata tenants (kanakkuiyan) and the second from the 1930s with the emergence of lower-class tenants (verumpattakar)<sup>12</sup>. The formation of Malabar kudiysangham(Malabar Tenants Association) hardly tried to mobilize non occupancy peasants. It was formed by M P Narayana Menon. The Home rule, Congress, and Khilafat committees all merged with one another and were made use of by middle class.<sup>13</sup>

The case of Kurumbrnad the number of peasants were less than tenants. 'Manusham', a system of land tax existed in here, another law system were existed here for the tenants that's called 'Melcharth',which means the omission of tenant from the land.<sup>14</sup>The rich peasants this region named KattilpurayilChathan, NuchikadanveetilChanthukutty, were lost all

their wealth by the exploitation of Government and Janmi. Later number of such peasants deprived their wealth. Janmi system always made pro – British attitude. The social awareness about the national movement led to the rise of women voice. The voice of people like MundangadanKalyani roused the tenants from their subjugation<sup>15</sup>. In 1923, eighty years old MoolayilKorumban, a tenant head, led a journey from Vdakara to Madras. By the influence of Malabar kudiyanasangham, leaders like Moyarathsankaran stood against this. And as well as a series of petition submitted by the leaders and their active work lead to the introduction of Malabar Tenancy Act of 1929. Which prevented omission of tenants from their land.

In generally we can analyze the nature of the political movement emerged in India last decade of 19<sup>th</sup> century but this development unnoticed in Kerala. But some conferences held at Kozhikode under auspicious of Congress in 1904 and 1908. Beyond this there was no political activity worth in Malabar<sup>16</sup>. The economic crisis caused by the First World War mostly affected the peasants of the region. This had resulted to the emergence of leaders from all walks of life regardless social status. National consciousness and social consciousness were confined only the upper strata of the society<sup>17</sup>. As mentioned in O.ChanthuMenon's *Indulekha*, 'all discussions were confined to the material level of elite class.'

The land was led to the idea of nationalism by the initiation of the Home Rule movement; K P KesavaMenon led activity here. The activity spread to more areas and more people started working as a part of it. With that, the growth of the national movement started to go down like a sieve. As a result of this the activity of congress began to reach wider scale, the growing tenant movement also gave more strength for it.<sup>18</sup> And congress needs a new program of action which tried to involve the peasant and the workers, so they believed that, to spread the national movement in grass root level. For this purpose a volunteer camp conducted in Kozhikode and gave training to peoples the leaders like MoyarathSankaran, Gopalakrishnakuruppu, Gopalannair, T V Chathukuttynair attend from Kurumbranad area. Their last sessions were the propagation of Congress agenda to the people and make them as a part of it. Even they worked the interior regions and made amsamcommittees (village committees).<sup>19</sup>

Many leaders of Kurumbranadu participated in picketing as a part of the non-cooperation movement. The picketing was decided under the leadership of Kunjali Haji, taluk committee president. According to this, MoyarathSankaran, PerachanVaidyar, and Kanaran Master were conducted picketing<sup>20</sup>. After much difficulty it gained public acceptance and all kinds of people in the society became a part of it. Here we see that national movement

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is coming to a social awareness. During this period khader and Gandhi cap were portrayed as the identity of cultureless by elite class. The leaders of 1920's were generally known as the name of Khilaphate. Because most of the Muslim were involved in Khilaphate movement, but Hindus were worked and preached against British government

Certain international changes occurred in world politics; this made developments in Indian national congress. The rise of Soviet Union and their attitude towards socialism made changes in congress. Their attitude towards socialism made an ideological break among the younger members of Indian national congress<sup>21</sup>. While this they realized the potential of individual terrorism and strength of mass based movement. On this context Gandhiji call for Civil Disobedience movement bring Malabar of the national level. A group emerged in congress with socialist attitude actively worked in that period, P R Nambiar was an active worker of it. Kanaran locally called him as Kanarettan gave training for youth. The period of second world war attracted the youth in to the national movement, because they opposed British supremacy, unemployments, break dawn of public distribution, and spread of epidemic like cholera.<sup>22</sup>

In 1930s, a drastic social change occurred in Malabar and its other parts. The Lahore declaration of 1929 and PurnaSwaraj brought about changes in lowest rungs of society<sup>23</sup>. During this period the importance of Khadi cloth and the serious awakening that rose among the people spread throughout the country.<sup>24</sup> Although the salt satyagraha in Kurumbranad was led by people belonging to the nair community, its participants were multi-caste. More and more people from every region came to participate the jathas that coincided with the salt satyagraha and spread their enthusiasm. Skthimandiram an organization formed in Thikkodi near Koyilandy to build volunteers for helping Salt Satyagrahis<sup>25</sup>. Picketing was another program got wide spread popularity among the rural people. Students, merchants, teachers, and lawyers also participated and gave supports to the leaders<sup>26</sup>. It was continuing program of INC, as well as social activity also, so the women, children and youth were stood for this

After 1934 many changes took place in Malabar, the agricultural labours of the land made association. It made a strong base for the further political activity. Later a strong political gathering took place in Kurumbranad during the time of Quit India movement. There witnessed number of agitation and hartals, then it moved to another nature like destruction activities.<sup>27</sup> It was a mass movement while compare with other two. This period congress go through a critical condition, it became weaker by the formation of congress socialist party.<sup>28</sup> The procession organized in that period were urban centered, the villagers used the method to participate in

it by made Jatha or came individually. In that period witnessed a strong protest from students, they boycotted the educational institution and made part of national movement.

The period of Quit India saw a clean struggle in outside and a mysterious subversive activity in inside. Most of the sabotage activities took place in hinterland. Congress focused its activities in villages taking place, however Quit India not gain much popularity in Malabar that of north India.<sup>29</sup> The main reason of it was the people's war policy of Communist party, because it had strong influences among agricultural labourers and peasants<sup>30</sup>. The agitation related to Quit India in Malabar took place as small protests, the reason of that was the ban of congress and its activity depletion.

In short, the national movement that took place in Malabar and Kurumbranad, which was not a circumcision of a society at that time. As usual the real leadership of the struggle was wasted by elite class as well as the middle class people of the society, but we can see some leaders also came from the lower section of the society. The social changes took place in Kurumbranad Taluk was quiet deferent than other region of Malabar, because as a part of national movement many training institutions to give training to the common people to make them for became part of national movement. Here there is no any discrimination among the people who got such training. Likewise many incidents like Kizhariyur Bomb case got attention to national level. By these activities people of the region realize the need independence and give their support to the local leaders. The important contribution of Kurumbranad to the national movement was the eminent leaders like K Kelappan and Moyarath Sankaran etc. Thus we can generally analyze the role of national movement in Kurumbranad Taluk showed its role in every aspect of the society.

### END NOTES (Endnotes)

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<sup>2</sup>Ward and Corner, *A Descriptive Memoir of Malabar*, Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 1995. p.81.

<sup>3</sup>P. Kurien, *Colonialism and ethno genesis: A study of Kerala, India*, Springer, 1994. p. 388.

<sup>4</sup>Vijayan.M.N., (Ed), *Nammudesahithyamnamude samoo ham-1901-2000*, Kerala sahitya academy, Thrissur, 2000, p.992

<sup>5</sup>Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakadha*, Mathrubhumi Books, Kozhikode, 2014.p.70.

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<sup>6</sup>U K Kumaran, *Thakshankunnuswaroopam*, Natinal Bookstall, Thiruvananthapuram, 2012, p.214.

<sup>7</sup>KunnikkalMadhavan, *TheeyarumDeseeyasamravum*, Mathrubhumi, Kozhikode, July 14, 1935.

<sup>8</sup>J Raghu, *Community as de-imaging nation: Relocating Ezhava Movement in Kerala*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London, 2010, p.48.

<sup>9</sup>K. Gopalankutty, *MalabarPadanangal*, State Institute of Languages, Thiruvananthapuram, 2007, p.58

<sup>10</sup>*Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency-1922-23*, Government press, Madras, chapter 7, p91.

<sup>11</sup>P KunjanandanNair, *Arangukanathanadan*, D C Books, Kottayam, 2008, p, 187

<sup>12</sup>R.H Hitchcock, *Peasant Revolt in Malabar: A History of the Malabar Rebellion, 1921*, The University of Michigan, 2008, p.268.

<sup>13</sup>A SreedharaMenon, *KeralavumSwathanthryaSamaravum*, D C Books, Kottayam, 2006, p.24.

<sup>14</sup>P KunjanandanNair, Op.cit. p. 82. Op.cit

<sup>15</sup>MoyarathSankaranOp.cit 92

<sup>16</sup>A SreedharaMenon, *A Survey of Kerala History*, D C Books, Kottayam, 2007, p.38.

<sup>17</sup>O Chandumenon, *Indulekha*, Redrose publishing house, Kunnamkulam, 2017, p.87.

<sup>18</sup>P.J Cherian, (Ed.), *KeralastateGazeteer vol-2 part 2*, Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 1999, p.427

<sup>19</sup>MoyarathSankaran, *Op. Cit.*, p. 78.

<sup>20</sup>MoyarathSankaran *Op.Cit.*p, 81.

<sup>21</sup>P J Cherian, (ed.), *Perceptives on Kerala History*, vol 2, part 2, Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 1999, p.461

<sup>22</sup>A SreedharaMenon. *Op.Cit.* p.97.

<sup>23</sup>P AWarrier, *Indian Swathanthrasamaravumkeralavum*, D C Books, Kottayam, 2009, p.43.

<sup>24</sup>A R Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, Popular Prakashan, Mumbai, 2010, p.317.

<sup>25</sup>P Kunjanandan Nair, *Op.Cit.* p. 169

<sup>26</sup>Mathrubhumi daily, 14,15, April 1930

<sup>27</sup>P A Warrier, Op.cit. p.73

<sup>28</sup>E.M.S. Namboothiripad, *Kerala Charithram Marxist Veekshanathil*, Chintha, Thiruvananthapuram, 2019, p.938.

<sup>29</sup>K. Gopalankutty, *Op.Cit.* p.61

<sup>30</sup>E.M.S Namboothiripad, *Op.cit.* p.986



# പശുരക്ഷാരാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിന്റെ ചരിത്രവും പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രവും

കെ ടി കുഞ്ഞിക്കണ്ണൻ

ഡയറക്ടർ

കേളു ഏട്ടൻ പഠന ഗവേഷണ കേന്ദ്രം, കോഴിക്കോട്

വർത്തമാനകാല ഇന്ത്യയിൽ തീവ്രമായികൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന ഗോരക്ഷയുടെ പേരിലുള്ള നരഹത്യയുടെയും മുസ്ലിം വേട്ടയുടെയും ചരിത്രത്തെയും രാഷ്ട്രീയത്തെയും പരിശോധിക്കാനുള്ള ശ്രമമാണ് ഈ പ്രബന്ധം. കഴിഞ്ഞ പത്ത് വർഷക്കാലം കൊണ്ട് നിരവധി നിരപരാധികളായ മനുഷ്യരെയാണ് പശുഭ്രാന്ത് പിടിപ്പെട്ട ആൾകൂട്ടങ്ങൾ തല്ലിക്കൊന്നത്.

പത്തൊൻപതാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിന്റെ അവസാനപാദങ്ങളിലാണ് ഗോരക്ഷാരാഷ്ട്രീയം ഉയർത്തിക്കൊണ്ട് ഹിന്ദുത്വമെന്ന ബ്രാഹ്മണ്യരാഷ്ട്രീയം തലപൊക്കുന്നത്.

1857 ലെ ഒന്നാം സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യ സമരത്തിന് ശേഷം ഇന്ത്യ ദർശിച്ച ഐതിഹാസികമായ കർഷകഉയിർത്തെഴുന്നേൽപ്പിനെ പ്രതിരോധിക്കാനാണ് ബ്രിട്ടീഷ് കോളോണിയലിസവും സെമീനാരി വർഗവും പശുരാഷ്ട്രീയം ഉയർത്തി കൊണ്ടുവന്നത്. ഹിന്ദുക്കളും സിഖുകാരും മുസ്ലിങ്ങളുമായ കർഷകർ കോളോണിയൽ കാർഷിക നയങ്ങൾക്കും സെമീനാരി സമ്പ്രദായത്തിനുമെതിരെ നടത്തിയ പ്രക്ഷോഭങ്ങളെ തകർക്കാനുള്ള ആസൂത്രിത നീക്കങ്ങളിലാണ് പശുരക്ഷാരാഷ്ട്രീയം ജന്മമെടുക്കുന്നത്. 'ഭിന്നിപ്പിച്ചു ഭരിക്കൽ' നയത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമായി ഇന്ത്യൻ ജനതയുടെ ദേശീയ ഐക്യത്തെ തകർക്കാൻ സാമ്രാജ്യത്വം നടത്തിയ തന്ത്രങ്ങളിലൊന്നായിരുന്നു പശുരാഷ്ട്രീയം. പശുവിനെ മാതാവായും ദൈവമായും അവതരിപ്പിച്ചു കൊണ്ടു ഹൈന്ദവ ധ്രുവീകരണം ഉണ്ടാക്കാനുള്ള നീക്കമാണ് ഇതിനു പിന്നിൽ പ്രവർത്തിച്ചത്. ജീവനോപാധിയായ കന്നുകാലി വളർത്തലും അതിന്റെ വിലപനയുമെല്ലാം നടത്തുന്ന കർഷകർ മഹാപാപികളാണെന്നും ഗോമാംസം കഴിക്കുന്നവരും അതിനെ വ്യാപാരത്തിനായി അറക്കുന്നവരും മരണത്തിൽ കുറഞ്ഞ ശിക്ഷയൊന്നും അർഹിക്കുന്നില്ലെന്നുമുള്ള പ്രചണ്ഡമായ പ്രചരണങ്ങളിലൂടെ ഉന്മാദം സൃഷ്ടിച്ചാണ് കോളോണിയൽ ഭരണാധികാരികളുടെ പിൻബലത്തിൽ ഗോവധ നിരോധന പ്രസ്ഥാനം

പശുരക്ഷാരാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിന്റെ ചരിത്രവും പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രവും

വളർന്നുവന്നത്.

ഹിന്ദുരാഷ്ട്ര നിർമ്മിതിക്കായി രാജ്യത്തെ വർഗീയമായി ചേരിതിരിക്കുകയെന്ന ലക്ഷ്യത്തോടെയാണ് കൊളോണിയലിസ്റ്റ് പിന്തുണയോടെ ഗോരക്ഷാരാഷ്ട്രീയം ജന്മമെടുത്തത്. പഞ്ചാബ് ഹിന്ദുസഭയായിരുന്നു ബ്രിട്ടീഷ് വിരുദ്ധ കർഷക മുന്നേറ്റങ്ങളെ ദുർബലപ്പെടുത്താനും തകർക്കാനുമായി ഗോരാഷ്ട്രീയമുയർത്തി വർഗീയധ്രുവീകരണത്തിനായി തീയിട്ടത്. ഇത് ബ്രിട്ടീഷ് പൊളിറ്റിക്കൽ ഇന്റലിജൻസ് ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെന്റിന്റെ ആസൂത്രണത്തിലാണ് നടന്നത്. ബ്രിട്ടീഷ് ഭൂനയങ്ങൾക്കും സെമീനാരി സമ്പ്രദായത്തിനുമെതിരെ ബ്രാഹ്മണരും ശൂദ്രരും സിക്കുകാരും മുസ്ലിങ്ങളുമായ കൃഷിക്കാർ നടത്തിയ ഐതിഹാസികമായ സമരം കണ്ട് പരിഭ്രാന്തരായ സെമീനാരി ബുദ്ധിജീവികളും ബ്രിട്ടീഷ് പൊളിറ്റിക്കൽ ഇന്റലിജൻസ് ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥരുമാണ് ഗോവധപ്രശ്നമുയർത്തി മതപരമായ ഭിന്നത സൃഷ്ടിച്ച് കർഷകഐക്യത്തെ തകർക്കാനുള്ള പദ്ധതികൾ തയ്യാറാക്കുന്നത്.

ബ്രിട്ടീഷ് നികുതിനയങ്ങളോ സെമീനാരി സമ്പ്രദായമോ അല്ല കാർഷികതകർച്ചക്കും കൃഷിക്കാരുടെ ദുരിതങ്ങൾക്കും കാരണമെന്നാണ് ബ്രാഹ്മണ ബുദ്ധിജീവികളെ മുൻനിർത്തി പ്രചാരണമഴിച്ചുവിട്ടത്. കൃഷിക്കാവശ്യമുള്ള കന്നുകാലികളെ കൊന്നുതിന്നുന്നവരും കന്നുകാലികച്ചവടക്കാരുമായ മുസ്ലിങ്ങളുമാണ് പഞ്ചാബിലെ കാർഷിക തകർച്ചക്ക് കാരണമെന്ന് പ്രചരിപ്പിച്ച് ഹിന്ദുമുസ്ലീം സംഘർഷം വളർത്തുകയായിരുന്നു. ഇതിനായി പഞ്ചാബിലുടനീളം അവർ ഗോരക്ഷിണി സഭകൾക്ക് രൂപം കൊടുത്തു. ദയാനന്ദ സരസ്വതിയുടെ ആര്യ സമാജം തന്നെ ഇതിന് മുൻകയ്യെടുത്തു. പഞ്ചാബിലും മധ്യേന്ത്യയിലാകെയും വർഗീയ കലാപങ്ങൾ പടർത്തി. ഈയൊരു വിഭേദ ക്യാമ്പയിനിന്റെ ബൗദ്ധിക നേതൃത്വമായി വർത്തിച്ചത് പഞ്ചാബ് ഹിന്ദുസഭയുടെ സ്ഥാപകനായിരുന്ന ആർ.ബി. ലാൽചന്ദായിരുന്നു. നാം ഒന്നാമതായി ഹന്ദുക്കളാണെന്നും രണ്ടാമതായി മാത്രമെ ഇന്ത്യക്കാരാകുന്നുള്ളുവെന്ന മതരാഷ്ട്രവാദപരമായ സാംസ്കാരികദേശീയവീക്ഷണങ്ങൾക്ക് വഴികീറിയത് ആർ. ബി. ലാൽചന്ദാണ്.

അതായത് ഗോവധനിരോധന പ്രസ്ഥാനം ഹിന്ദുരാഷ്ട്രവാദത്തിന്റെ പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്ര പദ്ധതിയായാണ് ജന്മമെടുക്കുന്നത്. ആർ. ബി. ലാൽചന്ദിന്റെ കുപ്രസിദ്ധ രചനയായ 'സെൽഫ് അബ്നഗേഷൻ ഇൻ പൊളിറ്റിക്സ്' (Self Abnegation in പൊളിറ്റിക്സ്, 1938) എന്ന പുസ്തകം ഹിന്ദുരാഷ്ട്രവാദത്തിന്റെ ആദ്യത്തെ രാഷ്ട്രീയ സൈദ്ധാന്തിക അവതരണം കൂടിയാണ്. ഗോവധ നിരോധന വാദത്തിന്റെ ഇന്ത്യയിലെ പൗരാണിക ചരിത്രമോ ഋഷിപ്രോക്ത സംസ്കാരമോ ആയി ഇതിന് യാതൊരു ബന്ധവുമില്ല. കിഴക്കിനെ ആദർശവൽക്കരിക്കുന്ന പാശ്ചാത്യ ഓറിയന്റലിസ്റ്റ് പഠനങ്ങളിലും രാജ്യദ്രോഹപരമായ ബ്രിട്ടീഷ് സേവയിലുമാണ് ഗോവധ നിരോധന പ്രസ്ഥാനം

ത്തിന്റെ ചരിത്രപരമായ വേരുകൾ ആഴ്ന്നുകിടക്കുന്നത്.

സംശയരഹിതമായും പറയാം സംഘപരിവാറിന്റെ പശുരാഷ്ട്രീയം സാമ്രാജ്യത്വപ്രോക്ത പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്ര പദ്ധതിയാണ്. 1947വരെ ബ്രിട്ടീഷുകാർ നാടുവിടിയെന്നും ഇന്ത്യക്ക് സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം ലഭിക്കില്ലെന്നും കൊളോണിയൽ ഭരണത്തിനുകീഴിലെ നാട്ടുരാജ്യങ്ങളുടെ സംയോജനത്തിലൂടെ ഹിന്ദുരാഷ്ട്രം യാഥാർത്ഥ്യമാക്കാമെന്നെല്ലാമുള്ള മുൻപന്തകളിലായിരുന്നല്ലോ ഗോൾവാൾക്കറും ആർ.എസ്.എസും കഴിഞ്ഞിരുന്നത്. ഹിന്ദുമുസ്ലീം മൈത്രിയെയും ഗാന്ധിയുടെ സ്വരാജീനെയും എതിർത്തുകൊണ്ടാണ് ഹെഡ്ഗേവാറും ഗോൾവാൾക്കറും ദേശീയപ്രസ്ഥാനത്തെ ഭിന്നിപ്പിക്കാനുള്ള വർഗീയവൽക്കരണ അജണ്ടയുമായി മുന്നോട്ടുപോയത്. 1947ലെ അധികാരക്കൈമാറ്റവും ഒരു പരമാധികാര മതിനിരപേക്ഷ ജനാധിപത്യ റിപ്പബ്ലിക്കായുള്ള ഇന്ത്യയുടെ രാഷ്ട്രരൂപീകരണ പ്രക്രിയയും അങ്ങേയറ്റം അസഹിഷ്ണുതയോടെയാണ് ആർ.എസ്.എസ് കണ്ടത്.

ഈയൊരു അസഹിഷ്ണുതയുടെയും വിഭേദത്തിന്റെയും രാഷ്ട്രീയമാണ് ഗാന്ധി വധമെന്ന മഹാഅപരാധത്തിലേക്ക് അവരെ നയിച്ചത്. ഗാന്ധി വധംമൂലം ഒറ്റപ്പെട്ടുപോയ സാഹചര്യത്തെ അതിജീവിക്കാനാണ് ഗോവധ പ്രശ്നമുയർത്തി വർഗീയ ധ്രുവീകരണത്തിനുവേണ്ടിയുള്ള കലാപങ്ങൾ സ്വതന്ത്ര്യാനന്തരം രാജ്യമെമ്പാടും ആർ.എസ്.എസ് ആസൂത്രിതമായി കുത്തിപ്പൊക്കിയത്. 1950കളിൽ കേരളത്തിൽപോലും ഗോവധനിരോധന പ്രസ്ഥാനം നിരവധി പ്രദേശങ്ങളിൽ സംഘർഷങ്ങളും വർഗീയകലാപങ്ങളും സൃഷ്ടിച്ചു. ഹ952 ൽ പയ്യോളിയിൽ നടന്ന വർഗീയ കലാപം ഹിന്ദു മഹാസഭയുടെ ഗോവധ നിരോധന കാമ്പയിന്റെ ഭാഗമായി സംഭവിച്ചതാണ് (കമ്മ്യൂണിസ്റ്റ് പാർട്ടി കോഴിക്കോട് ജില്ലാ ചരിത്രം, രണ്ടാം വാല്യം).

കഴിഞ്ഞ എത്രയോ ദശകങ്ങളായി പശുക്കളുടെത്തുകാർക്കും പശുവിനെ കൊല്ലുന്നവർക്കും വധശിക്ഷനൽകണമെന്നാണ് രാജ്യമെമ്പാടും സംഘപരിവാർ നടത്തുന്ന പ്രചരണം. മോഡി സർക്കാറിലൂടെ തങ്ങൾക്ക് ദേശീയാധികാരം കരഗതമായി എന്നാണ് ആർ.എസ്.എസ് നേതൃത്വം വിലയിരുത്തുന്നത്. ഈ ദേശീയാധികാരത്തിന്റെ സൗകര്യങ്ങളുപയോഗിച്ച് ഹിന്ദുരാഷ്ട്ര നിർമ്മിതിക്കുവേണ്ടിയുള്ള വർഗീയ അജണ്ടകൾ ഓരോന്നായി പുറത്തെടുത്തിരിക്കുകയാണ് ആർ.എസ്.എസ്. തങ്ങൾക്ക് അനഭിമതരായ വരെ പശുഘാതകരാക്കി വേട്ടയാടുന്നത് ഹിന്ദുത്വനിർമ്മിതിക്കുള്ള ഒരു രാഷ്ട്രീയ തന്ത്രമായി സ്വീകരിച്ചിരിക്കുകയാണ് ആർ.എസ്.എസുകാർ എന്ന കാര്യമാണ് ഗോരക്ഷാ ഗുണ്ടകളുടെ ആക്രമണങ്ങളിൽ മൗനംപാലിക്കുകയോ മുദ്രപ്രതികരണം നടത്തുകയോ ചെയ്യുന്ന പലരും മനസ്സിലാക്കാതെ പോകുന്നു.

മാംസ കയറ്റുമതിയിലൂടെ സഹസ്രകോടികൾ കൊയ്യുന്ന കോർപ്പ

പശുരക്ഷാരാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിന്റെ ചരിത്രവും പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രവും

റേറ്റ് മൂലധന താല്പര്യങ്ങളുമായി ചേർത്ത് വേണം രാജ്യത്ത് നരഹത്യകൾ സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്ന ഗോരക്ഷാ പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങളെ വിശകലനം ചെയ്യുന്നത്. കൗതുകരമായ വസ്തുത പശുവിന്റെ പേരിൽ കലാപങ്ങളും ആൾകൂട്ടക്കൊലകളും പടർത്തുന്ന ഹിന്ദുത്വ രാഷ്ട്രീയവുമായി ചേർന്നു നില്ക്കുന്നവരും ബന്ധപ്പെട്ടവരും തന്നെയാണ് ഇന്ത്യയിലെ ഏറ്റവും വലിയ ബീഫ് കയറ്റുമതി കമ്പനികൾ നടത്തുന്നതെന്നാണ്. സാധാരണക്കാരുടെ പോഷകാഹാരമായ ബീഫിനെ അറവു നിരോധന നിയമത്തിലൂടെയും ഗോവയ സംരക്ഷണത്തിന്റെ പേരിലുള്ള കലാപങ്ങളിലൂടെയും ഇല്ലാതാക്കി വൻകിട കയറ്റുമതി വ്യവസായങ്ങളിലേയ്ക്ക് എത്തിക്കുന്ന വ്യാപാരതന്ത്രം കൂടിയാണ് പശുഭക്തിയും പശു സംരക്ഷണ കലാപങ്ങളുമെന്നതാണ് യാഥാർത്ഥ്യം. അതായത് ഗോവയ നിരോധന അജണ്ടയുടെ ഉൾപ്രേരകമായി വർത്തിക്കുന്നത് വൻകിട കയറ്റുമതി കുത്തകകളുടെ വ്യാപാര താല്പര്യങ്ങളാണ്. ബീഫിന്റെ പേരിൽ മുസ്ലിങ്ങളെ ലക്ഷ്യമിട്ട് നീങ്ങുന്ന സംഘപരിവാറിന്റെ നേതാക്കളും സഹായികളുമാണ് ഇന്ത്യയിലെ പ്രമുഖങ്ങളായ മാംസ കയറ്റുമതി സ്ഥാപനങ്ങളുടെ ഉടമകളെന്നതാണ് ഗോവയ നിരോധന അജണ്ടയിലെ വിചിത്രമായ വസ്തുത!

അറബിനാമമുള്ള, പ്രത്യക്ഷത്തിൽ മുസ്ലിങ്ങളുടെ ഉടമസ്ഥതയിലുള്ളതെന്ന പ്രതീതി സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്ന എല്ലാ ബീഫ് കയറ്റുമതി സ്ഥാപനങ്ങളുടെയും മുതലാളിമാർ സവർണ്ണ ഹിന്ദുക്കളായ ബി ജെ പി ബന്ധമുള്ളവരാണ്.

ഇന്ത്യയിലെ പ്രമുഖ കയറ്റുമതി സ്ഥാപനമായ അൽ കബീർ എക്സ് പോർട്ട്സിന്റെ ഉടമ സതീഷ് സബർവാളാണ്. ഇദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ കമ്പനിക്ക് തെലുങ്കാനയിൽ മാത്രം 400 ഏക്കറിലധികം വിസ്തൃതിയുള്ള അറവുശാലയുണ്ട്. മറ്റൊരു കയറ്റുമതി കമ്പനിയായ അൽബ്നാം അഗ്രോ ഫുഡ്സിന്റെ ഉടമ ബി ജെ പി നേതാവായ സംഗീത് സോമാണ്. ഇദ്ദേഹം 2013 ലെ മുസഫർനഗർ കലാപത്തിന്റെ ആസൂത്രകൻ കൂടിയാണ്. കലാപം അന്വേഷിച്ച ജസ്റ്റീസ് വിഷ്ണു സഹായ് കമീഷൻ റിപ്പോർട്ടിൽ ഇയാളുടെ പേരെടുത്ത് പറഞ്ഞു കുറ്റപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. സംഗീത് സോം സംഘപരിവാറിന്റെ ലൗ ജിഹാദ് കാമ്പയിന്റെയും ഗോവയ നിരോധന കാമ്പയിന്റെയും ചാമ്പ്യനാണ്. ഇദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ ഉടമസ്ഥതയിലുള്ള യുപിയിൽ പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്ന മറ്റു കയറ്റുമതി കമ്പനികളാണ് അൽ നാം അഗ്രോ ഫുഡ്സ്, ഹലാൽ എക്സ്പോർട്ട്സ്, അൽ ദുവ ഫുഡ്സ് എന്നിവ. സുദിന്റെയും ഭാര്യ പ്രിയ സുദിന്റെയും ഉടമസ്ഥതയിലുള്ള കമ്പനിയാണ് എ ഒ പി എക്സ്പോർട്ടേഴ്സ്. കമ്മൽ വർമയുടെ ഉടമസ്ഥതയിലുള്ള കമ്പനിയാണ് സ്റ്റാൻഡേർഡ് പ്രോസൺ ഫുഡ്സ്. ഗോവയ നിരോധനത്തിന്റെ അർത്ഥശാസ്ത്രപരമായ അടിസ്ഥാനവും പ്രചോദനവും മാംസ വ്യാപാരത്തെ സമ്പൂർണ്ണമായി കയ്യട

ക്കാനുള്ള മുലധന താല്പര്യങ്ങളാണ്.

ലോകത്തിലെ തന്നെ ഏറ്റവും കന്നുകാലി സമ്പത്തുള്ള രാജ്യങ്ങളുടെ ഗണത്തിലാണ് ഇന്ത്യ. ആഗോള കന്നുകാലി സമ്പത്തിന്റെ 56.7% എരുമകളും 12.5 % പശുക്കളും ഇന്ത്യയിലാണെന്നാണ് സ്ഥിതി വിവരക്കണക്കുകൾ സാക്ഷ്യപ്പെടുത്തുന്നത്. കണക്കുകൾ പറയുന്നത് ഇന്ത്യയുടെ ജിഡിപിയുടെ 4% വും കാർഷിക ജിഡിപിയുടെ 26% വും കന്നുകാലി പരിപാലന മേഖലയിൽ നിന്നാണെന്നാണ്. ഇന്ത്യക്കാരിൽ മാംസാഹാരം വർധിക്കുകയാണെന്നാണ് ഭക്ഷണ സെൻസസുകളെല്ലാം ആവർത്തിച്ചു വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നത്.

സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യാനന്തരം ഇന്ത്യയിലുണ്ടായ മുതലാളിത്ത വികസനം മാംസ വ്യാപാരവും കയറ്റുമതിയും അഭൂതപൂർവമായ തോതിൽ വർധിക്കുന്നതിലേക്കെത്തിയിരിക്കുന്നു. ബ്രസീലിനെ പുറന്തള്ളി 2015 മുതൽ ഇന്ത്യ മാംസക്കയറ്റുമതിയിൽ ഒന്നാം സ്ഥാനത്തെത്തി. ആ വർഷം 20.82 ലക്ഷം മെട്രിക് ടൺ മാംസമാണ് കയറ്റി അയച്ചത്. ബ്രസീലിന്റേതാവട്ടെ 19.09 ലക്ഷം മെട്രിക് ടൺ മാത്രമായിരുന്നു. 2015ൽ മാത്രം ഇന്ത്യക്ക് മാംസക്കയറ്റുമതി വഴി 41000 കോടി രൂപയുടെ വരുമാനമാണുണ്ടായത്. മാംസക്കയറ്റുമതി രംഗത്തെ കോർപ്പറേറ്റുകളുടെ കൊയ്ത്തുകാലമാണ് ബി ജെ പി ഭരണ കാലമെന്നത്. ഇന്ത്യയിലേറ്റവും കൂടുതൽ മാംസം കയറ്റുമതി ചെയ്യുന്നത് യു പി യിൽ നിന്നാണ്. ഒരു ഭാഗത്ത് ബീഫിന്റെ പേരിൽ മനുഷ്യരെ തല്ലിക്കൊല്ലുകയും മറുഭാഗത്ത് ബീഫ് കയറ്റുമതി സഹസ്രകോടികൾ സമ്പാദിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്ന രാജ്യമാക്കി ഇന്ത്യയെ ഹിന്ദുത്വ വാദികളും അവർക്ക് പിറകിലെ മുലധന കുത്തകകളും മാറ്റിയിരിക്കുന്നു. മുലധനത്തിന്റെ ക്രൂര വിനോദങ്ങളിൽ മുസ്ലിങ്ങളും ദളിതരും വേട്ടയാടപ്പെടുന്ന രാജ്യമാണിന്ന് ഇന്ത്യ (കെ. ടി. കുഞ്ഞിക്കണ്ണൻ, ഹിന്ദുത്വവും നവലിബറലിസവും).

മൂന്നാം മോഡി സർക്കാർ അധികാരത്തിൽ വന്നതോടെ ആർ. എസ്.എസ് അജണ്ടയിൽ നിന്ന് രാജ്യത്തിന്റെ വിവിധ ഭാഗങ്ങളിൽ മുസ്ലിങ്ങൾക്കുനേരെ കടുത്ത ആക്രമണങ്ങൾ അഴിച്ചുവിടുന്നതാണ് നമ്മളിപ്പോൾ കണ്ടു കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നത്. 18ാം ലോക്സഭാ തെരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പിൽ ബി.ജെ.പിക്ക് ഒറ്റക്ക് ഗവൺമെന്റ് രൂപീകരിക്കാൻ കഴിയാതിരുന്നതും തെലുങ്കുദേശം, ജെ.ഡി.യുവും തുടങ്ങിയ പാർടികളുടെ പിന്തുണയിൽ മൂന്നണി ഗവൺമെന്റ് ഉണ്ടാക്കേണ്ടിവന്നതും പഴയതുപോലെ തീവ്ര ഹിന്ദുത്വ അജണ്ട നടപ്പാക്കുന്നതിന് തടസ്സം സൃഷ്ടിക്കുമെന്നാണ് പലരും വിലയിരുത്തിയത്. എന്നാൽ തെരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പിലെ തിരിച്ചടിയോടെ ബി.ജെ.പിയും ഹിന്ദുത്വശക്തികളും ഭൂരിപക്ഷ ധ്രുവീകരണം ശക്തിപ്പെടുത്താൻ പ്രതികാരമനോഭാവത്തോടെ ന്യൂനപക്ഷങ്ങൾക്കെതിരായി അക്രമണങ്ങൾ അഴിച്ചുവിടുകയാണുണ്ടായത്. ഹിന്ദുരാഷ്ട്രം ലക്ഷ്യംവെച്ച് പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്ന

പശുരക്ഷാരാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിന്റെ ചരിത്രവും പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രവും

കോർപ്പറേറ്റ് മൂലധനത്തിന്റെ സംരക്ഷകരാണ് മോഡിയും കൂട്ടുമെന്ന കാര്യമാണ് മൂന്നാം മോഡി സർക്കാരിൽ നിന്ന് മ്യൂദുസമീപനം പ്രതീക്ഷിക്കുന്ന പല നിരീക്ഷകരും കാണാതെപോകുന്നത്. അക്രമാസക്തമായ മൂലധനതാൽപര്യങ്ങളും കടുത്ത വർഗീയവിഭേദ അജണ്ടയുമാണ് ആർ. എസ്.എസിന്റെയും അതിന്റെ രാഷ്ട്രീയമുന്നണിയായ ബി.ജെ.പിയെയും നയിക്കുന്നത്.

കടുത്ത മുസ്ലീം വിരുദ്ധത പടർത്തി ഭൂരിപക്ഷ ധ്രുവീകരണമുണ്ടാക്കി തങ്ങളുടെ ജനപിന്തുണയിൽവന്ന ശോഷണത്തെ മറികടക്കാനാണ് സംഘപരിവാർ നോക്കുന്നത്. അതിനായി അവർ കടുത്ത മുസ്ലീങ്ങൾക്കെതിരായ നരവേട്ടകൾ രാജ്യമെമ്പാടും ആസൂത്രണം ചെയ്ത് നടപ്പിലാക്കുകയാണെന്ന് വേണം കരുതാൻ. പ്രകോപനങ്ങൾ സൃഷ്ടിച്ച് ധ്രുവീകരണമുണ്ടാക്കുകയെന്ന അജണ്ടയാണ് അവരുടേത്. കഴിഞ്ഞ ജൂൺ 7ാം തീയതിയാണ് ഗോരക്ഷാഗുണ്ടകൾ ഹത്തീസ്ഗഡിൽ അഴിഞ്ഞാടിയത്. തങ്ങളുടെ പശുരാഷ്ട്രീയം വീണ്ടും ആളിക്കത്തിച്ചെടുക്കാനുള്ള ആർ.എസ്.എസിന്റെ ആസൂത്രിതമായ നീക്കങ്ങളുടെ ഭാഗമായിട്ടുവേണം ഹത്തീസ്ഗഡിലെ മുസ്ലീം നരവേട്ടയെ കാണാൻ.

പശുവിനെ കടത്തിയെന്നാരോപിച്ച് ഹത്തീസ്ഗഡിൽ മൂന്നുപേരെയാണ് അടിച്ചുകൊന്നത്. അതേപോലെ റഫ്രിജറേറ്ററിൽ മാട്ടിറച്ചി കണ്ടെത്തിയെന്നാരോപിച്ച് മധ്യപ്രദേശിലെ മാണുലയിൽ 11 വീടുകളാണ് ഇടിച്ചുനിരത്തിയത്. ഹത്തീസ്ഗഡിൽ കൊല്ലപ്പെട്ടത് മൂന്ന് ഉത്തർപ്രദേശ് സ്വദേശികളായിരുന്നു. ഗുഡുഖാൻ, ചാമിയ, സദാംഖുറേഷ് എന്നിവരെയാണ് റായ്പൂരിൽ ഗോരക്ഷകർ അക്രമിച്ച് കൊലപ്പെടുത്തിയത്. ദേഹമാസകലം മുറിവുകളോടെയാണ് ഗുഡുഖാന്റെയും മിയയുടെയും മൃതദേഹങ്ങൾ കണ്ടെത്തിയത്. 12 ദിവസം ആശുപത്രിയിൽ കിടന്നാണ് ഖുറേഷ് മരണമടഞ്ഞത്.

മധ്യപ്രദേശിൽ സംഘപരിവാറുകാരോടൊപ്പം പോലീസും ചേർന്നാണ് മുസ്ലീം വേട്ടകൾ നടത്തിയത്. പശുക്കടത്താരോപിച്ച് നടത്തിയ തെരച്ചലിൽ പോലീസ് മാണുലയിലെ ഭായിൻസ്വാദി ഗ്രാമത്തിലെ ഏതാനും വീടുകളിൽ മാട്ടിറച്ചി കണ്ടെത്തുകയായിരുന്നു. പോലീസ് തെരച്ചിലിനുശേഷമാണ് റവന്യൂ അധികൃതർ മാട്ടിറച്ചി കണ്ടെത്തിയ 11 വീടുകൾ തകർത്തത്. അനധികൃതമായി നിർമ്മിച്ച വീടുകളെന്ന ന്യായം പറഞ്ഞാണ് മുസ്ലീം വീടുകൾ തകർത്തത്. ലക്നൗവിലെ അക്ബർ നഗർ നദീതീരത്ത് നിർമ്മാണം നടത്തിയെന്നാരോപിച്ചാണ് മുസ്ലീങ്ങളുടെ ആയിരത്തോളം വീടുകൾ ബുൾഡോസർ ഉപയോഗിച്ച് തകർത്തത്.

ഗുജറാത്തിലെ വഡോദരയിൽ മുഖ്യമന്ത്രിയുടെ ഭവനപദ്ധതി പ്രകാരം അനുവദിച്ച ഫ്ളാറ്റിൽ മുസ്ലീം സ്ത്രീയെ താമസിക്കാൻ അനുവദി

ക്കില്ലെന്ന് പ്രഖ്യാപിച്ചാണ് ചുറ്റുമുള്ള ഹിന്ദു കുടുംബങ്ങൾ രംഗത്തിറങ്ങിയത്. പരസ്യമായി മുസ്ലീം വിരുദ്ധതയും വിദ്വേഷവും പടർത്തുകയായിരുന്നു അയൽവാസികളായ ഹിന്ദുകുടുംബങ്ങളെന്ന് ഗുജറാത്തും നമ്മുടെ രാജ്യവും എത്തപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്ന സാമൂഹിക വിഭജനത്തിന്റെ ഭീകരതയാണ് കാണിക്കുന്നത്. ഹിമാചൽപ്രദേശിലെ നഹാനിൽ പശുവിനെ ബലിനൽകിയെന്നാരോപിച്ച മുസ്ലീം വ്യാപാരിയുടെ കട കൊള്ളയടിച്ച് തകർക്കുകയായിരുന്നു വർഗീയവാദികൾ. ഗോഹത്യകുറ്റത്തിന് ഹിമാചൽപ്രദേശിലെ കോൺഗ്രസ് സർക്കാർ വ്യാപാരിക്കെതിരെ കേസെടുക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. ഈ സംഭവത്തെ തുടർന്ന് നഹാനിലെ 16 മുസ്ലീം വ്യാപാരികൾക്ക് നഗരം വിട്ടുപോകേണ്ടിവന്നു.

ഡൽഹിയിലെ സംഗംവിഹാനിൽ ആരാധനാലയത്തിന് സമീപത്തു നിന്ന് പശുവിന്റെ ജഡം കിട്ടിയെന്നാരോപിച്ച് ഹിന്ദുതാസംഘടനകൾ പ്രകോപനം അഴിച്ചുവിടുകയായിരുന്നു. കടുത്ത വിദ്വേഷപ്രസംഗങ്ങളും ഭീഷണികളും മൂലം അവിടത്തെ താമസക്കാരായ മുസ്ലീങ്ങൾ അവിടെ നിന്നും പലായനം ചെയ്യുകയായിരുന്നു. ഇതെല്ലാം കാണിക്കുന്നത് ഗോരക്ഷാരാഷ്ട്രീയത്തെ ഉപയോഗിച്ച് സംഘപരിവാരും മൂന്നാം മോഡി സർക്കാരും കടുത്ത വർഗീയ ധ്രുവീകരണത്തിനുള്ള ആസൂത്രിത നീക്കമാണ് നടത്തിക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നതെന്നാണ്.

സംഘ പരിവാറിന്റെ പശു രാഷ്ട്രീയം നമ്മുടെ സംസ്കാരത്തെയും ചരിത്രത്തെയും സാമൂഹ്യ യാഥാർത്ഥ്യങ്ങളെയും കണക്കിലെടുക്കാതെയുള്ള വർഗീയ അജണ്ടയിൽ നിന്നുള്ളതാണ്. സാമ്രാജ്യത്വപ്രോക്തമായ ഈ ഹിന്ദുതാ രാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിന്റെ പിറകിലുള്ള മൂലധന താല്പര്യങ്ങളെയും അത് സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്ന വിദ്വേഷവിഭജന പദ്ധതികളെയും തിരിച്ചറിഞ്ഞ് കൊണ്ടേ ആൾക്കൂട്ടങ്ങളെ ഇളക്കിവിടുന്ന പശുഭ്രാന്തിനെ പ്രതിരോധിക്കാനാവൂ.

അപകടകരമാം വിധം ഇന്ന് ശക്തിപ്പെട്ടു വരുന്ന പശുരക്ഷാഭ്രാന്ത് മൂലധനത്തിന്റെ അധിനിവേശവാഞ്ചരകളുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ടതാണെന്ന് തിരിച്ചറിയേണ്ടതുണ്ട്.

ഗോരക്ഷാവാദികൾ സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്ന അസഹിഷ്ണുതയുടെയും അക്രമോത്സുകതയുടെയും രാഷ്ട്രീയ സംസ്കാരത്തെയും വിദ്വേഷത്തിന്റെ പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രത്തെയും മൂലധനബന്ധങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നുദർത്തിമാറ്റി കേവലമായ സംസ്കാര സംഘർഷങ്ങളായി പരിമിതപ്പെടുത്താവുന്നതല്ല.

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# ഭൂമി സാഹിത്യവ്യവഹാരം

## മലയാളത്തിൽ

ഡോ. രവി കെ പി

അസോസിയേറ്റ് പ്രൊഫസർ, മലയാളവകുപ്പ്  
ഗവ ആർട്സ് & സയൻസ് കോളേജ് കാലിക്കറ്റ്

മലയാളസാഹിത്യത്തിന്റെ പൊതുബോധം രാജവ്യവസ്ഥയുടെയും ദൈവീകതയുടെയും അധീശമൂല്യത്തെയും സൗന്ദര്യത്തെയും പുനരുൽപ്പാദിച്ചുകൊണ്ടാണ് നിലനിന്നതെന്ന് സാഹിത്യചരിത്രത്തിന്റെ സൂക്ഷ്മവിശകലനം സാക്ഷ്യപ്പെടുത്തും. ഈയർത്ഥത്തിൽ എഴുത്തച്ഛൻവരെയുള്ള പാട്ടുകൃതികൾ ഇതിഹാസപുരാണങ്ങളെ വിവിധരീതിയിൽ ആഖ്യാനം ചെയ്യുകയാണ് ചെയ്തത്. അധികാരവും ആത്മീയതയും തമ്മിലുള്ള ബന്ധമാണ് ഭക്തിയുടെ ആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ കേരളത്തിനകത്ത് സാധ്യമാക്കിയത്. ഇവിടെ ആത്മീയത സൗന്ദര്യബോധത്തെ നിയന്ത്രിക്കുന്ന മൂല്യസങ്കല്പമായി മാറുന്നു. മനുഷ്യനും മനുഷ്യനും തമ്മിലുള്ള സാമൂഹികബന്ധത്തെ നീതിപരമായി നിഷേധിച്ചുകൊണ്ടാണ് ദൈവവുമായുള്ള ബന്ധത്തെ സ്ഥാപിക്കുന്ന ഭക്തി കേന്ദ്രീകൃതമായ കൃതികൾ പ്രാധാന്യം നേടുന്നത്. കേരളത്തിന്റെ പ്രകൃതിയും പ്രദേശവും ആഖ്യാനത്തിനകത്ത് വരുന്നതേയില്ല. ദൈവത്തിന്റെ മുഖത്ത്നിന്ന് ജനിച്ച ബ്രാഹ്മണനും ദൈവത്തിന്റെ മുദ്ര പതിഞ്ഞിട്ടുള്ള മറ്റ് അധീശവിഭാഗങ്ങളും ഉൽകൃഷ്ടരായി പരിഗണിക്കപ്പെടുകയും അല്ലാത്തവരെ നികൃഷ്ടരായി മാറ്റിനിർത്തുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നിടത്ത് ദൈവസ്വർഗ്ഗം മനുഷ്യന്റെ മൂല്യം നിർണ്ണയിക്കുന്നതായി കാണാം. ആത്മീയതയുടെ ഭാഗമായ കല ബഹുജനസംസ്കാരത്തെ തരം താഴ്ത്തുകയും അയിത്തവൽക്കരിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. ദൈവബന്ധത്തിന്റെയും ആത്മീയതയുടെയും പേരിൽ ഒരു കൃതി ഉൽകൃഷ്ടമാണെന്ന് സ്ഥാപിക്കുന്നിടത്ത് പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നത് ചാതുർവർണ്യമൂല്യബോധമാണ്. അങ്ങനെ ആത്മീയപുരുഷൻ അധികാരശക്തിയാർന്നവനും വിശുദ്ധനുമായി മാറുന്നു. അയിത്തജാതിക്കാരൻ അധികാരരഹിതനും അശുദ്ധനുമായി മാറുന്നു. ഈ മൂല്യസങ്കല്പമാണ് ഇന്ത്യൻ സാഹിത്യത്തെയും കേരളത്തിലെ ആഖ്യാനത്തെയും ദീർഘകാലം നിയന്ത്രിച്ചത്. ഇതിൽനിന്നും രൂപംകൊണ്ട ഭാവുകത്വം സൗന്ദര്യബോധത്തെ കീഴ്പ്പെടുത്തി.



**താക്കോൽ വാക്കുകൾ  
വ്യവഹാരം, ഭാവുകത്വം, ആഖ്യാനം, അധികാരം  
സൗന്ദര്യം, അടിമത്തം**

ഇന്ത്യൻ ആധിപത്യവ്യവസ്ഥയുടെ നെടുംതൂണായ ദൈവബന്ധുത്വ നിയമമാണ് അയിത്തത്തത്വചിന്തയെയും അതിൽനിന്ന് ഉൽപ്പാദിപ്പിക്കപ്പെട്ട ആത്മീയ കലാഭാവുകത്വത്തെയും കേരളത്തിലും നിലനിർത്തിപ്പോന്നത്. പകലന്തിയോളം അധാനിക്കുന്ന കറുത്ത മനുഷ്യർ ദുർഗന്ധം പുരണ്ട വസ്തുവാണെന്ന് എന്നതുകൊണ്ട് അതിന് സൗന്ദര്യഭാവുകത്വത്തെ ഉത്തേജിപ്പിക്കാൻ കഴിയുകയില്ല എന്ന പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രം അങ്ങനെയാണ് സാമാന്യ ബോധമായി ആധിപത്യം നേടുന്നത്. ഈ ആത്മീയഭാവുകത്വത്തെ നിഷേധിക്കാൻ വേണ്ടിയുള്ള സമരങ്ങളാണ് കേരളത്തിന്റെ സാംസ്കാരിക രാഷ്ട്രീയത്തെ ചലനാത്മകമാക്കിയത്. സാമൂഹികനീതിയുടെ യുക്തിബലമുള്ള മനുഷ്യപ്രജ്ഞയ്ക്ക് അതിഭൗതികതയിലൂന്നിയുള്ള ജാതി-വർണ്ണ സങ്കല്പനത്തെ ഒരു വിധത്തിലും സാധൂകരിക്കാനാവുകയില്ല എന്നതാണ് യാഥാർത്ഥ്യം. നൂറ്റാണ്ടുകളായി അടിച്ചേൽപ്പിക്കപ്പെട്ട ഇരുണ്ട അടിമത്തത്തിന്റെയും വിധേയത്വത്തിന്റെയും അപകർഷതാബോധത്തിന്റെയും ബോധാബോധങ്ങളിൽനിന്ന് സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം പ്രഖ്യാപിക്കാൻ കേരളത്തിലെ അടിസ്ഥാനജനത നടത്തുന്ന ശ്രമമാണ് ദളിത് ആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ നിർവ്വഹിക്കുന്നത്.

**ജാതിയും അന്യവൽക്കരണവും**

ദേശീയ-ഇടതുപക്ഷപ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങളുടെ സ്വാധീനം ശക്തമായ കേരളത്തിൽ ദളിത്-സാഹിത്യരാഷ്ട്രീയസംവാദങ്ങൾ ശക്തമാകുന്നത് ആയിരത്തിത്തൊള്ളായിരത്തി എഴുപതുകളിൽത്തന്നെയാണ്. ചരിത്രപരമായ നിരവധി പരിണാമത്തിലൂടെയും രാഷ്ട്രീയമായ തിരിച്ചറിവുകളിലൂടെയുമാണ് ദളിത്വ്യവഹാരം സാധ്യമായത്. കേരളസംസ്ഥാനരൂപീകരണത്തിനുശേഷമുള്ള ഭൂബന്ധങ്ങളിലുണ്ടായ മാറ്റം ദലിതരെ ഭൂവുടമസ്ഥതയിലേക്ക് പ്രവേശിപ്പിക്കുകയല്ല കൂലിയടിമത്തത്തിലേക്ക് നയിക്കുകയാണ് ചെയ്തതെന്ന തിരിച്ചറിവും കർഷകത്തൊഴിലാളികൾ എന്ന പേരിൽ വിശേഷിപ്പിക്കപ്പെട്ട ദളിതർ പാർട്ടികളുടെയും പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങളുടെയും വിശ്വസ്തരും വിധേയരുമായി മാറ്റപ്പെടുകയാണുണ്ടായതെന്ന സാമൂഹികയാഥാർത്ഥ്യവുമാണ് ദളിത്സ്വത്വരൂപീകരണത്തിലേക്ക് നയിച്ച പ്രധാന ഘടകങ്ങൾ.<sup>1</sup> ആഗോളമായിത്തന്നെ ഉയർന്നുവന്ന സ്വത്വരാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിന്റെയും നവസാമുദായികരാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിന്റെയും സ്വാധീനവും അംബേദ്കറുടെ ആശയങ്ങളുടെ പ്രചാരവും ഇതിനു പിന്നിൽ പ്രവർത്തിച്ച സൈദ്ധാന്തികതലങ്ങളാണ്. ഇടതുപക്ഷപ്രസ്ഥാനത്തെ ദളിത്പ്രസ്ഥാനം ബ്രാഹ്മണപ്രസ്ഥാന

ദളിത് സാഹിത്യവ്യവഹാരം മലയാളത്തിൽ

മായി തിരിച്ചറിയുന്നതും ഇതിന്റെ വെളിച്ചത്തിലാണ്. മാത്രമല്ല, കേരളത്തിൽ ആയിരത്തിത്തൊള്ളായിരത്തി നാൽപ്പതുകൾ മുതൽ പ്രബലമായ പുരോഗമനസാഹിത്യആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ ദളിതരെ കർത്തൃത്വമില്ലാത്തവരായി സാക്ഷ്യപ്പെടുത്താനുമാണ് ശ്രമിച്ചത്.

നവോത്ഥാനത്തിനും പുരോഗമനപ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങൾക്കും കഴിയാതിരുന്ന പുതിയൊരു ഭാവുകത്വമാണ് ദളിത് സാംസ്കാരികരൂപീകരണത്തിലൂടെ നടന്നത് എന്ന് അക്കാദമിക് ലോകം അംഗീകരിക്കുന്നത് ആയിരത്തിത്തൊള്ളായിരത്തി എൺപതുകളിലാണ്. കെ.കെ.കൊച്ചു ഈ ദളിത് സാമൂഹികാവസ്ഥയെ ചരിത്രവൽക്കരിക്കുന്നത് ഇങ്ങനെയാണ്: “ഒരു കമ്മ്യൂണിസ്റ്റുകാരന്റെ സമർപ്പിതജീവിതം അസാധ്യമാക്കിയ സന്ദിഗ്ധതകളെയും കുഴപ്പങ്ങളെയുമാണ് എന്റെ സഞ്ചാരപഥങ്ങൾ നിർണ്ണയിച്ചത്. കേരളത്തിന്റെ ഗ്രാമീണനിശ്ചലതകളെ ഭേദിച്ച നവോത്ഥാനം, ദേശീയപ്രസ്ഥാനം, കമ്മ്യൂണിസ്റ്റ് പാർട്ടി, കലാസാംസ്കാരികപ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ, വായനശാലകൾ, പത്രങ്ങൾ എന്നിവ സൃഷ്ടിച്ച സാമൂഹികതയിൽ ദാരിദ്ര്യം, അയിത്തം, ഹീനജോലികൾ മുതലായ ജാതീയാടിമർത്തലുകൾ വലിയൊരളവിൽ അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കേണ്ടിവന്നൊരു ദളിതനായിരുന്നില്ല ഞാൻ. അതേസമയം, വ്യവസ്ഥിതിയുടെ ചലനനിയമങ്ങൾക്കു വിധേയമായ ന്യൂനീകരണം, വിവേചനം പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രപരവും രാഷ്ട്രീയവുമായ വിഷമസന്ധികൾ മൂലം ദലിതാവസ്ഥയിൽ സ്ഥിരമായി നിലകൊള്ളുകയും ചെയ്തു. ഏത് പരിതഃസ്ഥിതിയിലായാലും പദവിയിലെത്തിയാലും ഇന്ത്യയുടെ പൊതുബോധത്തിന് കീഴിൽ ദളിതർ സവിശേഷമായി അന്യവൽക്കരിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നുവെന്ന ബോധം രൂപപ്പെട്ടു... ഞാനുൾപ്പെട്ട ദളിത് സമുദായം അത്രമാത്രം തകർച്ചയിലും സ്വയംപ്രകാശിപ്പിക്കാനുള്ള അവസരം നിഷേധിക്കപ്പെട്ട അവസ്ഥയിലുമാണെന്ന ഉറച്ച വിശ്വാസമായിരുന്നു.”<sup>2</sup>

ജാതിവ്യവസ്ഥ സൃഷ്ടിച്ച അന്യവൽക്കരണത്തെ മറികടക്കാൻ ദലിതന്-സ്ത്രീക്ക്-ന്യൂനപക്ഷസമുദായക്കാർക്ക് 21-ാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിലും ഒട്ടേറെ സാമൂഹിക രാഷ്ട്രീയ-ജ്ഞാനാനുഭവങ്ങളിലൂടെ കടന്നുപോകേണ്ടതുണ്ടെന്ന യാഥാർത്ഥ്യമാണ് കെ.കെ.കൊച്ചു വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നത്. അതുകൊണ്ടുതന്നെയാണ് കേരളത്തിലെ ദളിത് ആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ പ്രധാനമായും ജാതിയുടെയും മതത്തിന്റെ പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രാധിഷ്ഠിതമായ വിനിമയരീതികളെ പ്രശ്നവൽക്കരിക്കാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുന്നത്. ജാതിമതവ്യവഹാരങ്ങൾ അത്രമേൽ ജനതയുടെ കർത്തൃത്വത്തെ നിഷേധിക്കുന്നു.

**പ്രതിരോധത്തിന്റെ ജ്ഞാനരൂപങ്ങൾ**

അതിശക്തവും വൈവിധ്യപൂർണ്ണവുമായ വാമൊഴിപാരമ്പര്യത്തിന്റെ അടിത്തറയിൽനിന്നുകൊണ്ടാണ് പിൻക്കാല ദളിത് ആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ രൂപ

മെടുക്കുന്നത്. ഐതിഹ്യങ്ങൾ, പഴമൊഴികൾ, നാടൻപാട്ടുകൾ, അനുഷ്ഠാനകലാരൂപങ്ങൾ എന്നിവയൊക്കെ അതിനെ വിപുലമാക്കുന്നു. ഘടനാപരമായും പ്രമേയപരമായും ഇവയെല്ലാം ലൗകികജീവിതാവസ്ഥയുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ടുകിടക്കുന്നു. പ്രാദേശികമായി രൂപപ്പെട്ട പാട്ടുകളിൽ മിക്കതും മനുഷ്യനും പ്രകൃതിയും, മനുഷ്യനും മനുഷ്യനും തമ്മിലുള്ള ബന്ധത്തെയാണ് സ്ഥാപിക്കുന്നത്.

പ്രാദേശികമായ അറിവനുഭവങ്ങളെ ആഗോളമായി പൊലിപ്പിച്ചെടുക്കുന്ന ദർശനം ഈ പാട്ടുകൾ ആശയപരമായി ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുന്നുണ്ട്. ദളിത് സാംസ്കാരിക മൂലധനമായിപിൻക്കാലകേരളസമൂഹം ഇവയെ ഉൾക്കൊണ്ടു എന്നതാണ് യാഥാർത്ഥ്യം. പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രപരമായി കീഴ്പ്പെടുത്തപ്പെട്ട അവസ്ഥയിൽപോലും പ്രതിരോധത്തിന്റെയും സമരത്തിന്റെയും വ്യത്യസ്തജ്ഞാനരൂപങ്ങൾ ഇതര ഇന്ത്യൻപ്രദേശങ്ങളിലെന്നപോലെ തന്നെ കേരളത്തിലെ ദളിതരും നിലനിർത്തുകയും പ്രചരിപ്പിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തുപോന്നു. ഒരേസമയം അധാനപരമായി ഫ്യൂഡൽ സാമൂഹികഘടനയെ നിലനിർത്തുകയും അതേസമയം പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രപരമായി അതിനെ അതിലംഘിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നതിന്റെ സൂക്ഷ്മതലം ഇത്തരം ആഖ്യാനങ്ങളുടെ സവിശേഷതയാണ്. പല അനുഷ്ഠാനപരമായ കലാരൂപങ്ങളും സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യവും സമത്വവും നിലനിർത്താൻ ശ്രമിക്കുന്ന ദളിത് സമുദായാംഗങ്ങളുടെ പോരാട്ടത്തിന്റെ പ്രതിരൂപങ്ങളാണ്.<sup>3</sup> ഇങ്ങനെ പ്രാദേശികമായി രൂപപ്പെട്ട പ്രതിരോധങ്ങളുടെ ആഖ്യാനമാതൃകകളെ പിന്തുടർന്നാണ് കേരളത്തിൽ ദളിത് സ്വത്വരാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിലൂന്നിയുള്ള ആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ പ്രത്യക്ഷപ്പെടുന്നത്. അടിമത്താനുഭവത്തിന്റേയും, പ്രായോഗികമായ അറിവിന്റെയും സാക്ഷ്യപ്പെടുത്തലുകളായി ഈ ആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ ആവിഷ്കാരം നേടുന്നു.<sup>4</sup>

മലയാളത്തിലെ ദളിത്സാഹിത്യത്തിന്റെ വികാസപരിണാമങ്ങൾ വിശകലനം ചെയ്തുകൊണ്ട് സ്വതന്ത്രമായ തിരിച്ചറിവിലേക്ക് ആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ മാറിവന്നതെങ്ങനെയെന്ന് പോൾ ചിറക്കരോട് നിരീക്ഷിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. അവയിൽ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ടത് താഴെ കൊടുക്കുന്നു.

“പ്രകൃതിയുമായി ഇണങ്ങിയകാലം, തൊഴിലാളികളെന്ന നിലയിൽ ക്രൂരമായി ദണ്ഡിപ്പിക്കപ്പെട്ട കാലം, ജാതിക്കെതിരെ കലാപം കൂട്ടുന്ന കാലം, പുതിയ മതാവബോധത്തിന്റെ കാലം, മതപരിവർത്തനത്തിന്റെ വിവേചനം തിരിച്ചറിയുന്ന കാലം, രാഷ്ട്രീയ ഉൽബുദ്ധതയുടെ കാലം, കറുത്ത അവബോധത്തിന്റെ കാലം.”<sup>5</sup> ദളിത് ആഖ്യാനത്തിന്റെ നൈരന്തര്യവും ചരിത്രവും സാഹിത്യത്തെ വിപുലപ്പെടുത്തുകയും സംവാദാത്മകമാക്കുകയും ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ടെന്ന് ഈ നിരീക്ഷണം വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. മാത്രമല്ല നവീനമായൊരു കർത്യത്വവും പ്രതിനിധാനസങ്കല്പവും കൂടി ദളിത്

ദളിത് സാഹിത്യവ്യവഹാരം മലയാളത്തിൽ

ആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ നിർവ്വഹിച്ചു. ‘എഴുത്ത്’ മേഖലയിൽ നിലനില്ക്കുന്ന അധീശത്വഘടനയോട് സംഘർഷാത്മകബന്ധം പുലർത്തിക്കൊണ്ടാണ് ദളിത് ആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ പ്രാധാന്യം നേടുന്നത്. ഇത് ഏതെങ്കിലും ജാതികളോ വംശങ്ങളോ കേന്ദ്രത്തിലേക്ക് പുനഃസ്ഥാപനം ചെയ്യുന്നതിന്റെ വ്യവഹാരമല്ലെന്നും കേന്ദ്രമായിരുന്നത് അസ്ഥിരപ്പെടുകയോ നിർവീര്യമാവുകയോ ന്യൂനീകരിക്കപ്പെടുകയോ ചെയ്യുന്നതിലൂടെ വ്യാപ്തിനേടുന്ന സവിശേഷമായ ഭൂമിശാസ്ത്രമാണെന്നും നിരീക്ഷിക്കപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുണ്ട്.<sup>6</sup>

ഒട്ടനവധി സാന്നിധ്യങ്ങളും സങ്കീർണ്ണതകളും അറിവനുഭവങ്ങളും ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുന്ന രീതിയിലേക്ക് ദളിത്വ്യവഹാരം മാറിയിട്ടുണ്ട് എന്നാണ് ഈ നിരീക്ഷണം വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നത്. കൊളോണിയൽ ആധുനികതയുടെ പ്രരുപമായ ആദ്യകാല നോവലുകളിൽത്തന്നെ ജാതിയെയും മതത്തെയും പ്രശ്നവൽക്കരിക്കാനുള്ള ശ്രമം നടന്നിട്ടുണ്ട്. എന്നാൽ കേരളത്തിലെ നോവൽ ആഖ്യാനത്തിനകത്ത് തുടർച്ച നഷ്ടപ്പെടുകയാണുണ്ടായത്. ഇതിന് പ്രധാന കാരണം വരേണ്യബോധം എഴുത്തുകാരനെ നിയന്ത്രിച്ചു എന്നതാണ്. പ്രാദേശികജീവിതത്തെ ആഖ്യാനം ചെയ്യുവാനുള്ള ശ്രമമായി ആരംഭിച്ച മലയാളനോവലുകൾ എങ്ങനെയാണ് പ്രാദേശിക സവർണ്ണാഖ്യാനമായി മാറിയത് എന്ന നിരീക്ഷണം പ്രദീപൻ പാമ്പിരികുന്ന് വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നുണ്ട്.<sup>7</sup> കേരളത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം ഈ സവർണ്ണവൽക്കരണം നടക്കുന്നത് നായർ സമുദായത്തിന്റെ വർദ്ധിച്ച സാമൂഹികാധികാരവുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട ചരിത്രപ്രക്രിയയിലൂടെയാണെന്നതാണ് ശ്രദ്ധേയം. അതുകൊണ്ടുതന്നെ ബഹുസംസ്കാരത്തിന്റെ സൂക്ഷ്മചലനങ്ങൾ വീണ്ടെടുക്കാൻ നോവൽ എന്ന ആഖ്യാനത്തിനായില്ല. അങ്ങനെ ദേശരൂപീകരണ പ്രക്രിയയിൽ അദ്യശ്യരായ ആദിവാസികളടക്കമുള്ള ദളിതർ ആഖ്യാനത്തിലും ബഹിഷ്കൃതരായി.

ദളിത്സമൂഹം കേരളത്തിന്റെ ചരിത്രഭാഷാബോധത്തിൽനിന്നും ബഹിഷ്കരിക്കപ്പെട്ടതിനെ വിശകലനം ചെയ്തുകൊണ്ട് അനേകം പഠനങ്ങൾ ആധുനികാന്തരം പ്രത്യക്ഷപ്പെടുകയുണ്ടായി. ഇവയെല്ലാംതന്നെ വാദിച്ചുറപ്പിക്കുന്ന ഒന്ന് ഉപരിജാതികളുടെ സ്വത്വവൽക്കരണത്തെ ബലപ്പെടുത്തിയ സാംസ്കാരികമൂലധനമാണ് ഇന്നും കേരളീയജ്ഞാനമണ്ഡലത്തെ സ്വാധീനിക്കുന്നതെന്നാണ്.<sup>8</sup> അടിസ്ഥാനജനത ലക്ഷ്യംവെച്ച ജാതിവിരുദ്ധവ്യവഹാരം തകിടംമറിയുകയും ജാതിസ്വത്വത്തിലേക്കും മതസ്വത്വത്തിലേക്കും പ്രമാണസമൂഹം രൂപാന്തരപ്പെടുകയും ചെയ്യുന്ന സാമുദായികരാഷ്ട്രീയമാണ് കേരളപൊതുസമൂഹത്തിന്റേതെന്ന് വ്യക്തമാകുന്നു. ദേശീയത, നവോത്ഥാനം, ആധുനികത, മതേതരത്വം ഇടതുപക്ഷദേശീയത എന്നീ പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രവ്യവഹാരങ്ങളെ ദളിത് ആഖ്യാതാക്കൾ പ്രശ്നവൽക്കരിക്കുന്ന സാമൂഹിക-രാഷ്ട്രീയപരിസരം പ്രാധാന്യം നേടുന്നത്

ഇങ്ങനെയാണ്. ഈ അർത്ഥത്തിൽ ദളിതരനുഭവിക്കുന്ന സ്വത്വപ്രതിസന്ധിയുടേയും രാഷ്ട്രീയകർത്തൃത്വത്തിന്റെയും സമത്വത്തിലൂന്നിയ ദേശരാഷ്ട്രപുനർനിർമ്മാണത്തിന്റെയും വ്യവഹാര മേഖലയായി ആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ മാറുന്നു. സൂക്ഷ്മമായി വിശകലനം ചെയ്യുമ്പോൾ ബഹിഷ്കൃതകർത്തൃത്വങ്ങൾ ആഖ്യാനമേഖലയിലേക്ക് വരുന്നതോടുകൂടിയാണ് ആഗോളാടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽത്തന്നെ അധീശത്വപ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രത്തിന്റെയും അതുസ്ഥാപിച്ചുറപ്പിക്കുന്ന ലാവണ്യസങ്കല്പങ്ങളുടേയും കേന്ദ്രീയത നഷ്ടപ്പെടുന്നത്.

കേരളത്തിന്റെ സാംസ്കാരിക-രാഷ്ട്രീയരംഗത്ത് ദളിത്വ്യവഹാരങ്ങൾ സാധ്യമാക്കിയ വിമോചനാത്മകതയും ചലനാത്മകതയും ഇടതുപക്ഷദേശീയതയ്ക്കകത്തുതന്നെ പിളർപ്പുകളുണ്ടാക്കി എന്നതാണ് വാസ്തവം. ദളിത് സാംസ്കാരികരാഷ്ട്രീയപ്രസ്ഥാനത്തെ ചരിത്രപരമായി വിശകലനം ചെയ്തുകൊണ്ട് പി. ഗോവിന്ദപ്പിള്ള എഴുതി:

‘ഇരുപത്തിയൊന്നാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിന്റെ ആദ്യദശകങ്ങളിൽ ഈ ശ്രദ്ധേയമായ പ്രസ്ഥാനം കണക്കിലെടുക്കേണ്ട ഒരു നിർണ്ണായകമായ ശക്തിയായിത്തീരുവാൻ സാധ്യതയുണ്ടെന്നും അതിനു ശേഷം കൂടുതൽ ശാസ്ത്രീയതയും ചരിത്രസാധ്യതയുമുള്ള കാഴ്ചപ്പാടും ആർജ്ജിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് അത് നേതൃത്വം നേടും.’<sup>9</sup> മാർക്സിസ്റ്റ് വ്യവഹാരനിർമ്മിതി ദളിത്ജീവിതാവസ്ഥയെ ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുന്നതിൽ പരാജയമായിരുന്നെന്ന് വീക്ഷണമാണ് അദ്ദേഹം മുന്നോട്ടുവയ്ക്കുന്നത്. മാർക്സിസിയയും ബുദ്ധനേയും താരതമ്യം ചെയ്തുകൊണ്ട് ഡോ. അംബേദ്കർ എഴുതിയ പ്രബന്ധത്തിൽ വർഗ്ഗരാഷ്ട്രീയംകൊണ്ട് ജാതീയമായ പ്രശ്നങ്ങളെ പരിഹരിക്കാൻ കഴിയുകയില്ലെന്ന് വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നുണ്ട്<sup>10</sup> അംബേദ്കറെ ഉൾക്കൊള്ളാനോ അദ്ദേഹം മുന്നോട്ടുവെച്ച വിമോചനാത്മകദർശനത്തെ പഠിക്കാനോ ഇന്ത്യൻ മാർക്സിസ്റ്റ് ചിന്തകർ തയ്യാറായില്ല. എന്നാൽ, പത്തൊമ്പതാം പാർട്ടി കോൺഗ്രസ്സ് അംഗീകരിച്ച രാഷ്ട്രീയപ്രമേയത്തിൽ ദളിത് അവകാശങ്ങൾ പരിഗണിക്കാൻ ഇവർ തയ്യാറായി ഇതാവട്ടെ സ്വത്വരാഷ്ട്രീയം സംവാദാത്മകമായ സവിശേഷ സാമൂഹിക രാഷ്ട്രീയസാഹചര്യത്തിലായിരുന്നു. ജാതിവ്യവസ്ഥയെയും ബ്രാഹ്മണ്യമൂല്യവ്യവസ്ഥയെയും വിമർശനാത്മകമായി വിശകലനം ചെയ്തുകൊണ്ട് തങ്ങൾ പിന്നിട്ട സാംസ്കാരികപരിസരത്തെ സ്വയം തിരിച്ചറിയാനാണ് ദളിത് സൈദ്ധാന്തികരും ആഖ്യാതാക്കളും ശ്രമിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളത്.<sup>11</sup> ജാതിയും മതവും ഒരു സാന്നിധ്യമായിരിക്കുമ്പോൾത്തന്നെ അതിനെ മറികടക്കാനുള്ള ആഗ്രഹവും ദളിത് ആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ പങ്കുവയ്ക്കുന്നുണ്ട് എന്നതാണ് ശ്രദ്ധേയം. അതിൽ സവിശേഷമായ ആഖ്യാനരൂപമെന്നത് ആത്മാഖ്യാനവും ജീവചരിത്രവുമാണ്.

ഇന്ത്യൻ ആധിപത്യവ്യവസ്ഥയുടെ അടിത്തറയായി പ്രവർത്തിച്ചത്

ദളിത് സാഹിത്യവ്യവഹാരം മലയാളത്തിൽ

ദൈവബന്ധുത്വനിയമമാണ്. ദേശരാഷ്ട്രസങ്കല്പം പോലും ദൈവകേന്ദ്രീകൃതമായി മതവൽക്കരിക്കപ്പെടുന്ന സമകാലിക സാംസ്കാരികരാഷ്ട്രീയ സാഹചര്യത്തിൽ ഈ ആത്മീയഭാവുകത്വപ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രത്തെ മറികടക്കാനുള്ള ശക്തമായ ആഖ്യാനനിർമ്മിതികളാണ് ദളിതുപക്ഷത്തുനിന്നും ഉണ്ടാകുന്നത്. സാമൂഹികനീതിയുടെ യുക്തിബലമുള്ള മനുഷ്യപ്രജ്ഞയ്ക്ക് സമഗ്രാധിപത്യത്തെയും അതിഭൗതികതയിലൂന്നിയുള്ള ജാതിവർണ്ണസങ്കല്പനത്തെയും സാധൂകരിക്കാനാവുകയില്ല. നൂറ്റാണ്ടുകളായി അടിച്ചേൽപ്പിക്കപ്പെട്ട ഇരുണ്ട അടിമത്തത്തിന്റെയും വിധേയത്വത്തിന്റെയും അപകർഷതാബോധത്തിന്റെയും വ്യവഹാരങ്ങളെ കൂടഞ്ഞെറിയാൻ അടിത്തട്ടു ജനത നടത്തുന്ന ശ്രമങ്ങളാണ് സമകാലിക ഇന്ത്യൻ ദളിത് ആഖ്യാനങ്ങളുടെ സവിശേഷതയായി മാറുന്നത്. വ്യവസ്ഥയുടെ പുനഃസ്ഥാപനമല്ല; മറിച്ച് വ്യവസ്ഥയുടെ നിർമ്മൂലനമാണത് ലക്ഷ്യമാക്കുന്നത്.

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3. ഉത്തരമലബാറിലെ കണ്ടിതെയും, പുലിമറഞ്ഞതൊണ്ടച്ചൻ, മലബാറിലെ കുട്ടി ചാത്തൻതിറ, കരികുട്ടിത്തിറ, പൊട്ടൻതെയും ഇവയെല്ലാം ജാതിവ്യവസ്ഥയ്ക്കെതിരെ നിലയുറപ്പിച്ച് അധിശത്വത്തെയും അധികാരത്തെയും വെല്ലുവിളിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തുകൊണ്ട് രക്തസാക്ഷികളായവരാണ്.
4. മലയാളത്തിലെ എഴുത്തച്ഛൻ വരെയുള്ള പാട്ടുകവികൾ പിന്തുടരുന്നത്. ബ്രാഹ്മണജ്ഞാന-സൗന്ദര്യപരിസരമാണ്. കുഞ്ചൻ നമ്പ്യാർ ആഖ്യാനത്തിന് വിധേയമാക്കുന്നത് പുരാണേതിഹാസകൃതികളെയാണെങ്കിലും വരേണ്യഭക്തിധാരയെ മറികടക്കാനുള്ള ശ്രമം നടത്തുന്നുണ്ട്. എങ്കിലും കുഞ്ചൻ നമ്പ്യാരുടെ ജനകീയപാരമ്പര്യം നായർ സമുദായം വരെ മാത്രമേ എത്തിച്ചേരുന്നുള്ളൂ. പ്രാചീനമധ്യകാലമണിപ്രവാള കൃതികളാവട്ടെ പ്രമാണസമൂഹത്തിന്റെ ശരീരബോധത്തെയാണ് ആഖ്യാനം ചെയ്യുന്നത്. സ്ത്രീശരീരത്തിന്റെ വടിവുകളും നഗ്നതയും രതിയും അതിസാധാരണമായ സൗന്ദര്യംശമായി മാറുന്നു. ഇതിൽ നിന്ന് വ്യത്യസ്തമാണ് ദളിത് ആഖ്യാനങ്ങൾ, കെ.പി.കറുപ്പന്റെ ജാതിക്കുമ്മി (1912) ഉദ്യാനവിരുന്ന് (1926) ഇവ ജാതിവ്യവസ്ഥയെയാണ് പ്രശ്നവൽക്കരിക്കാൻ ശ്രമിച്ചത്.
5. പോൾ ചിറക്കരോട്, വസന്തത്തിനായ് കാതോർക്കുക, ദളിത് സ്വത്വവും അധികാരത്തിന്റെ പ്രശ്നവും, യേശുദാസൻ ടി.എം, ആൽമണ്ട് ബുക്സ്, തിരുവനന്തപുരം, 2006, പൃ.79.
6. ബാബുരാജ്, കെ.കെ., വിഷയി, അന്യം, ഭാഷ, ദളിതപാതകൾ, (എ.ഡി) ബോബി തോമസ്, സൈൻബുക്സ്, തിരുവനന്തപുരം, 2006, പൃ.79.
7. പുല്ലേലിക്കുഞ്ചു (1882) സരസ്വതീവിജയം, (1892) എന്നീ നോവലുകൾ കീഴാളർക്കിടയിൽ രൂപപ്പെട്ടുവരുന്ന വിമോചനാത്മകദർശനങ്ങൾ ആവിഷ്കരിക്കുന്നു. എന്നാൽ, സ്ഥലവുമായും ചരിത്രവുമായും ഈ ആഖ്യാനങ്ങളിൽ

സംഘർഷഭരിതമായ ബന്ധങ്ങളാണ് സാധ്യമാക്കുന്നത്. ഭൂമിയുടെ ഉടമസ്ഥത ഈ വിഭാഗത്തിന് ഇല്ല എന്നതാണ് കാരണം. അതുകൊണ്ടു തന്നെ ഈരണ്ടു നോവലുകളിലെയും പരിമിതി ദേശരാഷ്ട്രത്തിനകത്തെ ദലിതരുടെ ബഹിഷ്കരണകർതൃത്വവുമായി സൂക്ഷ്മമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നുവെന്ന് നിരീക്ഷിക്കാനാവും.

പ്രദീപൻ പാമ്പിരിക്കുന്ന് (ഡോ), ദലിത് സൗന്ദര്യശാസ്ത്രം, ഡി.സി.ബുക്സ്, കോട്ടയം, 2011, പുറം. 12.

- 8. ബാബുരാജ് കെ.കെ.യുടെ മറ്റൊരു ജീവിതം സാധ്യമാണ്, സബ്ജക്ട് ലാംഗ്വേജ് പ്രസ്സ്, കോട്ടയം, 2008, ഇരുട്ടിലെ കണ്ണാടി, ഡി.സി.ബുക്സ് കോട്ടയം, 2011.

സലീം കുമാർ, കെ.എം. എഴുതിയ നെഗ്രിറ്റഡ്, ഡി.സി.ബി. കോട്ടയം, 2011. കെ.കെ.കൊച്ചിന്റെ ബുദ്ധനിലേക്കുള്ള ദൂരം, ഡി.സി. ബുക്സ്, കോട്ടയം, 2011. എന്നീ പുസ്തകങ്ങൾ ഈ വഴിക്കുള്ള അന്വേഷണങ്ങളാണ്.

- 9. ഗോവിന്ദപ്പിള്ള പി., ദളിതരാഷ്ട്രീയം: രാഷ്ട്രീയപ്രസക്തിയും തിരിച്ചടിയും. സാഹിത്യലോകം, വാല്യം, 1998 (എഡി) ദാമോദരൻ കാളിയത്ത്, കേരള സാഹിത്യ അക്കാദമി, പുറം-14.

- 10. ഡോ.ബി.ആർ.അംബേദ്കർ, ബുദ്ധനോ കാൾ മാർക്സോ, കേരള ഭാഷാ ഇൻസ്റ്റിറ്റ്യൂട്ട്, തിരുവനന്തപുരം, വാല്യം 7, 1999, പുറം. 355-382.

- 11. കാഞ്ച ഇളയയുടെ ഹിന്ദു അനന്തര ഇന്ത്യ, 2019, (വിവ) പി.വി.സത്യൻ, പ്രോഗ്രസ് ബുക്സ്, കോഴിക്കോട്. ഞാൻ എന്തുകൊണ്ട് ഒരു ഹിന്ദുവല്ല, (വിവ) എസ്.സഞ്ജീവ്, 1996, ഡി.സി.ബുക്സ്, കോട്ടയം. കെ.കെ.കൊച്ചിന്റെ ദലിത് നേർക്കാഴ്ചകൾ, 2013, റെയ്വൻ പബ്ലിക്കേഷൻസ്, തിരുവനന്തപുരം.

ദലിതൻ, 2019, ഡി.സി.ബുക്സ്, കോട്ടയം.

എം.കുഞ്ഞാമന്റെ എതിർ 2020, ഡി.സി.ബുക്സ് കോട്ടയം എന്നീ കൃതികൾ ദലിത് അനുഭവങ്ങളെ മുൻനിർത്തിയുള്ള സൈദ്ധാന്തികാനുഷ്ഠാനങ്ങളാകുന്നതോടൊപ്പം തങ്ങൾ പിന്നിട്ട സാംസ്കാരികപരിസരത്തെ വർത്തമാനകാല ജീവിതാവബോധത്തിന്റെ ഇച്ഛാശക്തിയാൽ അടയാളപ്പെടുത്താനുള്ള ശ്രമം കൂടിയാണ്.

# തൊഴിലും സ്ത്രീമുന്നേറ്റങ്ങളും

ഡോ. സോണിയ ഇ പ

അസി. പ്രൊഫസർ

ഗവ ആർട്സ് & സയൻസ് കോളേജ് കാലിക്കറ്റ്

തൊഴിലിനെ മുൻനിർത്തിയുള്ള ലിംഗഭേദ പഠനങ്ങൾ കുറഞ്ഞു വരുന്ന വർത്തമാന സാഹചര്യത്തിൽ 'Women In Labour Process Protection relations and Social Change' എന്ന ശ്രീവിദ്യ വി യുടെ പുസ്തകത്തിന് ഏറെ പ്രസക്തിയുണ്ട്. ഉൽപ്പാദനബന്ധങ്ങളുടെയും സാമൂഹ്യമാറ്റങ്ങളുടെയും പശ്ചാത്തലത്തിൽ വടക്കേമലബാറിലെ സ്ത്രീമുന്നേറ്റങ്ങളെ അടിസ്ഥാനമാക്കിയുള്ള പഠനമാണിത്. സ്ത്രീവാദപഠനങ്ങളിൽ നിന്ന് പാടെ കുടിയിറക്കപ്പെടുന്ന ഒരു സംവർഗമാണ് അധാനം. സാമൂഹ്യാധാനം/ഗാർഹികാധാനം എന്ന ദ്വന്ദ്വത്തിനകത്തുനിന്നുകൊണ്ട് തൊഴിൽ എന്ന സങ്കല്പനത്തെ പ്രശ്നവൽക്കരിക്കുന്ന രീതി ശാസ്ത്രമാണ് ഈ പഠനം മുന്നോട്ടുവെക്കുന്നത്. സുഘടിതമായ സൈദ്ധാന്തിക അടിത്തറയോടുകൂടിയതെന്നതാണ് ഫീൽഡിൽനിന്ന് ലഭിച്ച വിവരങ്ങൾ ശ്രീവിദ്യ വിശകലനം ചെയ്യുന്നത്.

ഡോ മാളവികബിനി എന്ന യുവചരിത്രകാരി ഒരു പ്രഭാഷണത്തിനിടയിൽ അവരുടെ ക്ലാസ്സ്മുറി അനുഭവം പങ്കുവെക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. പ്രൊഫസർ കുങ്കുറോയ് അവരുടെ ക്ലാസ്സുകളിൽ നിരന്തരം സിലബസിൽ ഇല്ലാത്ത ചരിത്രത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് പറയുമായിരുന്നു എന്ന കാര്യമാണ് മാളവിക എടുത്തു പറയുന്നത്. കളിമൺപാത്രനിർമ്മാണത്തിൽ ഏർപ്പെട്ടവരുടെ ചരിത്രവും വീട്ടുജോലിക്കാരികളുടെ ചരിത്രവുമൊന്നും നമ്മൾ പഠിക്കുന്നില്ല. സിലബസിലില്ലാത്തതും ചരിത്രപുസ്തകങ്ങളിലില്ലാത്തതുമായ ചരിത്രം അന്വേഷിക്കാനുള്ള പ്രേരണ ആ ക്ലാസ്സുകളാണ് നൽകിയതെന്ന് മാളവികബിനി സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. അദ്യശ്യമായതിനെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള ആലോചനയിലേക്ക് തന്നെ നയിച്ച അധ്യാപികയുടെ ചരിത്രദൗത്യത്തെയാണ് ഒരു വിദ്യാർത്ഥിനി ഇവിടെ തിരിച്ചറിയുന്നത്. സ്ത്രീകളുടെ തൊഴിൽ പങ്കാളിത്തം എന്നും അദ്യശ്യവൽക്കരിക്കപ്പെട്ട ഒരു മേഖലയാണ് എന്നു പറഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ടാണ് വി ശ്രീവിദ്യ തന്റെ പുസ്തകം ആരംഭിക്കുന്നത്. കേരളത്തിലെ ചരിത്രപഠനത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം ഇതൊരു പുതിയ കാൽവെപ്പായിത്തീരുന്നു. ജാതിഭേദം, സാമൂഹ്യനിയമങ്ങൾ എന്നിവയെല്ലാം സ്ത്രീകളുടെ തൊഴിൽ പങ്കാളിത്തത്തെ പരിമിതപ്പെടുത്തിയിരുന്നു. കാർഷിക മേഖലയിലെ സ്ത്രീകളുടെ തൊഴിൽ പങ്കാളിത്തത്തെ മുൻനിർത്തി മാത്രമേ



കാർഷികസമരങ്ങളിലെ സ്ത്രീകളുടെ പങ്കാളിത്തത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് വിശകലനം ചെയ്യാൻ കഴിയും. സമ്പ്രദായികചരിത്ര രചനാരീതിയുടെ ഉപാദാനങ്ങൾ ഇത്തരമൊരു പഠനത്തിന് മതിയാവില്ലെന്ന് ചരിത്രകാരി തിരിച്ചറിയുന്നു. അതുകൊണ്ടുതന്നെ പുരാതനഘോരങ്ങളോടൊപ്പം സർവ്വേ, അഭിമുഖങ്ങൾ, മറ്റ് പല രീതിയിലുള്ള സാക്ഷ്യങ്ങൾ എന്നിവയെല്ലാം ഇതിൽ ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നു. വാമൊഴിയായി ലഭിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള സാഹിത്യരചനകളും ഈ പഠനത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം വളരെ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ടതാണ്. സാമൂഹ്യശാസ്ത്ര പഠനത്തിന്റെയും നരവംശശാസ്ത്ര പഠനത്തിന്റെയും രീതിശാസ്ത്രങ്ങൾ ഈ പഠനത്തെ സഹായിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടെന്ന് ചരിത്രകാരി സാക്ഷ്യപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു.

1997-98 ആരംഭിച്ച ജനകീയാസൂത്രണത്തിന്റെ വികസനരേഖകൾ, സഹകരണ ബാങ്ക് രേഖകൾ, മറ്റു നോട്ടീസുകൾ എല്ലാം തന്നെ പഠനവശ്യത്തിനായി ശേഖരിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. മൂന്നു പേരെയെങ്കിലും ഇതിനായി ഇന്റർവ്യൂ ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഭൂരിപക്ഷവും സ്ത്രീകളാണ്. അഭിമുഖം നടത്തിയ ഇടങ്ങൾ പോലും ഈ പഠനത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം വളരെ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ടതാണ്. അവരവരുടെ വീടുകൾ, തൊഴിൽസ്ഥലങ്ങൾ, ക്ലബ്ബുകൾ, ലോക്കൽ ലൈബ്രറികൾ, നെൽപ്പാടങ്ങൾ ഇങ്ങനെയുള്ള ഇടങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നാണ് ഇന്റർവ്യൂ നടത്തിയത്. പത്രങ്ങൾ, നിവേദനങ്ങൾ, രഹസ്യസ്വഭാവമുള്ള ഔദ്യോഗിക രേഖകൾ എന്നിവയെല്ലാം പഠനത്തിനായി ഉപയോഗിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. സാമ്പ്രദായികമായ ദത്തങ്ങളുടെ നിലവറകളിൽ കുടുങ്ങിപ്പോകാതിരിക്കാനുള്ള ജാഗ്രത ശ്രീവിദ്യ പ്രകടിപ്പിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്.

ഒന്നാം അധ്യായത്തിൽ തൊഴിൽ, അധ്വാനം എന്നീ സങ്കല്പങ്ങളെ വിശകലനം ചെയ്യുന്നു. തൊഴിലിനെക്കുറിച്ചും അധ്വാനത്തെക്കുറിച്ചുമുള്ള മാർക്സിന്റെയും എംഗൽസിന്റെയും രചനകളിലൂടെത്തന്നെയാണ് ഈ പഠനം അതിന്റെ സൈദ്ധാന്തകാടിത്തറ പണിയുന്നത്. മാർക്സിൽനിന്നും എംഗൽസിൽനിന്നും മുന്നോട്ടുപോയ ഭൗതികവാദമെമിനിസ്റ്റുകളെക്കുറിച്ച് ഈ പഠനം ഉൾക്കൊണ്ടിട്ടുണ്ട്. സ്ത്രീകളുടെ അധ്വാനത്തെയാണ് ഇവർ സവിശേഷമായി പഠിക്കുന്നത്. ഗാർഹികാധ്വാനം, സാമൂഹ്യാധ്വാനം എന്നീ സങ്കല്പങ്ങളെ മുൻനിർത്തിയാണ് പ്രധാനമായും ഇത്തരം പഠനങ്ങൾ നടന്നിട്ടുള്ളത്. ചരക്കുകളുടെ ഉപയോഗമൂല്യവും വിനിയമമൂല്യവും പരിഗണിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് ഗാർഹികാധ്വാനത്തെ വിശകലനം ചെയ്യാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുന്നു.

ഗാർഹികാധ്വാനത്തിന് ചരിത്രപരമായുണ്ടാകുന്ന മാറ്റത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് ഇവിടെ പരിഗണിക്കുന്നു. വാലി സീകൊമ്പിന്റെ ഈ മേഖലയിലെ പഠനങ്ങൾ ഈ അധ്യായത്തിൽ ക്രോഡീകരിച്ചുവരുത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. സൈദ്ധാന്തിക വ്യക്തത വരുത്തുന്നതിന് സഹായിക്കുന്നു. ഉൽപ്പാദനരീതികളും കുടുംബ

തൊഴിലും സ്ത്രീമുന്നേറ്റങ്ങളും

രൂപങ്ങളുടെ വളർച്ചയും തമ്മിൽ വലിയ ബന്ധമുണ്ട്. തൊഴിൽശക്തി എന്നത് പരിഗണിക്കുമ്പോഴാണ് അത് കൂടുംബത്തെക്കൂടി പരിഗണിക്കുന്ന തായിത്തീരുന്നത്. ഗാർഹികതയും കൂടുംബവും കൂടുംബബന്ധങ്ങളുമാണ് എല്ലാ സമൂഹത്തിലും തൊഴിൽ ശക്തിയുടെ ഉൽപ്പാദനം നടത്തുന്നത്. മുതലാളിത്തസമൂഹത്തിൽ സ്ത്രീകളുടെ ഇത്തരം അധ്വാനം ഇരട്ടിയായി ത്തീരുന്നു. മാർഗ്ഗരറ്റ് മീഡ് ലിംഗപരമായ തൊഴിൽവിഭജനത്തിൽ നിലനിൽ ക്കുന്ന സ്വാഭാവികമായധാരണകളെക്കുറിച്ച് സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. സ്ത്രീകളുടെ തൊഴിലിനെ സവിശേഷമായി മനസ്സിലാക്കാൻ തുടങ്ങിയതോടെ ഇരട്ടവ്യവസ്ഥാസിദ്ധാന്തം രൂപപ്പെട്ടുവന്നു. ക്ലാസ്സിക്കൽ മാർക്സിസ്റ്റ് ദർശനങ്ങളെ, സ്ത്രീകളുടെ സവിശേഷപ്രശ്നത്തെ മുൻനിർത്തി സമീപിച്ച ചിന്തകരിൽ പ്രധാനിയാണ് ജൂലിയറ്റ് മിച്ചൽ. പ്രത്യുൽപാദനം, ലൈംഗികത, സാമൂഹ്യവൽക്കരണം, സാമൂഹ്യാധ്വാനം എന്നിവയെ പരസ്പരം ബന്ധിപ്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ടാണ് പുതിയ അന്വേഷണങ്ങളുണ്ടാകുന്നത്. ജീൻ ഗാർഡിനർ, പോൾ സ്മിത്ത്, ജോൺ ഹാരിസൺ എന്നിവർ സാമൂഹ്യാധ്വാനത്തിൽ ഗാർഹികാധ്വാനം ഉള്ളടങ്ങുന്നതെങ്ങനെ എന്ന് വിശദീകരിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ഗാർഹികാധ്വാനത്തെ മുൻനിർത്തിയുള്ള വാലി സീക്കോമ്പിന്റെ നിരീക്ഷണങ്ങൾ വളരെ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ടതാണെന്ന് ശ്രീവിദ്യ എഴുതുന്നുണ്ട്. സോഷ്യലിസത്തിൽ തൊഴിലിനെ മുൻനിർത്തി നടക്കുന്ന ചില പഠനങ്ങൾ കൂടി ഇതിൽ സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ഇന്ത്യൻ സാഹചര്യത്തിൽ കാർഷിക മേഖലയുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെടുത്തിക്കൊണ്ട് തൊഴിലിനെ പഠിച്ചത് ഉത്സാപട്നായിക്കാണ്. ഇന്ത്യയിലെ കാർഷിക സാമ്പത്തികമേഖല ഒരു സാമ്പത്തിക ഘടകം എന്നതിനേക്കാൾ ഒരു സാമൂഹികവ്യവസ്ഥയാണ്. ഈ മേഖലയിൽ പണിയെടുക്കുന്നവർ മർദ്ദിതജാതിയിൽപ്പെട്ടവരാണ് എന്ന കാര്യം ഉത്സാപട്നായിക് എടുത്തുപറയുന്നു. ഈയൊരു നിരീക്ഷണത്തെ അടിസ്ഥാനമാക്കിയാണ്

വടക്കേ മലബാറിലെ ഉത്പാദന ബന്ധങ്ങളെയും സാമൂഹ്യമാറ്റങ്ങളേയും അടിസ്ഥാനമാക്കി സ്ത്രീകളുടെ തൊഴിൽപ്രക്രിയയെക്കുറിച്ച് പഠിക്കുന്നത്. കാർഷികവ്യവസ്ഥയിലെ തൊഴിൽ വളരെ വ്യത്യസ്തമാണ്. കൂടുംബ വരുമാനത്തെ സഹായിക്കുന്ന ഉപവരുമാനം എന്ന നിലയിലാണ് സ്ത്രീകളുടെ തൊഴിലിനെ പരിഗണിക്കുന്നത്. ഉപവരുമാനം എന്നതിനെക്കുറിച്ച് വളരെ വിശദമായിത്തന്നെ പുസ്തകത്തിൽ പറയുന്നുണ്ട്.

കാർഷികമേഖലയിൽ ജോലിചെയ്യുന്ന സ്ത്രീകൾക്ക് ജോലി സമയമോ നിശ്ചിത കൂലിയോ നിശ്ചിത തൊഴിലിടമോ ഇല്ല. അഭിമുഖങ്ങളിലൂടെ ലഭിച്ച വിവരങ്ങളുടെ അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ അവർ ചെയ്യേണ്ടിവരുന്ന അനുബന്ധ ജോലികളുടെ വിശദവിവരങ്ങൾ ക്രോഡീകരിച്ചു നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. നിർവചിക്കാൻ കഴിയാത്ത വിധം സങ്കീർണ്ണമാണ് കർഷകത്തൊഴി

ലാളി സ്ത്രീയുടെ ജീവിതം. കാർഷിക മേഖലയിലെ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട ജോലി എന്ന് കരുതുന്നതെല്ലാം പുരുഷന്മാരുടെതാണ്. സ്ത്രീകളുടെ ജോലികളെ പൊതുവേ അനുബന്ധജോലികൾ എന്ന രീതിയിലാണ് പരിഗണിക്കുന്നത്. പാചകം, കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങളെ നോക്കൽ, മുതിർന്നവരെ ശുശ്രൂഷിക്കൽ, വളർത്തു മൃഗങ്ങളെ നോക്കൽ, വിറക് ശേഖരണം, മറ്റ് വീട്ടുജോലികൾ എന്നിവയെല്ലാം ചെയ്തതിനുശേഷം ആണ് തൊഴിലാളിയായ ഒരു സ്ത്രീ ജോലിക്ക് പോകുന്നത്. ജന്മിയുടെ വീട്ടിലെ പുറമ്പണികൾ കൂടി ചെയ്തതിന് ശേഷമാണ് അവരുടെ തൊഴിൽസമയം അവസാനിക്കുന്നത്. പറയരും പുലയരും മാണ് പ്രധാനമായും കാർഷിക പണിയെടുത്തിരുന്നത്. കാർഷിക അടിമകളെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള പഠനത്തിൽ ജാതി പ്രധാന സംവർഗമാണെന്ന് ഈ പഠനം ഓർമ്മിപ്പിക്കുന്നു.

ഉൽപാദനത്തിലെ പങ്കാളിത്തത്തെ അടിസ്ഥാനമാക്കിയാണ് സമര മുന്നേറ്റങ്ങളിലെ സ്ത്രീകളുടെ പങ്കാളിത്തമുണ്ടാവുക എന്ന നിരീക്ഷണമാണ് ഈ പഠനം മുന്നോട്ടുവെക്കുന്നത്. ഉൽപാദനപ്രക്രിയയിൽനിന്ന് പുറത്താവുമ്പോൾ സ്ത്രീകൾ വർഗസമരത്തിൽനിന്നും പുറത്താകുന്നതെങ്ങനെ എന്ന് തനികാസർക്കാർ അന്വേഷിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്.

കേരളത്തിലെ കർഷകപ്രസ്ഥാനത്തിന്റെ ചരിത്രപശ്ചാത്തലത്തിൽ നിന്നുകൊണ്ടാണ് സ്ത്രീകളുടെ സമരങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ച് പഠിക്കുന്നത്.

മുഖ്യധാരാചരിത്രം രേഖപ്പെടുത്താതെപോയ സ്ത്രീകളുടെ സമര ചരിത്രത്തിലെ പങ്ക് എടുത്തപറയുന്നുണ്ട് ഈ പഠനം. അധ്യാപികയും ദേശാഭിമാനി ലേഖികയുമായ പി യാശോദ സ്ത്രീകളുടെ സവിശേഷമായ പ്രശ്നങ്ങളിൽ ഇടപെട്ടുകൊണ്ടാണ് നേതൃനിരയിലേക്ക് വരുന്നത്. എ വി ജാനകി, തങ്കമ്മ, കാർത്ത്യായനിയമ്മ, കല്യാണിയമ്മ എന്നിവരെല്ലാം മഹിളാ സംഘത്തിന്റെ പ്രവർത്തകരാണ്. സംഘടനാപ്രവർത്തനത്തിനനുഗുണമായ നാടകരംഗത്തെ കലാകാരികളാണ് കെ ജാനകി, പി നാണി എന്നിവർ. ജാനകി നിരവധി ജാപ്പ് വിരുദ്ധ പരിപാടികളിൽ പങ്കെടുത്തിരുന്നു. എടോത്ത് ജാനകി, ടി ജാനകി എന്നിവർ ചേർന്നാണ് അന്ന് മുദ്രാവാക്യങ്ങൾ എഴുതിയിരുന്നത്. വിളകൊയ്ത്തു സമരം, നെല്ലെടുക്കൽ സമരം, പുല്ലുപനി സമരം തുടങ്ങിയ നിരവധിയായ സമരങ്ങൾ രേഖപ്പെടുത്തിക്കൊണ്ടാണ് ഈ പുസ്തകം സ്ത്രീകളുടെ ചരിത്രം കണ്ടെത്തുന്നത്.

1946 നവംബർ 23ന് നടന്ന പുല്ലുപനി സമരത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുത്ത ഒരു പാട് സമരനായികമാരുടെ പേരുകൾ ഈ പുസ്തകത്തിൽ രേഖപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. വയൽപ്പുറത്ത് കുഞ്ഞാതൈ, എടവന പാർവതി, മരുതിയോട്ട് തമ്പായി, ചീയ്യായി, എം വി ദേവകി, പി കെ കുഞ്ഞാക്കമ്മ, പി കെ ലക്ഷ്മി എന്നിവർ ഈ സമരത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുത്തവരാണ്. കുഞ്ഞാക്കമ്മയാണ് ഈ സമരത്തിന് നേതൃത്വം കൊടുത്തത്. 1947 ജനുവരി 22 ന് കുഞ്ഞാക്കമ്മ

തൊഴിലും സ്ത്രീമുന്നേറ്റങ്ങളും

നേതൃത്വം കൊടുത്ത ഒരു മാർച്ച് ജന്മിയുടെ വീട്ടിലേക്ക് നടന്നു. പോലീസുകാർ നശിപ്പിച്ച പാത്രങ്ങളും പിഞ്ഞാണങ്ങളും കൈയിലെടുത്താണ് ആ ജാഥ നടന്നത്. പോലീസിന്റെ സഹായത്തോടെ ജന്മിമാർ കുഞ്ഞാക്കമ്മയെ തുടർച്ചയായി ഉപദ്രവിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരുന്നു.

ബക്കളത്തുള്ള എ വി ജാനകി എന്ന സ്കൂൾ അധ്യാപിക വിവിധ നാടകങ്ങളിൽ അഭിനയിച്ചുകൊണ്ടാണ് സാംസ്കാരിക രംഗത്ത് സജീവമായത്. പി നാണിയും ഇവരോടൊപ്പം ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. ഇവരൊക്കെ തൊഴിലാളികുടുംബങ്ങളിലെ അംഗങ്ങളായിരുന്നു. തളിപ്പറമ്പിലെ എടോത്ത് ജാനകി നിരവധി ജാപ്പ് വിരുദ്ധ പരിപാടികളിൽ പങ്കെടുത്തിരുന്നു. അതുപോലെ മുദ്രാഗീതങ്ങൾ എഴുതുന്നതിലും സ്ത്രീകൾ പങ്കെടുത്തിരുന്നു. 'വിത്തിട്ടവൻ വിളകൊയ്യും' എന്നതാണ് അന്നത്തെ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട മുദ്രാവാക്യം. വിളകൊയ്ത്തുസമരം, നെല്ലെടുക്കൽ സമരം തുടങ്ങിയ കാർഷിക സമരങ്ങളിലും സ്ത്രീകൾ സജീവമായി പങ്കെടുത്തിരുന്നു.

സമരങ്ങളിൽ പങ്കെടുത്ത പോരാളികളായ സ്ത്രീകളുടെ അനുഭവങ്ങൾ പലപ്പോഴും മുഖ്യധാരാചരിത്രത്തിൽ രേഖപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ടില്ല. അത്തരം വിടവുകളെയാണ് ഈ പുസ്തകം അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുന്നത്. കൊയ്ത്തു സമരം, പുല്ലുപരിസമരം തുടങ്ങിയ സമരങ്ങളിൽ പങ്കെടുത്തവരുടെ അനുഭവങ്ങളാണ് ഇതിൽ രേഖപ്പെടുത്തുന്നത്. 1944 ലെ പുലിയന്നൂർ കൊയ്ത്തു സമരത്തിൽ നൂറുകണക്കിന് സ്ത്രീകൾ പങ്കെടുത്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഇതിൽ പങ്കെടുത്ത മീത്തലൈ പുറയിൽ കുഞ്ഞാതയുടെ അനുഭവം വിവരിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. പോലീസ് അവരുടെ സമരം നിർബന്ധപൂർവ്വം അവസാനിപ്പിച്ചു. എന്നാൽ സ്ത്രീകൾ പിൻവാങ്ങിയില്ല. കുഞ്ഞാതയേയും അമ്പാടിയേയും അറസ്റ്റ് ചെയ്തു ജയിലിലേക്ക് മാറ്റി. എല്ലേരിക്കൊയിത്തിന്റെ അനുഭവം വള്ളിയോട്ട് മാണി പറയുന്നു ദൂരെയുള്ള സ്ഥലങ്ങളിലുള്ള സ്ത്രീകൾപോലും അവിടെയുള്ള വ്യത്യസ്ത വീടുകളിൽ താമസിച്ചാണ് സമരത്തിന് പോയത്. മൂന്ന് മാസം പ്രായമുള്ള കുട്ടിയെ വയലിൽ കിടത്തിയാണ് അതിൽ ഒരു സ്ത്രീ സമരത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നത്. സ്ത്രീകളുടെ നേതൃത്വത്തിലാണ് പുല്ലുപരിസമരം നടക്കുന്നത്. 1946 നവംബർ 23 നാണ് പെരിങ്ങാം പുല്ലുപരി സമരം നടക്കുന്നത്. പിലാക്കോ മീനാക്ഷി, പിലാക്കോ ചീരു എന്നിവർ ഈ സമരത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുത്തിരുന്നു. വയൽപ്പുറത്തു കുഞ്ഞാതൈ, എടവന പാർവതി, മരുതിയോട്ട് തമ്പായി, ചിയ്യായി, എം വി ദേവകി, പി കെ കുഞ്ഞാക്കമ്മ, ചെറിയ, പി കെ ലക്ഷ്മി, ശ്രീദേവി. സമരത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുത്ത നിരവധിയായ പേരുകൾ ഈ രീതിയിൽ പുസ്തകം രേഖപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു. കുഞ്ഞാക്കമ്മയാണ് ഈ സമരത്തിന് നേതൃത്വം കൊടുത്തത്. ജന്മിയുടെ വീട്ടിലേക്ക് മാർച്ച് നടന്നതോടെ പോലീസുകാർ സമരത്തെ നേരിട്ടു. പോലീസുകാർ നശിപ്പിച്ച പാത്രങ്ങളും പിഞ്ഞാണങ്ങളും കൈയിലെടുത്താണ് ആ ജാഥ

നടന്നത് ജന്മി പോലീസിന്റെ സഹായത്തോടെയാണ് സമരത്തെ നേരിട്ടത്. 1946 ലാണ് തോൽവിറക് സമരം കാസറഗോഡ് ജില്ലയിൽ നടക്കുന്നത്. അടുപ്പ് കത്തിക്കാനുള്ള വിറക് കാട്ടിൽനിന്ന് എടുക്കുന്നത് ജന്മികൾ തടയുന്നതിനോടുള്ള പ്രതിഷേധമാണ് ഈ സമരത്തിൽ നിഴലിച്ചത്. കൂട്ടർ പാട്ടിയമ്മയാണ് ഇതിന് നേതൃത്വം നൽകിയത്. പോലീസ് ശാരീരികമായിത്തന്നെ സ്ത്രീകളെ അതിക്രമിച്ചു.

സമരത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നവർക്ക് ഭക്ഷണവും വെള്ളവും നൽകിയാണ് ചില സ്ത്രീകൾ തങ്ങളുടെ രാഷ്ട്രീയ പ്രതിബദ്ധത തെളിയിച്ചത്. രക്തസാക്ഷി അബൂബക്കറിന്റെ ഉമ്മയെ കർഷകസംഘത്തിന്റെ നേതാവായ സുബ്രഹ്മണ്യഷേണായി ഓർക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. സമരക്കാർക്ക് അരിയും വെള്ളവും എത്തിച്ചു നൽകുന്ന പണിയാണ് ആ ഉമ്മ ഏറ്റെടുത്തത്. പുരുഷന്മാർ ഒളിവിൽ പോകുമ്പോൾ അതിന്റെ പീഡനം മുഴുവൻ ഏറ്റുവാങ്ങേണ്ടിവന്നത് സ്ത്രീകളാണ്. സവർണജാതിയിൽപ്പെട്ട സ്ത്രീകൾ കർഷകസംഘത്തിന്റെ പ്രവർത്തനത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുത്തത് നേതാക്കളെ ഒളിവിൽ താമസിപ്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ടാണ്. എ കെ ജി യെപ്പോലുള്ള നേതാക്കൾക്ക് ഒളിത്താവളം ഒരുക്കിയത് ദേവകി അന്തർജനമാണ്.

സാമൂഹ്യ ഉൽപ്പാദനത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കുമ്പോഴാണ് സ്ത്രീകൾ സമരമുന്നേറ്റങ്ങളിൽ സജീവമാകുന്നത്. ഉൽപ്പാദനത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നതാകട്ടെ മർദ്ദിത ജാതിവിഭാഗത്തിൽപ്പെട്ടവരുമാണ്. നെല്ലെടുക്കൽ സമരം, പുള്ളുപറി സമരം, തോൽവിറകുസമരം, കലംകെട്ടുസമരം തുടങ്ങിയ സമരങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ചും അതിലെ സ്ത്രീപങ്കാളിത്തത്തെക്കുറിച്ചുമുള്ള വിലപ്പെട്ട വിവരങ്ങളാണ് ഈ പുസ്തകം മുന്നോട്ടുവെക്കുന്നത്. സ്ത്രീകളുടെ പൊതു പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിലെ വൈവിധ്യത്തെക്കുറിച്ചും ഈ പുസ്തകം ചർച്ച ചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ട്. പകർച്ചവ്യാധിയുടെകാലത്ത് പിടിയരി ശേഖരിച്ചാണ് സ്ത്രീകൾ പൊതുകർത്തൃത്വങ്ങളായത്. അവസാന അധ്യായത്തിൽ കരിവള്ളൂർ ഗ്രാമത്തെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള ഒരു കേസ് സ്റ്റഡി തന്നെ മുന്നോട്ടുവെക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ചരിത്രരചനയെ സഹായിക്കുന്ന വിപുലമായ ഉപാദാനങ്ങൾ എങ്ങനെ പ്രയോജനപ്പെടുത്തണം എന്നതിനൊരു മാതൃകയാണ് ശ്രീവിദ്യയുടെ ഗവേഷണം.

കർഷകസമരങ്ങൾ എന്ന ബ്രഹ്മദാഖ്യാനം മുഖ്യധാരാ ചരിത്രം പരിഗണിച്ചതാണ്. എന്നാൽ അതിലുള്ള വിടവുകളെ കണ്ടെത്തുക എന്നത് വർത്തമാനകാലത്ത് നിർവഹിക്കേണ്ട അനിവാര്യമായൊരു ധൈഷണിക പ്രവർത്തനമാണ്. ഉപദാനങ്ങളുടെ പിൻബലം തീർച്ചയായും ഇതിന് നിർബന്ധമാണ്. എല്ലാ തരത്തിൽപ്പെട്ട ഉപാദാനങ്ങളും ചരിത്രരചനയിൽ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ടതാണ്. ഏതുരീതിയിലുള്ള വിശകലനത്തിനാണ് ഉപാദാനങ്ങൾ ഉപയോഗപ്പെടുത്തുന്നത് എന്ന ചോദ്യം തന്നെയാണ് ചരിത്രരചന

തൊഴിലും സ്ത്രീമുന്നേറ്റങ്ങളും

യിൽ പ്രധാനം എന്ന് ഓർമ്മിപ്പിക്കുന്ന രചനയാണ് വി ശ്രീവിദ്യയുടെ 'Women in labour process.'

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