



1981

Foundations of Kerala Education: An Investigation Into Selected Historical Roots

Kurian Cherian Thottupuram
Loyola University Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Thottupuram, Kurian Cherian, "Foundations of Kerala Education: An Investigation Into Selected Historical Roots" (1981). *Dissertations*. 2018.

https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/2018

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License](#).
Copyright © 1981 Kurian Cherian Thottupuram

304

FOUNDATIONS OF KERALA EDUCATION:
AN INVESTIGATION INTO SELECTED HISTORICAL ROOTS

by

Kurian Cherian Thottupuram

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

April

1981

TO

HIS GRACE THE LATE MAR THOMA DIONYSIUS,
METROPOLITAN OF NIRANAM,

AN EDUCATED MAN AND A GREAT EDUCATOR,

WHO SPENT HIS TOTAL LIFE FOR THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION OF THE CHURCH

THIS DISSERTATION IS HUMBLY DEDICATED.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There is a number of people to whom I owe my gratitude as this work is completed. My thanks are due to all my professors, whose wisdom nurtured my mind and intellect during the past several years of my study, especially to Dr. John M. Wozniak, Director of my doctoral committee who screened the draft of this work and guided me through its various stages; and to Dr. Gerald Gutek, Dean, and Dr. Jasper Valenti, Associate Dean, the School of Education, Loyola University of Chicago, who served on my doctoral committee.

My thanks are also due to the Directors of the Arthur Schmitt Foundation without whose scholarship I could hardly complete my studies. I can not but most deeply appreciate the instrumentality of Dr. Joseph Gagliano, Associate Dean of Loyola's Graduate School in securing the Schmitt funds for my studies. I am also thankful to His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos for his help and encouragement in pursuit of my doctoral studies.

There are two other persons to whom I feel deeply obligated; Sr. Carol Frances Jegen, Ph.D., Head of the Graduate Division of the Mundelein College, and Sr. Ann Carr, Ph.D., Associate Dean of the University of Chicago Divinity School. They gave me a headstart in American graduate education.

The inspiration and encouragement provided by my spiritual fathers, Metropolitans Thomas Mar Timotheos, S.S.T., Givargis Mar Eustathius and Zacharias Mar Dionysius, S.S.T. have only strengthened my commitment to studies. His Grace, the late Mar Thoma Dionysius to whom this dissertation is dedicated, called me to the ministry and wanted to see me in higher studies. To these venerable fathers, I do not owe my thanks, but my filial devotion and loyalty.

Mr. George Thomas, B.Sc., B.T., M.B.A., himself a former high school teacher in Kerala, has rendered me valuable assistance and encouragement. My typists, Ms. Pat Prange and Ms. Victoria Younger have also been invaluable.

My family's support was immeasurable. It is embarrassing to thank them but I extend my deepest appreciation to Grace, Cherian and Kurian for having borne with me and my regular absences from home during the long period of my studies.

VITA

The author, Kurian Cherian Thottupuram, is the youngest son of Mrs. Eliamma C. Thottupuram and the late Mr. Cherian K. Thottupuram. He was born on May 18, 1943 at Cherianad in the District of Alleppey, Kerala, India.

His primary education was obtained at the Government Primary School, Cherianad, middle school education at the Sri Vijayeswari High School, Cherianad and secondary education at the Devaswom High School, Cherianad from where he graduated in 1959.

Upon completing five years of collegiate education he graduated from St. Joseph's Pontifical College of the Lateran University, Alwaye with a major in Philosophy and Classical Studies in 1964. From June, 1964 to December, 1965 he pursued at the St. Joseph's Pontifical Seminary of the Lateran University, Alwaye, his graduate theological studies for the priesthood, which he completed at the Mount Tabor St. Stephen's Monastery, Pathanapuram, India, and was ordained to the subdiaconate on May 27, 1967.

From June, 1967 to May, 1970 he served as private secretary to Metropolitan Mar Thoma Dionysius of Niranam. On December 29, 1969 he married Susan Grace Cherian.

He was later ordained to the diaconate on May 18, 1970 and to the priesthood on May 20, 1970. Thereafter he served as the Office Manager of the Diocese of Niranam along with his pastorate at St. George Church, Edathua until he came to the United States in 1971. From 1966 to 1971 he intermittently taught Latin and Aramaic at Mount Tabor.

In September, 1971 he came to Chicago to pursue his graduate studies at Mundelein College and was awarded the Master of Arts degree in July, 1973. In 1971 he founded St. Thomas Church in Chicago for the Eastern Christians from India and held its pastorate until July, 1980.

In September, 1976 he entered Loyola University of Chicago and was awarded the Master of Education degree in January, 1979.

An author of three books and several articles in Malayalam, Father Thottupuram appears in "A Critical Directory of Contemporary Malayalam Writers", published by Sahityavedi Publications, Kottayam in 1969.

Father Thottupuram has two sons, Cherian, 10 and Kurian, Jr., 6.

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I.	Growth of Population in Kerala.. .. . 12
II.	Literacy Rate in States and Union Territories.. .. . 14
III.	Malabar: Pupils Taking Instruction in Schools, From 1857-1899.. .. . 257
IV.	Malabar: Educational Progress, 1873-1882 ... 261
V.	Cochin: Progress of Literacy, 1891 and 1901.. 268
VI.	Cochin: Progress of Education, 1881-1900.. . 270
VII.	Cochin: Progress of Education; Schools and Scholars, 1901-1931.. .. . 276
VIII.	Travancore: Number of Educational Institutions, 1910-1911.. .. . 296
IX.	Travancore: Progress of Education, Institutions and Scholars; 1911, 1921 and 1930.. .. . 302
X.	Kerala: Progress of Literacy in Percentage 1872 - 1971.. .. . 304
XI.	Kerala: Progress of Education, Pupils in Attendance; 1961 - 1979 394
XII.	Kerala: Progress of Education, Government Expenditure in Education; 1962 - 1979 395
XIII.	Kerala: Progress of Education, Distribution of Schools; 1962 - 1979.. .. . 396

MAP OF KERALA

Since 1956

INDIA

KERALA

KARNATAKA

MALABAR

Calicut •

TAMILNAD

COCHIN

Cranganore •

Cochin •

Alleppey •

TRAVANCORE

ARABIAN SEA

Quilon •

Trivandrum •

Cape Comerin

INDIAN OCEAN



Present Boundary of Kerala



Southern Boundary of Erstwhile Travancore



Northern Boundary of British Malabar

KERALA

Progress of Literacy

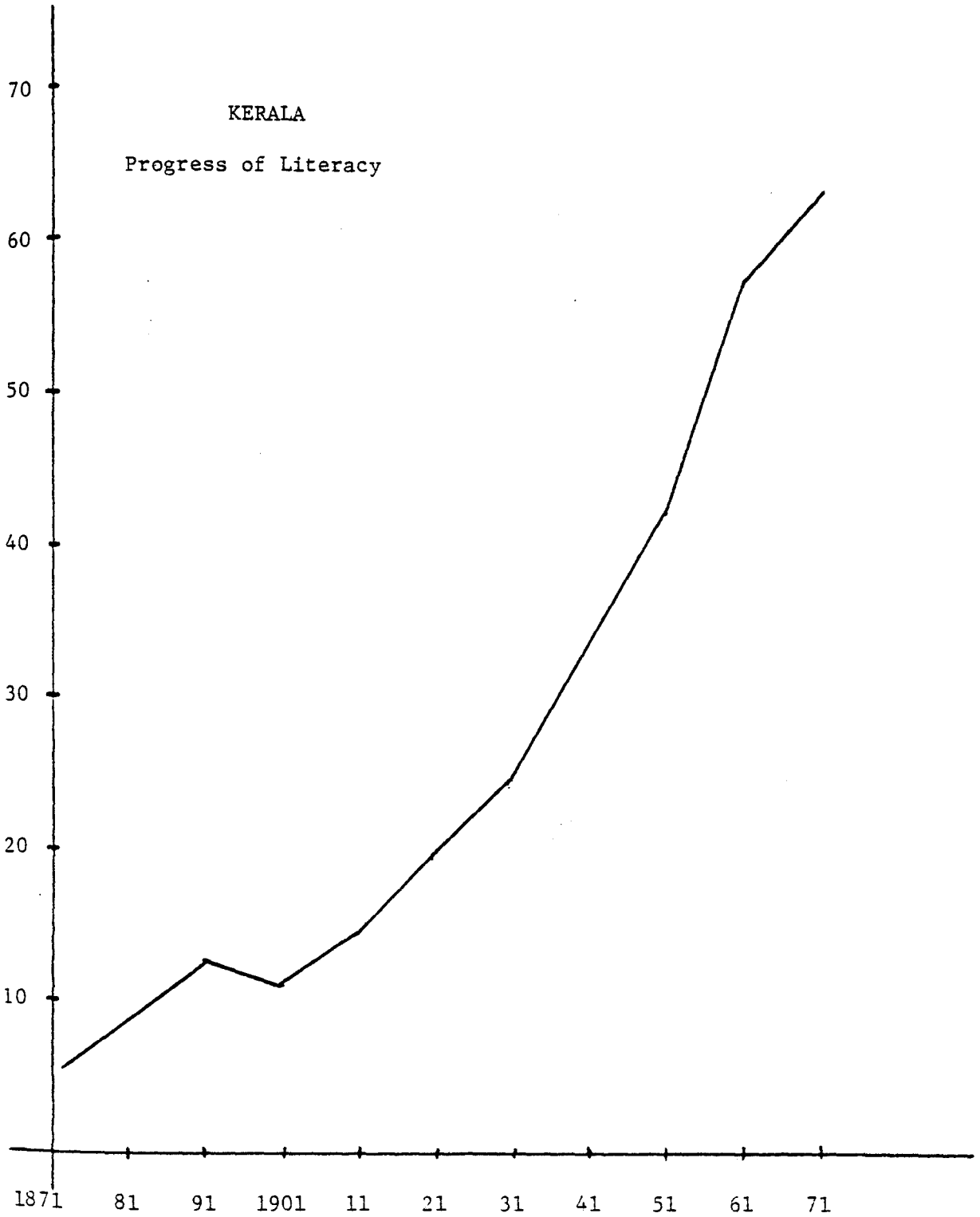


TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
VITA	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vi
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTORY	1
II. GENERAL BACKGROUND	8
III. DEVELOPMENT OF MALAYALAM LANGUAGE	66
IV. AESTHETIC FOUNDATIONS	98
V. INDIGENOUS SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION	138
VI. PRE-BRITISH EUROPEAN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND THEIR SUBSEQUENT INFLUENCES	192
VII. BRITISH EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND MODERN EDUCATION	234
VIII. MODERN EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE	307
IX. EDUCATION SINCE INDEPENDENCE	375
X. CONCLUSION	415
GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY	432

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

A. Importance and Purposes

Kerala is one of the smaller states in the Indian Union. But it is the most literate and educationally advanced state in India. The educated men of Kerala have made their imprints in social and political life of the nation and of countries abroad. How could Kerala, a small state geographically isolated in the southwest corner of India, become prominent in literacy compared to other parts of India? How could a relatively poor agrarian community get itself involved in the process of modern education? To what extent was modern education instrumental to the reconstruction of a very conservative and traditional society? How did the majority of Kerala's non-Christian population adjust to the process of educational modernization, a very unique contribution of western Christianity, and become supporters of it? How did the people of Kerala face the challenges posed by modern education, mainly in the form of social change? How did social change itself become a foundation of contemporary educational development in Kerala? To what degree were modern education and its development responsible for the

evolution of the political awareness in a people who had been contented with monarchy? How did the development of the Malayalam language serve as a platform for the educational aspirations of an ancient society? What was the role of the indigenous systems of education in maintaining education as a social agency?

The importance of this study rests on the answers of these and such other questions. For a social scientist, especially for an educator, answers to these questions are important to understand the foundations of an existing educational edifice. Therefore, this study is an inquiry into the foundations of education in Kerala.

The purposes in preparing this work are mainly two-fold:

The first is to investigate the relevant historical roots of Kerala Education. Education in Kerala is not a recent experience or a new experiment. It has a history of centuries. Some aspects of its indigenous component existed before the Christian era. Although specific dates may not be exactly traced for some of the earlier developments, they are treated in like manner but with available dates.

The second purpose is to analyze the identified roots and interpret them as to how they have influenced and moulded the course of education at various stages culminating at the present system of education in Kerala. For example, the

development of Malayalam language explains how an ancient people expressed their educational aspirations. The analysis of the aesthetic elements would explain how they have been conducive to the promotion of educational thriving; and of the indigenous system would elucidate how the rudimentary education in language and arithmetic became popular and how intellectual education consisting of Sanskrit scholarship was fostered. The arrival of the Portuguese in Kerala was a turning point in the history of education. Similarly the presence of the British was another innovative experiment in Kerala education. An analytical approach to these two eras is of paramount importance to comprehend clearly the forces behind modern education and the social and political changes thereafter.

This writer finds that no one has so far presented a systematic study of the issues regarding Kerala Education within a totally educational framework. Whatever treatment exists in this area is fragmentary, and not treated in a fully educational perspective, but in historical and sociological contexts. In other words, there seems to exist a vacuum of well-developed literature in the history and evolution of education in Kerala. This also has been a consideration for the writer to justify his purposes for this attempt.

B. Definitions

Kerala as a political entity came into being in 1956. However, in this study Kerala comprises all the three regions that existed as separate princely states under the Rajah of Cochin, the Maharajah of Travancore and the Zamorin of Calicut. The Zamorin became totally powerless with the Mysorean invasions; and thereafter with the Treaty of Seringapattam between the ruler of Mysore and the British, all of Malabar (northern Kerala) fell under the supremacy of the latter. As will be seen Cochin and Travancore also accepted British supremacy at the turn of the eighteenth century but remained vassals to the British.

In less than two years after Independence, Travancore and Cochin were united and the State of Travancore-Cochin was formed on July 1, 1949. When Indian states were reorganized on the basis of language, the Malayalam-speaking State of Kerala was constituted on November 1, 1956. Thus, the Malabar District of the Madras State was added to the former State of Travancore-Cochin for the formation of Kerala, but it lost to the State of Madras (Tamilnad) four of the southern Taluks and part of the Taluk of Shenkottah located on the eastern strip of the Sahya mountain, which had belonged to Travancore-Cochin, as they were Tamil-speaking regions.

This study includes these regions as they were part of the political unity of the erstwhile Travancore. In fact, the educational activities of the London Mission Society were concentrated at Nagarcoil, a town in the present Tamilnad, but formerly part of Travancore.

Foundations of Education were broadly defined as the basis on which the structure of a system of education is built. Any source of inspiration to the sprouting, development and sustaining of education can be called its foundation; and there are several foundations of education. They are generally categorized as behavioral and cultural foundations. Behavioral foundations are the socio-psychological dimensions of education; and cultural foundations explain the philosophical, historical, religious, aesthetic, sociological and other such bases and supports of education. This study concerns the cultural foundations of education with primary focus on the history and evolution of educational development in Kerala. It is in this perspective that the development of the Malayalam language, the aesthetic components, the indigenous systems, and the Portuguese and British educational activities are treated.

C. Sources and Procedure

The writer's sources are basically historical documents available in both primary and secondary forms. His

primary sources consist of governmental documents such as Censuses, Reports, Manuals and the like, published either directly by the government or by their agents. Secondary sources were predominantly historical and sociological. When he conducted research in Kerala in March and April of 1979, the writer had access to some source materials in addition to information gathered through interviews.

Most of the primary sources were available at the South Asian Department of Regenstein Library of the University of Chicago, where the major part of this work was prepared. Besides the Loyola University of Chicago Libraries, the Chicago Public Library also aided the writer in securing rare books and documents unavailable in the Chicago area.

The method of approach to the issues is historico-descriptive, heavily depending on documentary evidence. However, it also embraces perspectives in language development, social stratification, aesthetics and so on, which are of cultural importance.

D. Scope and Limitations

Foundations of Kerala Education in itself is a topic of extensive study. In this work all of them are not studied in detail. The investigation is limited to some selected historical roots which the witer has considered as constructive forces of the development of Kerala Education. The

author has identified those roots in the development of the Malayalam language, the aesthetic culture, indigenous systems of education, and the Portuguese and British influences. Although social change is treated as a result of modern education, its function as a basis of further development of education is also emphasized. All these major areas generally embrace a wider time span. For example, the development of ancient Indian education had started several centuries before Christ. Vedism itself is considered a product of a period between 1500 and 1000 B.C. As our primary focus is on selected roots, the dissertation examines the influences of education at different times. Towards the end of the dissertation, the time line reaches the twentieth century A.D. This work thus treats individual educational roots in an historical sequence.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL BACKGROUND

A. Introduction

The origin of the name Kerala has been interpreted in several ways. One of them etymologically defines Kerala as the land of coconut palms, (Nali) kera = coconut, and alam = land. Bishop Caldwell contends that Kerala is the Sanskrit name for this country, and it could be possible that the country got its name from the kera (coconut) trees which are peculiar to the land or that this tree got the name kera because it was abundantly growing in Kerala which was the name given by Sanskrit authors.¹

Pliny refers to its ruler as Celobotras and Ptolemy calls him Kerobothros. The Edict of Asoka refers to him as Keralaputra when it talks about the southern territories:

Everywhere in the dominions of King Priyadarsi, as well as in the border territories of the Cholas, the Pandyas, the Satiyaputra, the Keralaputra (all in the southern tip of the Indian Peninsula), the Ceylonese, the Yona King named Antiochos, and those kings who are neighbors of Antiochos--everywhere provision has been

¹R. Caldwell, A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages (London: Keagan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Col Ltd., 1913, reprint ed. New Delhi: Oriental Books, 1974), pp. 17, 18.

made for two kinds of medical treatment, treatment for men and for animals.²

It is likely that these references must have led several authors to think that Kerala is a Sanskrit word. However this interpretation has become obsolete. Kerala is now understood as a derivation of Cherala. Kerala was ruled in ancient times by the Chera kings and the land was called Chera kingdom. Linguistically it is easy for the consonant che to become ke. Hence, the name derives from indigenous Dravidian sound.

Kerala is also referred to as Malayalam and Malabar. Malaya, meaning a range of mountains, is a Sanskritized form of the Dravidian word Mala, designating a mountain. Alam or arma, according to Caldwell, is a verbal derivative of the root al, meaning to possess, to use, or to rule. Arma is softened from alma and the "r" sound again softened to "y" to make it Malayayma, meaning the region possessed by mountain, i.e., the mountain region. And finally, through linguistic process, Malayayma became Malayalam.

Kerala has been called Malabar, Manibar, Milibar, Melibar, Melibaria, Minubar, Mulibar, Munibar and so on by different authors. However, Malabar was the most common name. Malabar is most probably a combination of the

²N. A. Nikam and Richard McKeon, trans. and ed., The Edicts of Asoka (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1959). p. 64.

Dravidian word, Mala = mountain, and the Arabic barr or Persian bar meaning country. When the Portuguese landed in Calicut, the country was known as Malabar, a name most probably given by the Arabs who had trade relations with this coast for centuries. Thus, Malabar and Malayalam are synonyms for Kerala.

Kerala traditionally stretched from Kasargod to Cape Comerin, but it is now confined within the Malayalam-speaking areas of the extreme southwest coast of India. The present Kerala was formed by the merger of Malayalam-speaking areas of the former Travancore-Cochin state with the Malayalam-speaking Malabar district of the Madras state on November 1, 1956, according to the States Reorganization Act of 1956.³

One of the twenty-two states constituting the Republic of India, Kerala is a smaller state. It has an area of 38,864 square kilometers, which is roughly a little over one percent of the total area of India. Kerala has a population of 24,770,000 persons (1978) which represents 3.9 percent of the total population of India.⁴ This is

³R. Ramakrishnan Nair, Constitutional Experiments in Kerala (Trivandrum: The Kerala Academy of Political Science, 1964), p. 207.

⁴Mammen Varghese, ed., Manorama Yearbook 1980 (Malayalam), (Kottayam: Malayala Manorama Co. Ltd., 1980), p. 563. (The word in parentheses after the name of the work refers to the language in which it is published and will designate the same hereinafter.)

approximately 637 persons per square kilometer. The per capita area of land according to the 1971 census is 0.46 acre and in 1961 it was 0.57 acre. Kerala is, thus, the most thickly populated state in the union; a higher density is registered only by the union territories, such as Delhi (2723), Chandigarh (2254), Lakshadweep (994) and Pondicherry (982). It is observed that this population growth is chiefly due to a reduced death rate in Kerala compared to other states.⁵ We also have to note that there has been a steady process of emigration to other states and countries, especially of the educated, since the dawn of modern education, which only equals that of Gujerat. However, emigration has not been a population reducing force as we can see in Table I.

Because of overpopulation, the economic conditions of the state are less than satisfactory. Only 29.12 percent of the total population earn their livelihood by gainful employment. Over 70 percent of the population depend on earning-members of the family or co-owned family wealth to sustain themselves minimally, which in itself is not a healthy social condition. Therefore education is considered a redeeming factor and parents are eager to educate their children for them to find a job either in Kerala or outside

⁵Ibid., p. 586.

TABLE I

TABLE OF POPULATION GROWTH

Year	Population in Millions	Percentage of increment per year
Beginning of 17th century	3.0	...
1850	4.50	...
1881	5.22	...
1901	7.0	...
1911	7.15	1.18
1921	7.80	.92
1931	9.51	2.19
1941	11.0	1.60
1951	13.55	2.28
1961	16.90	2.48
1971	21.35	2.63

SOURCE: Mammen Varghese, ed., Malayala Manorama Yearbook 1980 (Malayalam) (Kottayam: Malayala Manorama Co. Ltd., 1980), p. 585.

the state after their education. The socio-religious forces of the state have always encouraged education by providing numerous schools through the collegiate level, which not only promote literacy, but also social mobility. The Christian missionaries and communities have played an active role to obtain these ends. Now, other religious groups also are engaged in educational activities. Due to the concerted efforts of the various socio-religious agencies Kerala has attained the highest percentage of literacy among the states of the Indian Union (see Table 2).

However, Kerala is not resourceful enough to absorb its educated population and utilize them for constructing a more productive economy to employ the thousands who complete their education every year. So the economic progress of the state is a slow process despite progress in education. Nevertheless, educational mobility is still considered an indicator of socio-economic mobility and stability.

B. Physiography

The State of Kerala is located on the extreme southwest coast of the Indian Peninsula between $12^{\circ}45'$ and $8^{\circ}20'$ northern latitude and between $77^{\circ}30'$ and $74^{\circ}50'$ eastern longitude. It stretches for about 575 kilometers from Kasargod on the north to Parasala on the South some 50 kilometers north of Cape Comerin. The breadth, which is nar-

TABLE II

LITERACY RATE IN STATES AND
UNION TERRITORIES (1971)

States			
States	%	States	%
Assam	28.15	Madhya Pradesh	22.14
Uttar Pradesh	21.70	Maharashtra	39.18
Orissa	26.18	Meghalaya	29.49
Karnataka	31.52	Rajasthan	19.07
Gujerat	35.79	Sikkim	...
Jemmu-Kashmir	18.58	Hariyana	26.89
Tamilnad	39.46	Himachal Pradesh	31.96
Nagaland	27.40	Manipur	32.80
Panjab	33.67	Tripura	30.98
West Bengal	33.20	Kerala	60.42
Bihar	19.94	Andrapradesh	24.56
Territories			
Arunachal Pradesh	9.34	Pondicherry	43.44
Andaman-Nicobar	43.59	Mizoram	50.9
Goa, Daman, Diu	44.53	Lakshdveep	43.66
Chandigarh	61.24	Delhi	56.61
Dadra-Nagarhaveli	14.86		
	India	29.45	

rowing on both north and south, is 120 kilometers in the middle of the state, rendering the state an average of 50 kilometers in breadth. On the north Kerala is bordered by the State of Karnataka, and on the east and south by the State of Tamilnad. The azure depths of the Arabian Sea protect the state from the west. The Sahya Mountains, an extension of the Western Ghats, serve the state as a huge fortress, which geographically separates Kerala from Karnataka and Tamilnad.

Kerala is physically divided into three regions:

(1) The Highlands: They slope down from the Western Ghats with an average height of 3000 feet above sea level. Some peaks rise over 6000 feet in height, the highest peak, Anamala, being 8841 feet high. Major plantations of tea, coffee, rubber, cardamom and the like are maintained in this area. All forest lands of the state, one fourth of the state's land, are on this elevated region. Kerala's forests are a major revenue for the state. Population is thin in this region with 100 people per square kilometer in some areas. Most of them are plantation workers. There are also a few passes going through the mountains to the border states permitting commercial and passenger transportation by roads and railways.

(2) The Midlands: This region is made up of beautiful hills and attractive valleys stretching between the

Highlands and the Lowlands. This is the Kerala farmer's paradise where they cultivate coconut and arecanut trees, rice, banana, ginger, pepper, tapioca, sugar cane and different varieties of vegetables. The population in some districts is 700 per square kilometer in this area.

(3) The Lowlands: This is the coastal strip of Kerala which is made up of river deltas, backwaters and seashores. Coconut trees are plentifully grown in this region, and hence the coir industry is rapidly progressing as a commercial enterprise and business. Fishing is another booming industry in this region. The backwaters of Kerala which attract several tourists every year are pleasant in their natural scenery and an economically valuable feature of the state. They are made up several lakes and sea inlets. The lake area covers about 666 square kilometers. These lowlands are very fertile for rice farming and they yield a major portion of Kerala's rice. One of the major lakes is Lake Vempanad, comprising an area of 80 square miles. Many of the rivers in Kerala fall into these lakes.

Because of the water transportation and higher population density in these areas, this part of Kerala is called the Venice of the East. Certain areas in this region have 1,600 persons per square kilometer. There are even families who live in boats and they earn their living by boats. A navigable canal stretches from far north Tirur to the south

as far as Trivandrum for about 228 miles.

Being on the extreme southwest coast and receiving a full force of monsoons, the state has a heavy rainfall; more than 83 inches a year. Some parts of the Highlands get 200 inches of rain. Kerala receives two monsoons, southwest monsoon and northeast monsoon, June through September and September through November. In fact, all the rivers in Kerala are monsoon-fed and therefore in the summer, March through May, most of them turn rivulets, especially in the Midland and Highland regions, drying most of the country wells which are the water fountains for the average household. During the monsoon season, flooding is a common occurrence in Kerala, despite several dams and flood control devices, destroying paddy fields and other crops.

Besides making the land fertile and irrigating a major portion of cultivable land, these rivers are a natural blessing to the state by generating electricity for the state and for certain areas of the neighboring states. The total quantity of electrical power produced in the state in the year 1977-78 was 1011.5 mega watt. Kerala's electrical generators are all powered by river water, thus providing the state with cheap and clean electricity. There are altogether forty-four rivers with an output of 86 billion cubic meters of water. All but three rivers flow into the Arabian Sea.

C. Climate

Kerala enjoys a moderate healthy climate with no extremes. The average temperature is 75°- 85 F. However, during the summer, in the Lowland and Midland regions the temperature will shoot up to 100° or over with a considerable amount of humidity, and in the Highland areas it will be comfortably cooler. Since Kerala is not far from the equator, little difference is observed during changes of seasons, although in December and January, the winter months, the nights are chilly, which could be felt especially in the elevated areas of the Highlands.

D. Economy

Even though Kerala is the leading state in literacy among the states of the Union, it is economically backward.

1. Agriculture and Plantations. The chief economic contributor is agriculture. Due to historical and climatic factors, Kerala is growing more commercial crops than food crops. As a result, there is a widespread scarcity in food commodities. There is insufficient rice, which is the staple food of the people.

Kerala produces 90 percent of Indian natural rubber, 60 percent of arecanut, 60 percent of cardamom, 70 percent of coconut, 70 percent of pepper, 80 percent of tapioca and 100 percent of lemon grass oil. The production of bananas

and ginger is wholly monopolized by the state. It also produces enough coffee and tea for foreign export.

There was a marked increase in production of rice in the year 1977-78 although it was still not enough to feed the people. Rice is supplemented by tapioca as a staple food. Through the efforts of various governmental agencies, different hybrid varieties of rice seeds and tapioca stems have been supplied to farmers for the last couple of decades, and consequently staple food scarcity has become less and less intense. Yet the state has to depend on other states for rice to feed its people.

As we have noticed earlier, one-fourth of Kerala land is forest, i.e., 9,345 square kilometers (1977-78). The present exploitable forest area is 77 percent. About 80 percent of the forest is government owned. Various types of timber, elephants, ivory, etc. are the major sources of forest income. In 1977-78, the forest contributed Rs. 318.6 million (approximately \$42.5 million) to the state treasury. In view of Kerala's economy, this is a major revenue.

Among the plantation crops, which control a substantial portion of economy, rubber, cardamon, tea and coffee are the chief produce. Rubber plantation industries are progressing remarkably, because there is sufficient impetus given to farmers by providing reasonably higher prices for rubber and by granting loans either to improve the existing

plantations or to start new plantations.

Tea once was one of the major plantation crops. However, the present trend is such that the government and the farmers have to work together for increased production.

Kerala cultivates 24 percent of India's coffee, while Karnataka produces 60 percent, which is the highest percentage in the nation.

Kerala also produces 60 percent of India's cardamom. The higher price of cardamom is strong incentive for farmers to invest their money and time in farming cardamom.

2. Fisheries and Animal Husbandry. Kerala has only 7 percent of the Indian seashore; however, it is a maritime leader accounting for 35 percent of the marine fish production and 58 percent of the foreign exchange earnings of the nation from such products. In 1977-78 the aggregate fish production was 0.37 million tons.

Animal husbandry is one of the weakest areas of Kerala's economy. This sector contributes only 1.5 percent of the regional income of the state. Cattle breeding and raising are still practically primitive. The Kerala cattle do not provide sufficient good quality beef or milk. In 1977 the per capita availability of milk was 79 grams when the daily nutritional requirement was 210 grams. But the

Indo-Swiss project in collaboration with the Kerala Live Stock Development and Milk Marketing Board is in the process of developing high yielding fodder varieties in some districts. However, the state is progressing remarkably in poultry products.

3. Mineral Wealth. Kerala's mineral wealth consists of ilmenite, zircon, monozite, sillimanite and so on, on the sea coast. Most of these raw materials are basic for several industries. There are also deposits of bauxite, iron and graphite; but there are major obstacles in the way of economically exploiting them.

Due to the required type of sand available in many parts of the seashore, Kerala has several glass industries. There are also many tile manufacturing industries on the west coast.

4. Industries. Although endowed with several favorable conditions, such as the vast forest, large resources of minerals of industrial importance, cheap and clean electricity, and scientifically educated manpower for modern industry, Kerala has not sufficiently utilized them to the fullest extent; and therefore the state is still industrially backward. As the economic system does not encourage industrial entrepreneurs to invest their capital in large industries, the state and central governments will have to mobilize their efforts toward industrialization.

Despite the state's setback in establishing more major industries, the government is trying to assist investors in providing financial backing and technical assistance, especially in small industries. At present (1977) there are 7,725 working factories in Kerala and there are 285,586 employees working in them.

There are some traditional industries peculiar to Kerala, such as the handloom, cashew shelling and processing factories and the coir industries. According to a survey held in May, 1973, there are 75,057 handlooms in the state offering employment opportunities for 150,000 persons. There are 258 cashew factories in Kerala, giving 125,000 jobs; 90 percent of which go to women. The ready availability of coconut husks is a boon to coir industry. The British started the first coir factories. Unable to compete with the European mechanized coir industry which market well-finished and cheaper coir products, the Kerala coir industries, which totally depend on human labor to protect the people's jobs, are seriously threatened.⁶

5. Overseas Employment. In the last decade, the number of young men and women seeking employment outside

⁶K.M. Mathew, ed., Manorama Yearbook 1980 (English) (Kottayam: Malayala Manorama Co. Ltd., 1980), pp. 727, 728.

India has increased phenomenally. Educated men and women imigrated to Australia and western countries like the United States, Canada, Britain and Germany. Most of the immigrants in the United States and Canada are likely to settle down in those countries due to favorable immigration laws, and economic policies which encourage them to invest the money earned by their hard work in those countries.

It is estimated that there are about 307,500 Keralites working in the Arabian Gulf regions.⁷ These Gulf Keralites and others who would like to settle down in Kerala send home about \$800 million which is more than 25 percent of the gross income of the State of Kerala. In other words, there is a huge amount of money flowing into the state. It is reported that this money is not invested for industrial development of the state. The bulk of this money is used for building fancy houses and buying sparingly available land, which, of course in Kerala, is not any way economically productive. So far, the government of Kerala has not established economic policies that stimulate people to invest this money in industries or businesses which would create jobs and thus ameliorate present economic conditions.

⁷ V.K. Madhavan Kutty, "Through the Gulf Countries" in Kerala Digest (Malayalam Magazine) Vol. II (Bronx, N.Y.: No. 7, 1980), p. 16.

In general, the economic outlook of Kerala is very bleak. With a very large population disproportionate to the size of the land and with 70 percent of that population depending on 30 percent employed people for their livelihood, there is very little hope for the state to do away with its economic ills. According to Varghese,

Because of industrial backwardness, (the citizens) have to depend on agriculture for their livelihood. However, as a result of the impact of reduction of the per capita share of land, the agricultural sector becomes unable to offer opportunities of employment. At the same time the third sector of commerce, trade and service, which does not make substantial contributions to production, grows rampant. Industrial sector stays inactive.⁸

This is the true economic picture of Kerala. With a per capita income of \$130.00 (1976-77) and with a very large unemployed population, the state with the help of the Central Government will have to launch some serious planning before the restless masses, out of frustration, reach out for non-democratic means of solving their socio-economic conditions. Prudent educational planning is the first step toward economic planning.

D. The Geological Origin of Kerala

1. The Legendary Origin. Often Kerala had a tradition of attributing historicity to mythology. Such is the case with the legendary origin of Kerala. In the elementary

⁸Varghese, Manorama Yearbook 1980, p. 13.

grades of school, this legend has been taught as part of the history of Kerala.

This legend gives historical credence to Keralolpatti.⁹ According to this mythology, Parasurama created the land of Kerala. Parasurama, a Brahman, had to kill his mother, Renuka, under obedience to his father, Jamadagni Rshi, when the latter had doubts about the chastity of his wife. However, his father brought her back to life by his ascetic supernatural powers on his son's request.

After spending a few years with his grandfather for his studies, being struck by the remorse of killing his own mother, Parasurama went to the Himalayas for ascetic practices and penance, and during that period, the Lord Siva presented him with a divine weapon, a Parasu (axe). Henceforth he took the name of Parasurama (Rama with the axe). Upon returning home after his ascetic exercises, he found his home plundered and his parents and brothers killed by hostile Kshatrias. Enraged by the atrocities of the Kshatrias he declared an all-out war against them. He killed all of them with his axe in twenty-one successive wars and conquered all their dominions.

He was again afflicted, now of Virahatya (killing of crowned princes). In a council of Rshis he begged for

⁹A book presumably written by a Brahman and later published by the Basel Mission Press, Mangalore in 1874.

remission of sins and requested ways of reparation and expiation. Upon the council's advice, he donated all the land he conquered to the Brahmans and he retreated to the Western Ghats where he again did severe penance and spiritual exercises. He was permitted by Bhumi Devi (Goddess of Earth) to claim as his own as much land as could be covered by hurling his axe from Gokarnam into the South. He did it and the axe fell where Cape Comerin (Kanyakumari) is now, and the waters of the sea in between receded to make that area a dry land. Upon the request of Parasurama, the Lord Siva called this land Kerala in honor of the marriage of the Sea-King's daughter to Keralan, the son of Jayanta.

The new land was not habitable as it was still quaking. So he conducted a sacrifice to stop the quaking. After it was found habitable he brought colonies of Brahmans from the banks of the rivers Kishna, Godavari, Narmada and Cauveri, and settled them in sixty-four villages. He also persuaded Kshatria families to immigrate to the new land. Later he brought representatives of various artisan professions, and several vegetables and trees to be planted in the new land.

He also established a monarchy by crowning Aditya Varma as king. After peopling the land and establishing a ruling dynasty, he concentrated on founding temples, starting military training and the like. According to this tradition he also established 108 parade grounds or kalaris for

the training of militia.¹⁰

This legend is a creation of the Brahmans who dominated the Kerala cultural and economic life for the last several centuries. However, even at the present time this mythical tradition is religiously believed by the majority of Kerala Hindus.

2. A Scientific Explanation of the Origin of Kerala

The legendary supernatural origin does not have any validity in scientific circles. However, Parasurama, as a hero, who led the Brahmans to Kerala, may not be considered historically absurd as it has been proven that the Brahmans had come from other parts of India and settled in sixty-four villages. The mythology of supernatural creation of Kerala might have been constructed by the Brahmans to ascribe divine intervention to some historical facts.

It is scientifically speculated that the land of Kerala erupted on account of some volcanic action within the earth. The great flood of the Bible is believed to have taken place in about 2348 B.C. Sanskrit Puranas and Buddhist scholars of Ceylon have agreed that there had

¹⁰V. Nagam Aiya, The Travancore State Manual, vol. 1 (Trivandrum: The Travancore Government Press, 1906), pp. 210-19. Also see, Herman Gundert, ed., Keralolpatti (Malayalam) (Mangalore: Basel Mission Press, first ed. 1843, 3rd ed. 1874).

been a geological commotion in about 2387, affecting India and Ceylon. Rev. William Taylor is of opinion that the time of so-called Parasurama might be within a thousand years after the flood, if stripped of mythology. That period is noted for several tidal waves and terrestrial formations. Scholars are of opinion that the great flood also was the result of tidal waves. When the pieces are put together it could be assumed that the geological emergence of Kerala must have taken place sometime during the latter part of the third millenium B.C.¹¹

There is another theory recently established by scientific circles. West of the Western Ghats there existed a super continent named Gondwanaland. Subterranean actions submerged this land millions of years ago. It is also believed that the present Palghat Pass opening to Tamilnad was once as elevated as the rest of the mountain ranges of the Western Ghats, but it cracked and came down as a result of this geological process. The rivers flowing westward from the Western Ghats, with the earth they carried, gradually filled the sunken area which formed the land of Kerala.¹² Several authors believe that the subsidence and

¹¹Z.M. Parett, Malankara Nazranikal, vol. 1 (Malayalam) (Kottayam: Manorama Publishing House, 1965), pp. 191, 192.

¹²Varghese, Manorama Yearbook 1980, pp. 563, 566.

uprising of the land of Kerala have happened during the historic times and under the eye of man.¹³ Some have observed that this had occurred shortly before the Aryan immigration to Kerala.¹⁴ Thus, despite differences in speculation, scientific studies in general assert the mythological assumption that this part of the earth was once under the ocean.

F. Kerala Anthropology

Kerala does not have one homogeneous ethnic group as many western authors have thought of because the people are of dark-brown skin. It is an oversimplification to assume that the Kerala people are descendents of the Dravidians, when anthropological studies reveal that although the mainstream of population is Dravidian, Kerala maintains several other elements of human races in addition to the Aryan race. An eminent Indian anthropologist, Aiyappan, believes that Kerala:

was uninhabited during the Old Stone Age; it was untouched during the greater part of the Neolithic Age that flourished on the other side of the Western Ghats.

¹³V. Nagam Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual*, vol. I, p. 213.

¹⁴Faubion Bowers, *The Dance in India* (New York, AMS Press, 1967), p. 62.

The slow pressure of the population in the eastern plains in the Chalcolithic Age led colonists to settle in what was to become in protohistoric times the Chera or Kerala territory.¹⁵

Thus, in the Paleolithic Age, we see man in South India. Although they were savages there are evidences that they used quartzite implements.¹⁶ In the Neolithic Age or New Stone Age he began to use other stone implements, and although he did not have any metal tools he knew gold. He cultivated the land and grew fruits and corn. Animals have been domesticated and fire was invented, walls were decorated. In South India, the Iron Age immediately followed the Stone Age. These are the people believed to have colonized Kerala.

Some believe that the Dravidians of South India are the direct descendants of the Stone and Metal Age man like the Kols and Bhils of northwest India. This is questioned because the Dravidians are more intelligent, progressive and civilized than the Kols and the Bhils. Moreover, the physiognomy of these aborigines, whose descendants are still

¹⁵A. Aiyappan. Social Revolution in a Kerala Village (London: Asia Publishing House, 1965), p. 4.

¹⁶B.N. Luniya, Evolution of Indian Cultures (Agra: Lakshmi Narain Agarwal, 4th rev. ed., 1967), p. 24.

presented as scheduled castes and tribes in India, is much different from that of the unmixed Dravidian. The descendants of the Paleolithic men are a Negrito race. It was assumed by some anthropologists that the black element in India was imported either from Australia or Africa. British anthropologist A.H. Keane refutes it on account of two major reasons. First, the Indian Peninsula is separated from Africa by the vast Indian Ocean and shut off from Australia by the Eastern Archipelago. Second, the Africans and Australians are mostly taller than the dark-colored inhabitants of South India.¹⁷ Since the Negrito race constitutes ten percent of Kerala's total population the origin of these people is of interest to any student of Kerala anthropology. Keane says:

The inference is that in India the dark autochthons were pigmies apparently allied to the Aetas of the Philippines, and to the Samongs and Sakais still surviving in the Malay Peninsula. From Malaysia these woolly-headed Negritos could easily have moved through Tennasserim and Arakan round the Bay of Bengal to the Himalayan slopes, where they have left traces of their former presence, and whence they gradually spread over the Peninsula most probably in early Paleolithic times.¹⁸

¹⁷ L.K. Ananthakrishna Iyer, The Cochin Tribes and Castes, vol. 1, Introduction by A.H. Keane (Madras: Higginbotham & Co., 1909), p. xxiv.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. xxv.

Unfortunately, these original inhabitants could not retain their original tongue due to Dravidian and Aryan pressures, which came in later, in continental India. The only fragment of their original tongue still preserved is only spoken by a thousand aborigines in Andamans, called Andamanese.

The majority racial element is Dravidian in Kerala. How did they enter India? We have already seen that they are not the descendants of the aborigines. Some believe that they are the descendants of the authors of the Indus Valley civilization of Harappa and Mohen-Jodaro. There are some who used to think, because of the Dravidians' lightly dark complexion, that they entered India from Africa through the Indo-African track. But this is considered unfounded because of well-marked physical differences in appearance.¹⁹ But the commonly accepted position is that they entered India either by the Mekran coast or the northwestern passes. The evidence pointed out by some scholars for it is the similarities of the Dravidian languages and the tongue spoken by the Brahuīs who live in the Kirthar mountains of southern Baluchistan. But the resemblance is only in language, not in race marks or customs. In view of the ancient geographical conditions, we can reasonably conclude that the Dravidians penetrated to India by the northwest of India.

¹⁹Luniya, Evolution of Indian Culture, p. 28.

Their ancient abode as we will see, should establish that assumption.

Dravidian languages are more associated with Scythian, languages (northern Europe and western Asia) like the Finnish, Turkish, Mongolian and Turgusian group than any other languages, according to Bishop Caldwell and Rask.²⁰ The Scythian languages have sprung from a common origin. Although Dravidian languages are not included in that Scythian group, they stand to that group in some sort of relationship.²¹ The Dravidian family may be considered closer to the Finnish or Ugrian language of the Scythian group. Because of this linguistic alliance we have to contend that the original home of the Dravidians was in the same region where the present Scythian languages are spoken. Caldwell states:

. . . we are led to conclude that the Dravidian race, though resident in India from a period prior to the commencement of history, originated in the central tracts of Asia--the seed-plot of nations; and that from thence, after parting company with the Aryans and the Ugro-Turanians, and leaving a colony in Beluchistan, they entered India by way of the Indus.²²

²⁰R. Caldwell, Comparative Grammar, pp. 61, 62.

²¹Ibid., pp. 64, 65.

²²Ibid., p. 67.



Some studies also show that the Dravidians came from the Mediterranean coasts of Italy and Spain by the Bolan Pass or along the coast.²³ That the Dravidians and the Aryans were one and the same race in prehistoric times is another speculation. Although there is a common agreement that the Dravidians entered India either from southwestern Asia or Europe, the Scythian connection is more and more stressed. Dr. P.J. Thomas contends that the Chaldeans and the Dravidians belong to the same race.²⁴ J.H. Hutton is of opinion that that Dravidians might have come to India from Mesopotamia or Asia Minor before the third millenium B.C.²⁵ He observes:

There are many cultural parallels between South India in particular and the older civilizations of Mesopotamia, Syria and Crete, and it is probable that many waves of immigration have taken place, all more or less of the same type of people. Probably the earliest of these were of a more or less unmixed long-headed type, the later comers being increasingly mixed with rounder-headed peoples from the highlands of Asia Minor and perhaps Iran.²⁶

It is to be understood that the Dravidians are not the first intruders into India. The Kolarians who came from beyond the Himalayas were the forerunners of the

²³Fr. Zacharias, An Outline of Hinduism (Alwage: S.H. League, 1959), p.5.

²⁴Dr. P.J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature--Contribution of Christians (Kottayam, S.P.C. Society, 1935, rev. & enlarged ed. 1961), p. 21

²⁵J. H. Hutton, Caste in India (London: Oxford University Press, 3rd ed. 1961), p. 5.

²⁶Ibid.

Dravidians. Since they did not develop a culture of their own their impact was often unnoticed. But they have also assimilated with other racial elements though in some areas they still keep their identity. In fact, the present Negrito race in Kerala has Kolarian and Dravidian blood in them.²⁷

Not being a Negrito race, it may be asked, why the Dravidians have a dark appearance which could not have been brought from beyond Hindu Kush where the indigenous population had a light complexion. A.H. Keane answers:

The inference seems obvious that these Dravidians and Kolarians are a blend in diverse proportions of Asiatic intruders with the true black indigenes of the Peninsula. In other words, they acquired their Negroid characters by secular interminglings with the Negrito aborigines.²⁸

It is observed that the Dravidians had a much higher civilization, even higher than that of the Aryans, since five thousand years. They were scattered all over India. Their influence was greater on Aryans, and as a culture Indian Aryanism developed from a Dravidian base. Luniya remarks:

²⁷L. K. A. Iyer, Cochin Tribes, p. xxvii

²⁸Ibid., p. xxvi.

The northern vernaculars of India, though mainly Aryan, have below them a solid Dravidian substratum. The inhabitants of Bengal and those of the Uttar Pradesh still bear some traces of Dravidian racemarks in their physical features.²⁹

This also indicates that the Aryans physically intermingled with the Dravidians. In fact the majority of the Indian population is Aryo-Dravidian, the extreme northwest India being the only area presently maintaining the original Aryan blood. Therefore we have reason to assume that the majority of Kerala Dravidians are also an Aryan blend. The so-called Aryan Brahmans of Kerala are not the pure Aryans who penetrated to India during the Rgvedic period, but the castified³⁰ commixture of Aryo-Dravidians.

The Dravidians are a docile, simple and peace-loving people who were engaged mainly in agriculture. They knew pottery and the art of making weapons and ornaments. They had a well-developed language. Their social system was matrilineal. They worshipped a mother goddess and other lower deities such as trees and animals. The social life was centered on totems. Even after the arrival of Brahmans from the north who Aryanized their

²⁹Luniya, Evolution of Indian Culture, p. 28.

³⁰This coining is made on the Portuguese stem "casta" for caste.

social life they maintained some of their past heritages, especially matriarchy. The belief that the Aryans had conquered the Dravidians and reduced them to slavery, as has been understood, is questioned by several scholars. Bishop Caldwell contends that this position cannot be legitimately held because of lack of Sanskrit authority or Dravidian tradition.³¹ It is possible that this was a make-belief of Aryan fanaticism. That the Dravidians were converted to Aryanism was the truth.³²

There are differences of opinions as to when the Dravidians settled in Kerala. Some believe that they came to Kerala in prehistoric times, and some historic times. It is commonly accepted that the Negritos were living in Kerala at least since 4000 B.C. Although there is no such agreement on the Dravidians' existence in Kerala, they are believed to have come at least by 700 B.C. As to the Aryanized people, they are believed to have come to Kerala immediately after that, the approximate chronology in Kerala starts from 300 B.C., several centuries after the intrusion of the Aryans into

³¹R. Caldwell, Comparative Grammar, pp. 107-08.

³²L.K.A. Iyer, The Cochin Tribes and Castes, vol. II, p. 3.

India which is believed to have taken place in the second millenium B.C.³³ To summarize, Kerala is predominantly Dravidian with diverse proportions of Aryan, Negrito and Kolarian racial elements.

G. Social Stratification

In Kerala social stratification is intensely manifested in the caste system. Nowhere in India does the concept of caste differentiation prevail as in Kerala. And it is because of this that Kerala was called a "mad-house" by Swami Vivekananda. Even now, after Independence and the codification of the Indian Constitution which guarantees equality for all citizens, the caste system is observed in the private and family life of the citizens, although its rigidity is slowly breaking down.

It is difficult to define what a caste is. It is not a class where there are differences between rich and poor, educated and uneducated even though the educated tend to be the rich. But the correlation is declining. It is not based on color because there are people with dark and fair complexions in any caste. A white person does not have to belong to a higher caste. Tradition says that when the Portuguese Archbishop Alexis de Menezes visited the Syrian churches in Kerala he was not

³³Varghese, Manorama Yearbook 1980, p. 569.

received by the priests in the traditional manner of kissing the bishop's hand, because they were afraid of getting polluted by touching him. It is not Aryan or Dravidian, because both races religiously practice caste. It is not occupationally-determined because almost all castes engage in agriculture. Many castes have their own priests. Soldiers were not exclusively Kshatrias.

Religion is not a key determinant factor of caste. Both Christians and Muslims have their own cast gradations. There were white and black Jews with different social status.

However, a caste may be defined as a hierarchical social group which is equal to or above or below another social group, recognizing where they belong and permitting each member to marry within the same group and to eat in each other's fellowship without being polluted. This is a loose definition so as to embrace the concept of caste and subcaste. In fact, subcastes are the bases of social interaction especially in rural life. A caste is more comprehensive than a subcaste. For example, Brahman is a caste and Tamil-Brahman is a subcaste; the latter being within the Brahman caste with lower or higher hierarchical status in relation to other subcastes in the Brahman society. Rise defines caste thus: Caste is

"a collection of families or groups of families bearing

a common name; claiming a common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine; professing to follow the same hereditary calling; and regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogeneous community."³⁴

Normally no one can be upgraded in his caste or lowered from his caste, because he is born in the caste of his parents. In an inter-caste marriage the offspring is born in the caste of the parent whose caste is lower; sometimes he becomes an outcaste which is worse than the lowest caste; he is socially isolated. Because of this stigmatization, in the past, nobody dared to contract an inter-caste marriage. Nevertheless, the trend is changing especially with government encouragement in monetary and other benefits.

According to Hindu tradition, there are four major castes, the Brahman, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya and Sudra, which are called the four Varnas. Varna simply means color, shape or quality which does not actually signify what caste does.³⁵ However, in the Indian community Varna denotes social and psychological distinctiveness which a particu-

³⁴Hutton, Caste in India, p. 47.

³⁵The Portuguese word casta whence the English word "caste" derives was first used by Garcia de Orta in 1563, and signifies only breed, race or kind. Caste could be only a proximate translation of Varna--Author.

lar group of people are characterized by and required to possess in relation to their call in the society.

Hindus ascribe the origin of caste to the deity from whose body all the Varnas sprang. The Brahmans were created from his mouth, the Kshatrias from his arms, the Vaishyas from his thighs and the Sudras from his feet. The Brahmans were assigned divinity and the sixfold duties of studying, teaching, sacrificing, assisting others to sacrifice, giving arms and receiving gifts, to the end that the Vedas were protected. The Kshatrias were assigned the duties of studying, sacrificing, giving alms, using weapons, protecting treasure of life, to the end that a good government is conducted. To the end that labor should be productive the Vaishyas were assigned the duties of studying, sacrificing, giving alms. cultivating, trading and tending the cows. The Sudras were assigned the sole duty of serving the upper Varnas whenever they needed them.

From this, one can make up his mind that the very castification process was based on vocational preparation and aptitude required for the stability of social structure. However, we cannot deny that in its later development castes were derived from tribal or heterogeneous racial elements. In reference to the origin of castes, Hutton observes:

Some are derived from tribal or racial elements, some are occupational, being of the nature originally perhaps of guilds of artificers or craftsmen, some are

territorial, some are religious and so forth.³⁶

Nesfield regards that the basis of caste distinction is exclusively occupations.³⁷ However, considering the overall impact of religion on the growth of the Indian society, we can generally conclude that religion also played a role in divinizing the origin of the caste system and formalizing its functions in society. Some used to think that the origin of the caste system was artificial, i.e., the Brahmans made it for their advantage; however, many anthropologists at present are of opinion that the origin and evolution was organic. The caste system could also be parallel to the pre-revolution social classes in Europe, such as the priests, noble and the bourgeois engaged in religious, political and economic spheres of social life respectively. Dahlmann views the ancient Indian society in this pattern.³⁸

Parenthetically, Aryans might not be the authors of caste system. Even before the arrival of the Aryans, it was possible that caste had its origin among the Dravidians although in rudimentary stages. Referring to

³⁶Hutton, Caste in India, p. 2.

³⁷Ibid., p. 170.

³⁸Ibid., p. 171.

the Hindu Puranas, Hutton says:

Clearly there were Brahmans before the Rigvedic Aryans, and we must look for the origin of that caste partly no doubt in the priests of the presumably Dravidian-speaking civilization who may well have shared the mathematical and astronomical knowledge of contemporary Babylonia.³⁹

Kerala society developed the caste system only after the immigration of Aryanized people, especially the Brahmans, from the north, from the third century B.C. until the fifth century A.D. They introduced the system to the natives of Kerala as it was practised in the rest of the Aryanized India. Those Brahmans did not bring the Kshatriyas or the other two castes with them. Therefore, those castes were made of the existing society in Kerala, for which they had to convert the natives into Arvanism.

During that period, the Dravidians were the powerful majority, the negligible minority being the aboriginal Negritos. The Dravidians were serpent worshippers. They were a warlike people; and had occupied the whole country enslaving the aboriginal inhabitants. Since they worshiped serpents (Nagas) they were called Nagar whence came the word Nayar, a caste name in Kerala. When the Aryanized Brahmans, or Nampudiris as they are called in

³⁹ Ibid., p. 153.

Kerala, immigrated to ancient Kerala, these were the people they had to confront.

Though there is some evidence of a conflict between the Nampudiris and the Nayars, a social adjustment seems to have been worked out early enough which left the Nayars in effective occupation of the land, with more or less exclusive local political power, while the Nampudiris, allying themselves with the leading Nayer families, maintained a social and religious pre-eminence. With minor exceptions the feudal chiefs of Kerala were Nayars, most of whom were closely allied to Nampudiris, while religious authority and the control of temples were vested in the latter.⁴⁰

Thus from the Nayars or Dravidians were formed the Kshatrias who held political power, the Vaishyas who held the land for cultivation and the Sudras who had none of the above. As a matter of fact, there is no clear distinction between a Vaishya and a Sudra in Kerala. Both of those castes are generally referred to as Sudras. The premise that the Sudras in Kerala were immigrants along with the Nampudiris is historically unfounded. Francis Buchanan also refers to Nayars as "Sudras of pure descent belonging to Malayala."⁴¹

⁴⁰K. M. Panikkar, A History of Kerala, p. 3.

⁴¹Francis Buchanan, A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara, and Malabar, vol. II (London: Cadell, 1807), p. 349.

The traditional caste hierarchy is represented in the Nampudiri and Nayar communities. Although the Christian church doctrinally does not advocate caste distinctions, the Syrian Christians have been always a caste-conscious community. Their tradition goes back to St. Thomas the Apostle who is believed to have converted their forefathers to Christianity about A.D. 52. Some old families still trace back their origin to the Brahman families of Sankarapuri, Pakalomattom, Kalli and Kaliankav illams of Palayur. The Pakalomattom family provided a hereditary line of Metropolitans for the Syrian church; among them Dionysius the Great, who is also called Mar Thoma VI, was pre-eminent.⁴² Quite a number of other Christian families also hail from Nampudiri families of prominence.

There is no doubt as to the tradition that St. Thomas came to Malabar and converted a few families of Nampudiris, some of whom were ordained by him as priests such as those of Sankarapuri and Pakalomattom. For in consonance with this long-standing traditional belief in the minds of the people of the Apostle's mission and labors among high caste Hindus, we have it before us today the fact that certain Syrian Christian women particularly of a Desom, called Kunnamkolam wear clothes as Nambudiri women do, move about screening themselves with huge umbrellas from the gaze of profane eyes as those women do, and will not marry, except perhaps in exceptional cases and that only recently, but from among dignified families of similar aristocratic descent.⁴³

⁴²The time of Dionysius the Great is treated in detail elsewhere.

⁴³V. Nagam Aiya, Travancore State Manual, vol II, p. 123.

Many of these families were keeping Brahmanic customs and traditions in their homes; and some still do. Despite the claimed Brahmanic lineage, Syrian Christians as a whole identify themselves with the Nayar communities because the majority of the former belonged to the Nayar race before their ancestors' conversion to Christianity; and they were held in equal status with the Nayar class of nobles. Like the Nayars they carried a sword in their hand wherever they went as a symbol of their social dignity and nobility.⁴⁴ These Christians did not mix or intermarry with the castes, not even with the new Christians converted from low castes by the Roman Catholic missionaries during the Portuguese period or by the Anglican missionaries during the British period. This does not mean that the Syrian Christians did not accept other castes into their religion. In fact Buchanan mentions that he was told by a priest of the Syrian church that "Converts, however, are occasionally made of both Nairs and Shanars."⁴⁵ On the caste ladder the Shanar caste falls on one of the lower rungs. Although when a lower caste person is converted to Christianity his caste restrictions are lifted,⁴⁶

⁴⁴Panikkar, A History of Kerala, p. 318.

⁴⁵Buchanan, Journey from Madras, p. 391.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 392.

he was very seldom treated equally among the Syrian church community. Even if they dine with him, it is just an expression of their common faith; but marriage alliance with such people was frowned upon. He is also placed in a different deference structure. Most of such people have become domestic servants who supervised the agricultural serfs and collection of crops in Syrian Christian families. These new Christians accepted into the Syrian church community, however, were not regarded as polluting.

The Nayars were the military class of the Kerala society. But when they were stripped of political power, especially during the eighteenth century, they became more and more dependent on the land they owned as cultivators. Similarly, Syrian Christians also were engaged in agriculture and trade in addition to the practice of martial arts. They also have conducted Kalaris (Martial schools) and trained their young men for military life. The Europeans really disarmed both the Nayars and the Syrian Christians reducing them to mere agriculturists and traders. The Syrian Christians were always a hard working community pursuing their temporal happiness unlike many other communities. A Nambudiri himself testified to that effect when Dr. Buchanan visited Kunnamkulam, near Trichur, that they were "a very orderly, industrious people, who live chiefly

by trade and agriculture."⁴⁷

The Nambudiris and the native Dravidians are called Savarnas or people within the caste. The Nambudiris and the St. Thomas Christians (so also are they called because of their apostolic origin with St. Thomas) are patrilineal, whereas the Nayars are matrilineal, typical of Dravidian heritage.

The lower castes are called avarnas, i.e., the excluded castes who were previously the untouchables in Kerala.

The Izhavas stood on top of the low caste hierarchy. They are known with different names in Kerala, like Thiyas and Chovas. They are believed to have immigrated from Ceylon which used to be called Izham, the eponym for their present caste title, sometime before the Christian era. It is said that they introduced the coconut tree and open canoe in Kerala. Their chief occupation was toddy-drawing and agriculture.

Although they were considered socially inferior, by their own efforts they have proved their potentialities. They have maintained Kalaris to educate young men, including Nayar youth, for the military. The sixteenth century hero, Aromal Chevakar, is an example. Some of them pursued higher education despite opposition from the Savarnas. Itty

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 392.

Atchutan, an Izhava, was a collaborator with Heinrich Van Rheede in preparing the monumental work, Hortus Malabaricus.⁴⁸

Although the Izhavas as a community were toddy tappers, tenant farmers and free laborers they had businessmen and Ayurvedic physicians among them; some were considerably richer than the noble Nayars and Christians, especially in north Kerala. Because of their martial skills the Dutch and the English later employed them as soldiers in their armies.

Mythologically, the Izhavas are believed to be the descendants of the seven cousins born to Lord Siva. Those cousins were asked to prepare palm wine for the ritual. A Brahman happened to drink it, and the cousins killed him in revenge; and for doing so they were made untouchable. Historically, as we mentioned, they are believed to have come from Ceylon and have been Buddhists. The hypothesis is that they together with the native Buddhists formed the ancient society in Kerala, but when Buddhism disappeared due to Brahmanic usurpation, the Buddhists were reabsorbed as inferior caste.⁴⁹ The Communist leader, E.M.S.

⁴⁸ Panikkar, A History of Kerala, p. 319.

⁴⁹ A. Aiyappan, Social Revolution in a Kerala Village (London: Asia Publishing House, 1965), p. 120).

Napoodiripad, argues that the Nayars, Brahmans and Izhavas of Kerala were originally one people, but Aryanism and feudalism made Izhavas a proletariat caste.⁵⁰ All Izhavas profess Hinduism as their religion like the Nayars. Numerically, the Izhavas are the second majority as a single community, and exert great influence on Kerala politics, especially after Independence. They are both matrilineal and patrilineal.

The next one on the low caste hierarchy is that of the Kammalans who believe themselves as direct descendants of Brahma the Creator; hence they call themselves the Visvakarma Brahmans. Historically, they are immigrants from Tamilnad, the neighboring state, although some argue that they have come from Ceylon like the Izhavas. It is true that the Kammalans and the Izhavas have more social relations among themselves than with any other caste.

The four artisan classes, the carpenter, the goldsmith, the bronzesmith and the blacksmith, constitute the Kammala caste. Their social organization is based on patrilineal succession.

There are also a number of minority lower castes, such as the potters, washermen, oil mongers, palanquin-bearers, stone masons, Mukkavas (fishermen) and the like.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 121.

According to the present government classification, all the above lower castes are called the backward classes.

The Harijan Communities or the scheduled castes, constitute the largest untouchable community, about ten percent of the total population of Kerala. They have different castes, such as the Pulayas (agricultural serfs), the Parayas (basket makers), and the like. Once they were treated inhumanly by their masters and were victims of slavery. More than any other low castes these classes suffered the cruelty of caste system in Kerala. Their past generations never tasted humaneness and human dignity. But the efforts of Christian missionaries and the equality guaranteed by the Indian Constitution have opened up for them avenues of upward mobility by way of equal opportunity in education and employment to a considerable degree. Free education and reservation for employment are helping them realize their inherent capabilities and eliminate the inferiority which has been subjugating them for centuries.

Although a bulk of the Mukkavas, who belonged to backward classes, has accepted Christianity, only a minority of the Pulayas and Parayas are Christians. It was mostly the Christian converts who reaped the benefits of education. In addition to the above castes, there are a few tribal castes inhabiting mostly in the hills of Kerala, such as Vedans, Mala Arayans, Kaniars, Muthuvans and so on, who

lead primitive lives. They generally resist any social changes resulting from modern civilization. However, the government is trying to better their conditions by offering free schooling and delivering social services.

All of the above-mentioned castes include one or more subcastes too. No caste is simply equal to another caste, because some degree of pollution is involved in inter-caste relations. For example, even among the subcastes of Brahmans, the Savarnas, one subcaste has some social restrictions toward the other. So is the case with the relations between the subcastes of the avarnas. There are two types of pollution, that of distance and that of touch. Among the Savarnas the members of a caste or subcaste are polluted only by a touch by a member of another caste or subcaste.

But a member of the avarna caste can easily pollute a member of the Savarna caste; he does not have to touch the latter to pollute him. In this case the pollution index consists of how far is the polluter from the polluted. For example, Izhavas were regarded polluting the Nayars within thirty feet in distance; and so the former have to stay at least thirty feet away from the latter. A Pulaya must keep further away from the Nayars, lest they be polluted.

Although the rigidity of caste distinction is slowly diminishing in Kerala society, caste system as a social

phenomenon is still alive and active in Kerala even among Christians.⁵¹

H. Religions

As noted earlier, the primitive religious life of the Dravidians consisted of nature worship. Mother goddess, trees, animals and so on were objects of worship. With the introduction from the north of Hinduism, a natural religion without dogmas, and flexibly sensitive to the religious needs of man as an emotional being, the Dravidians accepted the Aryan religion and its myths. However, some of the pre-Aryan myths also had been Aryanized and accepted into Hinduism. For example, the worship of Naga (serpent) which has been so prevalent among the Dravidians, is still a feature of Kerala Hinduism. Many scholars now are of opinion that Hinduism is the outcome of the assimilation of the civilization of indigenous population by the Aryans, and the doctrine of the Aryan origin of Hindu civilization should be questioned.⁵²

Hinduism, as emerged from the Dravidian and Aryan cultures, was detrimentally affected by Buddhist influences during the period before and after the Christian era.

⁵¹Vide Ninan Koshy, Caste in the Kerala Churches (Bangalore: The Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, 1968).

⁵²K.M. Panikkar, A Survey of Indian History (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 4th ed. 1964), p. 5.

However, due to the intensive reformatory efforts of Sri Sankaracharya (788-820), a native of Kerala who placed the Vedic religion on the metaphysical plain, Hinduism secured a stable hold in Kerala. Now the majority of the people of Kerala are Hindus with 12.63 million (1971) followers constituting 59.41 percent of the population.

Unlike any other religion, Hinduism is unusually tolerant toward other religions. When Christianity was first introduced in Kerala, in the first century A.D., according to reliable traditions, it is believed Kerala welcomed it without resistance. History even tells that Kerala Hindu rulers offered privileges and protection for Christians. Unlike any other country, it could be because of the absence of persecutions that Christianity did not flourish in Kerala, and for that matter in India, in spite of its founding in the first century. Moreover, Christianity did not present many new ethical values to an already existing religious civilization which had already in its reserve the perennial concepts of charity, monastic life, pre-eminence of virginity and chastity, non-violence, self-discipline, self-abnegation, sacredness of marital relations and the like. The most important of the doctrines Christianity had to offer Vedic India was the personal revelation of God through Jesus Christ. For a natural religion that had reached metaphysically to its conclusions and dealt with them

with the ultimate use of reason, a personal revelation of God through Jesus Christ was not quite appealing intellectually. This is the enigma contemporary Christian thinkers are trying to unravel regarding missionary activities in India. This explains why India's Christians are a small minority with 2.60 (1971) percent of the population.

Among the Indian states, however, Kerala has the highest Christian population with 4.49 million (1971) followers constituting 21.05 percent of its total population. The Christians are a leading community in Kerala especially in literacy, because of their educational activities. On account of the availability of educational opportunities, they also have higher socio-economic status compared to other communities.

Unfortunately, the Christian church is divided into three denominations, among whom the Roman Catholics are the largest. The Roman church is under three metropolitan jurisdictions corresponding to the Latin Rite, Syro-Malabar Rite and the Syro-Malankara Rite. The Latin Rite originated with the missionary activities of St. Francis Xavier in the sixteenth century. The Syro-Malabar Rite consists of descendants of those Romanized by the Portuguese Archbishop Menezes at the Synod of Diamper in 1599 and some of their ancient traditions and rites have been recently restored in 1963. The Syro-Malankarese are a recent Uniate group accepted by

Rome in 1930 when the Orthodox Archbishop Mar Ivanios, under pressure of litigations and unrest in his church, entered into Roman Communion. The latter two groups hail from the Apostolic origin like the Orthodox. The Oriental Orthodox Church, having a following of a million and a half, is under a native Patriarch, claiming succession on the Apostolic Throne of St. Thomas, residing at Kottayam, Kerala. He has thirteen metropolitans and five bishops with fifteen dioceses under him.

There are several Protestant persuasions in Kerala, among whom the Marthoma church and the Church of South India are the largest. The Marthomites could be considered a counterpart of the Anglican Low Church in Kerala, for their faith is Protestant, but in form they more or less appear like the Eastern Churches. Like the Eastern Churches they have a celibate episcopate and follow the Liturgy of St. James with references to the sacrificial aspects of the Eucharist, the Eucharistic change of elements, intercessory priesthood and to efficacy of prayers to the Mother of God and saints and for the dead deleted. They have an added evangelical emphasis. This denomination was started by Palakunnath Abraham Malpan, an Orthodox priest, who was converted to Protestantism by the efforts of the Church Missionary Society. The Malpan initiated his movement in

1837, but the denomination was officially established in 1889.⁵³

The Church of South India originated from the Church Missionary Society which concentrated its evangelical efforts in Kerala during the early nineteenth century. Quite a great number of St. Thomas Christians had been attracted to this denomination even before an Anglican Low Church was inaugurated for Travancore and Cochin in 1878. Most of the adherents are converts and their descendants from low castes for whose advantage the Church Missionary Society built churches, opened schools and controlled governmental policies of the native princes. This diocese of the Anglican Low Church was later amalgamated with the South Indian Methodist Church and South Indian United Church and came to be known as Church of South India in 1947.⁵⁴

There are 4.16 million (1971) Muslims in Kerala, i.e. 19.5 percent, who exert greater political power than Christians since they have organized their own political

⁵³ Daniel David, The Orthodox Church of India, vol. I (New Delhi: Printaid, 1972), pp. 89, 181.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 87

party, the Muslim League. From the earliest times Kerala traded with the Arabian Peninsula. When Islam was founded, its messages immediately reached the Kerala shore through the traders. In 644 Malik Ben Dinai came to Kerala and established several mosques. The Islam community, composed of native converts and Arab Muslims, was concentrated around their trade centers situated in coastal towns. The Mysorean invasion also considerably helped the growth of Islam in North Kerala. Most of the Muslims are engaged in business and petit trades. Their literacy rate is much lower than other religious groups due to lack of parental motivation. Generally children are required to help the parents in their family occupation.

I. A Brief Historical Sketch

Kerala with its wealth of spices had invited many western countries to its coast for commercial enterprises more than any other states in the union. The foreign trade the state had enjoyed existed prior to Aryan immigration. Therefore the commercial enterprises monopolized by Kerala was a purely Dravidian civilization. The geographic location of Kerala always facilitated a commercial culture.

The Dravidians were also experts in ship building and sailing in the sea, because of their close access to the sea. There is evidence that they settled in the west across the Arabian Sea and emigrated to Rhodesia and Arabia in ancient times.⁵⁵ It is also believed that the civilizations of Maya and Inca in Mexico are of Dravidian origin. The emblems of Indian elephants on a memorial in Coval (Mexico) are ascribed to the Dravidians as there were no elephants in the American continent. It is believed that these Dravidians had reached South America via Indonesia.⁵⁶

Among the foreigners who came to Kerala for trade were Egyptians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans and Chinese. We have already seen the references to the ruler of Kerala by Pliny and Ptolemy. The Periplus of Arrain, written by an Alexandrian Greek, a contemporary of Pliny who made several voyages to Malabar, refers to Musiris (Cranganur) as a prosperous city visited by ships from Arike and Greek ships from Egypt, and to Komar (Cape Comerin), Paralia Country (Southern Travancore), and Nilkamda (Neendakara).⁵⁷

⁵⁵Parett, Malankara Nazranikal, pp. 43, 44.

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 44, 45.

⁵⁷Aiya, Travancore State Manual, vol. 1, pp. 240, 241.

The first foreign people who set their feet on the Kerala soil were the Egyptians. They came to buy pepper, dried ginger and perfumes. After they made a huge profit, they retreated from Kerala. However, the Egyptian King Sesotres tried to reestablish relations but did not succeed. Then the Phoenicians took over the market by about 1000 B.C. They maintained a total monopoly over pepper trade. Kerala is said to have received the art of writing from them.⁵⁸

The Phoenicians were neighbors of the Jews and eventually the Jews were attracted to Kerala. Solomon captured some important ports of the Red Sea where the Phoenicians were dominant. He even recruited a marine troop with the help of the Phoenicians to expand trade with other countries.⁵⁹ According to V. Nagam Aiya, the celebrated author of the Travancore State Manual (1906), most of Solomon's trade relations were with Kerala. He observes:

In the Old Testament we find the following: "For the King had at sea a navy of Tarshish bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks"; with the exception perhaps of silver, these were all productions of Malabar Coast and the biblical name for peacock,

⁵⁸ S.G. Pothan, The Syrian Christians of Kerala (Bombay: The Leaders Press, 1963), p. 9.

⁵⁹ 1 Kings 9:26-27.

tuki, is evidently the Tamil-Malayalam, tokai, the bird of the tail. Again Herodotus mentions that the Red Sea trade in frankincense, myrrh and cinnamon and cassia (the two latter being Malabar products) was in the hands of the Egyptians and Phoenicians.⁶⁰

Lt. J. H. Taylor has authentically established the opinion of the great Indologist Max Muller that the "Ophir" of Solomon (1 Kings 9:28) was the gold mines of Wyanad (Kerala) and Mysore.⁶¹

Alexander founded the city of Alexandria as a trade center between the east and west, however, it was Ptolemy Soter, King of Egypt, who re-established trade with Kerala. Egypt continued it until it was captured by the Romans. It is probable that the previous traders took Kerala spices to Rome before Romans themselves came to Malabar. The Romans even had an embassy in South India at the time of Augustus Caesar, and maintained their troops in Cranganur making it a Roman colony. Potfuls of Roman coins have been unearthed in various parts of South India, especially at Kottayam, Tellicherry and Cranganur in Malabar, belonging to a period between 27 B.C. to A.D. 491. The rulers of Malabar also maintained their embassies in Rome.

⁶⁰ Aiya, Travancore State Manual, vol. 1, pp. 230-31.

⁶¹ Parett, Malankara Nazranikal, p. 47.

All this indicates that Malabar was known to the Western world from ancient times. Kerala was, at least from the third century before Christ and until the fifth century after Christ, ruled by the Chera dynasty. It was during this period Kerala had commercial relations with foreigners. This is considered one of the golden ages of Kerala in ancient times. It was also during this period, in A.D. 52, that St. Thomas is said to have preached Christ according to reliable traditions. When Pantaenus, the head of the Alexandrian School, visited Malabar in A.D. 189, he found a flourishing Christian community in Malabar.⁶²

A Jewish community was established at Crangannur in the first century A.D. at least after the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem by Roman troops. The history of Kerala is relatively obscure from the sixth to the eighth century A.D. Probably Islam was introduced during this period.

In A.D. 825 the city of Kollam (Quilon) was founded and the Malabar era was established. By this time Kerala rose to prominence again under the Kulasekhara dynasty. The ninth and tenth centuries witnessed another golden age for Kerala marked by developments in philosophy, education, literature and fine arts. The emergence of Malayalam language is attributed to this period.

⁶²Panikkar, History of Kerala, p. 5.

The country began to face disintegration as a result of continuous war with the Cholas, and was consequently divided into petty chiefdoms. This is the medieval feudal period of Kerala.

By the beginning of the fourteenth century Ravi Varma Kulasekhara established a short-lived supremacy over the entire South India. But his empire was dissolved after his untimely death in 1314. Again the country witnessed the feudalism of many belligerent chieftaincies, among whom, however, Travancore in the south and Calicut in the north became prominent.

By the end of the fifteenth century, the modern period of foreign contact commences. The Portuguese navigator, Vasco da Gama, landed in Calicut in 1498. The appearance of the Portuguese in Malabar weakened the Arabs who had been monopolizing Kerala trade so far. Finally, in the sixteenth century, the Portuguese became masters of Kerala commerce. Their efforts to establish political sovereignty were effectively resisted by the Zamorin of Calicut. However, with the abuse of the religious mandate they had from the Pope they tore apart the existing Eastern church irreparably. To their credit goes the evangelization of the downtrodden thousands on the coastal regions.

The Dutch, whose sole motive was trade, ousted the Portuguese in the seventeenth century, but they could not achieve dominance. The victorious Prince, Martanda Varma, of Travancore inflicted a humiliating defeat on the Dutch in 1741.

It was the Mysorean invasions of Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan in 1766 and 1790 that brought the British power into Kerala. British help was invoked by the princes of Kerala to resist those invasions. The British used the opportunity very cunningly. Cochin and Travancore had to accept eventually British suzerainty in 1791 and 1795 respectively. The Zamorin's territories were annexed to the Madras presidency under the name of Malabar District. Unsuccessful revolts against the British were led by Payassi Raja of Kottayam in Malabar from 1800 to 1805 and Veluthampi Dalava in Travancore in 1809. But they could only shed their blood as martyrs to strengthen the foundation of nationalistic movement in Kerala.⁶³ When India became independent on August 15, 1947, the Malabar district was under the Madras Presidency, and Travancore and Cochin were under two kings.

Two years after the Indian Independence on July 1, 1949, the princely states of Travancore and Cochin were integrated to form the Travancore-Cochin state with the

⁶³A.K. Gopalan, Kerala: Past and Present (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1959), p. 27.

Maharaja of Travancore as the Rajpramukh of the new state.⁶⁴
But, the state of Kerala as a single cultural and linguistic unit comprising all the Malayalis came into existence only on November 1, 1956.

⁶⁴R. Ramakrishnan Nair, Constitutional Experiments, p. 184.

CHAPTER III

DEVELOPMENT OF MALAYALAM LANGUAGE

A. Prologue

Language, a key cultural component, is the basic medium for transmitting culture. "The vocabulary of a language provides us with an interesting reflection of the culture of the people who speak it, an index to the way they categorize experience."¹ In other words language and culture are intertwined and hence inseparable. They are often born together, and they grow together. Education is the culmination of our culture. But education is a cultural invention for the purpose of preparing citizens to participate in their own culture effectively.

Like language and culture, culture and education are also inseparable, because education starts with culture. Although culture and education are not identical in the ultimate analysis, culture is transmitted and shared only through education at least in its generic form. What we observe here is a triangle of language, culture and education,

¹Muriel Saville-Troike, "Culture, Language and Education," in Bilingual-Multicultural Education and the Professional: From Theory to Practice, ed., Trueba, Barnett-Mizrahi (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers, 1979), p. 140.

and without one the other two cannot be adequately explained. Hence, for a social Scientist, this trigonalism becomes a postulate.

When we observe that education starts with culture we do not intend to mean that one goes before the other. What we state here is that education is the expression of culture but education is co-existent with culture which also embraces language. This is how the relevance of this trigonalism is stressed. It is within the ramifications of this postulate that language becomes a foundation of education. And the development of a language clearly expresses the rudimentary stages of origin and evolution of education. And educational development cannot be adequately explained without touching the language of a people whose culture derives from that language. The development of Malayalam, the language of Kerala, thus becomes a base of education in that state.

B. The Name "Malayalam"

The antiquity of Malayalam as a language is not yet determined exactly, although there are different assumptions about it. Some believe it is two thousand years old and others assume it is only a thousand years old. Anyhow, the vernacular of Kerala did not assume its present name,

Malayalam, until two hundred years ago.² The nomenclature specifically given by the Europeans was Lingua Malabarica, which simply means the language of Malabar, although they have generally called it Tamil. Malayalam was the name of the country. (The linguistic derivation of this name has been discussed elsewhere in Chapter II) Malayanma, Malayambhasha and so on, were used to designate this language until the turn-of-the-century. In official documents and even in the first grammar of this language, called Leelatilakam (fourteenth century), Tamil was the name given to this language.

Actually the word Tamil simply means language; it was not originally a proper noun. It is a compound word deriving from tam, meaning one's own, and mozhi meaning voice or word. Tam+mozhi = tammozhi means one's own word or voice (verbum suum in Latin).³ From tanmozhi derived Tamil. (The consonant zh takes the consonant "l" in colloquialism; for example, Pazham (fruit) is generally pronounced palam in Tamil.)

²C.P. Sreedharan, Innathe Sahityakaranmar (Malayalam) (Kottayam: Sahityavedi Publications, 1969), p. 17.

³P. Sankaran Nambiyar, Malayala Sahitya Charithra Samgraham (Malayalam) (Kottayam: S.P.C. Society, 1922; reprint 1964), p. 23.

After the arrival of the Aryans they had to give a name to the native language, and they called it Dravida. Even the very name Dravida is the Sanskritized form of Tamil, like from Tamizh--Damila--Dramila--Dravila--Dravida.⁴

So what we observe here is that when the language of Kerala was often called Tamil by Europeans, and even natives, they were not making a claim that the vernacular of Kerala was the present Tamil spoken by Tamilnad. The language of Kerala was very much distinct from the language spoken by its neighboring state. Of course, there was great influence of the Tamil language in Kerala, especially as a court language and as a language of the litterati especially before Sanskrit became the scholar's language. There was also powerful overlapping of the Tamil language into the day-to-day life of the rank and file. However, the people had already inherited a morphologically independent language of their own. When this language was called Tamil, it simply indicated a tongue.

This language was later called Malayayma, Malayanma and Malayarma because they were the names of that country. The present name, Malayalam, also denoted the country; and it is thus the language of Kerala is officially called.

⁴Ibid., p. 24.

C. Origin of Malayalam Language

Scholars vary in their opinions about the genesis of Malayalam language. Malayalam evidently belongs to the Dravidian family of languages, and this is being accepted unanimously by all contemporary linguists without any doubt.

1. Sanskrit Origin

However, some scholars upheld the view that Malayalam was an offshoot of Sanskrit. They depended for their claim mainly on the Sanskrit verse:

Samskrta himagiri galita
 Dravida bhasha kalindajamilita
 Kerala bhasha ganga
 Viharatu me hrtsara svadasanga

which simply meant that the language of Kerala is river Ganges flowing from the Himalayas which is Sanskrit, and joining with river Jamuna which is the language of Dravida; may this language dance in my heart. This theory was proposed by the grammarian, Kovunni Nedungadi, in his grammar, Kerala Kaumudi in 1875.⁵ On account of the high percentage of Sanskrit vocabulary in Malayalam, this explanation was accepted by several scholars. On the basis of usage of domestic terminology, morphology, syntax and the like, many scholars have rejected this theory.

⁵Ibid., pp. 18, 19.

Still, those who argue that Malayalam originated from the corrupted dialects (Prakrt) of Sanskrit base their assumption on several Pali words used in Malayalam. Scholars have discarded this position also, because Buddhism was prevalent in Kerala during the Chera period of the early Christian era and Buddhism must have contributed its Pali vocabulary to the language of Kerala.⁶

2. Dravidian Origin

Although the majority of contemporary linguists agree upon the Dravidian origin of Malayalam, there is considerable difference of opinion about the degree of relationship with other languages of the Dravidian family. For example, the famous linguist, Bishop Caldwell, claimed that Malayalam was an offshoot or a dialect of Tamil. To substantiate his theory, he cites the meanings of some of the words common to both Malayalis and Tamilians. For example, the word for east in Tamil and Malayalam is Kizhak, which etymologically means downward (low), and the word for west is Melk which etymologically means upward (high). Apparently for the Tamilians, the eastern part of their country is lower than the western part which is the Western Ghats. As the Malayalis use the same words with the same meaning Caldwell

⁶Ibid., p. 21.

contended that Malayalam originated from Tamil.⁷ Observing this, Logan says:

But it is quite as reasonable to suppose that the Dravidians, in finding names for east and west, selected words denoting that east was where the sun appeared from below, as it would seem to them, and west as the place where he similarly disappeared from above.⁸

To stress the filial relationship of Malayalam to Tamil this argument is no more accepted. However, the great Malayalam grammarian, A.R. Rajaraja Varma tried independently to establish this kind of relationship between Malayalam and Tamil.⁹

3. Merger Theory

There was another belief in a merger theory among scholars, not long ago. According to them, Malayalam is the daughter born of the union between Tamil and Sanskrit. However, present-day scholars are reluctant to accept this theory. Although Malayalam contains a strong vocabulary from Tamil and Sanskrit, vocabulary itself is not an indication of origin of language, for all the modern languages

⁷Caldwell, pp. 18-20. However padinjar is the most commonly used term for "west" in Malayalam. Author.

⁸William Logan, Manual of the Malabar District (Madras: Government Press, 1887 ; reprint 1906), p. 92.

⁹A.R. Rajaraja Varma, Kerala Paniniyam (Malayalam) (Kottayam: S.P.C. Society, 1895; rev. ed. 1968), p.35.

are constantly enriched in vocabulary by the development of other languages in the areas of science and technology. The determinant factor is the grammatical structure of a language. A language cannot borrow the grammar of another language. Malayalam has an independent dominion in the areas of grammar and syntaxes, of course, within the realms common to Dravidian family. Moreover, scholars like Max Muller are of opinion that a third language would not originate from the union of two distinct languages. The fusion of two languages to create a third language cannot be proved linguistically or historically; whereas the overlapping would enrich both languages individually.¹⁰

4. Proto-Dravidian Origin

Contemporary scholarship is reluctant to embrace all of these theories. Krishna Chaitanya says:

But we might also note that recent researches show that even in its origins it could not have been a daughter of Tamil. The indications are that Malayalam separated from the Proto-Dravidian tongue before--not after--Tamil separated from the same stock. Personal termination for the verb is found in Tamil; that is, the verb root takes on suffixes differing with person, gender and number. But Malayalam has only the tense termination and no additional personal endings. Almost all the scholars in the field are agreed that the primitive Dravidian language had no such personal endings for verbs in its earlier phase. Therefore, the probability is that Malayalam began its differential evolution from

¹⁰ M.K. Cherian, Bhasha Charitra Chintakal (Malayalam) (Kottayam: C.M.S. Press, 1970) pp. 26,27.

the parent language before the latter had developed this feature, and Tamil only after it had acquired it.¹¹

This position even supersedes the theory proposed by Dr. Gundert in his preface to A Malayalam and English Dictionary in 1871, wherein he stated that both Malayalam and Tamil are "dialects of the same member of the Dravidian family, than as separate languages."¹² Gundert suggested that Tamil and Malayalam were sisters born from the same parent. The modern studies indicate, as seen above, that Malayalam is an elder sister of Tamil.

Dr. K. M. George, who established this position has conducted extensive research in this area and presented evidence indicating the existence of Malayalam prior to that of Tamil.

(a) Personal Terminations. According to George, the absence of personal suffixes indicates its independent existence prior to Tamil. The Proto-Dravidian language lacks the personal terminations of Tamil.

(b) Influence of Sanskrit on Malayalam. Sanskrit influence on Dravidian languages was observed after the fifth century A.D. Tamil is the least influenced by

¹¹Krishna Chaitanya, A History of Malayalam Literature (New Delhi: Orient Longman Ltd., 1971), p. 15.

¹²Rev. H. Gundert, A Malayalam and English Dictionary (N.p., 1881; reprint ed. Gesamtherstellung, W. Germany: Proff & Co. Kg., 1970), p. iii.

Sanskrit because it was rich by that time. If Malayalam, which was most influenced by Sanskrit, is an offshoot of Tamil, which was already developed as a rich language by the first century A.D. and therefore did not welcome the interference of Sanskrit, it would have inherited the same advanced character of Tamil. The legitimate conclusion is that Malayalam separated from the parent Dravidian language before Tamil, and was enclosed within the geographically unreachable corner of the continent having been cut off from the rest of the language cultures by the Western Ghats. This kept it as an undeveloped language. When Sanskrit began to exert its influence, Malayalam embraced Sanskrit for its own enrichment.

(c) System of Inheritance and Customs. The matriarchal system of family inheritance is peculiar to Kerala. There are other social customs which differ from those of the Tamil people. Quoting Dr. C.A. Menon, Dr. George says that differences in customs and systems of inheritance are not just accidental. It is very probable that Malayalis and Tamils remained without contact for centuries; which would only explain their cultural and social disparity, in the absence of evidence that they were two distinct people. They were, in fact, one and the same people, but separated long ago when both inherited the Proto-Dravidian tongue,

but during the time of their separation developed their own languages independently. If Malayalam had originated from Tamil, the Malayalis would have inherited a major portion of Tamil culture, which they did not.

(d) Phonological Consideration. The presence of "a" ending in Malayalam, and that of the semi-"u"-vowel (Samvrtokaram) in Malayalam are more primitive than their corresponding terminals in Tamil. Similarly, several verbal suffixes indicate an antiquity prior to Tamil. This indicates the separation of Malayalam before that of Tamil.¹³

Other examples of circumstantial evidence that Dr. George uses to support his position are of interest: Even now there are Tamilians in Kerala who speak Tamil at home and Malayalam outside. These communities are believed to have come to Kerala as early as the tenth century A.D. or prior to that traceable to the sixth or seventh century A.D. The Kammalan castes, previously explained in Chapter I, are examples. If the language of Kerala was Tamil, these castes should not have kept bilingualism, and there was only need for a monogenic evolution of language in their families, i.e., into Malayalam. They should not have retained Tamil

¹³K.M. George, Ramacaritam and Early Malayalam (Kottayam: The National Book Stall, 1956), pp. 76-98.

in their families. This is a de facto evidence that Malayalam was a distinct language in Kerala when those communities migrated to Kerala; and they were necessitated to retain their mother tongue, Tamil, at home.

Similarly the study of aphorisms and proverbs would shed further light on the issue. The old sayings in Malayalam have no identity with similar ones in Tamil. These old dicta are morphologically and phonologically near modern Malayalam; and far away from ancient Tamil. They do not have Tamil terminals. Some of them are ascribed to as early as fifth century A.D.; if Tamil was the language of Kerala at that time, these dicta would definitely have possessed some elements of Tamil language structure.¹⁴ In view of the foregoing linguistic considerations scholars are of opinion that Malayalam separated from the mother-Dravidian before Tamil did; and Malayalam is an elder sister of Tamil.

D. The Malayalam Script and Alphabet

The modern Malayalam script is composed of basically Sanskrit and Dravidian sounds. This rich alphabet could designate almost all the sounds in any Indian language. This alphabet is believed to have come into

¹⁴K.M. George, A Survey of Malayalam Literature (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1968), pp. 7, 8.

vogue by the fifteenth century. Grandhalipi, or book-script, which was used all over South India since the seventh century A.D., was the basis of the present script. Historically, it was the manipravala literature (a mixture of Malayalam and Sanskrit vocabulary which we will discuss later) that introduced this script in Kerala. Dravidian languages adopted grandhalipi to denote Sanskrit sounds borrowed from Aryan culture.

Before grandhalipi was introduced, Malayalam used a script called Vattezhuth, which was also in currency in the Tamil-speaking areas. Vattezhuth is believed to have originated from Brahmi. Scholars assume that the root of Brahmi is the semitic script brought by Indian merchants from Babylonia around 1000 B.C.¹⁵ In fact, when the growth of Malayalam literature necessitated a modernization of script, Kerala adopted the present script from both vattezhuth and grandhalipi.

Vattezhuth was a kind of circular script which was preserved in Kerala until the eighteenth century; however, it disappeared from other parts of South India by the fifteenth century. From Vattezhuth derived another script called Kolezhuth. The shape of this script was oblong

¹⁵Ulloor Parameswara Iyer, Kerala Sahitya Charitram, vol. I, (Malayalam), 2nd impression (Trivandrum: University of Travancore, 1957), p. 427.

and it was written with a kol (stick). This script was more prevalent in Cochin and Malabar areas than in Travancore. There was also another script, Malayaymalipi, a branch of Vattezhuth, prevalent in South Travancore. All these three scripts were fundamentally the same. But as a parent script, Vattezhuth was in currency all over Kerala.

However, the existence of three scripts made reading and writing of Malayalam more tedious. Although Vattezhuth was uniformly accepted all over Kerala, it was incapable of denoting some of the Sanskrit sounds already in use. This situation paved the way for adopting grandhalipi which was already used by manipravala writers. By the nineteenth century the alphabet of Malayalam language became almost stabilized based on grandhalipi and Vattezhuth.¹⁶

The Malayalam alphabet has currently thirty-eight consonants and eighteen vowels including the semi-'u'-vowel. There are about five hundred characters in Malayalam including secondary vowel sounds and conjunct consonants. The multiplicity of characters poses difficulties to foreigners in mastering the Malayalam alphabet. Moreover, it is also a great obstacle for the Malayalam language to

¹⁶P.K. Parameswaram Nair, History of Malayalam Literature (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1967), p. 9.

keep pace with modern advancements in administration and business since an adequate typewriter cannot be devised to meet the present needs. Since 1968 there were attempts to reform the Malayalam script in the direction of reducing its number.¹⁷ However, the reforms so far made, do not seem to cope with the demands of the time.

E. Development of Early Malayalam

The origin and development of literature in any language always correspond to the development of education among its speakers. In Kerala, the development of Malayalam is an indication that its people began to experience need for an education. As the society grows more complex its interaction between the members gets more strong and viable with its language serving as a social link. In fact, language is the overpowering ligament that keeps them as a community. For that the growth of a language is inevitable; and language becomes a vehicle of social education. This is achieved only if the language becomes equipped to cater to the needs of the people.

It could be said that, in Kerala, Malayalam took the role of strengthening the society by educating the people even in its early period. It could be the other way too, the need for education must have influenced

¹⁷C.P. Sreedharan, Innathe Sahityakaranmar, p. 27.

language development. The development of Malayalam language and the craving for an educated mind must have gone hand in hand.

The development of literature, of course, was not meant for the rank and file, because literacy and education were intended for the princes and the nobility. However, Malayalam enjoyed an essential grassroots participation in the early stages of its development. These early developments took place much before the spreading of writing and reading. This development in Malayalam is characterized in the forms of its old sayings or pazhamchollukal, chants or tottam and folklore. They were not written, but were handed down orally through centuries.

These early forms of language development may not constitute literature as such. But their value as social education media cannot be disputed; and as such they are initial stages of educational evolution.

1. Chants and Pazhamchollukal (Old Sayings)

The most primitive form of poetry in Kerala is called tottams or chants. All of them belong to genuine Malayalam style; especially those from north Kerala. All of them are either religious or historical in content.

Poetic expression is the initial stage of the development of a language; language becomes a carrier of the emotional and rhythmical propulsion of the human

mind. This simple poetic ejection could be found in several old sayings. They are capsules of wit and wisdom of antiquity reaching as far back as the first century or earlier, coined without the interference of Sanskrit or Tamil. These old sayings consist of proverbs and riddles. They are educative and instructional and parents took pride in teaching them to their children.

The following proverbs will manifest their educative value:

"Annankunjum thannalayathu"; literally, "the baby squirrel does what it is capable of"; to stress self-responsibility and hard work among youngsters.

"Matiyan mala chumakkum"; literally, "the lazy would end up in carrying a mountain", instructing that the active and alert would find it easy to carry out even harder tasks, but for the lazy everything will turn heavy.

"Kadakkal nanachale talaykal podiyku", literally "water the root for buds at the top", stressing the right action at the right time and place before expecting good fruits.

All riddles are endowed with natural wisdom and wit; a few of them are given below:

"Oru kuppiyil randenna", literally "two oils in one bottle", meaning an egg.

"Kattil kidannavan kuttayi vannu", literally, "he who lay in the forest came for a companion", meaning a walking stick.

"Pinnale vannavan munnale poyi", literally, "he who came last, has gone first", meaning the tooth.

There are over 2,000 such old sayings in Malayalam throwing some light on social, occupational and martial life of early Malayalis.

2. Folklore

Folk literature, like old sayings are of purely indigenous origin, in the sense that there was no Tamil or Malayalam interference. Folk literature was never written and transmitted in the early period of its formation. It was basically an oral literature. Folk literature can be divided into two categories, i.e., the folk songs and the ballads. It is difficult to fix the date of the folk songs. The kind of language used in these songs is very much like the colloquial form; and there is a considerable degree of regionalism in them. The antiquity of ballads also cannot be fixed exactly. However, most of them are believed to belong to a period earlier than the twelfth century A.D., and some traceable back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹⁸ Like the old saying (Pazhamchollukal), there is no artificiality in the folk literature. The style

¹⁸ K.M. George, A Survey of Malayalam Literature, p. 27.

is lucid and exotic. All of the folk literature is poetic creations, but intelligible to the common man. Their meter, rhythm and melody are easily retained so that the rank and file could memorize them easily. The different folk songs and ballads will be dealt with later in another chapter.

F. Further Developments in Malayalam Literature

The early developments of Malayalam language are characterized in compositions which were transmitted and exchanged orally. The next major development of language took place in the form of written literature. While the earlier developments were a popular movement involving grassroots participation, the development of written literature was the result of attempts made by the then literati from the royalty and nobility. In other words, the written literature was a development meant for the people of the upper strata who had the time to enjoy a literary education.

Historians of Malayalam literature have classified this movement based on different criteria. For our convenience, we will briefly discuss them in the commonly accepted method of classifying them on the basis of impact each movement made to Malayalam literature. Every classification is arbitrary, as there is no established criterion to divide the development of a literature; and therefore this classification may be also considered so; but this has

the advantage of convenience.

Dr. K.M. George, in his A Survey of Malayalam Literature¹⁹ divides the developmental stages of Malayalam *and modern Malayalam starting from the fifteenth century* into early Malayalam, up to the fifteenth century; ^ In early Malayalam period, he includes the indigenous stream, the Tamil stream and the Sanskrit stream.

Since the indigenous stream does not utilize the literary style of a written language, we have conveniently discussed it representing the early stage of development. Malayalam as a literature starts only with the Tamil stream, and further proceeds with the Sanskrit stream and later settles down in a stage characterized by its simple poetic forms employing more common and intelligible Sanskrit and Malayalam vocabulary understood by ordinary people. This last stage starts with Krishnagatha in the middle of the fifteenth century (1427-1500).

So our discussion in this section will be limited to the Tamil and Sanskrit streams, and the final stage which is really the onset of modern literary education in Kerala, and as such the classical period of Malayalam literature. Many authors have called this last stage as modern period reaching as far as the present day. However, since the Malayalam language entered a new epoch of literary

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 12, 13.

activity after the introduction of modern education and of the literary styles of the rich English language, it would be inappropriate to include the latest stage under modern period. In fact, this latest stage is the contemporary period of Malayalam language, which will be touched upon when we deal with the impact of European education later.

1. The Tamil Stream

Tamil had a very rich literature at least from the first century A.D. The language reached its maturity in literature, grammar and syntaxes. But this enrichment was enjoyed by scholars and elites. On account of this, the literary language was conventionally separated from the common vernacular. In other words, classical Tamil was seldom understood by an ordinary Tamilian.

The same phenomenon was experienced in Kerala during the early middle ages when Tamil was the administrative language of the Kerala kings. They fostered Tamil literature and neglected the language of the people, which was Malayalam. Moreover, Tamil, a well-developed language by that time, exerted its influence on Malayalam, a less developed tongue in those days. This influence became intense as the rulers of the country were Tamil kings. This influence was noticeable at least until the arrival of the Portuguese.

One of the contributions of Tamil influence was the Pattusahityam (the school of song). Although pattu simply denotes song, here it signifies a specific verse form. Leelatilakam (fourteenth century), the oldest grammar, has clearly stated how a pattu can be made with certain prescribed metric form. The School of Song exactly "follows the Tamil tradition in prosody, rhyme and phonology. Even in grammar, the influence of Tamil is patent, for example, personal terminations are largely used for the verbs."²⁰

Ramacharitam is the most important work in this school in conformity with the style of the School of Song. This work contains the story of Rama as elaborated in Valmiki Ramayana. Although it was considered a Tamil work, it is difficult even for the Tamil scholars to understand, hence it is not accepted by them as a Tamil work. In fact, it was written in a bilingual dialect, which makes it at present difficult for both Malayalam and Tamil scholars to understand it fully. Despite its spurious linguistic style it is considered an eminent work. Even though its authorship and date cannot be exactly ascertained, it is believed to be a work of the twelfth or thirteenth century A.D. and written by a certain

²⁰Ibid., p. 30.

Chiraman.

Another set of poems ascribed to the School of Song is that of the poets of Niranam in central Travancore, commonly called Kannasan pattukal. They represent the transitional period of Malayalam. They are not restricted to the Tamil alphabet; Sanskrit sounds are lavishly used in them. The authors of these songs were Madhava Panikkar and Sankara Panikkar, both brothers, and Rama Panikkar, their nephew. All of them belonged to the same family in Niranam. Kannasan was the grandfather of the Panikkar brothers, and because of the former's reputation as a great master, the latter took his name when they wrote their poems.²¹ The period of their literary activities is between A.D. 1350 and A.D. 1450.

Bhagavatgita, Bharatamala, Ramayanam, Bhagavatam, Savitrimahatmyam, and Kannasa Bharatam are the major works of the Niranam poets. Bhagavatgita, a translation of Gita by one of the Kannasans, Madhava Panikkar, is said to be the first in any modern Indian language. He abridged it into half its original size, for the purpose of educating Kerala society in the principles of Hinduism. Bharatamala is another translation and abridgement of the Mahabharatam epic rendered by Sankara Panikkar. All of the Kannasan works are either translations or adaptations, written with the main

²¹P.K. Parameswaram Nair, History of Malayalam Literature, p. 39.

purpose of dissemination of Hindu religious and mythological stories. The last of the Kannasans, Rama Panikkar, outstands the rest of them for the intrinsic literary merit of his Ramayanam; were it not for its archaic language and metrical affinities with Tamil, it could have easily enjoyed wider popularity. Historians of Malayalam literature are of opinion that Ezhuttachan, the Milton of Malayalam language, was influenced by Rama Panikkar.

There are also other minor prose works falling under the category of the Tamil stream, such as the Bhasha Kautilyam, Duta Vakyam, and the like. A group of Thekkan pattukal (southern songs) contains heroic actions of Iravikuttipilla, and the love affair of the daughter of the Vaduka king with King Kulasekhara of Kerala. By tone they are similar to ballads. They generally inculcated social virtues like patriotism and courage besides immortalizing human love.

2. The Sanskrit Stream or Manipravala

Malayalam is one of the Dravidian tongues most influenced by Sanskrit classical literature. The overlapping influence of Sanskrit created a new form of literature proceeding the Tamil stream in Malayalam. This new form is called manipravala, mani meaning ruby, i.e., Malayalam,

and pravalam meaning coral, i.e., Sanskrit. The new form is like a necklace strung with rubies and corals.

According to P. Sankaran Nambiar, the Brahmans of Kerala were presumably

interested in leading by the hand the other less learned classes on to the fair fields of classical literature. . . Sanskrit vocabulary and grammar, administered in short and sweet doses, would be taken in by the average reader without much effort. He would thus be initiated to the intricacies of Sanskrit grammar in the course of his joyous poetical studies, almost without his own knowledge.²²

So the very motive prevalent in constructing the Manipravala literature could be considered as a step toward promotion and propagation of classical education. From what Nambiar assumes, we must believe that it was intended for the masses, although a minority of the population really benefited from such efforts.

Early manipravala poems start with Tholan who is believed to have lived prior to A.D. 1020. Several poems are ascribed to him although none is certain. Koodiyattam, a Sanskrit drama performed in the premises of temples, which is the predecessor of Chakkiyar Kooth, is attributed to Tholan. Among the manipravala works, the Vaisikatantram and the ancient Champus are worth mentioning.

Vaisikatantram, written probably in the eleventh century, is a notoriously erotic poem and deals with

²²K.M. George, A Survey of Malayalam Literature, p. 43.

vesyadharmam or duties of a prostitute. Champu is a literary style of poem composed in both prose and verse. Before manipravala Champus appeared, there already existed Sanskrit Champus, and the former are imitations of the latter. There are several manipravala Champus whose themes are one and the same: the life of unmarried danseuses. Most of them were written between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Champus were mainly written for entertainment through performing arts; and therefore the themes were centered on dancers and harlots. In general, whether Champus or other categories, most of the manipravala poems were stories of danseuses and courtesans, with the exception of some which were eulogies of kings. The Malayalam manipravals are a mirror of the medieval society. They depicted the life of the Hindu priesthood, royalty, nobility and the temple servants. There were devadasis and temple prostitutes at that time, and their relationship with the members of the upper strata was satirically dealt with in those poems.

Another important contribution of the manipravala movement was the message poems or sandesakavyas modelled after the Meghadoot of Sanskrit poet Kalidasa. There are message poems in Sanskrit, manipravala and Malayalam composed by Kerala poets. Just as the Champus, these poems

were also written from inspiration from danseuses and courtesans. The theme is again the same: the hero sends a message to his lover who is far away from him through a messenger. This messenger could be an animal or an inanimate object. The earlier part of the poem describes the route through which the messenger could travel and the place where the heroine lives. The latter part describes the beauty of the lover and her identification marks, and the very message. The sandesakavyas also glorify love and delve in arousing erotic sentiments. The major message poems are the Unnunili Sandesam, Kokasandesam, and the Kakasandesam.

The manipravala literary activities continued until the sixteenth century. The central motive of this movement was introduction of Sanskrit puranas to the ordinary people. Although it was the social picture of a fraction of the Kerala population, its impact on the people was great. The interest it created among the people continued in the form of learning languages, both Malayalam and Sanskrit, and of investigation into Sanskrit classics.

However, when more and more people from the middle and lower strata got interested, the trend was a concerted effort to mobilize their development activities toward their own mother tongue. With the riches they had reaped

from Sanskrit classics, they turned to concentrate on enriching Malayalam. This was the first trend toward popularization of literary education in Kerala. The proponents of this movement felt the need that the common people should understand what they read without an interpreter. The chief proponents of this movement are Cherussevi and Ezhuttachan, the latter being the father of modern Malayalam literature.

3. The Modern Period

This period starts with the literary activities of Cherusseri Nambudiri, the author of Krishna Gatha (fifteenth century). Speaking of Cherusseri, P.K. Parameswaran Nair says:

The theme of his magnum opus--the story of Krishna as told in the Bhagavata--and its inescapable association with the thought-patterns of the Aryans would normally necessitate the adoption of the Manipravala medium, but it would seem as though he was deliberate in linking the idiom of his poetry as intimately with the spoken tongue of Kerala as possible. Thus Krishna Gatha was in a sense a challenge to the champus of the later Manipravala phase which not only borrowed the vocabulary of Sanskrit unreservedly but even its inflexions. Cherusseri was erudite in Sanskrit, was well versed in the puranas and, being a Nambutiri, was bred in the best traditions of Aryan culture. Yet, first and foremost, he was a Malayali, and wrote his Kavya for the edification of the Malayalis. Indeed he was the first poet anterior to Ezhuttachan to handle the purana with a vision and individuality of his own, and the pioneer to strike the first notes of modernism in Malayalam poetry.²³

²³P.K. Parameswaran Nair, History of Malayalam Literature, p. 51.

Such was the genius of Cherusseri that while being a Sanskrit scholar he could reach the ordinary people and write his work in their language. His language is so simple that an upper primary school child could follow it. The meter he used was indigenous. He did not want to follow the Sanskrit or Tamil meters commonly used by scholars. In fact, he utilized the musical folk meters already employed by the folk literature; and therefore memorization becomes easier.

Ezhuttachan, who is believed to have lived in the sixteenth century, was another eminent literary man who fashioned the Malayalam language with fixity of structure and form. He was not a Brahman; but he mastered all that was required of Brahmanic scholarship. Well versed in Sanskrit and puranas he was unequalled by Brahman scholars. But he directed his ingenuity in strengthening the edifice of his own mother tongue by upholding the indigenous tenets. He believed that literature was meaningful only if the rank and file have any use of it.

His opera magna are the Adhyatma Ramayanam and the Mahabharatam. Both were written as if a parrot was narrating the whole story; hence the name Kilippatt, i.e., the song of the parrot or bird. The popular belief that the poet would experience the same calamities narrated

by him in an epic has forced several poets to substitute a bird in his place to tell the story. Ezhuttachan must have employed this conventional method. He also utilized several indigenous meters popularized and standardized by himself; and as such they are musical.

Besides the above-mentioned works he has also written other classical works of importance, all devotional literature. Dr. K.M. George explains why Ezhuttachan has become a powerful literary figure in Kerala:

For a literary work to move large masses of people over long periods, it should have spiritual, artistic and linguistic worth. Then only can it attain the status of a classic. Pattu literature had some spiritual and artistic worth, but its language could not reach the generality of the people. Manipravala poems also had the same drawback. Further, though they were much better from the artistic point of view, they lacked spiritual content. There was, therefore, a need for evolving a literary language more profound and effective than the language of the folk songs, and for using such a language for spiritually significant poetry. This was achieved to some extent in Krishna Gatha. But for its full efflorescence, it had to wait till a master like Ezhuthachan entered the field. Ezhuthachan's works are superior to Krishna Gatha because of their spiritual appeal and their wider range of expression. Ezhuthachan thus set a standard for generations to follow.²⁴

After Ezhuttachan, several other poets imitated him in the Kilipattu style; although none of them made any significant contributions.

²⁴K.M. George, A Survey of Malayalam Literature, p. 71.

Before we close this chapter, a brief discussion about the development of prose literature in Malayalam would complement this treatise. The development of prose literature usually takes place at a later stage in every language. Although Malayalam is not an exception to this process, the rudimentary stage of such a process is worthy of attention.

The first major work in prose is Kautiliyam, found in the Tamil stream, probably written in the tenth century A.D. It is a hermeneutic rendering of Kautilya's Arthasastra (Economics). We are not, however, sure if this work has made any impact on the public as an educational tool, although it is claimed to have possessed clarity of expression,²⁵ especially when dealing with a topic like public finance.

There were also two works illustrating the theories and procedures of Koodiyattam, called the attaprakaras and Kramadeepika, both of which had imperfections compared to the prose we have now. But these two works belong to the Manipravala style.

Generally speaking, most prose works or recordings until the eighteenth century contained a predominantly Tamil element except some of the writings related to the

²⁵P.K. Parameswaran Nair, History of Malayalam Literature, p. 79.

native Christians and missionaries. For example, the language used by the Diamper Synod (1599) indicates the genuine style of Malayalam as spoken by the people of Kerala.²⁶ As a rule, prose was never considered part of literature and whoever attempted to communicate with a prose style was frowned upon.

The overall struggle for development of language indicates the stages of development of literary education and its dissemination. In the Kerala society, like any other, this was not meant for the masses. However, this development becomes the basis for whatever educational experiments the people of Kerala have made in the past few centuries. The growth of language did enhance cultural enhancement and as such it has served as a foundation for educational aspirations of the people of Kerala at least until the introduction of western education.

²⁶C.P. Sreedharan, p. 31.

CHAPTER IV

AESTHETIC FOUNDATIONS

A. Prelude

The intent of this chapter is to examine the formation of educational awareness among the people of Kerala since early times through various forms of art. As noted earlier, here too, the focus is education in its generic form; by which we mean the dissemination of information in every aspect of the life of a people and the acquisition of basic skills in communication through the medium of language.

In the previous chapter we discussed at length the various developments in the Malayalam language in its formative period. The different movements from folk literature through Ezhuttachan are indicative of the efforts made to render literary scholarship relevant to the people. These developments gave rise to the aesthetic components of Kerala culture. In Kerala, educational achievement cannot be cut off from aesthetic heritage since the very culture is imbued with it.

The primary educational tools of all ancient people were the songs and poetry from which they derived intellectual

and mental excitement. The poetic composition, whether folklore or epics, were instrumental to induce people to intellectual curiosity in the realm of literature. Now, the results created by the literary activity of a particular culture or language have direct impact on the formation of an intellectual mind although it was not scientific or technological in the modern sense. The literary activities pursued through the centuries were primarily intended to please the human mind. They cultivated mental and intellectual pleasure in their creators and their appreciators.

Even after the introduction of western education, Kerala has adequately utilized the resources contained in the aesthetic components of its culture for the enhancement of education. After Independence when the state launched its own educational priorities, these components have influenced educational planners considerably. Consideration of aesthetic development is important not only in planning for education, but also in understanding how the past generation has achieved its educational goal.

In the early period, aesthetic development was a contribution of the people as a whole, whereas in the later period, it was a contribution of the litterati. The latter wrote poems for their own enjoyment and for the appreciation of a few; but when they were presented in

art form, the generality of the people derived pleasure from it in temples or public places. In fact, that was one of the ways the contents of religion and mythology were transmitted to the people. In either case, the beneficiaries were the rank and file.

There are several movements in the aesthetic tradition of the history of Kerala. We will touch upon them in their sequential order.

B. Folk Literature

Historians of Malayalam literature have identified the initial stage of aesthetic awareness of the people of Kerala in the folk literature. It, as a whole, comes under the indigenous stream of the development of Malayalam language. Folk poems are not generally considered under literary activity since they were not composed in a written language with linguistic accuracy in grammar or fixity in meters, although there are several of them already collected and published in recent times.

Folk literature may be classified into two; folk songs and ballads. Both folk songs and ballads are musical in their composition, and they are real poems as they are the artistic and rhythmic expression of human emotions in words.

1. Folk Songs

Folk songs are older than ballads. They are musical melodies, pleasing the ears and satisfying the mind. Generally, the folk songs do not contain any stories in them. They are mostly songs meant for certain occasions, and for encouraging quick action in occupations. There are several folk songs in Kerala and they could be categorized as follows:

(a) Marriage Songs: Like any other people, the Keralites consider marriage a happy occasion, for not only the bride and groom, but also for the families associated with them. There are several songs suitable for this occasion. For example, the Nayars had such songs for the games conducted during the marriage festivities. Similarly, they also had songs for the talikett kalyanam which was conducted even before a girl attained puberty.¹

The native Christians of Malabar always had a treasury of marriage songs. The marriage festivities, which start and conclude in one day, at the present time, were conducted for almost a week in early times. The

¹Tali is a golden leaf in the shape of a heart, tied around the neck of the bride. Kettu means "tying," and kalyanam means marriage. This ceremony is not the actual marriage; it is only a symbol of marriage which will take place when they are physically mature for married life; and it is not necessary that the actual marriage should take place between the same pair.

Roman Catholic Syrians began to use such songs starting from the ottu kalyanam i.e., the ceremony held in the church to exchange matrimonial consent.

However, generally the festivities start with the building of the marriage pantal;² and during which time the members of the family and other participants sing such songs. Similarly, the bride and the groom, on the night before their wedding, are served with sweets after an oil bath; this ceremony is also accompanied by such songs. Other important ceremonies that require the singing of marriage songs are the hair-cutting of the groom, procession to the church for the wedding and back home after the wedding, on the fourth day after the wedding when the couple takes their bath, and the door opening (of the chamber) ceremony.

These are not the only occasions marriage songs are sung; since there are many occasions connected with the marriage festivities, the singing might continue all day long until the celebrations are over. There are several folk dances which could be performed during the marriage celebrations.³

²A temporary shed, in the front yard of the house, made of bamboo and palm leaves or other materials to accommodate the participants of the marriage feast and to construct the nuptial chamber.

³P.J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Contributions of Christians, pp. 35-36.

(b) Onapatt (Songs for the Onam Festival):

Onam is a festival celebrating the return of Mahabali, the legendary asura⁴ king who ruled Kerala long, long ago. During his benevolent rule, the people enjoyed full prosperity and equality. There were no crimes whatsoever. His reputation as an exemplary king was so widespread in the world and in the heavens, that the devas (gods) lost their position among the humans, and the people no more needed the favors of gods. The devas got envious and the chief of the gods, Vishnu, came down in the form of a vamana (a puny boy), to test the integrity and honesty of Mahabali.

The vamana, one day, came to the palace of Mahabali and requested a place to live. The king was unaware of the plot. He was ashamed to see a poor man in his kingdom, so he offered any help vamana needed. He said he needed only three feet of land. The king asked him to measure three feet of land and possess it from anywhere in his kingdom. With two feet vamana measured the entire land of the kingdom, and asked for the third foot; showing his

⁴In Hindu mythology, devas are gods; and asuras are demons, not necessarily devils in the Christian conception of the term. All asuras are not necessarily evildoers. In this context, the asura king Mahabali was a benevolent ruler.

actual magnitude by this time. Being true to his promise, and realizing that there was no more land left, the king requested vamana to place his third foot on his head. Not only vamana did that, but also pushed him down to the hell, the lower regions of the earth, so that he would never come back to earth. Realizing his own helplessness, Mahabali made a final request that he should be permitted to visit his people once a year, and it was granted.

On one of the important days of the Onam holidays, i.e., tiru onam, people believe that Mahabali visits them.⁵

Onam, celebrated in the month of September, is now the harvest festival for the Keralites, equivalent to the Thanksgiving holidays in the United States. The festivities are characterized by preparations of different varieties of rich foods; they are meaningful, especially after a couple of indigent months of heavy monsoon preceding them.

There are several games played during the Onam days, and appropriate songs accompany them.

(c) Lullaby Songs: There are several songs belonging to the lullaby variety. They are intended to

⁵ P.K. Geevarghese, A Changing Small Town in South India (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979), pp. 7-9.

induce infants to sleep in their cradles. They can be considered having any artistic value. However, the quality of their music and rhyme is soul-penetrating, in the greatness of which the babies hide themselves and get into deep sleep.

(d) Elegies: The chanting of elegies is a common feature among the low castes, especially the pulayas, when their beloved ones pass away, for a couple of days. They have quite a few traditional songs to be sung in elegiac form. The language of elegies are very primitive, that an educated person unaware of the custom and the undeveloped language of the low castes cannot easily follow.

Though the songs are not intended for happy occasions, the tone of the music will penetrate into the hearts of the listeners and move them too, to sorrow; such is the artistic style they are endowed with.

(e) Thiruvathirappatt (The Song of Thiruvathira): Thiruvathira is a festival celebrated by young Hindu ladies to appease Kama Deva, the god of love, by singing and dancing. Women of all ages usually participate in it. For a person who is not familiar with the artistic genre of thiruvathira, the performance would look erotic.

The praises are based on the contents of both epics of India. It is customary that these songs are also used

during the Onam festivities.

(f) Religious Songs: There are several religious folk songs, some of which are still in use during religious feasts. Once the Keralites were serpent worshippers, and there are quite a few serpent songs, called sarpapatt.

There are also many other songs to appease different Hindu deities; such as kalampattu, bhadrakalippatt, thiyatt, navettupatt, velanpatt, chattupatt, etc. Navettupatt is a form for exorcism performed by a pulluva (one of the lowest castes) woman. The chattupatt is chanted for the protection of minor gods.

(g) Miscellaneous Folk Songs: There are some boat songs (vanchippatt) to be performed during great water shows. It is with the triumphant push of boat song, that one boat is led ahead of others in boat races during these water shows. Tens of thousands of people would gather on both banks of the river to watch these boat races and to get excited by the singing of the men who paddle fast according to the rhythm to win trophies. Boat races are one of the ancient recreational and artistic activities in the history of Kerala.

There are also vocational songs, such as Nadichilpatt (song of planting), neythupatt (songs for the occasions of weaving mats and making baskets), and the like. These

vocational songs do not have any contents; it is their rhythm that makes them important in folklore.

2. Folk Dramas

They are dramas in the broad sense of the word; even though their form is unscientific.

The folk dramas in Kerala are divided into four categories by Dr. S.K. Nayar, such as Ritualistic, Pseudo-ritualistic, Pseudo-classic and Secular.⁶ However, the nature of most of the folk dramas in Kerala overlap one another in their characteristics. There are numerous folk dramas in Kerala.

Some of them are briefly described below:

(a) Mudiyett: This is a ritualistic drama performed to appease goddess Kali. This drama is usually acted in groves under the guidance of masters who have been traditionally trained for that purpose. During the performance, the drama reaches its climax in the midst of dancing and singing.

(b) Thiyatt: Thiyatt is conducted primarily to drive away evil spirits and to obtain fertility. This

⁶S.K. Nayar, Folk-Dramas of Kerala (Malayalam) (Madras: University of Madras, 1955 (first ed.), 1962 (second ed.)), pp. 31-32.

type of drama could be performed either in a grove or in a house. There are two types of thiyatt, one in honor of goddess Kali, and the other in honor of god Ayyappan. Songs are a very important ingredient in these ritualistic dramas.

(c) Miscellaneous Variety: Theyyattam, Ayyappanpatt, etc. are some other ritualistic dramas; all of which are, again, to please individual deities. Theyyattam is a dance-drama, wearing the costume of a particular deity to be pleased. Ayyappanpatt is a performance for the favor of god Ayyappa, before a devotee prepares to go on a pilgrimage to Sabarimala, a shrine on the Western Ghatts.

Yatrakali which is also called Sanghakali, is another folk drama conducted during important turning points of a person's life, such as marriage, first rice feeding, first birthday, etc. Its origin is from the Hindu gymnasium.⁷ This is considered a pseudo-ritualistic play.

There are also a few music dramas that have taken their stories from the puranas, such as the Meenakshi Kalyanam (the wedding of Meenakshi) and the Kamsanatakam (a drama about Kamsa), both of which are classified as pseudo-classic.

⁷A. Sreedharan Menon, Cultural Heritage of Kerala: An Introduction (Cochin: East-West Publications, 1978), p. 91.

Besides these, there are several secular plays; Purattunatakam, Kakkachinatakam and Kurathiattam are worth mentioning among them. General theme of these dramas is the love-quarrel between married couples. And it is generally observed that these may not be an entertainment for the whole family, and people of higher social strata look down upon them.

Although some of the folk songs and dramas are of relatively recent origin, most of them are very primitive. Therefore, any assumptions about the date of origin of the folk literature belonging to these categories, are mere conjectures. The one thing we could reasonably conclude is that, although all of them belong to the early developing stage of Malayalam, going down to the early centuries of Christian era, they also have undergone changes in their forms without any radical alterations in its linguistic structure, and the idioms, which are peculiar to the Malayalam language.

3. Ballads

Many of the ballads of the folklore are still enjoyed by the people of Kerala because they inspire them about the past, and they are a matter of pride for them. Like any other folk literature, the date of ballads also cannot be ascertained. While we know that some of them

are very ancient, they can be traced to the twelfth century A.D. However, there are some recent ones belonging to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁸

Ballads could be classified as historical, religious and heroic; among them the majority are heroic.

The Vadakkan Pattukal, or northern Kerala ballads, deal with some of the ancient heroes. Thacholi Othenan is one of those heroes depicted in one of them, and the Othenan ballad is well known in Kerala. He is a representative of the martial age of Kerala. Aromal Chevakar is another hero glorified in a ballad. Both of these ballads inspire the present generation about the military skills once Kerala people enjoyed. Women were also actively engaged in martial arts; and there are also women characters in these ballads. Although of heroic nature, they are historical too, because these heroes were historical personalities.

There are some Thekkan pattukal, or southern Kerala ballads, which could be rightly called historical, because they tell the battle stories of Iravikuttippillai and members of royalty in Travancore.

Similarly, some of the native Christian ballads, such as parichamuttukali and margamkali are martial and

⁸K.M. George, A Survey of Malayalam Literature, p. 27.

historical in nature. The parichamuttukali is one of the remnants of Christian soldiery. The native Christians once had their military training schools and were active soldiers. The parichamuttukali is a military dance with swords, staged by several trained men in their military costume. It usually is performed, even now, during the patron saint's day of the parish; and was an integral part of the wedding feasts of the well-to-do.⁹ The language of its songs is still archaic. The margamkali, the song of which is over four hundred feet long with fourteen different meters, is performed by twelve trained men in dancing during razas (patron's day processions) of the parish churches. Like the former, this ballad was also used during the wedding festival. Both of them had a central theme, the arrival of St. Thomas the Apostle to Kerala and his apostolate. The songs of the margamkali¹⁰ were very old, but the language used at present, must have been refined by one Father Itti Thomman of Kalicherry in the seventeenth century A.D.¹¹ There is another ballad used by the native Christians, entitled the Ramban's patt

⁹ P.J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Contributions of Christians, p. 52.

¹⁰ Margam means way, the way of salvation as preached by St. Thomas; and kali means play. It is a play about the salvation preached by St. Thomas.

¹¹ P.J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Contributions of Christians, p. 57.

(Monk's song). This is believed to be written by one Ramban Thomas, baptized by St. Thomas himself. Another monk (Ramban) born in the forty-eighth generation of the Maliekal family of Nirananam, to which the former Ramban belonged, abridged it in 1601, which fact is recorded in the present song. Anyhow, the Sanskrit vocabulary in the ballad indicates that it is a seventeenth century composition, although it must have existed prior to that period.¹² There are also similar historical ballads in the Christian community explaining the origin of a particular church or about some bishops who ruled the native Christians.

Kerala is not a single community; it is the conglomeration of several social and religious communities. Each of these communities have contributed to the life of Kerala. Muslims are not an exception to this. The mappila pattukal, or the songs of the Malabar Muslims peculiarly picture the early Muslim life. The sentiments of these ballads are both heroic and erotic with their full expression in them. But the language is an admixture of Malayalam and Arabic; and the heroes are Muslims. Among the numerous ballads of the Malabar Muslims, Pikhana,

¹²Ibid., p. 61.

Miaraj Pattukal, Kompilpatt, Vakavalipatt, Daniel N'bipatt, Isa N'bipatt, Ibrahim N'bipatt, Trikkalyanapatt, Kachavatapatt and so on, are famous ones.¹³

In general, the folk literature of Kerala is a simple, natural form of human expression. It is beautiful and appealing. These authors were not men of scholarship in language or arts; still their spontaneous versification of human feelings is penetrating. They were transmitted orally from generation to generation. These songs always danced in the hearts of everyone whether a member of the downtrodden lowest caste or a member of the nobility. These songs carry a stamp of ancient Dravidian culture and heritage, and they talk loud about the past society.

No social criticism, apparently, is meant by the anonymous bards, but some kind of a backcloth had to be supplied by them for the actions of their heroes and heroines, and from this we could decipher the set up of that feudal society--the customs and manners of the people, their customs of marriage and inheritance, the features of their domestic ceremonies and the temple festivals, their beliefs, superstitions, education and physical training, status of women, the pastimes of the community and the general pattern of social behavior. It cannot be said that the ballads are of any high literary standard, but their naivete is indeed charming.¹⁴

says Parameswaran Nair.

¹³C. N. A. Moulavi and K. K. M. Abdul-Kareem, Mahataya Mappila Sahitya Parampariam (Malayalam) (Calicut: Parasparasahayi Co-operative Press, 1978), pp. 234-249.

¹⁴P.K. Parameswaran Nair, History of Malayalam Literature, pp. 47-48.

From the folk literature, we understand the structure of language and the common idioms used. The idioms are simple and unartificial, but they are sharp.

Most of these folk forms of literature are in the process of being revived and restored, because the educational system encourages such steps. Teachers are generally enthusiastic about learning them and teaching them to students. During festivals connected with school anniversaries and other social and national holidays, these forms of folk arts are regenerated to the full appreciation of the parents and the community people, thus finding a place for folk literature in the educational community.

Moreover, many poets tried to recreate additional songs and dramas to enrich the existing folk literature in simple and unartificial style; they are broadcast on radios to generate interest among the people for folk literature. Because of these attempts, the not very comfortable attitude shown by the litterati toward folk literature is slowly changing.

C. Modern Art Forms

By modern art forms we mean every form of artistic value not counted in the folk literature, excluding any contemporary arts. They are related to the development of literature; hence their history might be traced to the

tenth or eleventh century A.D. All of these art forms are associated with the religious life of the people of Kerala. Therefore, they were performed either in temples or churches.

To be very specific, Christian communities did not create many such forms until after the Portuguese intervened in their religion. Until that time, the native Christians, as a society, were intertwined with the Hindu society in their customs and manners. They attended whatever the predominantly Hindu society offered in the form of recreation. It was the Portuguese prelates who put a ban on attending Hindu performances because they considered them detrimental to the Christian faith. Therefore, the little contribution made by the Christians was in developing a pseudo-classical drama, called chavittunatakam, combining western opera and eastern kathakali (a dance-drama of Kerala), which will be discussed later. In the main, therefore, these art forms stayed within the courtyards and premises of Hindu temples. These are not as simple and natural as the aesthetic elements contained in the folk literature as we have seen.

1. Temple Arts

Hindu concept of art is divine; it originates as a result of revelation by gods. The relation between art and Hindu religion is so intense. Siva is supposed to have molded the world by setting its first rhythm in motion by

dance. Siva is believed to be dancing with his son Ganesa on the Kailasa of the Himalayas. He even defeated his wife, Parvati, who was also dancing with him, by an immodest behavior in his dancing. Although dancing is peculiarly dear to gods, all art performances are basically intended for appeasing them. Therefore, the temples became centers of art education and stages for art performances. Several art forms flourished in temple precincts in Kerala. Some of them are briefly discussed below.

(a) Bharata Natyam: One of the most mesmerizing arts of India, Bharata Natyam, became an integral part of temple activity in Kerala before the twelfth century A.D. There is sculptural evidence to prove this from the Trivikramamanglam temple assigned to the twelfth century A.D.¹⁵

The scientific principles governing the performance of Bharata Natyam are ascribed to Bharata who wrote the Bhara Natya Sastra (3 B.C. to 5 A.D.). In fact, the very name derived from the author of this work. He is also the patron saint of the dance. It is believed that all Indian dances owe their allegiances to Bharata; but Bharata Natyam is supposed to be the most loyal to him. And it is the most classical and pure form of dance in

¹⁵ A. Sreedharan Menon, Cultural Heritage of Kerala: An Introduction, p. 91.

India. This form of dance must have been brought from Tamilnad as that region of the Indian Peninsula cultivated and nurtured it since its inception.

Bharata Natyam was preserved through oral tradition. Extreme articulation of the dancer's body with endless series of various postures, leaps, turns and bends is the essential component of this dance.

Sometimes the arm is extended and the hand limply hangs down. The leg is extended and the foot rests upward on its heel. The flat palm of the hand is frequently shown to the audience. From the basic posture of Bharata Natya, which is extended palms at right angles to the forearm, as well as in movements which sweep the exposed palm across the dancer's body, one is made aware of the special beauty in the surface of the palm in movement. . . The various parts of feet, ankles, toes, and knees create a symmetry which balances the body from top to bottom, in the same way that the hands equalize it from right to left.¹⁶

The astounding speed in artistic expressions and actions renders it an electrifying energy keeping the audience spellbound. Of course, this dance was not only dear to gods, but also to humans who wanted to be in a trance at the presence of the gods in the temple.

The dance starts with devotional music that sets the background for the performance. It is performed according to the melody and content of the music. The

¹⁶Faubion Bowers, The Dance in India (New York: AMS Press, 1967), pp. 22-23.

accompaniment of instrumental sounds heightens the captivation of the dance.

Bharata Natyam was performed by temple dancers, generally called devadasis, meaning maids of the deity. Religious dance tradition was kept alive for centuries by these devadasis. There used to be several devadasis in one temple. Unfortunately, the system became extinct in Kerala by the eighteenth century when devadasis were severely criticized because of moral corruption. The devadasis became respectable prostitutes for the temple priesthood and the nobility; and it was even considered a virtuous act. Thus, the devadasis betrayed their noble call of service at the temple, finally damaging several aesthetic elements of Hindu temple activities. The popular pressure against devadasi system did not foster it anymore in temple.

Because these dancers were indulged in immorality, the average man began to look at the very act suspiciously, as if it was promoting immorality. Due to this misconception, dancing was not considered a noble profession, and only girls belonging to the lower socio-economic class ever went to learn dancing. As far as Bharata Natyam is concerned, the impetus of growth was lost, and it began to disappear from the temples. The trend is currently

changing due to elevated awareness of native art forms and the appreciation of the classical nature of indigenous arts. Modern education is very active in inculcating positive understanding about the almost dead art forms and reviving them in their original forms.

The main features of the Bharata Natyam are nrtha which consists of rhythmical movements without a story or melody, and nrtya which consists of a story with gestures according to the accompaniment of vocal and instrumental music. The latter developed into several other forms of art in Kerala which we will deal with subsequently.

Even before Bharata Natyam was accepted into Kerala culture, there were some other temple arts, such as Kudai Kooth (umbrella dance) and Kuda Kooth (pot dance). According to A. Sreedhara Menon, these two ancient forms "achieved a high degree of perfection" in the eleventh century.¹⁷

(b) The Chakkia Kooth: Kooth means play, and Chakkia is the title of the actor who played this form of art. This form derived from the nrtya aspect of Bharata Natyam. This is a monoact. The actor performs the roles of all characters of a puranic story. He could be considered a social critic who enjoyed full immunity while

¹⁷A. Sreedhara Menon, Cultural Heritage of Kerala, p. 91.

performing. As a satirist, he found relevance for the puranas in the existing society of his time. He criticized the nobility and the priesthood with his humor and jokes.

Kooth is performed only on the stage of Koothampalam (temple stage for Kooth), with the accompaniment of music for the chakiar's performances. Drums and cymbals are used as instruments. The chakiar would recite Sanskrit verses in a melody peculiar to religious chanting, and interpret them for the understanding of the audience with witticism. Usually the drummers belong to the Nambiar caste. The Sanskrit verses began to be slowly replaced by an admixture of Malayalam and Sanskrit form of poetry called Manipravalam which we have dealt with in the previous chapter.

The intent of this art form, besides providing entertainment for the audience, was instruction in puranas and Hindu doctrines. Authors are of the opinion that this form of art must have started at least with the age of Tholan in the eleventh century.¹⁸ However, many authors hold that it must have been in existence starting between the second and fifth centuries A.D. on the basis of a reference made to a Chakkiar in the ancient Tamil work,

¹⁸K.M. George, A Survey of Malayalam Literature, p. 45.

Chilappatikaram of Ilankovadikal, the brother of the Chera king, Chenkuttavan, in the second century A.D.¹⁹

The Chakkiar Kooth was performed in connection with temple festivals all over Kerala; and it is still an indispensable program along with the festivities in some temples.

(c) Koodiyattam: Koodiyattam etymologically means "dancing together"; so it required more than one actor. The Chakkiars and the females of the Chakkiar family (nangiars) were active collaborators in this performance, wherein the Chakkiar performs the male role and the nangiars perform the female roles. The ladies also sound the cymbals and sing the Sanskrit verses. The nambiar sounds the Mizhav, a metal drum. A clown will help the audience by translating the Sanskrit verses. The Attaprakaras and the Kramadeepika ascribed to Tholan illustrated scientific principles of proper performance of the Koodiyattam. The non-verbal expressions of the art were regulated by the nryta aspects of Bharata natyam.

Like the Chakkiar Kooth, the Koodiyattam also was a puranic exposition in art form. Manipravala was the standard text of verses for the clown. The actors, especially the main actor--Chakkiar, had to wear special

¹⁹Clifford R. Jones and Betty True Jones, Kathakali, An Introduction to the Dance-Drama of Kerala (San Francisco: The American Society for Eastern Arts, 1970), p. 9.

costumes and makeup. Usually the performance lasted for several days, to almost a month.

Because of the complexities of performance, this art form began to lose its importance in temple activities. However, a few temples in central Kerala even at present, encourage its performance annually.²⁰

(d) Kathakali: Kathakali literally means "story play," but it is often paraphrased as "dance-drama." The evolution of this drama is originally from Chakkia Kooth via Koodiyattam. Although the Koodiyattam was meant for people of all walks, it was the artistically minded and more literate who enjoyed it most. The disinterest of the common people led to the creation of other forms.

The Chakkia themselves, because of this popular disinterest, adopted the Gitagovindam of Jayadeva, a Bengali rshi (sage) of the twelfth century for dramatic performance along with Koodiyattam. The Zamorin of Calicut in 1657 created a new form of drama from this, believed to be revealed by lord Krishna. He called it Krishnanattam. "The religious vision by the Zamorin was the inspiration, the vernacular plays of the day were basis of the technique."²¹ In Krishnanattam the actor was supposed to do only the

²⁰ A. Sreedhara Menon, Cultural Heritage of Kerala, p. 94.

²¹ Faubion Bowers, The Dance in India, p. 67.

abhinaya (bodily gestures) and the angya (digital language). All other components of the play, such as singing, beating the drums, etc., were the duty of other people. Despite its sophistication, the innovation was largely accepted.

As Krishnanattam began to enjoy popularity, the King of Kottarakara invited the Zamorin's troupe of actors to come over to the South and perform it. The invitation was declined on the ground that the people of the South did not have the artistic talent to grasp the art. The King of Kottarakara (in Travancore) felt so humiliated that he wanted to invent a counter art form. He wrote a poem dealing with the epic hero, Rama, and named it Ramanattam. To perform it, he invited the king of Kottayam, a neighbor of the Zamorin, and two Brahmans. Their erudition in living theater, derived from Koodiyattam and Krishnanattam, gave Ramanattam its aesthetic shape. By the end of the seventeenth century, Ramanattam was widely known as Kathakali. Like the Krishnanattam, the Kathakali also was largely influenced by the previous art forms.

It is also in strict adherence to the principles laid down in the Natya Sastra of Bharata. But it is more masculine and heroic in tone. It is an energetic, violent,

thunderous, acrobatic and athletic performance. Because of the virile accent of the art, all actors are men, including those who act female roles.

Unlike the Krishnanattam, Kathakali had the added advantage of the language being Malayalam, which created more participation and interest from the public. Initially, the Koodiyattam costumes were adopted for Kathakali which offered a continuity in appearance. However, several reforms were made in matters of costumes and performance of kathakali gradually, especially by the Raja of Vettath. His contributions are generally called "the Vettath style" in Kathakali. The King of Kottayam introduced the red scapular over the costumes. The crown of some of the actors, fashioned like a French hat, was the contribution of the King of Kadathnad.

Kathakali actors are speechless on the stage. They act according to the meaning of the background music, through symbols of hand (mudra) and facial expressions. The important characters of the act are worth mentioning: the hero is called pacha or green face, representing god-head, gentleness and other virtues, with a chutti on the jowl, a mark made with a thick, white rice paste. The villain is marked with a kathi (knife), which is often the mark for demonic characters. The kathi character

alone is permitted to make some shrieking sounds at moments of excitement, violence or climax. Voluptuous characters are given the mark of thadi (beard) which may be white, red or black. For example, lesser demons are red beards, the monkey character, Hanuman, is white beard, and robber chieftains are black beards. Minor demons are called kari (black), whose faces are painted black with white crescents on their cheeks and red lines on the forehead. Sages, women (except demon women) and servants are represented in the character of minukk (shining).

Apart from the attakathas, the plays which form the base of the repertoire of Kathakali, written in Malayalam by men of erudition, both in Sanskrit puranas and Malayalam language, and the patronage rendered by the royalty, priesthood and nobility, there is another aspect of extreme importance in the development of Kathakali. That is the tradition of Kalari or military gymnasium in Kerala. Kathakali training is an intensive physical exercise in the beginning. It shapes the human to suit the actions of supernatural beings. To condition the body, mind and intellect, one has to start training for Kathakali when he is ten or eleven years old at the latest. For the complete mastery of the art, it would take eight to

ten years. The gymnastics and physical exercises usually start by 3:00 a.m. to last for at least four hours. A special feature of this training is the oil massage given by the headmaster of the Kathakali school. This is intended for supplying suppleness to the limbs and body in order for them to create hyperflexibility on the stage. Therefore, besides belonging to a noble family with morally healthy traditions, one has to have proper physical fitness before being selected as a Kathakali student. Often the physical training and massages are excruciatingly painful and therefore, there is also a considerable drop-out rate. Only after the physical aspect of the training is complete, lessons in further aspects of Kathakali will come forth. The students are also trained in acrobatics. Training of the eyes is a painstaking effort, which is often torturing. But that is required for physically disciplining the eyes to convey messages, emotions and experiences through their movements.

Due to the austerity demanded by the profession as a Kathakali actor, and the relatively poor financial rewards and due to the emergence of modern dramas and film productions which have been acclaimed as the entertaining media without sophistication, Kathakali began to lose its popularity in Kerala. This was the fate of several other

classical art forms. However, some people with understanding of the worth and value of traditional aesthetic forms and a vision to rejuvenate them rose from the elite group; among them, a poet laureate of Kerala, Vallathol Narayana Menon, took the leadership of rescuing Kathakali. Mahakavi Vollaathol,²² himself turned deaf later in his life, "found in the dance-drama remnants of Kathakali not only one of India's richest art heritages, but a sign language and mute art form which served as a source of communication, not only for the intellectual artist, but also for the deaf."²³ He used his own poetic skills to develop modern puranic stories to be played by the Kathakali team; and enriched the Kathakali literature (attakathas) which has foundation in the Indian epics. He established the Kerala Kalamandalam (Kerala Academy of Arts) in 1930 at Cheruthuruthi in central Kerala, to spread the Kathakali traditions and train actors for Kathakali. Although the financial support comes from the government, it is not adequate enough to warrant the growth of the art.

²² Mahakavi means Great Poet, a title given to poet laureates.

²³ Faubion Bowers, The Dance in India, p. 93.

Kathakali has gone beyond the boundaries of Kerala and India during the past two decades. There is a widespread interest for Kathakali among artists in Europe, America and other nations recognizing its superior artistic value. It is deplorable to see that such a great piece of art is not sufficiently nurtured in its own birthplace. Although it is recognized as a classical art of infinite value, it is relevant in the academic circles only as far as its literature. No universities in Kerala offer a degree level training in Kathakali so that the very art would be proud of its acceptance in the higher education circles.

Nevertheless, the role of Kathakali as a vehicle of social and religious education in the form of an art during the past several centuries, will be fully understood only after specific researches are conducted about it by literary men and social scientists. And Kathakali single-handedly will stand out with its valuable contributions rendered to the Kerala society.

(e) Thullal: (Thullal literally means "dance.") Another form of art which received popularity since the eighteenth century is the Thullal movement. It is an indigenous form of art much simpler than any other temple art. The development of Thullal as we have now, is the

sole contribution of Kunchan Nambiar (1704-1769).

According to tradition, Nambiar wrote the poem for the Thullal in one night, and developed the art form during the next day, and presented the Thullal as a perfected art form on the same night. He had a very good reason to do so. Nambiar, by caste a beater of drum (mizhav), during the Kooth was rebuked by the Chakkiar because the former happened to sleep and produced a wrong note. Being humiliated, Nambiar decided to present another form of art in the premises of the same temple at the same time the Chakkiar performed, which he did. The audience was all attracted to the Nambiar performance, and the Chakkiar had to leave for home without anybody to listen to him.

This tradition as it relates to the origin of Thullal, is not widely accepted by scholars at present. Nambiar should be considered the genius behind the development of that form of art. However, the form itself was in existence prior to the time of Nambiar.

Nambiar himself developed three categories of Thullal, such as the ottan, the seethankan, and the parayan.

The ottan style of Thullal is supposed to have originated from the exorcist dances of the Kaniar and Velan castes. The seethankan style must have derived from the dances of the Pulaya caste. The origin of the parayan

style is ascribed to the Paraya caste in Kerala. Therefore, we are certain that Thullal has been a primitive art in the form of folk dance, existing since several centuries before Nambiar.²⁴ These Thullal styles had been performed in the temples of the low castes. The low caste people had to develop such forms in their temples, because they were denied admission to the Chakkia Kooth and Koodiyattam, lest they pollute the members of the higher caste and the temple premises. These folk dances, which were totally meant for the illiterate, were further developed by Nambiar with his own poetic skills and with a language familiar to the common people. This form was simple, and his language unartificial. Because of this approach to literary creation, he is considered one of the stalwarts of popular literature in Malayalam.

In his dance and poems, he criticized the Kerala society and pinpointed the evils transgressing it. He asked for social change, pointed his finger at the absurdity of the caste system, and ridiculed the Brahmans and the nobles.

In this form of art, there is only one performer; he acts and dances while singing the story. There is somebody along with the actor to sing and beat the drum.

²⁴C.P. Sreedharan, Innathe Sahityakaranmar, p. 50.

The story itself is a selected topic from the epics, but versified in Malayalam language. Nambiar himself wrote over forty Thullal stories for his dances belonging to the three categories of Thullal. There are also similar works written by the followers of Nambiar.

Since it is a simple form of art, Thullal is still a very popular form of entertainment in Kerala. Schools occasionally encourage its performance as a way of fostering aesthetic awareness of the students. The Kerala Kalamandalam, founded by Vallathol, is also offering instruction in Thullal.

(f) Mohiniattam: It is a "dance by an enchantress." This dance is the existing remnant of Bharata Natyam in Kerala. Like Bharata Natyam, Mohiniattam is more of feminine (Lasya) and erotic (srngara) sentiments. We have already seen that Bharata Natyam was a popular dance in Kerala, and fell into ignominy when the devadasis who performed it became symbols of moral decay.

It was Swati Thirunal, the Maharaja of Travancore, who made the modest attempt to revive the ancient temple dancing in some form in the middle of the last century. He combined the artistic elements of Bharata natyam, Kathakali, and other folk dances and gave shape to Mohiniattam. He also designed the costume for this dance. It was exclusively performed by women; but it gradually

became an art form used by prostitutes to attract patrons. Because of its immoral associations, Mohiniattam also fell into disgrace.²⁵ However, this beautiful piece of art is being rescued by the attempts of Kerala Kalamandalam founded by Vallathol. This academy offers courses in this dance, so that it will regain acceptance in Kerala.

We have so far discussed the important temple arts. There are several other minor forms of aesthetic value, however. These minor forms do not have their own literature; whenever they are performed they borrow literature and stories from other forms of art. Harikatha, Kathaprasangam, and concerts are some of them. Harikatha is the story of Hari (god), a modern remnant and evolution of the old Chakkia Kooth. Harikatha is often performed by one person in singing and narration with instrumental accompaniments. This takes place on temporary stages in temple precincts. Kathaprasangam is similar to the Harikatha except that the stories are not necessarily taken from Hindu mythology and that it could be performed anywhere, even on the premises of a church. In other words, it is the secularized form of Harikatha.

2. Chavittunatakam

Among the religious arts, this is the only form that

²⁵Faubion Bowers, The Dance in India, p. 69.

could be called a church art. Although many try to include this among the classical forms, in the literary circles, this is only considered a pseudo-classic form. One of the drawbacks is that it cannot trace its own independent origin and form. It is a combination of western and eastern art forms.

After the arrival of the Portuguese missionaries, there was a Latin hierarchy established for the new converts. The missionaries dissuaded their faithful from attending the Hindu forms of arts, such as Koodiyattam, Kathakali, and so on. But the ecclesiastical authorities realized that a prohibitive measure alone would not satisfy the needs of the people. So they decided to encourage positive steps in shaping a new art form for the new Christians. During that time, a Roman Catholic convert from Tamilnad was living in Cochin. His name was Chinna Thampi Pallai. The priests found in him a man who could create the new form of art they wanted. The first drama they thus created was based on the life of St. Brasina. It adopted elements of Kathakali and the western opera. Later, another Tamilian, Veda Nayakam Pillai, also came and wrote several dramas and taught them to the Malayali Christians.²⁶

²⁶P.J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature: Contribution of Christians, p. 160.

By the eighteenth century, Chavittunatakam became an independent form of art. The stories of Chavittunatakam were mainly taken from the Bible, and lives of saints or Christian heroes. Unlike in Kathakali, in Chavittunatakam the actors spoke and sang; and there were many actors on the stage simultaneously. The literature has a great influence of Tamil language, as it was composed mainly by Tamilians. Vocal and instrumental music, dialogue, acting, dancing and the like are chief elements of this drama. It is because of the excessive stamping (chavittu) with feet on the wooden stage it is called Chavittunatakam (natakam = drama). This drama was very popular among the Latin Christians on the coastal line during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. But due to lack of encouragement, this became almost defunct. However, some churches near Cochin are still trying to preserve it from extinction.

Due to political and ecclesiastical reasons, this drama did not appeal to the majority of the people of Kerala; which does not mean that it lacks any aesthetic value. During the last two centuries, Chavittunatakam played a significant role in the social and religious education of the members of the Latin churches and as such, its importance in Kerala cannot be undermined.

3. Tradition of Music

With the aforementioned art forms active in Kerala, one can reasonably assume that the musical culture was also developing there. The folk literature and later the temple arts, all were consciously utilizing music as the soul of entertainment.

However, music as a separate discipline was developed by several composers since ancient times. It was considered one of the sixty-four fine arts. During the Sangam period (200 B.C.-A.D. 500), composers were generally remunerated by the rulers of Kerala. Some of them lived in the courts. Fiddle, flute, drum, pipe, and the like were common musical instruments. During the rule of the Kulasekhara kings (800-1102), musical culture reached its climax in the medieval period.²⁷

Kerala really reached its climax in creative music during the reign of Maharaja Swati Thirunal of Travancore (1829-47). He was a great musician and composer himself. He was a great master of Karnatak music, the queen and classical form of Indian musical culture. Besides being a multi-linguist who composed music in all the South Indian languages, he was also a constant encouragement to musicians all over India. It was during his time musicians were ever highly remunerated in the monarchical history

²⁷ A. Sreedhara Menon, Cultural Heritage of Kerala, p. 109.

of Kerala. A contemporary of Swati Thirunal, Irayimman Thampi, contributed to the music of Kerala with his religious lyrics. All these activities were in classical music as a service to religion. However, the charm and beauty of these compositions are perennially appealing to everyone irrespective of creed, because of their artistic wholesomeness and integrity. Even at present, classical concerts are reproductions of these compositions.

Kerala also has produced several scientific treatises; among whom Sangita Sastram, Svarataladi lakshanam, Sangita Choodamani and Sangita manjari are to be specially mentioned. Sangita Choodamani is a treatise on ragas and talas.²⁸ Raga is the chief characteristic of Indian music, maintaining one principal mood and expanding and developing it to create a musical ecstasy. The raga is measured by rhythm or tala with fixed number of beats determined by their stress and quantity arranged in distinctive groupings. Sangita Choodamani gives ninety ragas and over one hundred talas, and elaborates the conduct of musical concerts.

Although Kerala possesses such a rich heritage in classical music, except in academies of music, its serious study is not a part of regular curriculum in

²⁸ A. Sreedhara Menon, Cultural Heritage of Kerala, p. 113.

schools. The current trend looks more attached to popular musical composition of lyrics and songs chiefly due to their marketability in an age of audio-visual revolution in the entertainment field. Although its artistic value is not questioned, one has to wait and see if it will endure the test of time owing to its privation of classical touch. It is, nevertheless, heart-warming to observe that some schools informally try to encourage the old classical music occasionally.

The aesthetic development of Kerala communities from folk literature through the present stage is indicative of the pursuit of a people toward active sharing of social and religious values of that society. In any society, such were simple and humble steps toward concretization of educational aspirations and mass education. Kerala is not an exception to this phenomenon. However, like any other society, only a minority in Kerala actually benefited from these activities.

CHAPTER V

INDIGENOUS SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION

A. Prelude

Kerala society contains several racial and ethnic elements, as we have already seen. In the early period, these racial elements were not so much assimilated into each other as we see today. Although we do not have any historical evidence to show that each of these communities developed its own system of education, we can very well see a powerful influence on the educational awareness of the entire population exerted by Aryanism and its literary culture. Here the easy dividing line would be between the Brahmans and the non-Brahmans. By Brahmans we mean the people of the priestly caste migrated to Kerala during the centuries before and after Christ and the people made Brahmans by the Hindu proselytizing activities of the former. It was the Brahmans who monopolized learning in Kerala, like any other region of India. This does not mean that the majority of the non-Brahman population was illiterate or they were indifferent to learning. They too had their own agencies of education.

In other words, Kerala developed its own indigenous systems of education which prepared her as an adequate

receptacle for modern education.

The unique position which Kerala has attained in the educational map of India is not the result of a sudden spurt of activity in the field of education in recent times, but the climax of the enlightened policies followed by its rulers from early days and the intellectual pursuits of the people spread over several centuries,¹

says Mr. A. Sreedhara Menon.

Our approach is to examine the various elements of indigenous educational systems of Kerala and to examine them for their contributions which have served as the basis of educational development in Kerala.

B. Nampudiri System of Education

Brahmans in India belong to two groups, the Pancha Gaudas and the Pancha Dravidas; the division is made on their geographical settlements, the former live north of the Vindhya Mountains and the latter south of them. The Pancha Dravidas are the Malayala Brahmans, Tamil Brahmans, Kannada Brahmans, Telugu Brahmans and the Maharashtra Brahmans. These Brahmans were said to be of higher purity and character because they did not eat flesh of any kind, whereas the Pancha Gaudas ate fish. Among the Pancha Dravidas, the Malayala Brahmans are said to be more priestly. The Malayala Brahmans are generally called Nampudiris. Nampudiri etymologically means "sacred person";

¹A. Sreedhara Menon, Cultural Heritage of Kerala, p. 158.

some believe that it could also mean "the disseminator of knowledge."

According to tradition, they are the descendants of the Brahmans who migrated to Kerala and settled down in sixty-four villages. This assumption has been challenged by several authors, especially by another Brahman, a celebrated leader of the Indian Marxist Communist Party, Mr. E. M. S. Namboodiripad.² Although he agrees that there had been some Brahman immigrants, he denies that all the Nampudiri population are descendants of them. According to him, the majority of the present Nampudiri population are descendants of the Brahmanized natives of Kerala.

Nampudiri population is mainly distributed in the northern regions of Kerala, but they are also found in other areas. Brahmans in Kerala include several super and sub strata among themselves with different social statuses; and Nampudiris are on the upper rung of those strata. For our discussion, all Brahmans are treated as one priestly caste, the Nampudiris.

1. Important Rituals

Before we describe education of a Brahman, it is opportune that we briefly go over the chief religious

²E. M. S. Namboodiripad, Kerala, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow (Calcutta: National Book Agency, 1967), pp. 24-26.

ceremonies a Brahman would have to undergo in his lifetime.

(a) Jatakarmam (birth ceremony): This is conducted thirty-six hours after the birth of a child. The father distributes gifts to other Brahmans. After that, he mixes honey with ghee and puts it into the mouth of the baby with a golden spoon, reciting appropriate vedic prayers.

(b) Namakaranam (naming ceremony): This takes place on the twelfth day after the birth of the baby. Again, gifts are distributed. The father whispers the name of the child in Sanskrit into the right ear of the infant. The mother also does the same.

(c) Nishkramanam (exiting ceremony): When the baby is four months old, he is taken out of the house and made to walk over the root of a jacktree, after which he is taken inside the house. This is the first day outside the house since his birth.

(d) Annaprasanam (first feeding): When the baby is six months old, he is fed the first time with rice, which is also blessed by appropriate vedic prayers.

(e) Choulam (tonsure): For the first time, the heads of boys and girls are shaven at the age of three or five. A member of the maran caste is the barber. Boys are fixed with a tuft on his head. This ceremony is

intended for longevity.

(f) Vidyarambham (initiation into education):

The child starts learning alphabets at the age of five.

(g) Upanayanam (leading to the master): This

takes place at the age of eight. It is this ceremony that makes a child a Brahman. This is his second birth, hence the synonym, dvija or twiceborn for a Brahman.

With this, a boy starts serious study of the vedas.

(h) Samavartanam (termination of scholasticate):

He rejects all the habits required during the student life, such as the Krishnajina and the grass-waist-ring, and shaves his face for the first time. He is now ready for married life or grhastashrama.

(i) Marriage: Brahmanic sacrament of marriage

is permitted only for the eldest son. The younger brothers are allowed to maintain informal sexual partnerships with women of lower castes, but not below a Nayar caste. As an exception, a younger brother would be permitted to contract a Brahman marriage when the oldest brother does not get a boy from even his fourth wife. The latter cannot contract a fifth marriage. This system of marriage is observed only among the Kerala Nampudiris. The reason for them to observe this type of marriage system is for keeping the family property undivided. The progenies of

the younger brothers, born of low caste women, do not inherit any property their fathers have, even their fathers' caste status is also denied to them.

All Kerala Brahmans, whether of upper strata or lower strata, follow these ritualistic ceremonies faithfully, but some of them will be observed with slight variations or differences.

2. Vidyarambham (Initiation into Education)

Vidyarambham literally means "the beginning of learning". The patria potestas, the right of the father over his family, of the patricians of early Rome, can be observed among Brahman families of India. The father was the head of the household, and also the family priest. He was endowed with the supreme power in the family. It was his duty to initiate a child into early education. Education was considered as a religious training for performing sacrifices.

Vidyarambham takes place at the age of five; in rare cases at the age of three. Usually, the ceremony is conducted on Vijadasami day in October, following nine days of propitiatory rituals in honor of Saraswati, the goddess of learning. The ceremony itself starts with a devotion to god Ganapati. After that, the child offers Dakshina to Brahmans. The father is the preceptor; however, if the father is dead, the guardian takes his place.

The father takes the child and seats him/her on his knees and writes with a piece of gold, usually a golden ring, on his temple the Pranava, which is the mystic syllable aum. The syllable aum is the most sacred symbol of the divinity; and therefore the most holy term in Sanskrit. It is the second-symbol of the Supreme Being. It is considered the nearest word to denote the concept of God. Human words are finite to signify divinity. Therefore, a new word comprising all the vowels and consonants of the alphabet is created to impart the idea of godhead; and that word is aum.³ The same syllable is whispered into the child's ears.

The first sentence the child is asked to write is an invocation to deities, such as, Vishnu, Lakshmi and Ganesha. The Sanskrit sentence, "Hari Sri ganapataye namah," means "adoration is due to Vishnu, Lakshmi and Ganapati." The preceptor holds the index finger of the child and traces it over the rice spread in a wide plate or on the floor, and makes him write this invocation in the vernacular script. In ancient days, the devanagari script of Sanskrit language was used. Then the child is helped, his right index finger being held by the preceptor,

³Father Zacharias, An Outline of Hinduism (Alwaye: S.H. League, 1959), pp. 112-113.

to trace the letters of the alphabet on the spread rice.

During this ceremony, the child is also given blessed ghee. This is believed to promote higher intellectual operations. This custom, practiced by Kerala Brahmans, has a story behind it. Uddanda Sastri, a foreign Brahman, had been carrying away the best prizes from Malabar rulers on account of his superiority of vedic wisdom over the Kerala Nampudiris. They, in turn, devised a set of mantras (prayers) for creating an intellectual genius in their own community. With the help of these mantras and the concerted religious and devotional efforts of the native Brahmans for one year, a Kerala Brahman couple belonging to the Kakkacherry family, prepared to create a genius. Eventually, a baby boy was born to them, and upon him the whole Brahman community built their hopes to beat Uddanda Sastri. Finally, he proved to be the most intellectual Brahman in course of time. The Zamorin's intellectual contest approached as usual. Uddanda Sastri was present. The Kakkacherry Brahman also brought his son for the contest. The whole native Brahman community was surprised to see the young Nampudiri winning the prizes. Thereafter, the native Brahman mantras were considered very efficacious in producing a Brahman child for the highest intellectual achievement. It is with these mantras used by the Kakkacherry couple that the

ghee for the Vidyarambham ceremony is believed to be blessed.

After the Vidyarambham ceremony, the child begins to learn to write and read the basics of language from his own father. Similarly, as years go by, he is also given rudimentary lesson of arithmetic. Both boys and girls are offered this type of education in the vernacular. Girls usually stop their education once they learn the basics of arithmetic and obtain a satisfactory achievement in reading and writing. Whereas for the boys, this is only a preparation for the vedic studies which should take place after Upanayanam.

3. Upanayanam (Leading to the Master)

Upanayanam literally means "leading to". By this ceremony a Brahman boy is led to his guru or master for vedic education. This takes place at the age of seven or eight. It is also this ritual that makes a boy a Brahman by his second birth, through the rites of Upanayanam; henceforth, he is called a dvija, or twiceborn. Without the observance of this rite, he is a non-caste, or no better than a Sudra.

An auspicious day is selected by an astrologer for this ceremony. On that day, the boy is bathed and properly attired and he wears a ring made out of darbha (grass with the botanical name "Poa cynosuroides").

Both the boy and the celebrant of the rites face east. The celebrant offers sacrificial and expiatory prayers to Lord Ganapati. Then the boy's feet are washed followed by the punyaham or sanctifying rite with the sprinkling of holy water over the boy. As usual, Brahmans receive gifts from the boy.

After this, the boy eats a sumptuous meal given by his mother and stands in the middle of the courtyard facing, again, east, and offers dakshina (gifts) to his master. The sacrificial fire is lit by this time, as a symbol of the Onmiscient. The ritual proper starts with an invocation to Lord Ganapati at the western side of fire. The boy and his father stand facing east. At this time takes place the investiture of the boy with the holy thread consisting of three smaller threads spun into one. A piece of the antelope skin (Krshnajina) is also attached to the skin as a symbol of perseverance and commitment. A waist-ring made of munja grass is also tied around the boy's waist. Holding the boy, the master then offers sacrifices, and places himself on the north side of the fire facing east.

The teacher then utters a few verses of prayers from the Rgveda and seizes the boy's hand together with the thumb saying "By the impulse of God Savithri, with

the arms of the two Aswins, with Pushan's hands I seize thy hand." Again he says, "Savithri has seized thy hand a second time. Agni (fire) is thy teacher a third time."⁴

Afterwards, the boy goes to the open air and gazes at the sun so that his eyes are penetrated by the rays of the sun; and again comes back to the fire and makes sacrificial offerings saying "To Agni I have brought a piece of wood and through this piece of wood, O Agni! increase thou, and through the Brahman may we also grow!" Having offered fuel to fire and touched it, he wipes his face thrice saying, "With splendor I annoint myself. May Agni bestow on me insight, offspring and splendor. May Indra bestow on me insight, offspring and strength. . . ." Similar prayers are offered to other deities. With these prayers he prostrates before the master and holds his feet. At this time, the guru, upon request by the boy, initiates the child into mysticism of Savitri mantras, and utters the sacred syllable aum into the boy's ears, followed by the recitation of the gayatri japam by both of them.

After that, the master exhorts the boy about the rule of conduct during his discipleship. The boy is now

⁴L. K. A. Iyer, The Cochin Tribes and Castes, Vol. II, p. 207.

made a full Brahman, entitled to study the vedic texts and the performing of sacrifices. With this ceremony starts the period of discipleship or brahmacharya. After the initial instructions, the boy gets a dand (stick) which he is to carry wherever he goes. Then he is given an alms pot (bhikshapatram) to beg his food during his brahmacharya (brahmacharya literally means "walking with the Brahman," the word is used also as a synonym for chastity) period. First, he goes to his own mother to beg for his food; she gives him a few handfuls of rice. He takes it to his master and says "Bhikshamidem," i.e., this is my collection of alms, and blessing the boy he responds "May it be good."

On the fourth day after the Upanayanam, he begins the study of Vedas. After the study of one part of the Vedas, there is a sacrificial ceremony called Anupravakaniya sacrifice, during which time the teacher offers the food cooked by his disciple to Savitri. After the second part is completed, it is offered to the Rshis (sages), and the third time to Agni (fire), and the fourth time, which is the last, to the Brahmans who declare the graduation of the boy from the primary vedic school. During this fourth ceremony the cloth shrouding the holy thread and the Krshnajinam is removed, and for the first time, the graduate blesses his food.

The brahmacharya period of a Brahman youth is significantly characterized by the austerity and rigidity of his life. He is permitted to wear only the sacred thread with the Krshnajinam and the shroud covering them besides an oblong piece of loin cloth worn over the navel and pubic areas. He is to reside with his master, who is also his spiritual father. This period could last as many as thirty-six years according to Manu, the law-giver,⁵ however by eight years a boy should be able to complete his vedic studies. During the discipleship, he is forbidden all luxuries of life. He cannot chew betel, wear flowers or perfumes. He is not even permitted to see any female but his own mother. Early morning, he should get up from sleep and bathe, and conduct his prescribed prayers; which are to be performed three times a day, morning, noon and evening. He should be always on his guard by keeping away from all the worldly desires of sensuality, anger, greed, dancing, music, games, falsehood, impurity in thought, action and word, killing or hurting any animate being, and the like. He is not permitted to sleep any time during the day. In other words, it was a monastic training in the most rigid sense.⁶

⁵Ibid., p. 208.

⁶Ibid., pp. 206-209.

Instructions are given usually in Sanskrit, but it is rendered in Malayalam for his understanding.

Most of the basics of the Upanayanam ceremony are the same all over India; but they have been indigenized for the climate and conveniences available in Kerala, as described above.

After the completion of the discipleship, the student is declared ready for family life by the ceremony of Samavartanam.

4. Agencies and Methods

Learning in ancient Kerala was not intended for its own sake, but for the sake of religion. It was dharma that every student was supposed to learn. The total configuration of ideals, practices and conduct was called dharma. It was considered a way of salvation or self-actualization, which is called mukti or emancipation. Hence, the ancient education is to be considered in that perspective of theory of knowledge and values. Knowledge was considered the third eye of a man, giving insight into all affairs of life and leading it into salvation; of course, on the mundane level it would lead to progress and prosperity. Knowledge is search for truth. The aim of education is to free the mind, chitta vrtti nirodha; that is to set the mind free of the activities of inhibitions by which it is entangled in the material world.

Education must help in attaining the ideal of fulfilling, and not in the acquisition of mere objective knowledge. It is subjective rather than objective in its content. Thus, ancient Indian education was based on the Indian epistemological and philosophic traditions. The idea of the ephemerality of life and the world, the concept of death and the futility of mundane pleasures, provided the ancient educators with this special angle of vision. In fact, the entire educational tradition originated in these fundamental values.⁷

It was based on these epistemological principles that the vedic education in Kerala was built up. Vedic education in early times consisted of an oral tradition in accordance with the Upanishadic methodology, according to which there are three approaches to learning, such as Sravana, Manana and nidi-dhyasana.

Sravana consisted of listening to the mantras and sutras, each of which was a compressed capsule of maximum ideas in minimum words. Upon listening, they are memorized. Until the eighth century A.D. this was the accepted method. It was a sacrilege to reduce the Vedas into writing; for the Hindus, learning was not reading but self-realization and it should assimilate and penetrate into the learner without the media of reading and writing. The object of Sravana or hearing is sabda or sound, Sabda is the Brahman (god) himself and by Sravana one gets the direct perception

⁷M. S. Gore, et al., ed., The Sociologoly of Education in India (New Delhi: National Council of Education Research and Training, 1967), p. 79.

of the Brahman. Srvana consisted of six steps; the upakrama, the formal ceremony preceding the study of the Vedas; the abhyasa, the exercise of recitation of various texts; apurvata, a ready grasp of the meaning of the texts; phala, comprehension of the outcome; arthavada, the reading of elucidatory books such as Bhashyas or commentaries; and apapati, the attainment of the goal of learning.

After this stage, a student is supposed to engage in manana which is the thinking process by which the student reaches his own conclusions within the limits permitted by the vedic epistemology. The final stage is nidi-dhyasana by which the student reflects on the topics he has mastered and tests his conclusions against the vedic principles. It is in this stage that he focuses on contemplation or dhyana which ultimately brings about the realization of the truth. To facilitate this process, he has to take some exercises in meditation, or upasana, which is a training for contemplation.

During the brahmacharya period, all students were supposed to go through these steps one by one in the traditional vedic training. As years went by, the intensity of this preparation has somewhat diminished or shifted focus. However, the Brahmanic learning process generally was faithful to this pattern.

Although the very ancient development of educational agencies of Brahmanic education may not be directly related to the life of Kerala Brahmans, as they came to Kerala after the development of such systems, it is worth mentioning, due to their influences on Kerala Brahmanic life.

The development of vedic thought and its philisophical ramifications could be considered in a manner of progression. The first stage consists of the composition of the Vedas, stretching between a period from 2000 B.C. to 1400 B.C. The second stage consists of the epic period starting from approximately 1400 B.C. to 1000 B.C. on a liberal speculation. This period does not actually represent the actual composition of the epics; but only its developing stage. The epic contents were still in oral form during that period. The final written version of Ramayana must have been completed by the fifth century B.C.⁸ Similarly, the other epic, Mahabharata, is believed to have reached its written form between 600 B.C. and 200 B.C.; although several ancient songs must have been in existence during this second stage.⁹ It was during this second stage Brahmanic learning found its first active

⁸Fr. Zacharias, An Outline of Hinduism, p. 360.

⁹Ibid., p. 375.

expression in institutions. Royal courts began to encourage learning. Parishads were established in villages and towns with a view of disseminating vedic knowledge and contents of epics which were running as folk songs. The entire method of education was by word of mouth.

The third stage is characterized by the emergence of Vedic Rationalism commencing from 1000 B.C. to 320 B.C. It is during this stage the Hindus are believed to have been moving to the South. The Sutra system was developed to give concise form of dissemination of knowledge and it really boosted the educational process. Details of sacrificial ceremonies were established. Dharma sutra (code of customs, manners, and laws), Grha sutra (domestic rights), Siksha (phonetics), Cchandasa (poetic meters), Vyakarana (grammar), Jyotisham (astronomy), Anukramani (Index to the Vedas) and different Bhashyas (commentaries) were some of the developments during this period. These treatises also were produced in written form. With the concepts of astronomy, the notion of virtues of numbers had become stressed.¹⁰

The Brahman settlements in Kerala took mostly

¹⁰ Gyan C. Sharma, Early Brahmanic Education: An Historical Monograph on the Ancient Indian Education, Ph.D. dissertation; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1926, pp. 2-4.

during the period after this third stage of the development of vedic thought. By this time, Brahmanic educational foundations had achieved a crystalized form. Although this period had experienced the pressure of Buddhism, the Hindu Brahmans who came to Kerala were orthodox in their beliefs and vedic philosophy. In view of this, we have every reason to believe that the immigrants had transferred their way of life, systems of worship and the already matured vedic thought to their host country and that they, due to their higher status which was even powerful enough to convert the native Dravidians to their own faith and lifestyle, must have carried on the same institutional style of learning in Kerala. Hinduism and the traditional Brahmanic thought would have been suppressed by the Buddhist influence which was also prevalent in Kerala, if they had remained idle. So, it is evident that the Kerala Nampurdiris were actively engaged in the dissemination of their heritage of Brahmanic learning in the early period of their existence in Kerala.

(a) Agencies of Brahmanic Education: The traditional institutional style of vedic education consisted of Gurukula, Parishad and Sammelanam. These institutions were the outgrowth of early development of education. The Brahman society itself underwent sophisticated changes

required by the complexity of the social growth.

As has been seen, the father was the chief educator in a Brahman family. But, except for rudimentary education in the memorization of vedic verses and practices in daily sacrifices, the father could not avail himself for further education of his children. Moreover, the Vedas orally transmitted through generations, were collected together, possibly "due to the action of some chieftain, who ruled a community, and collected them from the various families under his rule for his own use."¹¹ Since the Vedas were collected and coordinated, fathers, who knew only some of them from the family tradition, had to depend on other masters who achieved a comprehensive knowledge of all the available ones. Hence, the need of a guru (master) became imperative.

(i) Gurukulam: Under this system, a Brahman boy, after his upanayanam had to live in his guru's house. He was to serve his master always. He had to collect fuel from the forest for the master's fireplace. He had to keep the house clean and take care of his cattle. Tending the house was to train him in self help, and to teach him the dignity of manual labor. There were several disciples and all of them did everything collectively to inculcate

¹¹Ibid., p. 14.

community action and brotherhood. The pupils were also required to go out begging; just for its educative value. Learning in poverty showed a spirit of humility and renunciation, not humiliation. This, in turn, emphasized the awareness of the community about learning in the gurukulas and the responsibility of the society for maintaining an educational institution. The mendicant pupils were received by the community with alms.

In the gurukula the students were taught the vedas, knowledge of pronunciation, phonology and grammar. The life was simple like that of a monk. Strict discipline of passions, habits, sexuality, desires, lust for glory, excessive sleep, anger, eating and the like was enforced. Although the education in a gurukula only lasted from eight to twelve years, the learning for self-realization was a lifetime job. Brahmacharya contained all virtues so as to enforce a philosophy of education. Every pupil was equal in the gurukula irrespective of his socio-economic status. Asceticism was necessary to discipline his mind and body. He had to honor everyone to whom honor was due. The master was entitled to the highest honor. There was a hierarchy of gurus, with one's own master on the top; there were at least ten gurus a pupil should honor: his own guru, father, elder brother, father-in-law, grandfather, maternal and paternal uncles, the king,

the employer, and a person of higher caste.

Non-vedic studies of gurukula were open to other castes also. But they were not permitted to learn Vedas and the Sanskrit language.

(ii) Parishads (Academies): Parishads were intended for the higher order of learning. Only a few selected students were admitted into a parishad. Those students who have completed their studies in a gurukula could attend the parishads. It is more like a graduate seminar in modern education, because the method of learning consisted chiefly of discussions and intellectual interaction. Famous scholars were invited to lead such seminars. The students also went for travels all over the country to enrich their learning.

(iii) Sammelanams: Literally Sammelanam means convention. These meetings were convened by kings, and scholars and philosophers attended them and exposed their learning. The greatest of them was awarded with prizes and diplomas. Scholarly women also used to attend these convocations.¹²

(b) Counterparts in Kerala

The three institutions of Brahmanic learning, just

¹²Gore, et al., The Sociology of Education in India, p. 82.

discussed, were substantially represented in Kerala. Although the Nampudiris in Kerala became a dominant community, they still had to adapt their style of life and education in accordance with the social conditions prevalent in Kerala. The various changes they made in their rituals are indicative of their adaptation. They are typically Nampudiri rituals which Brahman communities of other parts of India do not follow. Similarly, the system of education also was indigenized, although the curriculum content remained basically intact.

i. Salas

One of the agencies emerged to impart Brahmanic education was the Sala system. The salas were characteristic of the vedic education in South Kerala. There were several salas located at Kandalur, Parthivasekharapuram, Tiruvala, Moozhikulam and other places. There are references to the Kandalur sala in Chola and other inscriptions.¹³ The Kandalur and Parthivasekharapuram salas were open under the patronage of the Ay dynasty. The salas at Tiruvalla and Moozhikulam came into prominence during the time of the Kulasekhara dynasty in the medieval period.

Sala was an educational institution which provided free lodging and boarding for Brahman students. For example, the Parthivasekharapuram sala established by

¹³ A. Sreedhara Menon, Cultural Heritage of Kerala, p. 163.

by Karunandadakkam, a king of Ay dynasty, in the ninth century, provided tuition and living facilities with food for ninety-five Brahman students. This sala operated with the same rules followed by the Kandalur sala. The former sala even maintained a quota system for the selection of students from different places. These two salas achieved their full growth during the reign of the Kulasekhara kings.

In the eleventh century A.D., according to Tiruvalla copper inscriptions, the Tiruvalla sala needed 350 nazhis (a nazhi is approximately a pint) of rice to provide the noon meal.¹⁴ From this it is evident that at least three hundred students were receiving education in that school.

These salas provided education in the Vedas, Upanishadic philosophy, Sanskrit grammar, Hindu law and the like. The code of conduct was very strict as we have mentioned earlier in connection with the Brahmacharya period. They did not even employ a female servant to tend the salas. No weapons were permitted in the premises of the salas. Gambling was punished by denying a day's meal. The discipline and the intensity of instruction of subjects made the salas ideal educational institutions during the medieval period.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 164.

ii. Mathoms

The mathoms could be called the temple universities of Kerala; because they were established within the precincts of Hindu temples. The origin of the mathom movement is attributed to Sri Sankara, the celebrated Advaita philosopher and expounder of the Vedas.

Sri Sankara was born at Kaladi, Central Kerala, in A.D. 788. Son of a Brahman he studied all the Vedas and their commentaries. He chose to become a monk rather than a family man. He traveled all over India to stabilize Hinduism against the attacks of Buddhism. He also proposed his metaphysical theory of Advaita or pantheistic monism. His philosophic activities were mainly rooted in the upanishads. He destroyed Buddhism in the philosophical field. He was also a great religious reformer. To withstand the pressures of Buddhism, he purged Hindu worship and rituals from objectionable practices. He is the greatest philosopher that India has given birth to. Hinduism came up with a new life with his preaching and writing.

To propagate his kind of Hinduism, he established four great mathoms at Badrinarayan in the north, Puri in the east, Dvaraka on the west coast and Sringeri in the south. Sringeri became his main center of learning. His own monastic order supervised the operation of these

religious centers of vedic education. They concentrated on propounding upanishadic thought based on vedic orthodox Hinduism. They taught nothing but Vedism to attack Buddhism, whereas in Nalanda University, a Buddhist school Vedism was also taught.¹⁵

Later these mathoms began to popularize his doctrines by establishing colleges or universities attached to temples as their extensions. Such institutions also were called mathoms.

There were eighteen such mathoms in Kerala. Like the salas, the mathoms offered free education for Nampudiri youth in Vedas, philosophy, grammar and so on. The gurukula ideal was very much stressed in these schools so as to give personal attention to the students. Students also were provided free boarding and lodging.

It is believed that Sri Sankara himself established the Vadakke Mathom, Naduvil Mathom, Edayil Mathom and Thekke Mathom near Trichur. Some mathoms are still famous for their scholarship, such as those of Chovannur, Kumpalam and Tirunavai. The one at Kumpalam became a center for learned men to exchange their scholarship. The Tirunavai mathom was particularly endowed by the

¹⁵ K.M. Panikkar, A Survey of Indian History (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 4th ed., 1964), pp. 106-107.

Zamorins of Calicut; and the hereditary master of the Zamorins was the head of that mathom for some time.

Many of these mathoms and salas were engaged in scholarly seminars and exchanges for continuing education or expounding new dimensions of vedic thought, which the parishads had been doing.

The monarchs of Kerala generously supported the cause of education by conducting contests for learned men. The Zamorin of Calicut had a convention of scholars called Revati Pattathanam to confer the title of Bhatta. Representatives from various mathoms participated in that convention. The topic of discussions ranged from grammar to philosophy. Similarly, during the time of Dharma Raja (1758-98) conventions of scholars were conducted periodically in order for the talented to expose themselves. The Mutual of Katavallur (Kadavallur Anyonyam) was another contest which awarded three types of recognition. The highest recognition called Kadannirikkal (leap over) was something any vedic student could aspire for, because it made him cross and sit in the place of highest honor because of his achievement. The second recognition was called Mumpirikkal (sitting in the front), and the last one Ramdannirikkal (sitting in the second place). Usually students from the mathoms participated in this contest.

(c) A Brief Survey of Curriculum: Brahmanic education started out with the idea of the teacher passing on to his students the tradition he had received, and this included primarily the learning by heart of the sacred books. But even from the earliest times, the content of education began to widen out because of further development in vedic thought and other sciences.

(i) Vedic Literature in General: The first content was, of course, the vedic ritual for sacrifices. Then was the study of Vedas and the Vedangas. Four are the Vedas: Rgveda, consisting of hymns; Samaveda, consisting of chants; Yajur veda, consisting of prayers and sacrificial formulae; and Atharva veda, consisting of incantations.

Generally, the vedic literature is divided into two: the Srti and the Smrti, the heard and the remembered, respectively.

The Srti are the revelations through the Vedas consisting of the four Vedas already mentioned, the Brahmanas or commentaries and the upanishads. The Smrti consists of the Vedangas, i.e., the members or limbs of the Vedas. They are believed to have been handed down by tradition from olden times through memory in the form of Sutras or very concise prose capsules. There are six

Vedangas, such as Siksha (phonetics), Kalpa (ritual), Vyakarana (grammar), Nirukta (etymology), Cchandasa (meters) and Jyotisha (astronomy).

According to Max Muller, Vedism took its literary form as early as 1000 B.C. Jacobi and B.G. Tilak are of the opinion that some of the hymns have been composed some 4000 years before Christ. Luniya concludes that the fair approximation of vedic age starts in between 2500 B.C. and 1200 B.C.¹⁶

Sanskrit was the language in which the vedic literature was finally fixed; although it was not the language brought by the Aryans. In fact, the fusion of Aryan dialect with the non-Aryan indigenous language gave rise to new dialects called the Prakrt or the natural, with its own regional variations. The early vedic compositions represented these Prakrt dialects; however, when they were collected and mainstreamed their languages also had to be refined and coordinated for the better understanding of people of all regions. Sanskrit actually means "refined"; and this refinement took place only in literature, and this form of refined language was finally fixed by Panini, the great grammarian, most probably in the fourth century B.C. Sanskrit was never spoken by a people, it was only

¹⁶Luniya, Evolution of Indian Culture, p. 47.

a language used for precise and classical exposition of vedism, upanishadism and literature. The Prakrt dialects spoken by the early Aryans, in the course of centuries, developed into various Ind-European living languages of North India. It is the refined Aryan language or "Sanskrit" which is a subject of study in the vedic educational scheme; and it remained a language of rituals, and of the elite and the scholarly.

In addition to the vedic studies discussed above, the general curriculum also included studies of the great epics of India, such as the Ramayana of Valmiki and the Mahabharata of Vyas.

Higher studies provided by Brahmanic education mainly consisted of the advanced exposition of the above, in addition to the six orthodox systems of philosophy, which are rooted in the thirteen principal upanishads, Hindu laws, the Arthasastra of Kaudilya (science of economics and politics including public accounting), astrology and astronomy, mathematics including geometry and trigonometry, advanced grammar and lexicography, literature, medicine and the like.

(ii) Orthodox Philosophical Schools: It is the heterodox schools of thought such as Charvakaism (sixth century B.C.), a materialistic philosophy denying the

existence of the Brahman the Supreme Being; Jainism (sixth century B.C.), a religious thought denying the authority of the Vedas; and Buddhism (sixth century B.C.), another philosophy totally denying Brahmanism as a revealed religion, that provoked the progress of orthodox philosophical schools in Hinduism. Any progress in philosophical thinking was usually strengthened by powerful attacks on historical traditions of a society. Critical thinking thus flourished. For Buddhism, logic was the powerful weapon. Heterodox criticisms served as cathartic agents in formulating a clear vision in orthodox thought. Hence, we have six systems of thought in Brahmanic Hinduism.

This process gave rise to a critical theory of knowledge as foundation of meaningful speculations. Thus, in addition to supernatural revelations, natural methods of approach to life and experience were highlighted. Thus originate the darsanas or philosophical schools based on reason.

All logical attempts to gather floating conceptions of the world into some great general ideas were regarded as darsanas. They all help us to see some aspect of the truth. This conception led to the view that apparently isolated and independent systems are really members of a larger historical plan. Their nature could not be completely understood so long as they

were viewed as self-dependent, without regard to their place in the historic interconnection.¹⁷

All the six systems have some common tenets; they all accept the authority of the Vedas. But each system has its own theory of knowledge. Intuition, inference and the Vedas are accepted by all the systems. Reason is a subordinate of intuition. All the systems attack the skepticism of the Buddhists, and construct a criterion of objectivity and truth as opposed to an eternal unstable flux.

The flow of world is not just mental; it is objective; it has its origin in eternal Prakrti (nature) or maya (illusion) or atoms. Anything that begins, also ends. Whatever is composed of parts is not eternal or self-subsistent. The true individual is not divisible. Whatever is becoming is not real. The universe as extended in time and space is becoming, hence not real, not being. Creation is not a fresh being out of nothingness.

Except the Purva Mimamsa, all systems aim at the practical end of salvation. As the universe turns according to its eternal laws, no man is forced to shape his own destiny. The direction and goal of life are lost in

¹⁷S. Radhakrishnan and Charles Moore, eds., A Source Book in Indian Philosophy (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 349-350.

the infinite. Death is a new step in the way of life. The development of the self is an ongoing process, being broken by rebirth in death. We are stuck in the darkness of the world (Samsara).

These are the highlights of the six systems; and each Nampudiri student pursuing higher education was supposed to master all these tenets contained in each system.

The following are the six schools of Hindu orthodox philosophy:

1. Nyaya (Epistemology and Logic)
2. Vaiseshika (Cosmology)
3. Samkhya (Ontology or Metaphysics)
4. Yoga (Physiology and Psychology)
5. Purva Mimamsa (Ethics)
6. Uttara Mimamsa (a metaphysical summation of

the above-mentioned five systems into a rigidly speculative thought).

These schools had achieved their distinctive features during the six hundred years prior to the Christian era. Their primary sources of inspiration, besides the Vedas, were the upanishads, such as, (1) Isa upanishad, (2) Kena upanishad, (3) Katha upanishad, (4) Prasna upanishad, (5) Mundaka upanishad, (6) Mandukya upanishad,

- (7) Taittiriya upanishad, (8) Aitareya upanishad,
 (9) Chandoya upanishad, (10) Brahadaranyaka upanishad,
 (11) Svetasvatara upanishad, (12) Kausitaki upanishad,
 and (13) Maitrei upanishad.

In the advanced stages of study the upanishads are critically reviewed and applied to the various schools of philosophy. One thing we have to specially observe is that, although it is of a higher order of studies, the schools emphasized the need of memorization of philosophical maxims relevant to the particular theme; because they should be readily available at the tip of tongue during discussions and deliberations; as there were not too many copies of the texts handy during such seminars. One of the reasons to emphasize memorization in the early part of Brahmanic education, even ignoring the importance of the literacy component had philosophical explanation. Mukerji observes:

An ideal of Hindu education was culture and not literacy. The main idea was to bring to the humblest man the highest products of human mind and heart. The system looked to the development of the self and to enable an individual to lead the highest possible life in circumstances in which he was placed.¹⁸

¹⁸ S. N. Mukerji, History of Education in India (Baroda: Acharya Book Depot, 1966) p. 2.

This does not mean that these advanced students did not care for literacy. Any student in higher studies of vedism had to have a mastery of the Sanskrit language required for the full comprehension of the original texts.

(iii) The Code of Manu (law): This code emphasized the conservation of the social order, especially the caste system of glorifying customs and conventions. Manu expounded the four aims of life, Dharma (ethical precepts), Artha (wealth), Kama (desires) and Moksha (final emancipation). Manu deals with religion, law, customs and politics in 2,685 verses of his Code. Although he gave high honor to women, he restricted her role within the walls of her own home. He does not have a dogmatic moral code; his is more liberal and flexible. Although the Code of Manu is the generally accepted law, the Brahman students had to master the Institutes of Yajnavalkya who was held in highest esteem by Aryan Hindus.

(iv) Artha Sastra of Kautiliya: Kautiliya deals with the material aims of human life. The Artha sastra is a well-expounded treatise on politics, economics, government and diplomacy. The work is dated back to third or fourth century B.C. Kautiliya even believed that the economic foundation is the determinant of

spiritual and artistic aspirations of life.¹⁹ He deals with accounts, commerce, measures, agriculture, army, navy, weights, law, etc. In his treatment about government, he prefers monarchy to republican system.

(v) Astrology and Astronomy: Astronomy developed from astrology. The Indians already had divided the year into twelve months of thirty days, with a thirteenth month every fifth year. The quinquennial cycle is explained in Jyotisha (astronomy). They also had the zodiac calculation based on lunar houses. This is not considered of Indian origin, though.²⁰ However, an advanced student had the opportunity of learning astronomy, or astrology which only was basically involved in casting horoscopes. By the first centuries after Christ, these sciences reached their maturity of growth.

(vi) Mathematics: Mathematics goes hand in hand with astronomy; so this was considered a basic part of curriculum for an advanced student. Algebra was also known to the early Indians. It advanced far beyond the

¹⁹Radhakrishnan and Moore, eds., A Source Book of Indian Philosophy, p. 193.

²⁰Gyan Sharma, Early Brahmanic Education, p. 39.

achievement of Diophantus, the Greek. When we compare Greece with India, the former was "pre-eminently geometrical and speculative, the latter arithmetical and mainly practical."²¹ The so-called Arabic numerals were an Indian invention. Geometry was accepted in so far as it is of service to astronomy. Indian scholars had independently advanced in trigonometry.

The earliest Indian mathematician was Aryabhatta (sixth century A.D.). His treatise extended to determine quadratic equations, indeterminate equations of the first degree, and probably the second. Cridhara and Padmanabha (algebraist) are some of the mathematicians belonging to this period. Later in the twelfth century A.D., Bhaskara Acharya made further contributions to the science; especially Beejaganita or root-extraction. We are not sure if Indian algebra was borrowed from the Greeks or vice-versa; at any rate, Indian algebra was considered superior to that of Diophantus. Geometry was a lost science for India, chiefly because geometrical truths began to be represented by algebra and arithmetic.

Although trigonometry was a Greek invention, the Indians were better calculators than the Greeks. The geometry Indians received from Greece, via Alexandria, was used as a base for trigonometrical calculations.²²

²¹Ibid., p. 40.

²²Ibid., p. 42.

(vii) Grammar and Literature: Linguistic inquiry, phonetics as well as grammar, was necessary to understand the Vedas. Panini's Ashtadhyayi (a grammar with eight chapters) served as the classical grammar. It is interesting to observe that he has employed algebraic symbols in his book.²³ No one has attempted to create another grammar of the Sanskrit language after Panini, because Ashtadhyayi was such a monumental and classical work with a comprehensive approach. It was the culmination of long researches completed sometime in the fourth century B.C.

Before Panini's time, there was Nirukta, a treatise on etymology. After Panini, Katyayana presented his Varttikas in the third century B.C., and later Patanjali wrote a commentary on Panini in the second century B.C. Amarasinha's Amarakosham (Sanskrit lexicography) appeared in the sixth century A.D.

Every Nampudiri student in advanced studies had to master all these works besides literary works in the fields of drama, dance and so on of celebrated poets like Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti and the like.

(viii) Medical Sciences: Those students who wanted to specialize in the indigenous medicine had to master the Ayurveda system of medical practices.

²³Ibid., p. 43.

Ashtangahrdaya clearly exposes the technique of medical treatment with extracts of plants and shrubs. Ayurveda of Dhavantari Rshi, considered an apocryphal veda, is the classical work on Indian medical education. The Ashtangahrdaya of Vagbhatacharya is considered another elaborate exposition of the Ayurvedic system. The Ayurvedic system also encompasses treatment by surgical operations.

The Ayurveda system is still an approved system of medical treatment along with the allopathic system in Kerala. Some of the hereditary physicians of the Ayurvedic discipline hail from some old Nampudiri families. There are eight such families.

To sum up, the Brahmanic education was a comprehensive system covering most of the disciplines of learning. Every Brahman had the opportunity to specialize in any field of his interest. And the agencies flourishing in Kerala gave ample opportunities to pursue it. However, these opportunities were restricted to the Brahman caste, hence they were not universally available. Nevertheless, their contributions were of paramount importance in the educational development and ambitions of the people of Kerala as a whole.

C. Non-Brahmanic Education

Even though the Brahmanic influence on education

was great in Kerala, we cannot assume that it is just because of the Brahmans Kerala started its educational activities. Even before Brahmans began to exert their cultural influence, during the Sangham period (200 B.C. - A.D. 500) the Dravidians of Kerala took education seriously. During that period, education was meant for all irrespective of sect or sex.²⁴ The Kuravas, the Parayas, the Panas, and such communities were considered high in their intellectual achievement by the kings. The Panas were even held higher than the Brahmans because of their educational superiority. The great Sangham poets, Kapilar and Paranar, are believed to have belonged to the Pana sect. Kappiyattu Kappiyanar, another great poet, was richly rewarded by Narmudi Cheral, one of the early Chera kings.

Female education was also fairly encouraged, as for evidence we have a great poetess, Auvayyar, belonging to the Pana community, held in high esteem during that period. "The Purananuru mentions about 15 poetesses; most of whom belonged to castes considered inferior in the social scale in later days."²⁵

²⁴A. Sreedhara Menon, Cultural Heritage of Kerala, p. 158.

²⁵Ibid., p. 161.

In ancient Kerala, although there were several centers of learning, Matilakam near Crangannur was the most important among them. There were Buddhist and Jainist, and Sanskrit and Tamil scholars who found Matilakam a haven for them. Ilangovadikal, the author of Chilappathikaram, was the head of an academy of intellectuals associated with Matilakam.

This period was characterized by the social unity of Kerala. There were no restrictions based on caste system. However, with the arrival of Aryan culture the cultural and social homogeneity began to be affected. The caste system introduced by Aryan culture began to impose restrictions on social and cultural interaction of the society. The Sudras, and other communities who were engaged in physical labor, were denied educational opportunities. The once glorious Panas were reduced to the lowest of the castes. Female education lost its momentum. Thus, the great ideals of the Sangham period were ostracized. Monopoly of education fell in the hands of the Nampudiris and other upper castes.

Even the Dravidian kings who later ruled Kerala in the medieval period were prone to encourage Brahman scholarship; probably to identify themselves with the Aryan culture which had its sway all over India by that time. But the educational aspirations of the people

did not remain inactive. This is what we see in the non-Brahman activities in education. Such activities are characterized in two forms, one with concentration on general studies and the other with focus on martial sciences.

1. General Studies at the Ezhuthupalli

Ezhuthupalli is an institution parallel to the schooling enjoyed by the Brahman children after the vidyarambham or initiation into education. This system also has its origin from the family as an agency of education. In course of time, families began to accept a master to teach their children either in his own house, or another place of the master's choice.

It is said that Ezhuthupalli, as an educational institution, have had its origin under Buddhist influence.²⁶ However, we see more Brahmanic influence in this system than Buddhist.

Each kara (component area of a village) had an Ezhuthupalli. The head of this school was called Ezhuttasan or Asan. Because of this, in some regions of Kerala, the same institution was called Asanpallikudam. An Ezhuthupalli was owned either by an Asan himself, in which case he received fees from students; or by the local community, in which case the Asan was remunerated

²⁶Ibid., p. 168.

by the community chief from contributions by the local people. In either case, the Asan was compensated, mostly in kind, seldom in cash. Occasionally, the Asan also received gifts at the time of local festivals and other religious and social holidays. An Asan was a reputed person in the community to whom was given a high place of honor and respect by the community. His blessing or curse was considered a determinant factor in the future of the child. So everyone, including the parents, was very particular to please him whenever possible.

An Ezhuthupalli was open only to the caste-Hindus and the Christians. Consequently, in the old days, a low caste person did not have any opportunity to learn writing and reading, and arithmetic.

The initiation in education of a non-Brahman is also called Vidyarambham. It takes place on the auspicious day of Vijayadesami in the month of Kanni or Thulam of the Malabar calendar (September or October). This day is also called Puja Etupp which means taking away of the educational articles placed in a venerable place to be blessed by Sarasvati, the goddess of learning three days ago, which is called Puja vaypp--i.e., depositing them for blessing. During those three days, no student or teacher is supposed to touch any of those articles. This Puja season of three days is still observed

in Kerala, and all schools are closed to celebrate it.

If the initiation takes place in the child's house, the local Asan or a locally recognized and reputed person is invited to initiate the child. If it takes place in the Ezhuthupalli, the Asan officiates the ceremony. First, the child, who may be three or five years old, offers a dakshina (consisting of betal leaves and areca nut, and a cash offering enveloped with plantain tender leaves) to the Asan or any other preceptor. The Asan, who sits on a floor mat cross-legged, receives it and blesses the child. In the very early days, the master would write on the tongue of the child with a gold coin an invocation to the gods. This practice later was dropped when gold coins were not readily available. But the common practice later accepted, was that the child was made to write the invocation on the rice thinly spread in a bell-metal or gold plate, depending on the economic condition of the child's family.

The Asan would hold the index finger of the child, who sits facing east, and trace his finger over rice, the first sentence, i.e., "Hari Sri Ganapathaye Namah," meaning "Adoration to Vishnu, Lakshmi and Ganapati". Christian children also were supposed to write the same invocation and repeat it after the master. But later it was changed to "Sarvesvaraya namah, Thampuran thunakka:

Guruve Saranam," meaning, "Adoration to God, Lord help: Master, (you are) the refuge," among the Syrian Catholics;²⁷ and to "Sri Yesu Mesihaye namah," meaning, "Adoration to Jesus Christ," among the Orthodox Christians.

After that, with the help of the master, the child traces all the alphabets over the spread rice in the plate. On the same day, sweetmeats or a heavy feast will be served to the guests and relatives depending on the economic affluence of the child's family.

(a) Curriculum: The initial part of the education may be conducted in the child's home, if the parents can afford an individual tutor. But generally he is placed under the Asan's care in the Ezhuthupalli. In the school, the child practices writing of the alphabets on spread sand, tracing with his index finger. His lessons are given on palmyra leaves. After he becomes familiar with the shapes and sounds of letters, short sentences are introduced to him. The lessons given on cadjans (ola) are taken home for practice.

After mastering the language to a considerable degree, the lessons of arithmetic will be added to his curriculum. The tables of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division were all in rhythmic form so that

²⁷ P.J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature--Contribution of Christmas, p. 72.

the child could easily memorize them. In about two years the youngster would have a satisfactory mastery in reading, writing and arithmetic.²⁸

In olden days, there was very little writing involved; since most of the writing was on olas (palmyra leaves) it was done by skilled people with the use of a sharp iron needle. Writing was needed only for courts in the recording of documents and for learned men engaged in literary activities. Since the early society was less sophisticated, there was little need for writing. The society was predominantly agrarian which did not need expertise in writing. The merchants used Kanakkappillais, skilled in basic accounting, to tabulate and calculate accounts for their business. The courts employed trained scribes, called Menons in the north and central Kerala, and Pillais in South Kerala.

Therefore, the training in writing the children got from an Ezhuthupalli just consisted of tracing the letters or a sentence on sand. However, training in writing on olas was provided for those who wanted in some Ezhuthupallis,²⁹ which of course was a later development.

After the child obtains rudimentary mastery in

²⁸L. K. A. Iyer, The Cochin Tribes and Castes, vol. II, pp. 62-63.

²⁹P. J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature--Contribution of Christians, p. 73.

these village schools, he is recommended for higher studies depending on his intellectual ability and the affordability of his family. The same Asan or another learned man would teach him Puranas (Hindu mythologies), Mathematics, Ayurvedam (medicine) and other subjects. The study of Sanskrit was necessary for a thorough understanding of Puranas and Mathematics. Mathematics was studied only to the extent of understanding astronomy which prepared a student for the profession of casting horoscopes.

In the study of Sanskrit, the student was exposed to Amarakosham (lexicography), Sidharupam (grammar), Nitisaram (ethical principles) and the like. The students also got acquainted with the epics of India in the original language, i.e., Sanskrit. It was considered prestigious for a Christian student to master the Puranas, besides the Sanskrit language. Hence, several wealthy Christian families also sent their children for higher studies in those areas.

Music also was a subject of studies, even from the elementary level; especially for girls. They learned the various religious lyrics, so that later they could teach them to their own children at home.

In the early period, Sanskrit and higher studies in the Puranas were forbidden to the non-Brahman students.

However, later these studies were available to them indirectly. Elsewhere, we have observed that the younger Brahman brothers were not permitted to contract a Brahman marriage, and they were to establish informal conjugal relations with Nayar women. The children of these unions were taught Sanskrit and the scholarship available in that language by some of their own fathers. These children, not considered Brahmans, had to socialize with Nayars. They are the ones who introduced Sanskrit and puranic education to the non-Brahmans. Yet, there was considerable resistance from the Brahman community to this practice. Often, non-Brahman scholars were not accepted equal to a Brahman scholar. Imparting Brahmanic learning to the untouchables was still considered a sacrilege, both by the Nampudiris and the Nayars.

(b) Physical Setting and Discipline: The Ezhuthupallis may not be compared to a modern school building, or even to Brahman mathom or sala, which enjoyed the endowments of kings. They were flimsy sheds with little or no furniture. They were thatched with grass or coconut palm leaves, the latter was a luxury. The children sat on the cow dung-plastered floor with sand spread in front of them for the purpose of tracing alphabets over it. But the Asan had an elevated bench or

stool in order for him to observe the children.

The school hours were from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. in the morning, and from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the afternoon. During the first hours, the children came to the Asan to show him their mastery. The school had a mastery approach. Only after one learned an area of his studies, the next lesson was introduced to him. This was done by the Asan himself, or by his assistant. As they did not have any printed books, the lessons were written on olas. The children are given some lessons for homework. The average working days in a month consisted of 19 to 20 days, with occasional breaks for holiday seasons, and planting and harvesting seasons.³⁰

No hard punishment was administered in ancient days, but such a trend changed eventually to corporal punishment with a cane. Generally, four methods of disciplining were used. They were: Sama (exhortation), Dana (token or gift), Bheda (separation) and Danda (corporal punishment); the last having been administered as a last resort. However, corporal punishment became a common practice of disciplining in the Ezhuthupallis. It was fear, rather than respect, that ruled the student

³⁰L. K. A. Iyer, The Cochin Tribes and Castes, vol. II, p. 62.

life. The parents did not only tolerate this discipline, but also accepted it with admiration for the master. A good Asan always meant somebody with a cane always in his hand.

There was no set of rules of evaluation except the teacher's conviction of a student's mastery of the content. The success of a student depended on his exercise of the faculty of memory. The master was never questioned by the pupil or his parents on any matter whatsoever, whether discipline or curriculum or learning. Therefore, there was no cultivation of thinking or originality.

Ezhuthupallis are the predecessors of the village schools which became systematized and organized vernacular schools after the inception of modern education during the British period.

2. Military Gymnasia or Kalaris

After the elementary education in an Ezhuthupalli consisting of two to five years, a student had three choices; either to continue his studentship in advanced studies, or to go home and help his parents in his business or agriculture so that he could establish a lifetime career, or to enroll in a Kalari, where he could get a military training.

Nayars were a military caste and were proud of obtaining a martial education, even though they later changed their mind and became farmers. They used to constitute the local army of princes and chieftains.

The sixteenth century traveller, Duarte Barbosa states:

. . .in this land of Malabar there is another caste of people called Nayres, and among them are noblemen who have no other duty than to serve in war, and they always carry their arms whithersoever they go, some swords and shields, others bows and arrows, and yet others, spears. They all live with the King, and the other great Lords; nevertheless, all receive stipends from the King or from the great Lords with who they dwell. . . . They are bound to the service of the King or of their Lord, and guard them well, bearing arms before them by day and night. They give little heed to what they eat and drink, but only to serve and to do their duty, thus oftentimes, they will sleep on a bench without any covering, to protect him who gives them their food. . . .

The more part of these Nayres when they are seven years of age are sent to schools where they are taught many tricks of nimbleness and dexterity; there they teach them to dance and turn about and twist on the ground, to take royal leaps, and other leaps, and this they learn twice a day as long as they are children and they become so loose-jointed and supple that they make them turn their bodies contrary to nature; and when they are fully accomplished in this, they teach them to play with the weapon to which they are most inclined, some with bows and arrows, some with poles to become spearmen, but most with swords and bucklers, which is most used among them, and in this fencing they are ever practicing. The masters who teach them are called Panicals, and are much honoured and esteemed among them, especially by their pupils, great and small, who worship them; and it is the law and custom to bow down before them whenever they meet them, even if the disciple is older than the master. And the Nayres are bound, howsoever old they may be, to go always in the winter (i.e., in

the rainy season) to take their fencing lessons until they die. Some of the Panicals dwell with the Kings and great Lords, and do not teach, but are captains in war, in which they have great repute. And in this science they take degrees as do learned men among us, and in this way they receive more victuals than those on which the other Nayres live.³¹

The above narration gives an almost adequate picture of a Kalari in those days. Like ancient Sparta, Kerala considered martial training an important part of a youth's education. Kalari was a typically indigenous institution with no foreign influence at all. Every important village had a Kalari to train its youth in this martial art. The head of a Kalari was called Panikkar or Kurup, who gave lessons not only in the use of arms, but also in physical feats as fencing, boxing and wrestling.

The training in a Kalari consisted of several stages. When a youth is admitted to a Kalari, for two weeks he had to undergo a course in massage. Then he is given twelve physical exercises designed to prepare him to meet all situations of attack and defense. Both of these courses will help him to acquire suppleness of the body. Then he is taught the use of different weapons stage by stage. The best of them are given courses in marmams, i.e., knowledge of vulnerable parts of the body.

³¹ Mansel Longworth Dames, ed., The Book of Duarte Barbosa, vol. II (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1921) pp. 38-40.

An expert of marmams can easily defeat his opponent by mere touch. But this practice is limited to extreme situations since it will kill the opponent or cripple him for his life. The training in a Kalari would last from five to eight years.

Since the native Christians identified themselves with the Nayers in social status, they were also actively involved in martial training. They usually attended the Kalaris run by Nayers. However, in predominantly Christian regions, they also had their own Kalaris with Christian Panikkars as heads.

Similarly, the Izhavas also held a very active Kalari system. The hero of one of the ballads, Thacholi Othenan, was an Izhava. Their Kalaris were attended by Nayers, and some of the Nayar Kalaris had Izhava Panikkars as their heads.

Girls were also admitted to Kalari training. But their training was intended for building physical fitness and charm.³² However, some of the ancient ballads praise the martial skills of their heroines.

A system which provided soldiers in several wars in the past, Kalari began to disintegrate after the arrival of the Europeans who waged war with guns and cannons, and finally lost its martial importance in the

³²A. Sreedhara Menon, Cultural Heritage of Kerala, p. 106.

nineteenth century. Kerala still has some Kalaris in its northern districts, not for military purposes, but for entertaining people as an art; to keep an ancient system from extinction. Some of the best men in Indian Circus did have their primary training in the Kalaris of Malabar districts.

Like the Brahmanic education, the Ezhuthupallis and Kalaris were important in the educational history of Kerala, because they had taken responsible roles in the physical, mental and intellectual development of the people of Kerala before it developed the modern system of education. Like the Kalari system, many villages are still retaining the Ezhuthupalli system at least on the preschool level, which is an indication of its reputation as a valuable social institution. The indigenous systems dealt with in this chapter can be considered the cornerstones of foundations of the educational development experienced by the people of Kerala for the last couple of centuries.

CHAPTER VI

PRE-BRITISH EUROPEAN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND THEIR SUBSEQUENT INFLUENCES

A. Prelude

The scope of this chapter is to inquire into the educational and literary efforts of pre-British European settlers in Kerala. This has been one of the areas in the educational history of Kerala seldom researched and studied. Historians of educational development tended to ignore the pre-British European influence on education and its impact on the formation of a civilization which continued even after the arrival of the British. It may be because the British system enjoyed monopoly over the past two centuries in formulating an educational policy of India that the contributions of the Portuguese explorers were left unnoticed.

We will evaluate the impact of those attempts on literary and cultural life of the people of Kerala, where the Portuguese centered their activities. It may be asked if such endeavors have any relationship to the British efforts toward modernization of education. We should assume that the Portuguese efforts were helpful

to the British educational enterprises. Although not dominant, the non-British western efforts initiated by the Portuguese, the Dutch and French efforts being negligible, survived through the centuries and influenced a portion of the people independently, without fusing or reconciling with the British system of education.

B. The Portuguese in India

Up until the fifteenth century, generally speaking, the western world was conducting trade with the Arabs, who were directly trading with India to obtain Indian spices. The Moorish princes levied heavy taxes on the Arab ports and the Arab merchants were making unjustifiable profits on the Indian spices from their business transactions with the Europeans. Moreover, the Muslims were very hostile to Christian Europe. These are the main reasons why the Portuguese set out to establish direct trade relations with India.¹

When the Portuguese arrived at Calicut in 1498 under the leadership of Vasco da Gama, India was not one nation, as it is now. There were hundreds of petit kingdoms ruled by native princes. The geographic region where the Portuguese mainly concentrated their activities was South India, especially Kerala (Malabar), although Goa was

¹D. Ferroli, The Jesuits in Malabar, vol. I (Bangalore City: The Bangalore Press, 1939), p. 86.

one of their chief ports. Therefore, we will discuss their activities chiefly in that region.

Kerala was known to western countries and the Middle East even before Christ. We have proof that animals and birds like monkeys and peacocks have been exported to those countries. "Malabar teak was found in the ruins of Ur".² It is believed that sandalwood and other timbers for the construction of the temple of Jerusalem have come from Kerala. Kerala also maintained trade with Egypt, Mesopotamia, Rome and other western cities. The coins excavated in Kerala have collections from the early Roman empire.

The commodities they traded were pepper, cardomom, ginger, cloves and the like. Those spices were very dear to the West. The reason for Columbus to make his tedious trip which finally discovered the American continent was to reach India for establishing trade. The above-mentioned spices were produced chiefly by Kerala. Hence, every explorer had Kerala in mind when he set out for India.

As we have said earlier, the Portuguese came with the same intentions. However, the motive was not purely commercial. Pope Nicholas V commissioned the Portuguese King Affonson V to evangelize the new lands his country would find by a bull dated January 8, 1454. However, the

²K.M. Panikkar, A History of Kerala, p. 1.

expedition under Gama which landed in Calicut on May 17, 1498, was arranged by Dom Joao II.

The educational activities of the Portuguese are intrinsically connected with their religious works as in the case of several other colonial settlers. Therefore, the various phases of the Portuguese educational and literary efforts within that perspective will be discussed.

The Need for Educational Activities

Missionary activities, especially after the reformation, could be carried out only through the medium of written language. Therefore missionaries usually concentrated their initial efforts on the study and development of native languages if they had not obtained the desired maturity.

When the Portuguese missionaries came to Kerala they had a double task. To evangelize the heathens was the first. To bring the already existing Christian community, called the St. Thomas Christians or Nazarenes (Nazaranees), under the Roman hierarchy and rite was another task. The native Christians belonged to the Eastern Church, and followed the Eastern rite according to the East Syrian tradition. They were in agreement with the Hindu customs as long as they were not in direct conflict with the Christian faith and sacraments.

Although the Nazaranees were not a totally literate or educated community, their priests or Kanthanars were sufficiently educated in their liturgical language and liturgies to give their flock adequate religious leadership. The Portuguese suspected the native Christians as heretics holding unorthodox doctrines, which they were not. They were orthodox in their fundamental faith. But the missionaries could not understand their liturgical language (Aramaic) and the symbolism of their rites. They could not tolerate a married clergy.³ They could not understand the various purification ceremonies of the native Christians in tune with ancient Hindu tradition. Because of the Nazaranees' association with East Syrian liturgy they were also suspected of Nestorian heresy, despite their deep devotion to the Mother of God.

So the Portuguese missionaries had to declare an all out war against the native Christians. The major changes they proposed in an ancient Church were complete Romanization by establishing a Latin hierarchy and by obstructing the entry of Eastern bishops and imposing Western liturgies on them.

³In the Eastern Church a person in minor orders can marry and get ordained a deacon and priest, although no marriage is permitted after the diaconate and priesthood or when a priest becomes widowed. Another stipulation is that a married priest cannot become a bishop.

Evangelization of the heathens required preparation of a Catechism in the native languages. The Portuguese missionaries, therefore, concentrated their attention on developing the native languages and creating literary works in those languages.

C. Educational Activities of the Portuguese

The Portuguese religious activities may be understood in two different perspectives:

1. Romanization efforts among the native Christians.
2. Evangelization of non-Christians.

1. Romanization Efforts Among the Native Christians

We are not interested in the political history of this region at the moment. Our concern is education.

The time under discussion is a few years after the arrival of St. Francis Xavier in Malabar (1544 or 1545). Xavier wrote a letter to the King of Portugal. The letter explicitly admits that the Archbishop of the Nazaranees, Mar Jacob, is an orthodox bishop and he deserves the protection of the Crown.⁴ However, his priests were suspected of being schismatics by the Portuguese. Hence comes the first proposal for establishing a college to educate priests who would be faithful to the Portuguese and the Roman Church.

⁴D. Ferroli, The Jesuits in Malabar, vol. I, pp. 149-150.

(a) The College of Crangannur, Cochin: During this period, Dom Joao de Albuquerque, the first bishop of Goa, decided to establish a seminary. Thus, Fr. Vincente de Lagos, a Franciscan, was sent to Malabar to start a college for the aspirants to the priesthood in 1541. Mar Jacob conceded to this proposal reluctantly, and the seminary was established in the same year. Mar Jacob brought seven boys there "presumably to be trained for the priesthood."⁵ On January 20, 1545, Francis Xavier wrote the following letter to King John III of Portugal:

The College of Cranganore, which is the work of Fra Vincenzo, makes great progress and will advance from good to better if Your Highness continues to favour it heretofore. There is really a truest reason for giving constant thanks to God for the great fruit to the service of Christ our Lord which has arisen from that holy College. There is a very probable hope that it will send forth religious men who may make the whole of Malabar, which is now sunk in vice and error, feel a saving shame at its own state of misery, and may bring the light of our Lord Jesus Christ to the benighted minds of the people and make his Holy Name manifest among them all, by the work⁶ and ministrations of the disciples of Fra Vincenzo.

In 1549 his seminary at Crangannur near Cochin had 100 pupils, sons of noble St. Thomas Christians. In 1539 four students went to Lisbon for priestly education.

⁵ Ibid., p. 150.

⁶ V. Nagam Aiya, The Travancore State Manual, vol. II, p. 155.

The seminarians at the College of Crangannur were educated in the Roman way, and no instruction in Eastern theology and Aramaic was given to them. However, the College gave a fairly sound training in view of the sixteenth century standard of clerical education. It contained several manuscripts from Europe.⁷ Despite its anti-Eastern focus, Mar Jacob tolerated it. But his successor, Mar Joseph denied the graduates of this college ordination to the priesthood.

Educationally considered, this school was the first attempt for Western education in Malabar. Previously, priestly candidates were trained by Malpans (learned priests or bishops) in their houses. Such a training consisted of studies in Aramaic and liturgical performances in the Church and a practicum with the Malpan in the parish ministry and Church leadership.

The general formation of the Malabar clergy before the arrival of the Portuguese was probably as good as in many countries in Europe at that time. Simple priests may have learned just enough to perform the different functions attached to their office. These functions do not appear to have gone beyond saying Mass and reciting the office on certain days and assisting at marriages, funerals and family functions. All that a priest had to learn was the liturgical functions and an elementary knowledge of Syriac and of the Holy Scripture. All this he could learn, as far as was necessary for practical purposes, from elderly priests of his own church.⁸

⁷P. J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Contributions of Christians, p. 80.

⁸George M. Anathil, The Theological Formation of the Clergy in India (Poona: Pontifical Athenaeum, 1966), p. 7.

The general education of a Christian youth was conducted in an Ezhuthupalli just as that of a Hindu child. However, he was given orientation to Christian living by teaching prayers, mostly in Syriac. He also learned the use of weapons after that. Candidates for the priesthood generally came from hereditary priestly families. Once a candidate for the priesthood completed his secular studies, he went to a Malpan (a reputed priest with authority from the bishop to teach liturgy and the Holy Bible) for his priestly education. Once the Malpan certified that a candidate fulfilled all the requirements for the priesthood, and his home parish recorded its consent, he was ordained to the priesthood by the bishop.⁹

We have seen that the Syrian Archbishop Mar Jacob endorsed the priestly training given at the College of Cochin, though reluctantly. But his flock did not admit many of the priests who came out of that seminary, because they feared them having been already Romanized. When Mar Joesph did not ordain the graduates of the Cochin College, the bishop of Goa had to ordain them and use them for the newly established Roman Catholic parishes of his diocese. This created additional tension between the Roman Catholics and the Syrians.

⁹P. J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Contributions of Christians, p. 76.

(b) The Vaipicotta College: To avoid further trouble, the successor of Mar Joseph, Mar Abraham, requested the help of the Jesuits to reform the education of the Syrian clergy in the Eastern tradition. Accordingly, in 1577, a Jesuit house was established at Vaipicotta in the name of the Holy Cross. The house slowly developed into a College or Seminary between 1581 and 1584. Aramaic, Malayalam, Ethics, and Theology were some of the major subjects taught there. Even the already ordained priests began to attend that college. Classes were offered to laymen also.

Eventually, the school became famous and the curriculum became broader. There lived fifty to sixty "students belonging to the descendants of those who were converted to true faith by the Apostle St. Thomas. They are taught the humanities, Latin, Chaldaic, the cases of conscience, the rudiments of Catholic faith and of the Liturgy."¹⁰ The King of Portugal also helped the running of the Seminary. A Dutch traveller, Baldaeus by name, witnesses that this Seminary has been endowed with a huge library of native and European books and manuscripts, and the building itself was equal to the size of such European institutions.¹¹

¹⁰D. Ferroli, The Jesuits in Malabar, p. 169.

¹¹P. J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Contributions of Christians, p. 81

In the meantime, some Jesuits began to object to the teaching of Aramaic and the Syrian liturgy. Upon hearing it, the Pope decided that Syro-Chaldaic must continue to be taught.

Eventually, there was another school opened for the Jesuit scholasticate at Cochin leaving the Vaipicotta Seminary for the education of Syrian clergy. The Crangannur College, run by the Franciscans, became a secular school serving the lay students.¹²

As years went by, there were several changes in the religious realm of India. Goa was made an Arch-bishopric, and Alexis de Menezes became the archbishop and Primate of the East. Mar Abraham the Syrian Archbishop of Angamali died, and before his death he appointed his Archdeacon as his vicar sede vacante. Displeased with the appointment, Archbishop Menezes appointed Fr. Francis Roz, the Rector of the Vaipicotta College, as Vicar Apostolic of the See of Angamali. Consequently, the Syrians became angry and no longer permitted a Roman priest to officiate in their Churches. Finally, Menezes revoked his appointment of Roz.

(c) The Synod of Diamper, 1599: However, the rift began to widen. The Archdeacon did not want to yield

¹²George M. Anathil, The Theological Formation of the Clergy in India, p. 25.

to the Archbishop of Goa. He believed in the independence of his Church and held that his people were not under the Roman prelates. Archbishop Menezes began to take stronger measures to bring the Syrians under his control and his efforts climaxed with the Synod of Diamper in 1599.

The Synod of Diamper succeeded in bringing the Syrians under the Roman hierarchy at least for a short period, with the force of the Portuguese military. As we are not interested in the religious implications of the Synod deliberations we do not go into them. However, we have some very clear educational suggestions by the Synod.

The 12th Decree of the Synod demands that children should be educated under Christian schoolmasters. If only pagan schools are available, Christian students should not be allowed to take part in pagan religious rites. This decree indicates that there were schools before the Diamper Synod. Some schools were Christian as the decree says. It was the Ezhuthupallis that the decree was referring to. These schools were uncommitted to any religion; however, Hindu influences were predominant. The Synod decree paved way for opening new schools adjacent to the Churches by Portuguese activities.

We also find that Jesuits have already established a regular school at Crangannore in 1577.¹³

The Christians and Hindus before the arrival of the Portuguese, were one single society respecting each other's religious preferences. The Ezhuthupallis they had were attended by the children of both religions. From the decree we could assume that the concept of "parochial schools" in Kerala was a contribution of the Portuguese, as they began to be established after the Synod of Diamper. However, there is no evidence they have been directly under the control of the parishes. They might be under the political control of the Portuguese, but run by native Christian noble men. And that is why they could not survive after the Dutch takeover. If they were directly under the churches, they would have continued like some seminaries.

The 13th Decree of the Synod points to the abuses in the schools run by Christian masters. To attract non-Christian students, those schools used to keep idols. The Synod condemns this practice.

The 17th Decree recommends the preparation of a Catechism in Malayalam. The Rector of the Viapicotta

¹³P.J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Contributions of Christians, p. 80.

Seminary was authorized to undertake that responsibility.¹⁴ The Kathanars (priests) were also asked to give basic education in their own residences to children to counter-act pagan influences.

The colleges founded by the missionaries gave leadership in educational matters during this period. K. M. Panikkar, a famous diplomat-statesman and historian, himself a Hindu, says:

The Colleges founded at Angamali and Cochin for education of Malabar Christians in the Roman faith were useful in spreading the knowledge of Latin and Portuguese. The later Raja of Cochin conversed fluently in Portuguese, and often corresponded directly in that language. In fact, till the establishment of British supremacy in Kerala, Portuguese continued to be the diplomatic language of the Kerala rulers.¹⁵

(d) The Ambalagak Seminary: The Seminary at Vaipicotta served the Latin and the Romanized churches for over eight decades. However, the Jesuits could not continue their educational activities freely, as the Portuguese political power began to disintegrate. In 1664, Cochin was invaded by the Dutch, and as a result, the Jesuits had to flee from the Seminary. They went to the dominions of the Zamorin of Calicut and established their Seminary at Ambalagak. However, their educational

¹⁴D. Ferroli, The Jesuits in Malabar, vol. I, pp. 187-188.

¹⁵K.M. Panikkar, A History of Kerala, p. 182.

activities again were restricted because the Society of Jesus was suppressed by the Pope in 1773. Their seminary was finally destroyed in 1789 by Tippu Sultan.

This school was named after St. Paul; and meant for the Jesuit scholasticate and for the Syrian seminarians. The Seminary went through severe hardship due to lack of money and necessary books, in its early period. Although there was only one rector for both the scholasticate and the Syrian seminarians, the training of the Syrians was done separately. Eventually the school grew to a Collegium Magnum for the Malabar province of the Jesuits. Languages, Theology, Mathematics, Philosophy and Geography were taught there.

In 1670 there were about 50 Syrian youth studying there for the priesthood. The school also grew to a center for language students. Sanskrit, Malayalam, Latin, Syriac, and Tamil were the main languages taught there. The printing press of Ambalakat published several Tamil books of religious content. Jesuits themselves wrote several grammars and lexicons which later became helpful to the English missionaries in the study of the native languages. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, these linguistic contributions of the missionaries were crucially important, and Malayalam had immensely benefited from their contributions.

Parenthetically, there was another school for the training of Syrian clergy conducted by the Jesuits at Angamaly from as early as the last decade of the sixteenth century. From a report of Cardinal Gesualdo to the Pope (1599) we understand that the students in that school have received instructions in humanities, Latin and Chaldean languages, cases of conscience, ecclesiastical rites and in Roman Catholic faith.¹⁶ But it does not say that the school had any particular social importance like the others.

(e) The Verapoly Seminary--A Test of Native-
Foreign Collaboration

When the native Christians became fed up with Jesuits who were considered incompetent to heal the factions between the Latins and the Syrians, Rome sent a Romo-Syrian priest, Bartholomew Hanna, from Aleppo, to start a Seminary in which he could teach Syriac and Syrian liturgy and the Carmelite monks could teach other courses. Since the seminary could not be opened soon, Hanna went to teach Syriac in some of the Malpanates. But when it was opened in 1682, Hanna became the first rector. Again, the seminary was closed due to lack of support from the Romo-Syrians, and due to unfavorable

¹⁶George M. Anathil, The Theological Formation of the Clergy in India, p. 26.

political conditions created by the Dutch presence in the Cochin area.

In 1764, the Propaganda Fide Congregation re-established the seminary for both the Syrians and the Latins. The seminary had to recruit ten Syrians and six Latins for the first year. One Syrian and one Latin professor were supposed to teach Syriac and Latin respectively. Other theological subjects had to be taught in Malayalam. The seminary officially started instructions in 1766 in a temporary building until the permanent building was completed. But the experiment did not last long. The Syrians and the Latins were again separated. The Syrians immediately started another seminary at Alengad, while the Latins continued at Verapoly. The first doctorate holder in Kerala, perhaps in all India, Fr. Joseph Kariattil, was a professor in the Alengad Seminary.

Nevertheless, attempts were made to bring both of the factions back under the leadership of the Apostolic visitor who was a Carmelite. He finally succeeded in bringing the Syrians back to Verapoly in 1773; both institutions became one seminary again. The seminary followed a systematic curriculum. The medium of instruction was Malayalam. It was a tedious job to translate the

original works into Malayalam. This urged the missionaries to study the native tongues, like Malayalam and Sanskrit. Philosophy, Theology, Rhetoric, Latin, Portuguese, Syriac, etc. were some of the major courses of the curriculum. The duration of studies lasted from seven to eight years.¹⁷ One of the rectors of this seminary, Fr. Paulinus de Bartolomeo, was a great linguist who contributed immensely to the language and culture of Kerala.

But again, due to rift between the two rites, the Syrians moved back to Alengad, and the Latins remained at Verapoly. Later, the Seminary at Verapoly was transferred to Puthenpally in 1866.

(f) Centralization of Clerical Education: Along with the combined Syrian-Latin seminaries, there existed several houses of Malpans (the Malpanate) for the training of candidates to the Romo-Syrian priesthood, as a continuation of the pre-Portuguese system of priestly education. They were mostly indigenous, but there were some run by foreign priests also. For example, the seminary at Kaduthuruthi, established by Father Francis Donati, a Dominican priest, well-versed in Assyrian and Syriac, was a malpanate. In spite of the systematized

¹⁷Ibid., p. 78.

education in a few seminaries, most of the Romo-Syrian priests came out of the malpanates. There were at least eighteen malpanates in Kerala in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Although the malpanates provided a basic priestly education in liturgy, scripture and in Malayalam and Syriac languages, its standard and quality were not considered equal to a seminary education. However, the spiritual and pastoral formation imparted by these malpanates was no way inferior. But the Vicar Apostolic of Verapoly, Msgr. Bernadine, who also had jurisdiction over the Romo-Syrians, could not tolerate a dual system under him. As a result, he arbitrarily abolished all the Malpanates in 1850, and established four seminaries, at Mannanam, Puthenpally, Vazhakulam (1866) and Elthuruth (1868). The Seminary of Verapoly, transferred to Puthenpally in 1866, thus became one among them, and the Seminary of the Romo-Syrians at Alengad had to close its doors forever. The Vicar Apostolic also decreed that only the graduates of these four seminaries would thereafter be ordained to the diocesan priestly ministry. Although the Romo-Syrians did not particularly appreciate this arbitrary step, they had no options. Among the four seminaries, three were given to the Romo-Syrian

Carmelites (a third order of the Carmelites, founded by native priests of the Syrian rite) to operate, and the one at Puthenpally was given to the foreign Carmelites. The one at Puthenpally trained both Latins and Syrians; the other three were exclusively for the Syrians.

In 1887, two dioceses were established for the Romo-Syrians, thereby separating them from the Latin jurisdiction. This created further crisis. The Syrians controlled all seminaries but the one at Puthenpally, which trained both Syrians and Latins. The latter fell under the control of the Latin Vicariate of Verapoly. The question arose whether each diocese should have its own seminary. Finally, the Propaganda Fide Congregation intervened and decreed that Malabar needed only one central major seminary and took over the Puthenpally Seminary under its jurisdiction declaring it an "Apostolic Seminary" in 1890. Thus, all other seminaries ceased to exist.

Since the Puthenpally Apostolic Seminary adopted the curricular structure of European philosophates and theologates, the medium of instruction became Latin. Therefore, all the Syrian dioceses had to teach their priestly candidates the Latin language well enough for them to comprehend philosophy and theology in that

language. Consequently, each diocese began to open minor seminaries as feeding institutions of the Apostolic Seminary.¹⁸

The Apostolic Seminary at Puthenpally was later transferred to Alwaye in 1933. Ever since, this institution became a learning center, especially for the Roman Catholics of Kerala. The seminary was accorded "Pontifical" status in 1964 and recently in 1975 became a Pontifical Institute, with academic autonomy to grant its own advanced degrees in the faculty of Philosophy and Theology. The seminary also houses one of the largest libraries in India.

2. Evangelization Efforts and Their Implications to Education

Evangelization efforts of the Portuguese fully started with the arrival of St. Francis Xavier in May 1542. He was a Jesuit. Even before the arrival of Jesuits in India, a group of far-sighted laymen and priests had founded in 1541 the College of St. Paul in Goa, which was earlier called the "Seminary of Santa Fe." "It was meant for young men from Africa and the East who were there to be given solid Christian formation, and then to be sent back to their countrymen as real apostles".¹⁹

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 111-113.

¹⁹John Correo-Affonso, Even Unto the Indies (Bombay: St. Xavier's High School, 1956), p. 74.

When St. Francis Xavier arrived, he was given charge of the college. Without assuming that responsibility, he appointed another Jesuit, Fr. Paul de Camerino, to teach in that college. But in 1549, the administration of the college finally fell into Jesuit hands.

This school was initially meant for elementary education; it was exclusively for externs. However, Jesuit tradition was to conduct apostolic schools to prepare candidates for the order. Yet they insisted on education for externs in reading, writing and Christian doctrine. St. Paul's became very prominent in Goa. There were several brilliant students in that school.

During the same period, Fr. Lancilotti established another college in Quilon, Kerala, where he admitted boys between seven and twelve years of age, rather than older ones. He accepted children from more influential noble families. He had the blessing of Ignatius Loyola in starting such schools. Loyola writes to Lancilotti: ". . . from multiplication of similar colleges, I shall always hope that there will follow great fruit for God's glory."²⁰

The civil and ecclesiastical authorities placed great hopes in Jesuit colleges. St. Paul eventually developed into a university and a studium generale

²⁰Ibid., p. 76.

was started there. College courses were given in Arts, Philosophy, and Theology. The St. Paul College Press in 1556 published the list of philosophical theses to be defended in public disputation. In fact, the Jesuit's career as schoolmaster in Europe was initiated in India.

We also have documentation that shortly after 1580, another Jesuit College was established in Chaul near Bombay. There were about 300 students in that school. The curriculum consisted of courses in Latin, Logic, Theology, rudiments of Portuguese grammar and Music.²¹

In the midst of the Iberian missionaries, we see an Englishman, another Jesuit, the first English missionary to land in India, engaged in educational and civilizational activities. He was Fr. Thomas Stephens, who came to Goa in 1579. He was a capable Rector of the Jesuit College in Margoa, and later of the Salsette College. He studied Indian languages and wrote several books. He mastered the Canarim language and translated a Portuguese book of Fr. Marcos Jorge, Christian Doctrine, into it. He even wrote a Grammar in that language which was published posthumously at the St. Ignatius College Press in 1640. But his opus magnum is Christian Puranas,

²¹N. N. Law, Promotion of Learning in India by Early European Settlers (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1915), p. 80.

an epic poem, narrating the Incarnation of the Son of God and Redemption of mankind. It starts from the Creation and ends with the ascension of Christ.²² The influence of the Puranas on Konkani Christians and Konkani literature was enormous.

The Jesuits constructed another College in Bandora in 1620, the College of St. Anne, and under the mandate of the Portuguese King Dom Joao IV, another one at Monpacer. Most of the schools were financed by the King of Portugal.

The above treatment does not rule out the possibility of other schools established by Portuguese missionaries in conjunction with their evangelistic activities. But those already mentioned were the major institutions in South India. We have also, evidence that they established several other schools in Diu, Damaun, Hoogly, etc. "The Portuguese started school with the sole purpose of educating their new converts to Christianity, and their Portuguese schools taught reading and writing in Portuguese as well as in the language of the region."²³

²²D. Ferroli, The Jesuits in Malabar, vol. I, p. 454.

²³Singarayer Fernando, The Teaching of English in Madras' Secondary Schools Before and After Indian Independence (Chicago: Loyola University, Ph.D. Dissertation, 1960), p. 14.

D. Printing and Literary Activities as Sources of Educational Stimulation

1. Printing Efforts

Writing on palm leaves and transcribing the same content on other palm leaves to hand them down to the next generation, were the chief methods of preserving knowledge and information in Kerala. It was a very difficult task. Hence, the establishing of printing presses marks the beginning of a new generation in letters and, consequently, an enhancement in the educational activities.

The first printing presses were brought by the Jesuits and they established two print shops in Goa in 1550 according to Fr. Ferroli. It seems that the Catechism of St. Francis Xavier has been the first book printed in India.²⁴ In fact, Francis Xavier's translation of the Catechism in Malayalam is the crude beginning of the new movement of translation from Western languages, which has become so marked a feature of Indian vernacular today. According to T.N. Siquiera, S.J., the first printing press was at Ambalagakad near Cochin established in 1577.²⁵ Both of these opinions are expressed by

²⁴D. Ferroli, The Jesuits in Malabar, Vol. I, p. 471.

²⁵T. N. Siquiera, S.J., The Education of India (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 23.

Jesuits, and which one is the first should be debated. But this writer tends to agree with Fr. Feroli's opinion due to evidence, such as, the publication of theses for public disputation at the St. Paul College in Goa in 1556. Books in Marathi and Konkani were printed there, but in Roman characters.

The Ambalakat Press was attached to the St. Paul's College, elsewhere mentioned. In 1577 a Spanish Jesuit Lay Brother, John Gonsalves, was the first to cast a Malayalam-Tamil type in that press. It is believed that these types were made in Goa and brought to Ambalakat.²⁶ In 1679, Fr. Anthony de Provensa printed at the same press, the first Portuguese-Tamil Dictionary. During this period there were some scholarly priests at the Ambalakat College. They studied Sanskrit with the help of the Brahmans and collected several Sanskrit books. It was during this time Fr. Robert De Nobili was engaged in evangelizing the Tamils in the Madurai kingdom. Some of the Tamil books for the new converts were also printed at this press. The Tamil grammar prepared by Fr. Da Costa and the Tamil lexicon prepared by Fr. Provensa, were

²⁶P. J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Contributions of Christians, p. 81.

printed at this press. De Nobili's book Theology was also printed there in Tamil.²⁷

Soon after the Diamper Synod, Fr. Francis Roz requested Rome to send Syrian liturgical books for the St. Thomas Christians. Instead of sending those books, Pope Clement VIII in 1602 sent a press with Chaldean (Aramaic) types to Malabar. That press was set up at the Vaipicotta College for printing liturgical books for the Malabar Syrian Church. However, much before that, Vaipicotta had a press and engaged in printing activities. One of the books published there is worth mentioning, because of a copy which is still available in the library of the Sorbonne University. The title of the book is Principes on elemens de la Religion Chtne en langue de Malabar imprime a Cochin - 1579. This does not mean the language of the book was Malayalam, it was Tamil, which seems to have been the court language of Kerala at that time.

In 1579, at the Press of Madre de Dios at Cochin, Fr. Marcos Jorge printed two books, Doctrina Christiana and Christian Worship. "It could be assumed that at

²⁷Ibid., p. 85.

least fifty books have been printed at these two presses at Cochin and Vaipicotta".²⁸

St. Xavier himself prepared a Catechism book in Tamil in 1550. His co-worker, Fr. Enrique Enriques, a Tamil scholar, wrote a Tamil grammar and lexicon, besides various doctrinal books.²⁹ One of his doctrinal books was published by Fr. Marcos Jorge with the name Doctrina Christiana.

One of the instructors at the Vaipicotta Seminary was Fr. George Castro who was well-versed in Malayalam and Aramaic. He translated several books from Latin to Aramaic and Malayalam; which included some parts of the Bible, treatises on sacraments and the Missal. Fr. Francis Roz, who became the first Latin bishop of Romo-Syrians, also translated several liturgical books into Aramaic. Parenthetically, he also established a seminary at Kaduthruuthy which lacks any notable historical or religious importance. It is also understood that Roz has made an Aramaic lexicon for the use of the Syrians.³⁰

The printing press at Viapicotta in 1624 was

²⁸Ibid., p. 83.

²⁹Singarayer Fernando, The Teaching of English in Madras' Secondary Schools Before and After the Indian Independence, p. 15.

³⁰P.J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Contributions of Christians, p. 84.

transferred to Crangannore where Roz had his headquarters as Archbishop.

In 1578, on the Fishery coast in Pannikkayal, Fr. John De Faria, S.J., cast Tamil types and printed the Flos Sanctorum and some other devotional books. It is not certain if this is the same printing press at Tuticorin mentioned by Fr. Ferroli³¹ as Tuticorin is on the Fishery coast. However, the printing of Flos Sanctorum and the establishment of the press at Tuticorin were in the same year (1578), and hence this writer believes that both are the same.

We have already mentioned the literary activities of Fr. Thomas Stephens, S.J. He had a Polyglot Press at Rachol. Fr. Cinnamo's Catechism, Fr. Stephen's Canarese grammar and lexicon, The Lives of Saints, A Treatise of Apolegetics, etc. were printed there.

In the early seventeenth century at the Vaipicotta press, several liturgical books, including a literal translation of the Roman Cermonial of Exorcisms, a Syrian Missal and Breviary with Malayalam explanations were printed. Further, several Malayalam books on Syric character, called Carson writing, were also printed there.

³¹D. Ferroli, The Jesuits in Malabar, vol. I, p. 471.

With the preceding highlights in printing efforts, we now turn to some of the major literary contributions of the foreigners who were not British.

2. Literary Activities

As far as Malayalam language was concerned, none of the above-mentioned works, although printed in Kerala, was printed in Malayalam as such. Malayalam books were printed either in carson or Tamil. When we come to the eighteenth century we find printing in Malayalam characters. It is generally believed that the oldest known books printed in Malayalam were printed in Rome. Dr. P. J. Thomas is of the opinion that Malayalam types were cast in 1772 with the help of a Carmelite priest, Clement Peanius, in Rome. His book, Alphabetum Grandonico-Malabaricum, is an evidence for it. In the preface of this Latin book, it is said that although Malayalam has 51 letters, they had to cast 1128 types to suit the combination of consonants and vowels.³²

Despite this assumption, we have proof that there was another book printed in Holland, named Hortus Malabaricus between 1686 and 1703, in which the names of Kerala plants have been given in Latin, Arabic,

³²P. J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Contributions of Christians, p. 87.

Sanskrit and Malayalam characters. Further, some sentences in the narrations are in Malayalam characters. Hence, the claim that it was in Rome that Malayalam types were first cast, may not hold up in scholarly circles. However, it could be claimed that it was in Rome a Malayalam book was printed first. The first book in Malayalam printed in Rome was Samkshepavedardham (Compendiosa Legis Explicatio Omnibus Christianis Scitu Necessaria) in 1772 written by Clement Peanius.

When the early Europeans came to Kerala, the language of Kerala was a kind of inferior Malayalam-- a mixture of Tamil and Malayalam. In upper circles, Tamil and Sanskrit were considered more aristocratic. Therefore, even when books were printed for the ordinary people who did not use Sanskrit, they were written in Tamil, in the Vattezhuthu script, (a forerunner script of the present Malayalam). Most of the books were preserved on Olas (palm leaves). Generally, the language of literature was Sanskrit.

The people as a whole, did not consider prose works as literature. As a rule, prose was reckoned inferior. Although they had some prose works, they were semi-prose, a mixture of prose and poetry, and people seldom concentrated on creating prose works. This trend was changed by the arrival of foreign missionaries. They

transplanted the European style of narration in prose. This was done basically by translations and by original works which they thought of importance to literary development of the natives.

When the missionaries came to Kerala, Malayalam did not possess a scientific grammar or lexicon. Because of the influx of Sanskrit vocabulary and the literary use of the language by the Brahmans, Malayalam has been Sanskritized, and hence, Sanskrit grammar and syntax were widely used in literary circles. The rank and file did not cherish any interest in such sophisticated linguistic exercises.

Missionaries began their efforts to popularize Malayalam for the ordinary people.

Although Malayalam had a rudimentary grammar called Leelathilakam, it only gave some guidelines to create a predominantly Sanskritized Malayalam. And it did not provide foreigners the mastery of Malayalam grammar. Hence, they had to get into the field of constructing grammar, and also lexicons.

St. Francis Xavier made a grammar and smaller lexicon with the help of his co-worker Enriques, but they were in Tamil. Despite several attempts to bring about a Malayalam grammar during the sixteenth century, they were all just for the purpose of personal use. It

was Dr. Angelo Francis, the Archbishop of Verapoly, who made a relatively comprehensive Malayalam grammar in 1700.

The literary activities of some prominent foreign missionaries are worth mentioning as they are foundations of the present Malayalam literature.

(a) John Ernestus Hanxleden, S.J.: He was a German Roman Catholic missionary, generally called "Arnos Padre" in Kerala. He was a contemporary of Archbishop Angelo Francis. He came to Kerala in 1699. First he lived at the Jesuit house at Ambalakat.

During that period Trichur was the center of Brahmanic learning, and they had an academy at that time; it was called Trichur University by the missionaries.

Soon after Fr. Hanxleden came to Kerala, he went to the academy. Although the academy authorities were suspicious of a European missionary, his quest for learning interested them. They taught him Sanskrit grammar and literary works, and the great epics like Machabharata and Ramayana in Malayalam, which were written on palm leaves.

Gradually, he became well-versed in both languages, and began literary works in those languages. He also has written several books on the Sanskrit language in Latin. He became a close friend of Brahmans and as a result, could extract several valuable works in Sanskrit from them.

One of his aims was to create epic poems in the fashion of Hindu epics for the use by Christians. His first work was Chaturantyam, which was written in several popular meters at that time. Language was predominantly Sanskrit, a trend prevalent during that period. He created another work, Ummaparvam, on the Blessed Virgin. He also made a grammar and lexicon for Malayalam. But they were tilted toward Sanskrit. He also wrote another epic poem, The Life of Christ, similar to Hindu epics. The contents of the book start from Creation and end at the Redemption by Christ. Dictionarium Malabaricum, Vocabularium Malabarico-Lusitanum (Malayalam-Portuguese Lexicon), and Yudhishtira Vijayam are some of his other works.

His works are still considered very valuable in Malayalam literature. He died in 1732 and was buried at the Pazhayur church where he lived most of his lifetime in Kerala.

(b) Paulinus de San Bartolomeo: He was an Austrian missionary (b. April 23, 1748) belonging to the Carmelite order. A scholarly priest, having had his education at the Universities in Prague and Rome, he came to Kerala in 1777. Soon after that, he established healthy relationship with the Maharaja of Travancore, and

this helped his literary activities. He went back to Europe in 1789. Although he lived in Kerala only for fifteen years, he had mastered the languages of the land.

He wrote a Sanskrit grammar Sidharupam and published in Rome in 1790, but it was in Latin. He also wrote The Religion and Customs of the Brahmans and Amarakosham, which became famous in Europe. In fact, besides Sir William Jones, it was Fr. Paulinos who introduced Sanskrit literary wealth to Europe. Voyage to East Indies, India Orientalis Christiana, etc. are some of his other works. He has contributed several critical studies on the literature and history of India. In fact, it is from him that we have more information about the activities of Fr. Hanxleden.

The History of St. Theresa and The Six Attributes of God are his poetical works in Malayalam. His poetic language is not as appreciable as that of Fr. Hanxleden. Scholars point out some poetical errors in his work. This does not belittle his intellectual acumen and scholarship. The books are heavily Sanskrit.

The major prose works are Kudasapusthakam (Sacraments), Divyagnanam labhikunna sarani (Way to receive Divine Wisdom) and Ettudivasathe dyanam

(Meditation for eight days). Like other missionaries who thought Malayalam was an offshoot of Sanskrit, Paulinus depended on Sanskrit to create these books. He is also the author of a book of Malayalam Aphorisms (Adagia Malabarica), printed with their Latin translations. It is believed that he also has written a Malayalam grammar and an alphabetical lexicon.

Paulinus was a celebrated linguist. He wrote books in almost all the languages he studied. "Among the European scholars who studied Malayalam, every one will agree that (Paulinus) holds first place."³³

(c) Fr. Matthew O.C.D.: Born in Italy in 1600, trained in the Carmelite order, Fr. Matthew came to Kerala to help the Romo-Syrian Metropolitan Mar Alexander around 1650. His major work is in the field of Botany.

He co-authored the book Hortus Malabaricus with the Dutch Governor Van Rheedee. This book, consisting of twelve volumes and 794 pictures, was published at Amsterdam between 1686 and 1703.³⁴ Dr. P. J. Thomas is one of the opinion that this book was written by Fr. Matthew alone.³⁵ This book is a study of plants,

³³Ibid., p. 115.

³⁴D. Ferroli, The Jesuits in Malabar, vol. I., p. 13.

³⁵P. J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Contributions of Christians, p. 118.

flowers and herbs in the Malabar coast. Some parts of the narrations are in Malayalam.

In addition to the missionaries mentioned above, we have a few more foreigners who contributed to the Indian languages, especially Malayalam, in several ways. They are Archbishop Angelo Francis, Bishop John Baptist, Bishop Innocent, Fr. Stephens, Fr. Germinian., Fr. Clement Peanius (mentioned elsewhere), Fr. Feros, Bishop Ildephonse, Fr. Aloysius Mary, Bishop Pintel, and Fr. Florence. They engaged in literary activities in various Indian languages, such as Malayalam, Hindustani, Telugu, Aramaic and Sanskrit. Some of them wrote grammars and lexicons. However, their efforts were not as varied as others, except those of Fr. Stephens.

In the Fishery coast Frs. Robert de Nobili and Beschi engaged in extensive linguistic and literary activities in connection with their evangelization

The scope of this paper does not permit us to have a full length description of them.

E. The Dutch and the French

The Dutch landed in Kerala in 1604. They had their main interest in trade; which also was the target of all other European settlers. But unlike the Portuguese who exercised their religious mandate to the

extent of committing crimes, the Dutch remained relatively indifferent to the religious issues of the time. And it may be because of that, their contribution to education and literacy happened to be negligible. However, Bishop Brown mentions that the Dutch officer, Visscher has suggested to train young Dutchmen in Syriac and Malayalam with a view of converting the native Christians to the reformed faith, and of making more profits for the company as the native Christians had been the principal merchants who have supplied commodities.³⁶

Nevertheless, they did not make any valuable contributions to language or education, except the Hortus Malabaricus.

As their prerogative was commercial, their attention turned to the methods of profitable cultivation of crops. To this effect, they taught the people of the coastal areas the scientific methods of cultivation, especially of coconuts and rice and other plantation crops. The farmers were excited to see best results after employing their methods of cultivation. "Both by their improved methods and by their scientific system,

³⁶L. W. Brown, The Indian Christians of St. Thomas (Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 6.

the Dutch attempts at cultivation improved and the coastal people took to plantation of coconuts for the purpose of trade and this introduction of commercial economy was highly beneficial to the population."³⁷

The French were never a power in Kerala. By the time they started to set their feet on the Kerala soil, the British drove them out of the land although they retained a minimal jurisdiction in Mahe, a coastal town in north Kerala. However, they established several elementary schools admitting children without consideration of religion or race.³⁸ The very few secondary schools they started were by their settlements and the instruction was given in French. Although they had a fair start, they did not survive in Kerala to create a long-standing impact on educational development.

F. Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the education implications of the pre-British missionary activities in Kerala. There is a tendency to ignore these activities in their

³⁷K. M. Panikkar, A History of Kerala, p. 311.

³⁸T. M. Thomas, Indian Educational Reforms in Cultural Perspective (Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1970) p. 83.

relation to the enhancement of education. As we have seen, the literary and school activities of the Portuguese colonialists have a great impact on formalizing and developing linguistic life of the people and thereby reforming and modernizing native education.

The activities of Christian missionaries had a great impact on native scholars and kings. The planting of Roman Catholicism itself brought about many substantial changes in the cultural structure of the society. Their seminaries were sound educational institutions. A part of the people, thus became familiar with foreign language like Portuguese, Latin and Greek; and the cultures they represented. By studying the native languages, they brought them to the curriculum of the institutions they ran. Thus, there was a cultural assimilation of the West and the East. They, together with the men they educated, contributed to Malayalam language and to the enhancement of native education. The literary styles they produced in translations and new works, have become a headstart for the builders of modern prose literature. Their grammars and lexicons have become an index for native linguists in matters of scientific approach to the intricacies of language treatment. Their popular prose style became a basis for later writers to build their language. No

educational historian of Kerala can ignore such a great and valuable contribution.

When the British came to Kerala, they already had a prepared field to work on. In fact, the grammar and lexicons prepared by the Roman Catholic missionaries were foundations for the British to further enrich the language and existing system of education in India. Many noble families got their education from the systems and linguistic efforts of the missionaries who followed Portuguese colonialists.

Although the Dutch and French came to the Malabar coast, their main activities were commercial. They did not do much to enhance education or the language of the region. In fact, the Dutch destroyed the Jesuit library at Cochin, which was one of the fairest in all Asia at that time. That library contained books from Europe, and several rare manuscripts in Hebrew, Chaldaic, Arabic, Persian, Indian, Chinese and other oriental languages. The Jesuits copied all books in Ethiopia and brought them to Cochin. Those pages were used to light the tobacco of the Dutch soldiers. Like the Dutch, the French also could not make a durable imprint on education in Kerala, due to their short presence in the state.

Despite their hostile behavior toward the St. Thomas Christians in Romanizing them, the Portuguese

missionaries made a valuable contribution to Kerala language and education. Their activities are a sound foundation to the Kerala education, although it was the British who modernized it in its present form. Therefore, the educational development of Kerala cannot be fairly treated without giving deserved credit to the Portuguese.

CHAPTER VII

BRITISH EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND MODERN EDUCATION

A. Introduction

The development of Malayalam language and the aesthetic activities of the people of Kerala could be considered as the seminal propulsion towards an educational culture. It is the indigenous systems of early education which really quickened that culture. However, it was the Portuguese missionaries who introduced education as a discipline with a wide range of activities. Although they have started primary educational institutions adjacent to their churches, their continuity could not be preserved due to their religious fanaticism and political unrest as a result of Dutch and French reprisals. But the religious education institutions they had established, maintained a remarkably sound educational system which produced several learned men whose wisdom and vision perpetuated that tradition. This, in turn, benefited the State with linguistic and literary works, at least for their own followers who constitute a sizable portion of Kerala population. However, the fruits of their efforts are commonly shared by all without distinction of caste or creed. Since it was basically a

clerical education, it must be pointed out that, the beneficiaries were mainly the priests. Since Christian priesthood, from very early times, was an educational agency, we can undoubtedly believe that the parishioners they served must have definitely received a certain degree of enlightenment from the priesthood. Therefore, even the seminaries were an indirect agency for popular education.

But the mass education process in Kerala starts with the presence of the British. Even their political activities were in direct support of education for the masses. Their missionaries considered it as a means of evangelization. When some of the Roman Catholic missionaries generally wanted to keep the status quo of the social stratification, even by identifying themselves with the Brahman caste, the British went as far as to break the nucleus of the caste system. Moreover, the latter's proselytizing efforts were less fanatic which permitted them easy entry into the innermost circles of the society. This gave them an added momentum in their activities. Even though the target was evangelization through education, they believed the enlightenment by education as the first course of action. So they tried to spread education, whether the educated would be converted to Protestantism or not. For the political

authorities, it was a need to spread western education, for they had to supply a clerical staff equipped with English education to man the government offices. In the process of empire building, they could not do away with the natives; and in order for them to be useful they should be educated in the British way.

However, the British maintained that the European civilization was superior to that of the Indians. One of the most eminent Governors-General in India, William Bentinck contributed more to modern education in India than all others put together. He became Governor-General in 1828. He directed his attention to educational reforms as a first priority. On June 26, 1829, he wrote to the Committee of Public Instruction:

Impressed with a deep conviction of the importance of the subject and cordially disposed to promote the great object of improving India by spreading abroad the lights of European knowledge, morals, and civilization, his Lordship in Council has no hesitation in stating to your Committee and authorizing you to announce to all concerned in the superintendence of your native seminaries that it is the wish and admitted policy of the British government to render its own language gradually and eventually the language of public business throughout the country.

. . .¹

The famous Macaulay Minute of 1835, which regulated a State policy of education in India and expressed the ambitions of an empire, contained the thrust of superiority

¹Michael Edwardes, British India (New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1968), p. 114. (Italics mine).

of European systems and treasury of knowledge over those of the Indian people who considered themselves wiser and nobler than any other peoples in the world. Macaulay believed in the superiority of the British. He says:

. . .the dialects commonly spoken among the natives of this part of India contain neither literary and scientific information, and are, moreover, so poor and rude that, until they are enriched from some other quarter, it will not be easy to translate any valuable work to them.²

He further emphatically states that the native vernacular cannot hold any worthwhile knowledge. He also believes that neither Sanskrit nor Arabic can do that job, saying: "I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of good European library as worth the whole native literature of India and Africa."³

Although his motives could be justified, the sarcastic statements derogative of the metaphysical and literary magnitude of Sanskrit classics were never appreciated by the Indians who came to learn the contents of this Minute. Similarly, Europe having been indebted to Arabic learning for their philosophy, medicine and mathematics, nor did the Muslims applaud these statements.

Macaulay also establishes the "intrinsic superiority of the Western literature", and the "superiority of the

²Ibid., p. 122.

³Ibid.

Europeans". He also says: ". . . all the historical information which has been collected from all the books written in the Sanskrit language is less valuable than what may be found in the most paltry abridgements used at preparatory schools in England".⁴ It is to be noted that these are statements from a man who admits that, "I have no knowledge of either Sanskrit or Arabic", in the preface of his Minute! Then he goes on praising the English language and tells how English excels all other European tongues. He finally concludes that "of all foreign tongues, the English tongue is that which would be the most useful to our native subjects".

From this we can validly conclude that, unlike the Portuguese whose primary motive of spreading education was the propagation of the Roman Catholic faith, the British as a political authority launched their educational policies to impose the so-called cultural and intellectual superiority of the British over the Indians who only lacked the technical knowledge of producing gunpowder to protect their country from the former's incursion. Whatever might be their other motives, they are only corollary to it. However, the benefits India, and Kerala in particular, has reaped from those policies are immense and long lasting.

⁴Ibid., p. 123.

B. Early Educational Policies of The British in India

British East India Company was founded by eighty businessmen in 1599 in London. Their chief concern was trade, not education or evangelization. The first voyages were directed to Sumatra, not to India. However, the Indian calicoes were dear in Bantam and the Moluccas. Therefore, in 1608, they obtained permission from Mughal emperor Jahangir for a trade post to buy them. They established their warehouse at Surat in 1612. By 1623 they totally concentrated their commercial enterprises in India, and by the end of the seventeenth century became landowners in Madras, Bombay and Calcutta. Thus, the "English had come as traders; then they became armed traders; soon they needed soldiers to defend their settlements; and as the Mughal empire disintegrated, 'spheres of influences' became necessary if the Company was to survive. Slowly, the rhythm of empire building had imposed itself on the simplicities of trade."⁵ The battle of Buxar against the Navab of Bengal in 1764 was the real foundation of British dominion in India,⁶ although many historians consider the battle of Plassey in 1757 initiated it.

⁵Ibid., pp. 18-19.

⁶Ibid., p. 22.

By the time the British came to India they were not anymore within the Roman Catholic Church. Britain received the concepts and habits of Reformation which was effected by Luther, Calvin and others, especially after Henry VIII declared himself the head of the English Church when he could not canonically divorce his wife, Catherine. The Church in England was placed under interdict by the Pope and finally England was altogether lost to the Roman Catholic Church. Hence the formation of the Anglican Church whose head was the English monarch with spiritual authority vested with the Archbishop of Canterbury came about. In the Anglican Church developed two currents of dogmatism; the high church and low church ideals, the former being more Catholic and sacramental and the latter being more Protestant and evangelical.

When the English came to India, both of these groups followed them. Most of the high church clergy catered to the religious needs of the British, but the low church clergy went out evangelizing the natives. It is to be noted that both of these groups were under the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury who tolerated both views in the same church. We also see that eventually the high church clergy also began evangelizing activities among the natives later. Parenthetically, the southeast coast (Madras) was under the control of the low church

missionaries and the rest of India, i.e., Bombay, Surat and Calcutta, was under the control of the high church missionaries. By 1614 the missionaries got some converts, and a few were sent to England for ministerial studies. In 1636 Archbishop Laud started a chair for Arabic at Oxford with a view to train men to work as missionaries among the Muslims in India.⁷

Although the East India Company remained neutral in missionary activities lest they be confronted with loss in trade, the Charter Act contained a missionary clause. Clergy were considered carriers of education. The Act also included the maintenance of schools in every garrison and factory according to need. The Act indirectly mentioned evangelizing at least their Indian employees, which the Company officials did not carry out. However, they established charity schools.

Even though their educational activities were not very significant during the early period, most of those activities were managed by the missionaries. They started a secondary school in Madras city in 1673; and the Madras government built the St. Mary's School in Madras for the Protestant employees of the Company in 1715. In 1717 another English-Tamil school was begun in Cudallore. Danish missionaries also collaborated with English

⁷S. N. Mukerji, History of Education in India, p. 17.

missionaries in educational activities. In 1717 two more schools were started in Madras with the financial help of the Governor of Madras, one for the Portuguese and one for the Tamilian natives under the leadership of a Danish missionary called Schultz. In 1742, Kierander, another missionary established a charity school at Fort St. David, Calcutta.

But it was a German missionary, C. F. Schwartz, who landed at Tranquebar in 1749 who first framed an educational policy for British India. He founded a school at Trichy for European and Eurasian children in 1772. By this time the petit monarchs within the Madras Presidency felt the need of modern education and extended their moral and financial support to found schools within their kingdoms. Thus Thanjavur, Ramanadapuram and Shivaganga got their schools. Schwartz's system insisted on importing instruction in the language of the child, i.e., English for the English, Tamil for the Tamilians, and Portuguese for the Portuguese. The British Resident at the Tanjavur court insisted on English language as the medium of instruction, and he suggested a system of English medium education through government subsidized schools. Schwartz conceded to this move.

These schools were welcomed by the monarchs and other native wealthy people. They contributed richly to

these efforts, and several other schools were established. These schools were subsidized by the government, local monarchs and native wealthy people.

In 1787, the governor's wife established a girls' school for orphans followed by another school for boys. This school system was characterized by the monitorial approach proposed by Dr. Andrew Bell. The curriculum of these schools included Tamil, English, Hindustani, accountancy and Christian doctrines.

In the west coast Rev. Cobbe, a chaplain at St. Thomas Church, Bombay, established a school for the poor European children. Although it was initially subsidized by voluntary contributions, later the Company took over its entire financial responsibility. Likewise, Bengal area also had some charity schools by 1731 due to the efforts of Rev. Bellamy and the Society for the Promotion of Indians, and by Kierander who was mentioned earlier.

England then did not have a state system of education. And the English who gained political power in India did not have it either, nor did they advocate it. Although they financially helped education they wanted a private monopoly of education. Consequently, they did not interfere with the indigenous system, but encouraged private citizens, or religious or charitable organizations to maintain schools. They even offered public facilities for

that purpose. In the early period, whatever the Company did for education was through the enthusiasm of their officers, or missionaries in their private capacity.

In 1781 Warren Hastings, the first governor-general of India, started the Calcutta Madrasah at the request of the Muslim deputation. The main aim was to provide governmental career opportunities for Muslim children who were deprived of them due to the monopoly of Hindus. The students were given stipends, and they spent over seven years at that school which even prepared them for the judicial professions. It was purely an Islamic school with the medium of Arabic language. The courses of instruction included Philosophy, Islamic Theology, Law, Geometry, Arithmetic, Logic and Grammar.

Sir William Jones founded the Royal Asiatic Society in Bengal in 1784 with the intention of intensifying studies in history, the antiquities, arts, sciences and literature of the subcontinent. A branch of the same society was established in 1804 in Bombay.

In the year 1791, the Banaras Sanskrit College was founded by Jonathan Duncan, another government official. It was to deepen the study of Hinduism in particular. The course work focused on Ayurvedic medicine, Hindu law, the Vedas, music, mechanical arts, grammar, etc. The aim was to produce judicial clerks for the English judges, like

that of the Madrasah established by Hastings to create judicial paraprofessionals.

Another development occurred when the Fort William College was founded by Lord Wellesley in 1800 with the purpose of alleviating lower educational standards of government employees. This was in the Bengal area. This college made a significant impact on the study and inquiry of Hindu and Muslim law, History of India and native languages; such as, Bengali, Hindustani, and Urdu. This institution attracted a band of scholars. It is said that Bengali emerged as a language of its own right at this time.⁸

Along with these institutions, several English schools sprang up in the Eastern province. In spite of the indigenous educational enterprise of the British, the knowledge of English was highly considered, especially to obtain a gainful job. This gave impetus to establish more English schools. By the end of the eighteenth century there were at least twenty such schools in and around Calcutta alone. Anglo-Indians pioneered most of those schools.

As a general rule missionary activities were forbidden in Bengal by the British to appease the Hindus and the Muslims. However, some Danish Baptist missionaries

⁸Ibid., p. 23.

established a Christian mission at Serampore, a suburb of Calcutta. They did it under the protection of the Danish government. They came by American and Danish ships as it was then prohibited for any missionary to travel to India by a British ship. This move eventually paved the way for British missionaries also to appear on the scene, especially Methodists. The Baptist missionaries started a printing press at Serampore in 1800. A year after that they printed the New Testament in Bengali, and thereafter attacked the beliefs of the Muslims and Hindus. This began to create a political chaos in that region, and the government confiscated the Baptist press and removed the missionaries. But due to the intervention of the Danish government the situation was peacefully settled with the guarantee that no more they would offend the Hindus and the Muslims. However, the Baptists continued their educational efforts without getting too much involved in offensive evangelization, and by 1817 they had about 115 schools.

At the turn of the eighteenth century, as newer educational projects were experimented, there were enough discussions going on in England about English policies in India, especially because it was time for the renewal of the Charter of the Company. In 1793, Wilberforce, a philanthropist, moved a resolution in the British parliament

requiring the Company to provide for Western education and missionary activities in India. But some of the M.P.'s opposed it on the basis that India had a system of education already existing and a religion that taught very sound moral principles.

The motion was killed when Randle Jackson remarked that England lost the American colonies because of the inspiration and democratic thought the Americans absorbed from English education. The parliament did not want to take a chance in India.

Twenty years later, in 1813, again there was the renewal of the Company Charter under discussion in the Parliament Wilberforce again surfaced with his resolution to uplift the education of the British dominions in India with a backing of Charles Grant who was a former employee of the Company in India. The missionaries also influenced several M.P.'s towards this goal. They succeeded in convincing them that the Company was only profit-motivated, and not concerned about education and moral enlightenment of the people of India and was holding an anti-missionary policy. Finally the Parliament resolved:

It shall be lawful for the Governor-General-in-Council to direct that out of any surplus which may remain of the rents, revenues, and profits arising from the said territorial acquisitions, after defraying the expenses of the military, civil, and commercial

establishment and paying the interest of the debt, in manner hereinafter provided, a sum of not less than one lac rupees in each year shall be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives in India and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India.⁹

In fact this was the very foundation stone of the British educational policy in India, admitting the role of the State in education which was recognized in England not until 1833. This also lifted restriction placed on missionaries. This was basically intended to upgrade the existing oriental educational system in India; and it should be understood that it was not intended to impart western education as the clause was not specific about it. Moreover, the Company Directors were reluctant to move in that direction since it would provoke animosity among Hindus and Muslims.

Unfortunately, this Despatch could not be implemented by the then Governor-General Lord Moira immediately as he was preoccupied with British security against the Gurkhas, Marathas and the Pindarees. However, later some educational surveys were conducted in Bengal, Madras and Bombay provinces; each of which had revealed different statistics, Madras with the highest number of educational

⁹Sharp, ed., East India Act of 1813, Selections from Educational Records, Part I 1781-1839 (Calcutta: Government Printing, 1920), p. 22, in S. N. Mukerji, History of Education in India, p. 33.

institutions. The survey also included domestic instruction facilities as most of the children attended them because their parents considered it below their status to send their children to a regular school. Despite the Despatch of 1813, the government seemed incapable of making a general policy on education. Hence, more private individuals and organizations began establishing schools. Unlike the Company management and government, they wanted English modern education. The Calcutta School Book Society and the Hindu College established in 1817 were the results of their endeavors. Indians and the British took initiative in this direction to start more such schools. The Indians saw English education as a stepping stone for official life and commerce, whereas the missionaries used it as a means of evangelization.

In 1823 the government established a Public Instruction Committee which took charge of the government schools (they were few), and administered the educational grant to private schools. The Committee also assessed the educational situation to give advice to the government regarding educational matters. The government was basically promoting oriental scholarship. Native reformers like Ram Mohan Roy, protested this policy. They wanted the government to initiate western education" . . . which the natives of Europe have carried to a degree of perfection

that has raised them above the inhabitants of other parts of the world ". They were horrified at the idea that they were to receive instead, a school which could "only be expected to load the minds of youth with grammatical niceties and metaphysical distinctions of little or no practical use to the possessors or to society."¹⁰

However, the Committee suggested that "tuition in European science (was) neither among the sensible wants of the people nor in the power of the government to bestow". But still, the Indian reformers were craving for western education.

Later, on March 7, 1834, with the thrust created by the Macaulay Minute, and with his arduous efforts to formulate an educational policy for India, Lord William Bentinck who became Governor-General in 1828, issued a proclamation containing the following:

1. That the chief aim of educational policy is to encourage European wisdom.
2. That no more stipends will be given to students pursuing oriental obsolete studies.
3. That the government will not print oriental books.
4. That the funds thus available will be employed in promotion of European studies and English language.¹¹

¹⁰Michael Edwardes, British India, p. 113.

¹¹Isaiah Azariah, Lord Bentinck and Indian Education, Crime, and Status of Women (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1978), p. 53.

Thus, English education was formally established in India with the authority of the State to administer it. Although the present State of Kerala, excluding the Malabar district of the British Madras Presidency, was not directly under the British dominion, Kerala is the only state which was remarkably benefited by these policies. In fact, much before this promulgation was issued, Kerala was in the forefront in modernizing its educational systems.

C. The British in Kerala

Ralph Fitch is believed to be the first Englishman to have come to Kerala in 1583. In 1615 Captain Keeling came to Calicut on his way to the court of Jahangir and made a treaty with the Zamorin according to which British assistance was offered to the Zamorin to expel the Portuguese from Cochin. The Zamorin, in turn, granted privileges to conduct trade in his dominions. During the last days of Portuguese power in Kerala, the English entered into an agreement with the Portuguese which gave the former access to all Portuguese ports in Kerala.¹² In 1644 the King of Venad gave the British permission to build a factory at Vizhinjam. Similarly in 1664, the Zamorin of Calicut also permitted them to build another factory at Calicut. In 1684 they obtained sanction from

¹²A. Sreedhara Menon, A Survey of Kerala History (Kottayam: S.P.C. Society, 1967), p. 307.

the queen of Attingal to erect another factory at Anjengo. And by 1690 they managed to get permission from the same queen to build a fort at the same location. The acquisition of Anjengo was of strategic importance for the British because it facilitated their movement in Kerala by sea and land. This strengthened their first grip of Kerala.

In 1723 a formal treaty was made between the East India Company and the Raja of Travancore, which is said to be the first treaty between the British and an Indian State. But it was the Mysorean invasions of Malabar and Cochin by Tipu Sultan that cemented the British supremacy in Kerala. A major part of Malabar came directly under the British according to the terms of the Seringapatam Treaty (1792) of which the British and the Mysorean monarch Tipu were parties.¹³ The British also entered into treaties with Cochin on account of Mysore threat in 1791 prior to the Seringapatam Treaty making Cochin a British vassal; and in 1800 Cochin was placed under the control of the Madras Presidency reducing the Raja to be merely a territorial ruler. Similarly a fresh treaty was concluded between the Company and the Travancore Raja in

¹³C. K. Kareem, Kerala Under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan (Ernakulam: Paico Publishing House, 1973), pp. 128-132.

1795 according to which the latter also accepted British supremacy on the condition that the British would protect Travancore from all external threats. But it cost the State Rs 800,000 per annum as tribute. But by the year 1805 Travancore lost its political freedom completely by a treaty enacted between the Dalava Veluthampi of Travancore and the British which even permitted the British to interfere with internal administration of the State.

D. Educational Activities

Thus, Malabar became a district under the direct administration of the Madras Presidency, and Cochin and Travancore became vassalates under British supremacy. Since the political history of Kerala under the British is not our main concern, our discussions will be limited to their educational enterprises. When the British came to Kerala, the social conditions were miserable due to inequalities created by the caste system. The Brahmans and the nobility were beneficiaries of the system. Education, especially higher education, was afforded by the Brahmans and the nobility. Other classes simply were satisfied with a rudimentary education. The untouchables did not have the right to an education at all. Even the education enjoyed by the upper castes was of no use to a

growing commercial economy and a sophisticatedly widening administrative system.

Therefore, the British had a twofold task in the educational activities that they had planned to enter. First, to educate the masses who were denied a basic education. Second, to educate a class of people to meet the manpower needs of the States and Company. As Kerala was, at that time, under three political units under the supremacy of the British, we will discuss their endeavors separately.

1. Malabar

Although Malabar came under the British by the end of the eighteenth century, Western educational activities did not start immediately. The village system of Ezhuthupallis and the Nampudiri system of Mathoms were major agencies of education. Although the Nampudiris, Nayars, Christians and Eurasians maintained some degree of literacy, the Muslims and the lower castes were totally illiterate.

It was the Basel Mission in Malabar founded by Dr. Herman Gundert which was actively engaged in educational activities in the middle of the nineteenth century. They have primarily focused their attention on primary education. Along with them, local princes and British

authorities also began to open schools on the primary level.

One of the schools run by the Basel German Mission is noteworthy. It is the Brennan School. Mr. Brennan, Master attendant at Tellicherry, left Rs. 12,000 for establishing a school for all creeds and denominations before he died in 1859. It was mainly intended for English education. The school was opened by the Basel Mission in 1862. But in 1872 the government took it over due to mismanagement and made it a District School. In 1883 the middle and high school sections were handed over to the municipality for operation; and in 1891 the school was affiliated with the Madras University as a second grade college, i.e., a junior college; and its trusteeship rested with the District Collector and other government educational officials.¹⁴ Again, in 1919, the government took over the college and school sections of the Brennan School, and a secondary training school was attached with it in 1925.

Another school founded during the British occupation is the Victoria College of Palghat. It started as a rate school in 1866. Although the government took it over for sometime in 1884 it was made over to the municipality. In 1884 the school was made a college. Under

¹⁴C.A. Innes, Malabar and Anjengo (Madras: Government Press, 1915), pp. 282-283.

Mr. C. M. Barrow, who was headmaster from 1890 to 1903, the school achieved rapid progress and became the largest school in Malabar. In 1919 upon request by the municipality, the Madras government again assumed the operation of the school; and in 1925, it was made a first grade college, leaving the primary and middle sections of the school to the municipality to run. The high school section was attached to the college as a feeding school where carpentry, blacksmithy and commercial subjects were taught. They also started a night school for the backward classes in 1926.¹⁵

Even before the Brennan School was started, the Basel missionaries had established a primary school at Kallayi in 1848. This school was later transferred to Calicut and in 1872 it was raised to a middle and in 1878 to a high school. And the high school developed into a second grade collage. Unfortunately, during World War I, the Basel missionaries had to give up the work and the school was taken over by the Madras Christian College in 1919; and henceforth it was called the Malabar Christian College. However, in 1927, the college was handed back to the Basel Mission.

Another development during the same period in secondary and post-secondary education was sponsored by

¹⁵C. A. Innes, Malabar. vol. I (Madras: Government Press, 1908, reprint 1951), p. 297.

TABLE III
MALABAR
PUPILS TAKING INSTRUCTION IN SCHOOLS
FROM 1857-1899

Year	College	High School	Middle School	Primary School	Normal School
1857	---	205	508	116	---
1862	---	381	577	---	32
1867	10	753	2,012	1,013	26
1872	32	562	3,696	11,671	22
1877	55	295	1,180	27,527	90
1882	149	431	1,431	37,196	120
1890	191	2,452	3,554	48,265	154
1893	126	2,383	3,871	53,937	210
1896	166	2,755	4,772	58,436	108
1899	156	2,923	5,694	59,027	109

SOURCE: William Logan, Manual of the Malabar District
(Madras: Government Press, 1906), p. 107

the Zamorin of Calicut. The Zamorin's college was started in 1877 under the leadership of C. M. Barrow who became the headmaster of the Victoria School later. This school was intended for the young princes of the Zamorin family. Nevertheless, the school became open for all upper classes including Nayers in the following year. The school also enjoyed certain grants from the Madras government although it was a totally private institution. In 1879, the Zamorin's College was affiliated with the Madras University with the status of a second grade college. It was run by a board with the Zamorin as the manager. By 1921, the school came completely under a trust with financial assistance from the Zamorin. This school is the present Guruvayurappan College.

It was the Madras Local Boards Act of 1834 which gave a momentum in modern education in Malabar.¹⁶ Accordingly, a sizable number of primary and middle schools were managed by local boards; a phenomenon not very common in Travancore and Cochin areas. However, as we have seen, the Basel Mission was very active. Roman Catholic missions also contributed their share, but not as much as they have done in the other regions.

¹⁶ A Handbook of Kerala (Trivandrum: The Kerala State Department of Public Relations, 1959), p. 90.

By 1931 Malabar had over 4,126 primary schools for boys and girls with an enrollment of about 342,000 pupils. Most of these schools were individually owned schools with or without grants from the government. Whereas in Travancore and Cochin areas most of the private schools were managed by organizations or religious groups. In 1931, 65 percent of the schools were owned by the private management either individuals or organizations, 33 percent by local boards or municipalities and 2 percent by the government.

There were not too many high schools during the British time, chiefly because the focus was on primary education. However, the Basel Mission took initiative in starting a few high schools in the middle of the nineteenth century; most of them were established as middle schools. They had three high schools at Palghat, Tellicherry and Badagara. The Roman Catholics had two, one at Cochin and the other at Pavaratti. The government also ran two high schools attached to the Brennan College and the Victoria College. The only municipal high school was under the management of the Cannanore municipality. There were thirteen high schools under the local boards, fifteen under the district board. There were also seven high schools under individual management, chiefly by local nobles. This is the picture of high school education

before 1931. All of these schools received grants from the Madras government.

There was a rapid progress during the latter half of the nineteenth century in educational activities. (See the sample data during the ten year period between 1873 and 1882 in Table IV.)

In spite of this steady progress, women's educational status did not improve much. During this period mentioned on Table IV, there were no girls attending a high school or college. Even the percentage of girls attending schools was only 5 to the total student population.

Similarly, the Muslim population did not benefit much from this progress either. It was not because the government was reluctant to push education to the Muslim masses. Muslims generally did not like to attend public schools; especially if they had Hindu students. The education Muslim children received from the schools attached to the mosques was not even nominal because most of the children could hardly read and write Arabic or Malayalam. The mullahs who taught them were incompetent to do a teaching job. Besides that, most of the children dropped out before they even obtained the rudiments of education. The Muslim aversion to secular education and their own incompetencies to give a sound basic education

TABLE IV
MALABAR
EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS
1873-1882

Year	College	Pupils	High Schools	Pupils	Middle Schools	Pupils	Primary Schools	Pupils	Normal Schools	Pupils	Total Schools	Total Pupils
1873	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	398	19,524
1874	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	475	21,358
1875	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	631	22,265
1876	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	700	30,730
1877	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	738	28,877
1878	1	28	4	213	27	837	640	23,277	3	80	679	24,435
1879	2	90	6	372	28	973	748	25,241	4	108	788	26,784
1880	2	133	6	368	28	1,108	747	30,190	4	95	787	31,894
1881	2	139	7	423	35	1,441	829	34,721	4	102	877	36,826
1882	2	149	7	431	35	1,431	892	37,196	4	120	940	39,327

SOURCE: William Logan, Malabar, vol. II (Madras: The Government Press, 1887, reprint 1951), pp. xxv-xxvii.

created the illiteracy problem out of proportion.

As a result of illiteracy (that was what the British thought), Muslim outbreaks were very common in Malabar. Therefore, the government decided to uplift the Muslims educationally as a way of preventing future outbreaks. In 1871-72, a plan was devised for improving the education of Muslim children imparted in the schools attached to mosques. The mullahs were instructed to start vernacular education with religious training. But the results were unsatisfactory. Innes points out that "the greatest obstacle of all was now the supreme indifference of the Mappilla to secular education."¹⁷ Therefore, in some areas of Malabar, the Muslims were officially recognized as a backward class in order for them to be taken out of the Grant-in-Aid Code of the school system and helped financially at a rate 75 percent higher than those of the standard scale provided for them in the Grant-in-Aid Code. Schools were started away from mosques to free them from "reactionary mullahs".

In 1931 there were 1,410 public schools for the Muslims, with a strength of 102,639 children including 4,000 girls. All of these schools were isolated ones.

¹⁷C. A. Innes, Madras District Gazatteers, Malabar, vol. I (Madras: The Government Pre-s, 1908, reprint 1951), p. 300. (In Malabar, the Muslims are called Mappillas.)

Only Muslim children attended them. In the primary stage of education, thus, those children were denied interaction with other cultural and religious components of the society. In spite of the government's effort to fuse the Hindus and Muslims in the educational field, Muslim resistance made it futile.

During the British period there were eleven teacher training schools to meet the teacher shortage in secondary and primary grades. Four of them were to train women teachers. All but one were run by the government. One of them was intended for training Muslim teachers.

The government training schools also gave manual training classes to the teacher trainees. There was a Government School of Commerce which prepared students for the business life with knowledge in commercial and technical subjects. There were also two aided schools run by private agencies meant for industrial and technical education. But on the whole, Malabar was not benefited by a systematic technical and industrial education.¹⁸

To sum up, Malabar really did not benefit sufficiently from modern education started by the British. The schools established in Malabar did not get sufficient impetus due to several reasons. One main

¹⁸Ibid., p. 302.

reason is the Muslim indifference to modern education; and Malabar had a sizable population of Muslims. Second, Malabar had the lowest ratio for Christians who were the proponents and propagators of modern education elsewhere in the State. Third, Malabar did not have an indigenous leadership for competition in modern education as it was not a princely state. Politically, it was under the direct rule of the British, and whatever the British offered was passively received. The beneficiaries were the upper castes who knew sufficiently well the worth of modern English education and they assumed covetable positions with the government and British companies. However, English education in Malabar became instrumental in igniting nationalistic conscience and kindling movements of emancipation from the caste structure. The mobilization of the Thiyas in Malabar against caste rigidities was never achieved without English education.

2. Cochin

Up until the early decades of the nineteenth century, Cochin as a state did not get into educational activities. Educating the children was the responsibility of the families and individuals and in this direction the Ezhuthupallis and the Mathoms gave leadership in the education of Nayars, native Christians and the Nampudiris.

The masters of these schools offered instructions in reading and writing and arithmetic, and in Sanskrit poetry, drama and rhetoric; but the progress of acquisition of skills was at a slow pace.

But in 1818, when Colonel Munro was the Resident, the Cochin government made a proclamation establishing thirty-three vernacular schools, one in each Pravrtti (administrative unit of villages). Although these schools were under government supervision, the structure was not very much different from that of the old village schools of the Asans. There was only one master in each school, and the curriculum and methods of instruction remained fundamentally the same. Since they proved ineffective they were abolished in 1832. In 1835 Divan Sankarasubbayya established six vernacular schools, one in each Taluk (the Taluk is somewhat equivalent to a county). However they were not also successful and finally abolished in 1890 when all Taluks had an English school each.

It was the Rev. J. Dawson who first experimented English education in 1818 in the Cochin state. He started a school at Mattancheri near Cochin with financial aid from the government. But the school had to close by 1821 due to poor enrollment.¹⁹ However, another English

¹⁹C. Achyuta Menon, The Cochin State Manual (Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1911), p. 291.

school was opened at the same place in 1835 due to the efforts of Resident Casamajor for the education of Jewish children. It offered instructions in English, Hebrew and Malayalam. In 1838 two more English schools were opened at Trichur and Tripunithura for the education of the royal family. Ernakulam had its first English school in 1845. These schools carried only an elementary English education. In 1875 A. F. Sealy, a European, was appointed headmaster of the school at Ernakulam; and under his able leadership this school began to grow, and by 1868 it became a full-fledged high school competent enough to prepare students for the matriculation examination which only qualified students for admission to a college or university. In the year 1875 the Ernakulam High School became a second grade college with affiliation to the Madras University.

The state also was very active to spread English education during this time, and as a result several district schools sprang up; and Sealy became director of these schools in 1877. Some of these schools eventually became high schools. In 1889 the state adopted a Grant-in-Aid Code which provided financial assistance to private schools. This move brought about several private schools under the managements of individuals and groups. Many of these schools were stepped up through the high school level eventually.

In 1890 the State Department of Vernacular Education was organized to spread mass education, thereby opening several schools for boys and girls in the various Pravrttis. Private agencies also shouldered this responsibility along with the government. In 1892, both English and vernacular education were amalgamated and brought under a Superintendent of Education. But by 1898 the vernacular and English high school education was brought under the direct supervision of the Divan (Prime Minister).

By 1901 the number of schools had increased. However, the percentage of literates did not increase simultaneously. (See Table V.)

The levy of fees, strict hours of attendance and a change in the curriculum of studies not familiar to the simple folks of the village wrought hardships upon the poor parents, who, accustomed to pay their school masters when they could, and to send their children to school when they chose, found themselves tied hand and foot by a cut and dried system.²⁰

This was the main reason why attendance in schools under the government direction was discouraged. This does not mean that the village Asans had been idle during this period. They were functioning in a minimal way. Considering this dilemma, the state superintendent in 1901 suggested:

²⁰ Census of India 1901 Cochin Part I (Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1903), p. 99.

TABLE V
COCHIN
PROGRESS OF LITERACY
1891 and 1901

Number of Literates in 1000		Numbers of Literates in 1000		Variation		
				Males	Females	
1891	1901	1891	1901	1901	1901	
1	232.5	197.1	35.1	35.9	-35.4	+ .8
2	387.4	332.6	57.9	59.5	-54.8	+1.6

1. These figures represent the proportion of literates above 14 to the total population.
2. These figures represent the proportion of literates above 14 to the population above the same age.

SOURCE: Census of India 1901 Cochin, Part I
(Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1903), p. 106.

"The question of educating the masses is one surrounded by difficulties. The one main end that the government has in view is that as many of the people as possible should be able to read, to write and to cypher. A State school, conducted on the approved modern system will, no doubt, accomplish it much more efficiently and expeditiously than the indigenous pyal school. But the latter has the very same end in view and attains it less efficiently and expeditiously, in a manner more in consonance with the feelings and prejudices of the people. . . I am inclined to think, therefore, that the more expedient policy will be to begin by conserving existing pyal schools and then gradually effect improvement in the matter and manner of the instruction given in them. A small grant may be given in aid of each and every pyal school containing a certain minimum of pupils, and as they approximate more and more to the standard aimed at by the Government, the amount of grant may be proportionately increased. This will have the effect of gradually improving the quality of instruction without sacrificing quantity."²¹

However, this suggestion was never materialized.

This period is also characterized by the spread of English education with a view of more English knowing literates; because material prosperity of a community largely depended on the extent of English education its members had received. There were only 939 males and 125 females who were literates in English in the State in 1891. This ratio had increased about five times in 1901; with 4,389 males and 495 females. It was the Jews who mostly benefited from English schools. By 1901 the State could produce two M.A.'s 30 law graduates, one Cambridge University graduate in addition to several B.A.'s. Out

²¹Ibid.

TABLE VI

COCHIN
PROGRESS OF EDUCATION
1891-1900

Year	Government Schools	Private Aided Schools	Private Unaided Schools	Total Number of Schools	Total Number of Pupils
1891	37	152	543	732	22,488
1892	45	113	588	746	24,255
1893	46	126	711	833	28,125
1894	58	118	816	992	30,696
1895	60	125	877	1,062	31,882
1896	60	122	838	1,020	30,550
1897	68	112	862	1,042	34,316
1898	60	108	1,022	1,190	36,057
1899	60	108	1,071	1,239	36,893
1900	60	121	1,108	1,289	39,600

SOURCE: Census of India, 1901, Cochin, Part I
(Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1903), p. 107.

of the 7,565 graduates of the Madras University by the year 1901, 159 were Cochin citizens, in addition to the four graduates in Medicine and Surgery.

Table VI gives us some further information about the progress of education during this period. Although the government involvement had been gradually accelerated during this period, we see that private involvement in education receiving subsidy from the government had been diminishing. One legitimate reason ascribed to this phenomenon is that the private agencies had to closely abide by the government guidelines, which was not altogether possible for them because for every penny the private management got from the government, departmental stipulations had been attached to it. This kind of governmental control did not always enhance the development of education even though there was a promise of government money. Whereas we see that there had been a steady increase in the number of the unaided private schools. What it tells us is that private agencies as a rule do not like governmental interference in education and they are committed to the cause of education and only when they are financially hurt, they sacrifice their academic freedom.

Industrial education also received momentum during this period. By 1901 there were four industrial schools, all run by Christian missionaries. Two such schools

received government assistance. There were 107 students in these schools. They were offered training in carpentry, tailoring, coir-manufacturing and the like.

There were 382 special schools in the State by 1901, a few managed by the government and the majority by private management. They included a normal school, and other schools which taught Sanskrit, Arabic, Hebrew, Gujerati, Hindustani, Music and the Bible.

Out of the total number of 39,600 pupils receiving instruction, 27,837 were boys and 11,763 were girls in 1901.

The spread of education gained added impetus as years went by; and during the first decades of this century, Cochin stood on top in literacy percentage among the three regions of Kerala under discussion here. By 1910 there were sixteen high schools, of which nine were directly run by the government, six were under the aided private management and one was managed by an unaided private agency. Of the seven private high schools, five were run by Christian churches.

In addition to these, there were 39 middle schools, 14 under the government and 25 under private management; of these 11 were for girls. Of the 2,709 middle school pupils 324 were girls in 1910. There were also 1,046

primary schools during this period, 93 under the government, 250 under aided private management and 703 under the unaided private agencies; of which 42 were exclusively for girls. Most of the private schools were under the management of the churches.

We see a decrease in special schools in 1910; there were only 258 of such schools including a normal school at Trichur. These schools generally offered instruction in tailoring, embroidery, mat-making, shoemaking, rosary-making, lace-making, coir-manufacturing, Sanskrit, Arabic, Tamil, indigenous medicine, Music, Astrology, Vedism, the Bible, etc.

By 1909 the Cochin government began to take active interest in industrial and technical education, and opened a Government Industrial and Technical School at Trichur. The curriculum included instructions in carpentry, lacquer work, electroplating, bell-metal work, blacksmithy, mat-making, bamboo work, pottery, weaving, etc. for the boys; and home economics, needlework, dressmaking, lace-making, cutting and tailoring, embroidery, handicrafts, etc. for girls. Courses in typewriting, shorthand, precision-writing and indexing, commercial correspondence and so on were also offered in the Technical Section, which provided a School Leaving Certificate at the end of the courses. The students also were offered courses in

Malayalam and English Composition, practical arithmetic and mensuration, art and geometrical drawing, market accounting and the like depending on their specialization in the school. In view of the early twentieth century vocational education criteria these developments were undoubtedly innovations.

Some major features of educational activities, from this time on, are worth noticing. Generally, all primary schools remained exclusively vernacular; except those that were meant for Europeans and Eurasians. But if a student needed English instruction in the primary grades, he had to pay special tuition fees for it. The curricula underwent changes in tune with the ideals of modern education. School leaving certificates were awarded after completion of secondary schools and technical schools. A few night schools were also started to impart education to the working class. Normal school curriculum was revised according to the demands of the growing educational sector. The salary of the teachers also simultaneously was revised. Primary and secondary teachers were trained with appropriate focus giving more opportunity for women to enter the teaching career. The students in middle and high schools had to pay tuition fees, which hindered the educational progress of several

poor children; to help these pupils the government made provisions of awarding scholarships. A more liberal Grant-in-Aid Code also was adopted subsequently to enhance educational process in conformity with their reforms.²²

As a result, modern education in Cochin had been steadily developing. The number of colleges and high schools subsequently increased. But the number of primary schools began to drop.

Table VII indicates that the number of lower educational institutions were fluctuating during the four decades prior to 1931. Although there were sixteen high schools in 1910, the number was reduced to 13 in 1911. But by the end of that decade there was a surge in the number of high and middle schools, and even primary schools. By the year 1931 a sudden development in high school education was felt in the State with 42 high schools; however the number of primary schools drastically dropped. The two second-grade colleges were upgraded and one more first-grade college was added to the list of collegiate institutions. In spite of the downward trend in the number of primary schools we see a greater number of enrollment of pupils.

By 1931 nearly 75 percent of the educational institutions were under private management; and of the total

²²A. Achyuta Menon, The Cochin State Manual, pp. 293-296.

TABLE VII

COCHIN
PROGRESS OF EDUCATION
SCHOOLS AND SCHOLARS
1901-1931

Class of Institution	1901		1911		1921		1931	
	No. of In-stitutions	No. of Pupils	No. of In-stitutions	No. of Pupils	No. of In-stitutions	No. of Pupils	No. of In-stitutions	No. of Pupils
First Grade College	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	1,003
Second Grade College	1	57	1	182	2	438	---	---
High Schools	8	804	13	1,246	28	2,574	42	6,105
Middle Schools	19	1,696	21	2,646	61	6,781	60	10,701
Primary Schools	875	29,139	969	46,550	1,026	79,381	503	121,266
Night Schools							111	6,099
Special (Industrial and Technical Schools)	386	7,904	11	698	21	1,041	54	3,990
Total	1,289	39,600	1,015	51,322	1,138	90,215	773	149,164

SOURCE: Census of India, 1931 Vol. XXI, Cochin, Parts I and II (Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1933), p. 213.

number of schools, 25 percent were monopolized by the Christian churches including the Church Missionary Society.²³

With the concerted efforts of the churches and other groups, and individuals and with the support of the state government, modern education was felt as an achievable goal in Cochin. By the time India was about to be liberated from the foreign yoke, Cochin had made nearly half of its people literate; and it also produced quite a good number of leaders with nationalistic awareness.

3. Travancore

While Cochin experimented with modern education chiefly due to interest taken by its government at the instance of the British authorities, Travancore on the whole was a beneficiary of the modern educational activities of the missionaries. The interest taken by the Travancore government was a later development after the Maharaja himself had witnessed the marvelous work the missionaries were doing in that field.

(a) Activities of the London Mission Society:

We have already seen that the British obtained suzerainty in Travancore by 1800. As the British supremacy was accepted all over, Protestant missionaries began to flow

²³Census of India 1931 Vol. XXI Cochin Parts I and II (Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1933), p. 212.

to the country. Although their primary motive was evangelization of the Hindus, especially of the lower castes, they could not achieve that goal without the people being educated. Therefore, they mobilized their efforts towards that direction.

It was the Rev. William Tobias Ringeltaube who first introduced modern English education in Travancore. And it was the first step towards English education in all Kerala. Ringeltaube was a native of Prussia who worked in Travancore as a missionary from 1806 to 1816. His activities were centered mainly in Nagarcoil. He established several schools in southern Travancore for Christians and non-Christians. In 1813, he wrote a letter to Colonel Munro, the British Resident, that there were six schools for the laity. The instruction consisted of lessons in reading, writing and arithmetic. Christian children were given instruction in Catechism and the New Testament. He also mentions in that letter that books were supplied by the missionaries at Tranqbar, but were not enough to meet the needs; and that the natives were not disposed to send their children to school.²⁴ Rani Lakshmi Bai also helped him at the instance of the Resident.

²⁴V. Nagam Aiya, The Travancore State Manual, vol. II, p. 446.

Ringeltaube belonged to the London Mission Society. Later the Rev. Mead continued his educational activities as a representative of the said Society. He came to Travancore in 1817 and died in 1873. He stressed the communication of religions and useful knowledge. He encouraged the teaching of English, Tamil, Malayalam and Sanskrit. He also established a seminary at Nagarcoil which later became a first-grade college. Two divans (prime ministers) of Travancore were graduates of this college. Mead became the Superintendent of Schools in Travancore in 1855. He also established several industrial schools and worked hard for the cause of female education. He was also instrumental for the issue of the proclamation of abolition of slavery in Travancore. Eventually, Trivandrum, Quilon and other towns became their centers of activities.²⁵

(b) Activities of Church Missionary Society:

During the same period, members of the Church Mission Society, founded in 1788 representing the low church evangelical branch of the Anglican Church for the purpose of gospel work in Calcutta and Madras, visited Travancore. Dr. Claudius Buchanan, the principal of Fort William

²⁵ P. J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Christian Contributions, p. 173.

College, Calcutta, and a member of the Church Missionary Society, visited Metropolitan Dionysius the Great of the Syrian Church in 1806. Metropolitan Dionysius became very enthusiastic about the plans of Buchanan. He wanted to uplift the general educational condition of his flock. The Romo-Syrians under the Roman Catholic prelates had the advantage of the activities of foreign missionaries although they did not do much in the cause of secular education. But the Syrian counterparts, whose head Metropolitan Dionysius was, did not have any of those advantages. Primarily they were suspicious about all the missionaries from the West. But when Buchanan presented his plans, the Metropolitan had nothing to be suspicious about. Because, the Buchanan plans basically highlighted only educational needs of the church; both of the laity and the priests. There was no apparent intention of interfering with the faith and autonomy of an ancient church. The Metropolitan was pleased about his suggestions, and welcomed their activities. The authorities of the Church Missionary Society also had given instructions to its members that they should not interfere with the doctrines and traditions, and the administration of the Syrian church.²⁶

²⁶David Daniel, The Orthodox Church of India, vol. I, p. 80.

One of the suggestions made by Buchanan was the opening of parochial schools adjacent to churches. The Metropolitan wholeheartedly cooperated with the program. Colonel Munro contributed all possible financial support from the State. Munro's primary intention, as a Resident, was the propagation of modern English education. Being a devout Anglican, he also thought he could attract the Syrians and other religious persuasions to Anglicanism,²⁷ which, of course, was a hidden agenda. Buchanan also helped the Metropolitan to have the first Malayalam New Testament translated by Fr. Philipos of Cheppad from Syriac printed in Bombay in 1811. On May 13, 1808, Metropolitan Dionysius passed away leaving many activities he had started with the help of the Church Missionary Society with his successor, Metropolitan Mar Thomas VII, who died in 1809. Mar Thoma VIII succeeded him as Metropolitan; however he was a weak prelate.

Nonetheless, there were capable priests like archimandrites Joesph Pulikkottil and Philipos of Cheppad. They were calling for a systematic education of the Syrian clergy. They proposed two major seminaries for the training of the Syrian priests; one in the north and one in the south. Archimandrite Joseph Pulikkottil began raising funds for the construction of the seminaries. He

²⁷P.J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Christian Contributions, pp. 175-176.

also discussed his plans with the British Resident from whom the priest received sufficient encouragement. The Resident, besides paying the accumulated interest of Rs. 3,600 on the Trust Fund deposited by the Syrian Church with the East India Company according to arrangement made by Dionysius the Great, persuaded the Travancore Queen for a donation of Rs. 20,000 and sixteen acres of land in Kottayam for the construction of a seminary.

The construction of the seminary began in 1813 and it was completed in 1815. Archimandrite Joseph Pulikkottil became the principal of the school. Being very much interested in the affairs of the seminary, Resident Munro made an appeal to the Church Missionary Society to send out learned missionaries to teach in the school.²⁸ Consequently, Rev. Norton (1816), Rev. Baily (1816), Rev. Fenn (1818) and Rev. Baker joined the seminary staff, with Baily as the principal. The curriculum included the study of Sanskrit, Hebrew, Syriac, Greek, Latin, Mathematics, History, Geography and the like.²⁹ Although the London Mission Society had started schools in southern Travancore a little earlier, an English school with systematic academic curriculum and

²⁸David Daniel, The Orthodox Church of India, p. 79.

²⁹P.J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Christian Contributions, p. 176.

with a faculty of learned men started first in Travancore was the Seminary School at Kottayam in 1816. This school also maintained an advanced level of instruction and within a few years it developed into a college.

Bailey's interests were varied. He also set up a printing press at Kottayam. He translated the Bible and the English Book of Common Prayer into Malayalam and made two Malayalam dictionaries. He also accelerated the parochial school system which had been in existence since the time of Metropolitan Dionysius the Great. Bailey himself started 72 such schools. Since Bailey concentrated on several such activities, he had to leave the principalship of the seminary with Rev. Fenn. In 1820 there were 42 students in the seminary, of whom 21 were candidates to the priesthood of the Syrian Church. The missionaries also established several schools to be run directly under their management. They alone had 35 schools under them by 1821. They also started three grammar schools. Qualified graduates from parochial schools and missionary schools were admitted in the grammar school; and the graduates of the grammar schools were admitted in the college section of the seminary which was started in 1821. By 1825 the missionaries established a girls' school each in Kottayam and Alleppey.

During this period Archimandrite Joseph Pullikkottil was made a Metropolitan, with the Episcopal name Dionysius II, but his metropolitanate was brief. Father Kurian Punnathra assumed the metropolitanate in 1817 as Dionysius III. He served the Church until his death in 1825. Archimandrite Philipos Anjilimoottil of Chappad succeeded him as Dionysius IV. During these administrative changes the services of the society had been always helpful to the Syrian Church.

But by 1833 the first missionaries were replaced by Rev. Joseph Peet and Rev. Woodcock who began to teach Protestant doctrines in the seminary. They attacked priestly celibacy,³⁰ veneration to the Mother of God and Saints, prayers for the dead, ministerial priesthood and the like. In fact, Resident Munro looked forward to reforms in this direction much earlier. In 1835 Bishop Daniel Wilson, Anglican Metropolitan of Calcutta, visited Travancore and proposed measures of administrative reformation for the Syrian Church.

Since the English men began to deviate from their earlier promises of non-interference with the faith and internal affairs of the Church, Metropolitan Dionysius IV convened a Synod at Mavelikara on January 16, 1836, and after long deliberations severed all connections with

³⁰ No deacon or priest was allowed to marry in the Eastern Church, although married men in minor orders are promoted to the diaconate and priesthood.

the English missionaries. Thus the college division of the Kottayam Seminary was separated and became the C.M.S. College under the missionaries and later got affiliated with the Madras University in 1882. This college is now a higher education center offering undergraduate and graduate degrees in Arts and Sciences. The seminary division came under the Syrians and is now grown to a center of higher studies in Theology, Liturgy and classical languages offering graduate degrees in those disciplines. At present, plans are under way for this seminary to become a theological university.

When the missionaries parted with the Syrians, the former began to establish their own missionary centers and the schools not only in Travancore, but also in the other two regions of Kerala. But it was not until 1878 that an Anglican Diocese was formed in Travancore. In the realm of religion, although the British like the Portuguese, gave a hard time to the native Christians, their educational contributions to the State had become foundations of modern education. They began to widen their educational activities with more schools especially for the lower classes. They did not charge any fees for their services; and even their boarding schools run for girls were free. The missionaries also provided free school materials in order to create interest in schools.

The Syrians also continued their educational activities although most of their parochial schools lost momentum after the connections with the missionaries were severed. They also established a boarding high school, the M. D. Seminary Boarding High School, in 1856, the first of such schools in Travancore. This was intended for the education of Syrian youths. While continuing the high school section, the M.D. Seminary campus nearly two decades ago grew into a college with the name Baselius College, imparting higher education in arts, sciences and commerce.

It was not only the Christians but also the Nayars and Brahmans who attended these schools, because an education in a modern school promised higher positions with the government administrative service. In 1904, the missionaries alone had 290 schools with 13,148 pupils. When the Syrians and the Nayars were benefited from modern education started by these Protestant missionaries, there was one portion of the society who could not be participants in this process. It was the Roman Catholic Syrians and Latins. The Syrian Christians had the advantage of at least a brief association with the missionaries, and some of the schools left with them by the missionaries. But the Roman Catholics were forbidden to attend any of the missionary-run schools. Because of this, in the early days of modern education, Roman Catholics could not become

beneficiaries of it. The same reason led Roman Catholic missionaries to establish English schools later under their auspices and to encourage the study of English language in their seminaries along with Latin. Although they maintained some fine schools, the system as such did not create an imprint of influence as that of other agencies, due to Roman Catholic religious isolationism in matters of school admission and educational cooperation, during their early experiments with modern education. However, with the opening of parochial schools attached to each parish according to the administrative circular of Fr. Kuriakos Chavara, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Verapoly, in 1865 the Roman Catholic community also took a bold step in modern education. Father Chavara himself started two high schools toward the end of the nineteenth century for the higher education of those who had completed their parochial school education.³¹ Thus, private sector of modern education was growing; and the pioneers of modern education in Travancore were the churches, whether Roman Catholic, Orthodox or Protestant. Nevertheless, the interest shown by the state government was no way insignificant.

³¹P. J. Thomas, Malayalam Literature-Contributions of Christians, p. 180.

D. Governmental Efforts

1. The Trivandrum School

In 1834 the Maharaja of Travancore visited Nagarcoil Seminary, and was impressed by its educational activities. He requested the missionaries to provide the services of one of the competent teachers in order for him to start a school in Trivandrum. He got Mr. Roberts, the headmaster of the seminary, to implement his plans. Roberts came to Trivandrum and opened a private school with the aid of the government by way of remitting tuition fees of all the 80 students. Because of the reputation of the school, the government took it over in 1836 and appointed Roberts as the headmaster. The school was named as the Rajah's Free School. Admission was limited to just 100 pupils. Besides English, the curriculum embraced Logic, Philosophical Studies, higher branches of Mathematics, etc. Roberts also acted as the director of English schools in the state. He retired in 1855.

In 1864, there were 500 students in the Rajah's Free School. When the school began to attract more students free education was abolished. The demand of modern English education was great at that time that only two students quit because they were unable to pay the tuition fees.

In 1866 the school was classified as Junior and

Senior Departments. The Senior Department, which was to become a college and then a university, was so famous in South India that it attracted students from neighboring states. The standard of the Senior Department was upgraded soon to become a second grade college with the name, the Maharajah's College, under the Madras University. The college was further upgraded and it produced its first Bachelor's degree holders in 1870. The curriculum of the B.A. classes was comprised of Philosophy, Mathematics and Natural Philosophy as major subjects. A chair of advanced chemistry was added in 1884, history in 1900, and advanced Physics in 1907.

There was another development in the meantime; the Maharaja, by a Royal Proclamation preferred English School graduates in public service. This step conferred an added impetus to the development of modern education.

2. District Schools

Along with the Free School in Trivandrum the government established several District English Schools at important towns in the state. These schools were under Mr. Roberts, who was the headmaster of the Free School. Due to lack of funds some of these schools phased out but were later revived when Rev. Mead became Superintendent of Education in 1855. He also established

some more schools than those in existence during the time of Roberts. He also combined the Vernacular and English systems under one umbrella. In 1862, J.E. Lafrenais succeeded Mead.

District Schools were feeders of the Trivandrum School. In 1864 six scholarships were awarded to District School students to come and study at Trivandrum on a competitive basis. When Lafrenais became superintendent there were only eight District Schools feeding the Trivandrum School; but in twelve years he raised their number to 18. After his death the number of District Schools rose to 22. But, rather than increasing the number of District Schools, the government adopted a Grant-in-Aid Code in 1887 to attract private enterprises in education, especially in Vernacular education.

3. Vernacular Education

Originally the Vernacular Schools are an extension of the old Ezhuthupalli system which provided a network of village schools across the country. Although these schools provided everything they had in reserve for the education of village children, they were less structured curriculum-wise, and hence less efficient. The selection of contents was not done in consideration of the age and capability of the children. The focus

was on memorization. This approach, of course, did not focus on mental, intellectual and physical development of the child. To correct this situation the government came up with some administrative measures in 1866, and allocated Rs. 20,000 for the program.

It was one of standardization of the Vernacular education system. The government established one school each in every Taluk headquarters and another central Vernacular School in Trivandrum. The classrooms began to be graded like the English system; until then the system had a mastery approach. Contents of English School curriculum were translated into Malayalam, especially those of History, Geography and Arithmetic. The Vernacular teachers also began to receive their training in a Vernacular Normal School, but in accordance with the English School teaching method. A Vernacular Education Directorate also was established.³² The Director was given two inspectors, one for the north and one for the south to supervise the schools.

In the year 1866, there were eleven schools and 855 pupils; but by the end of 1868 there were 20 such schools and 1,383 pupils; and the number rose to 29 and

³²T. K. Velu Pillai, The Travancore State Manual, vol. III (Trivandrum: The Government of Travancore, 1940), p. 704.

2,152 respectively, in the next year. Since the government adopted a Grant-in-Aid Code in behalf of Vernacular education there came several private individuals and agencies to share the responsibility of imparting education. It appeared that the government wanted to entrust Vernacular education with the private agencies while retaining English education within its reins.

In 1871 the activities of the Vernacular system was further extended by establishing such schools in every Pravrtti (revenue territory of a village), similar to the Taluk schools. In doing so, the government demanded the help of the community by providing the site and at least a temporary building, but not the teacher salaries and maintenance. A deputy inspector was appointed for every 14 Pravrtti schools. These schools had a curriculum comprising reading and writing, arithmetic, regional geography and history. But in Taluk schools, the curriculum had a wider scope like, Indian History, Sanskrit and the like. The Central Vernacular School in Trivandrum taught advanced areas of geometry (First Book of Euclid), Algebra up to simple equations, History of India and Travancore, and advanced Sanskrit. The response of private groups to conduct Vernacular schools was so great that in 1893 there were 1,375 aided schools with 57,314 pupils.

4. Further Reforms and Progress

In 1894 the dual authority for English and Vernacular schools was lifted. To secure unity of aim and method in both systems, both systems were placed under one authority with three inspectors for three geographical ranges. Each range was further divided into four districts with an Assistant Inspector in each district. The duties and roles of these officials were defined. The Travancore Educational Rules of 1894 also had dealt with administration of grants to private schools, curricula, teacher education and qualification, building condition, sanitation, equipment, admission policies, inter-school conducts and the like. The rigorous supervision of private schools brought forth efficiency of schooling.

Each Pravrtti was given an elementary school according to this reform; consequently in 1906 there was one school for every 1.9 square miles and for 72 people.

In 1902 schools were classified as high, middle, upper and lower primary schools. In upper and lower primary schools Malayalam was the medium of instruction, with English as a second language starting in grade 3. Both the English and Vernacular systems had the same classification. The first two grades comprised the lower primary school. Grades 2 through 4 constituted the upper primary school. If the child intended to go to an English

school the 5th grade was a preparatory year to Form I, and if he intended to join a Vernacular school it is the first grade in the Vernacular middle school which was constituted by grades 5 and 6. Forms I and III made the English middle school, and forms IV to VI the English High School; and grades 7 and 8 constituted the Malayalam high school; a ninth grade was added to the Malayalam high school later. In English schools, Malayalam was taught as second language and vice versa.³³ Drawing, Hygiene, Domestic Economy, Agriculture, Practical Geometry, etc. were added to the middle and high school curriculum.

By 1904 the government accepted the responsibility of imparting free primary education to all children in the state,³⁴ and ordinances were passed permitting low caste children in public schools, which until then was permitted only in missionary schools. This does not mean that primary education had reached the low castes. Due to the positively encouraging attitude of the government in the previous decade, the number of schools considerably increased and in 1904 there were 3,727 schools including colleges, with a student population of 197,385. This was chiefly due to the booming number of unaided schools;

³³ Ibid., p. 715.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 716.

which alone accounted for 2,248 institutions primary through collegiate levels. However, we cannot observe this growing trend in 1910-11 as the number of unaided institutions sharply decreased. (See Table VIII). But the involvement of private agencies in imparting education was so great that in 1910-11 over 67 percent of the education providers were private agencies (see Table VIII). There is also remarkable progress in the subsequent decades in the number of schools and enrollment (see Table IX).

5. Professional and Special Schools

For the improvement of an educational system, especially when it was still in its infancy, well-qualified teachers were to be trained. To achieve this goal the government of Travancore encouraged the opening of several Normal Schools. For the English Schools, the state was hiring teachers from outside. But as the number of schools began to increase this system did not adequately serve the purpose. Therefore an English Normal School was established at Trivandrum in 1894. Graduates of middle schools, high schools and second grade colleges were given admission in that school. There were already two Vernacular Normal Schools at Trivandrum and Kottar established in 1883, but the latter stopped functioning in 1884. So the one at Trivandrum

TABLE VIII
 TRAVANCORE
 NUMBER OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
 1910-1911

Institution	Government	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total
Arts Colleges	2	1	1	4
Professional Colleges	2	---	---	2
Secondary Schools	28	11	29	68
Elementary Schools	478	792	286	1,556
Training and Special Schools	8	1	10	19
Total	518	805	326	1,649

SOURCE: Census of India 1911, vol. XXIII Travancore Part I (Trivandrum: The Ananda Press, 1912), p. 163.

was later amalgamated with the English Normal School when the latter was founded. This school was for men only. To train the increasing number of women aspiring for the teaching career, a female teacher's school was established in 1887 at Trivandrum; but this school gave only training in Vernacular education. Nevertheless, an English Training Branch was later added to it in 1904 and was placed under the Principal of the Maharajah's College for Girls. There were also six other teacher training schools in various parts of the state run by Roman Catholic and Protestant missions, two of which were for backward classes.

As social interaction became more complex and the structure of administration became more legalistic the government felt the need of providing education in legal matters. As a beginning of that first law classes were organized in 1874 in the Maharajah's College with 46 students. This arrangement was for the graduates of the Maharajah's College, who wanted to appear for the B.L. examinations of the Madras University. Eventually classes were offered for high school graduates for a two year pleadership diploma. But when the Madras University required the B.L. students to be separated from the Maharajah's College, the law school had to be separately instituted with a three year curriculum. In 1897, a

chair of medical jurisprudence was added to it under Dr. Poonnen, M.D., M.Ch. Thus, Kerala had its first law college.

To encourage oriental scholarship, the Travancore government also established a Sanskrit School, which later became a college, in 1899 at Trivandrum. The curriculum consisted of nine years of study in Logic, Grammar, Rhetoric, Philosophy, Vedism and Literature. Examinations in the fifth, seventh and ninth years were conducted to confer degrees of Sastri, Upadhyaya and Mahopadhyaya respectively; the last degree could only be aspired by a Brahman. It is to be noted that in this school students also had to study secular sciences, modern Mathematics and History, which were never part of Sanskrit scholarship before that.

During the same period the attention of the government was turned to help the juvenile offenders. A reformatory school was opened for them in 1892 near Trivandrum. Youths under sixteen were placed in that school for a regular academic education with focus on vocational training in agriculture, manual labor and the like, so that they could get in a gainful career after discharge from the school.

It was Rev. Mead who first started an Industrial School at Nagarcoil in 1820. It provided training in

printing and book-binding. The London Mission Society also opened another such school in Neyyur which gave instructions in paper-manufacture, weaving, rearing silkworms, sugar manufacture, and so on. Their work awoke the government to move in this direction. In 1863, a School of Arts was opened by the government at Trivandrum; but it soon ceased to exist. In 1873 another school was started to teach carving of ivory, wood, coconut shells and the like. This school had an Art branch and an Industrial branch. This school gave lessons in hand-drawing, model drawing, modelling, designing, painting, photography, smithy, carpet weaving, stained-glass manufacturing and so on.

Due to the Technical Grant-in-Aid Code adopted by the government there were several private agencies to run such schools. Many of these schools were undertaken by Roman Catholic and C.M.S. missions. Some of those schools offered courses in Banking, Commercial Geography, Bookkeeping, Commercial Correspondence and Typewriting, in addition to industrial subjects like Building materials and construction, Drawing and estimating, Earth work and Road construction, Plane and Solid Geometry, Mensuration, Carpentry, Smithy, Weaving, Lace-making and so on.

Some students were given scholarship to study technical subjects in Europe by the government.

In the educational development of a country printing presses have an important place. During the British era we have seen that Baily set up a printing press at Kottayam in 1820. Likewise, Rev. Mead had printing presses at Nagarcoil at the same time. The government set up its first print shop when Roberts came to start his English school at Trivandrum. By 1905 the number went up; there were 28 privately owned printing presses in Travancore.

To the government press at Trivandrum was added a Lithographic press in 1870. All these presses helped the educational development of the state by printing textbooks and other material. The Trivandrum Government Press also was engaged in publishing government documents like the Travancore Government Gazette, Almanac and the Annual Administration Report.

Among the three regions of Kerala, it was Travancore that was largely benefited by British activities. The British not only did introduce a new system of education, but also change the social life of Travancore to a greater degree. The educational institutions established as a result of their influence grew in quality and quantity to serve the citizens of Travancore. The Maharajah's College of Trivandrum later became the

Travancore University in 1937 by a Royal Proclamation,³⁵ affiliating all the colleges in Travancore. It was the first university in Kerala. Later when Travancore and Cochin were united in 1949 it had jurisdiction in both states. When Kerala as a single geographic and linguistic entity came into existence in 1956, its jurisdiction had to be extended all over Kerala; and in 1957 it was renamed the University of Kerala to serve the entire state.

The decades prior to the Independence of India have been experiencing rapid progress in all levels of education; more and more schools and colleges came up to serve the country. The education the citizens received made them to think like civilized men and they realized that they were the shapers of their own destiny as citizens of India. All the freedom fighters before Independence were the products of modern education.

As years went by, Travancore stood on top in literacy percentage in the whole Kerala. (See Table X). This would not have been possible without the collective efforts of the churches and other agencies in the field of education in close cooperation with the developmental policies of the government.

³⁵A. Sreedhara Menon, Cultural Heritage of Kerala, p. 174.

TABLE IX

TRAVANCORE
PROGRESS OF EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONS AND SCHOLARS
1911, 1921 and 1930

Description of Institutions	Number of Institutions			Number of Scholars		
	1911	1921	1930	1911	1921	1930
Arts & Science College	4	4	7	432	1,114	2,541
Training College	1	1	1	56	75	100
Sanskrit College	---	1	1	---	324	53
English High School for Boys	26	41	55	8,963	22,161	27,568
English High School for Girls	3	9	15	600	2,539	4,126
English High and Middle School for Boys	32	89	155	2,791	11,611	19,693
English High and Middle School for Girls	7	10	21	348	1,330	2,314
Vernacular Middle School for Boys	81	227	243	28,046	65,032	93,699
Vernacular Middle School for Girls	42	86	99	7,601	21,632	31,259
Primary School for Boys	1,264	2,278	2,624	96,301	235,457	334,020
Primary School for Girls	169	285	366	13,711	29,488	49,559
Training Schools	5	16	18	103	329	332
Technical Schools	10	61	19	398	1,496	1,243
Other Special Schools	4	4	17	318	225	2,196
Total	1,648	3,112	3,641	159,668	392,913	568,703

E. Conclusion

Although the Portuguese were engaged in education of the clergy and in literary activities, education as a massive force and as a popular social agency in Kerala is the contribution of both the British political authorities and the missionaries. Although the monarchs in Cochin and Travancore were active agents in materializing the British policies, it was the political pressure exerted by the British that really moved them toward that direction.

We had two reasons for discussing the educational activities in Travancore rather elaborately. First, it was in that state the bulk of these activities was concentrated. Travancore had a more systematic development due to its enlightened monarchy. Moreover, it was also economically more resourceful. The presence of the Orthodox Syrians and their early association with C.M.S. missionaries gave a lasting impetus to modern education although the latter divided the former by influencing one minority to be Anglicans and another minority to slip away from the church as Reformed Syrians. But all of these groups were craving for modern education as a way to economic redemption. This is true with other castes too. This healthy response itself directed the growth

TABLE X

KERALA

PROGRESS OF LITERACY IN PERCENTAGE

CENSUS YEAR	MALABAR			COCHIN			TRAVANCORE			KERALA		
	Male Literacy	Female Literacy	Total Literacy	Male Literacy	Female Literacy	Total Literacy	Male Literacy	Female Literacy	Total Literacy	Male Literacy	Female Literacy	Total Literacy
1872	-	-	5.3	8.4	0.37	4.4	11.0	0.46	5.77	-	-	5.1
1881	11.6	2.4	7.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1891	22.0	4.0	13.0	23.8	3.7	13.7	19.1	2.7	11.0	21.6	3.5	12.5
1901	8.5	1.5	10.0	22.4	4.5	13.4	21.5	3.1	12.4	17.5	3.0	12.0
1911	19.0	3.0	11.0	24.3	6.1	15.2	24.8	5.0	15.0	22.7	4.7	13.7
1921	20.8	4.9	12.6	27.4	10.0	18.6	38.0	17.3	28.0	28.7	10.7	19.7
1931	22.9	6.3	14.4	38.3	18.5	28.4	40.8	16.6	30.0	34.0	13.9	24.0
1941	-	-	-	52.0	30.6	41.0	68.0	42.0	55.0	-	-	-
1951	41.0	21.0	31.0				64.5	43.2	53.0 [*]	52.7	32.1	42.0
1961										64.9	45.6	55.1 ^{**}
1971										66.6	54.31	60.42

* Travancore-Cochin State Effective July 1, 1949.

** The State of Kerala came into existence unifying all these regions on November 1, 1956.

Source: Computed from Census Reports 1872-1971. The first Census in India was taken in 1872.

of modern education in Travancore. Whereas in Cochin, where the Christian majority is for Roman Catholics, modern education was not a Christian endeavor on the whole; it was a government undertaking in the beginning. No government can achieve its goals unless there is popular involvement in its activities. The Travancore government always encouraged mass cooperation in modern education. Therefore modern education was a fait accompli for Travancore.

Second, Travancore became a leader in directing the educational planning and policies soon after Independence. In less than two years after Independence, Travancore and Cochin were united as one state. The capital of former Travancore was retained as the capital of the new State of Travancore-Cochin. Most of the leading educational institutions were at the capital. The policymaking legislature and policy executing Secretariat were also there. Naturally the role of educational leadership fell on the erstwhile Travancore. After the birth of Kerala the same trend continued. It was the established system of modern education in Travancore that became a model to further build and develop, although resources of all the three regions were pooled to construct a comprehensive system.

The impact of modern education on Kerala is so great that it changed the attitude and vision of a traditional society which was infested by caste gradations, slavery of the untouchables and inequality of sexes. In the next chapter we will examine the relationship between modern education and social change.

CHAPTER VIII

MODERN EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

A. Prelude

When we dealt with social stratification in Kerala the rigidity of caste system was also sufficiently discussed. The cast system in Kerala was a fierce practice which did not even permit humans of inferior castes to be equal to animals. The cow of an untouchable was more venerable than its owner.

The untouchable had no place in the vicinity of the house of a caste-Hindu. He could not walk along the public streets used by masters. In case he happened to walk on the street, he had to make a warning sound "Ho-Ho-Ho-Ho", so that the upper castes should not come closer to him lest the latter be polluted by his closeness. Likewise, if a member of the upper caste wanted to walk through the streets he or his servant had to utter "Po-Po-,Po-Po", meaning "go, go, go away", so that an oncoming untouchable should not get any closer to and defile him. In many cases the upper caste member had the authority to kill a polluter; often the latter was mercilessly beaten.

If an untouchable was believed to have committed a crime or even a minor offense, his innocence was often proved by ordeals, such as throwing him into the burning fire or forcing him to put his hand in the boiling oil. If he would come out uninjured, his innocence was proven.

In some areas, the untouchables were fed in the most inhuman way. The untouchable laborers who worked in the fields would come and stand somewhere in the back yard of the house, but keeping the non-polluting distance. Plantain leaves would be placed on holes already dug on the ground. Food was served on the leaf, and the hole and leaf would hold the food like a dish. The untouchables would have to eat from that "dish". If they were to be punished for any misdemeanor that occurred while working or elsewhere, they were not permitted to eat with their hands; they had to eat like a dog!

The untouchables were also victims of attack by Nayar soldiers to show their martial skills. When a Nayar came out of his Kalari after training, he used to fight with members of Pulaya caste irrespective of their age or sex as a display of his military training. Often the victims were left dead or fatally injured.

Similarly the social conditions of women were not satisfactory. Although the matriarchal system of the Nayars provided a higher social status for women in Nayar families, generally it rested only with the head of the

family, the mother, and other women were restricted to the premises of the house. Brahman and Christian women were more restricted than women belonging to other castes. Generally a woman could not aspire for an education beyond the primary level consisting of reading, writing, arithmetic and music. Of course, some women had achieved higher skills, but they were cases of exceptions. Menstruation was considered one of the disabilities of women, and their movements were restricted even within the house. A menstruating woman was never permitted to attend the temple or church services. For three to five days she had to be confined within a secluded area of the house. Her own children could not touch her, except the babies breast-fed by her.

It was into this society modern education was introduced. In this chapter we will examine how it changed a very traditional society, how it consolidated various strata of the society, how the society became receptive to modern education, and the very society transformed by modern education advocated and used it on its way to social emancipation and economic freedom.

B. Female Education

When the British came to Kerala, women generally could aspire for no higher than an elementary education

consisting of the study of the three R's, and some music. In exceptional cases some women had learned Sanskrit. Learning of the higher order was monopolized by men, because they only had the use of it. The place of a woman was her home, taking care of the needs of her husband and children.

In the beginning, the British were afraid of starting schools for women, because they did not want to interfere with the social and religious life of the people. But they also believed that if they promoted the education of men, they, in turn, undertake the education of women.¹ Although this was the general policy of the British government, the English missionaries took a bold step in the direction of educating women in Kerala. The earliest structured attempt in female education took place in Travancore when Mrs. Mead started her Boarding School for Girls in 1819 at Nagarcoil. This school was intended to impart a Christian and moral education together with the three R's, meant primarily for Christian girls. The girls in this school were taught knitting, spinning, needlework, crochet, and embroidery.² Mrs.

¹Sindhu Phadke, "Special Problems of the Education of Women," in Gore et. al., ed., Sociology of Education in India, p. 176.

²T. K. Velu Pillai, The Travancore State Manual, vol. III, p. 692.

Norton and Mrs. Baily opened two girls' schools each at Alleppy and Kottayam, respectively, during the same period. Mrs. Baker, the wife of one of the C.M.S. missionaries at Kottayam, was relentlessly working for the cause of girls' education.

Prior to 1862, there were two schools in Trivandrum under the auspices of the government, one of which was an English school for the education of Christian girls, and the other a Vernacular school for the Brahman girls. The former, located at the Cantonment, offered lesson in drawing, music and French for advanced students. The latter, located at Karamana, gave instruction in Hindu music, and received the special attention from the royal family. In 1870 another Vernacular girls' school was opened by the government within the Fort at Trivandrum.

Girls' education received impetus when female teachers were appointed in girls' schools. Generally, parents did not advocate the idea of having male teachers for their girls. With lady teachers in the classroom, that social block was busted. During the same period another English girls' school was started at Alleppey in 1874; and another one at Trivandrum in 1863; the latter being for the education of Hindu girls. By the turn of the nineteenth century, there was a rapid increase

in girls attending schools. For example, in 1895, there were 28,933 girls in schools, in 1905 the number increased to 47,570 and 1915 to 73,832.³ This progress was chiefly due to the Grant-in-Aid Code adopted by the government. In course of time the stigma attached to female education also began to disappear. The missionaries distributed pamphlets to influence public opinion in favor of female schooling.

The English school in the Cantonment, Trivandrum, which was taken over by the government in 1866 when it was about to phase out due to lack of encouragement under the management of missionaries, began to develop as it was open to all castes. In 1867, Ms. Abel became its headmistress. In 1888 it was made a high school, and in 1896 it became a second grade college awarding the Fellow of Arts degree under the Madras University with a new name, the Maharajah's College and High School for Girls. In the same year, fees in the high school were abolished to promote female education.

Another English high school was opened by Ms. Blandford in 1867 within the Fort at Trivandrum with government grants for caste girls. Royal women began to attend this school. Later the St. Joseph's Convent

³Ibid., p. 693.

College for Girls was started by the Roman Catholic nuns as a second grade college.

In 1904 there were two second grade colleges, three English high schools, one Vernacular high school, seven English middle schools, 33 Vernacular middle schools, 22 upper primary schools and 116 lower primary schools for female education in Travancore.

In 1908 all girls' institutions in Travancore were placed under an Inspectress with four assistants to help her. The creation of a separate Inspectorate was helpful in identifying problem areas and needs of the female education network in the state. It also provided optional areas of study for girls which were not offered to boys. Courses in singing, sewing, domestic science including sick-nursing and first aid, and the like were added to the girls' curriculum, and some of them had been included as optional subjects in public examinations held by the state.⁴

Along with separate schools for girls, co-education was also encouraged in places where there were no girls' schools, especially in primary schools. In fact the number of girls attending boys' schools was greater than the number of girls attending girls' schools. For example, out of 7,780 girls receiving instruction in 1885, 5,278

⁴Ibid., p. 695.

were in co-educational institutions.⁵ In collegiate level, girls were encouraged to take courses in a men's college when they were not offered in their own colleges. The concept that their girls should attend an all-girl school as maintained by the parents was less and less emphasized. Because of that on the recommendations of the Education Reforms Committee, the Travancore government declared all primary schools "mixed" in 1934. However, all girls' primary schools did not cease to exist.

As a result of the collective enterprises of the government and private agencies Travancore achieved the highest female literacy in India (see Table X).

The State of Cochin did not seem to have obtained as much progress in female educational institutions as did Travancore although its female literacy always reflected a higher percentage than other regions. It might be possible that an active Ezhuthupalli system in Cochin was responsible for it. Although the government had undertaken to run most of the girls' schools in the nineteenth century, female education was a major concern of the Roman Catholic nuns through their convent schools. By 1910 Cochin had three high schools, eleven middle schools and forty-two primary schools exclusively for

⁵Ibid., p. 696.

girls; and over 60 percent which belonged to the government. Schools exclusively for girls were a later development in Cochin, however. The first government school was started only in 1887, for caste girls at Trichur; and by 1900 the State had only six middle schools and thirty primary schools for girls.⁶ However, the number of girls' schools was increasing in subsequent decades, as we have just seen above. But the majority of female education took place in co-educational schools. The reduction of fees for girls also gave added impetus to female education in Cochin.⁷

Malabar, which was directly under the British rule, relatively had fewer girls' schools compared to the other two regions. There too, co-educational institutions catered to the needs of the girls. But most of the girls' schools it had were run by the Christian missions and religious groups. In 1914 the Basel German Mission High School for Girls at Calicut was the biggest in Malabar. Roman Catholic sisters also maintained two convent girls' schools each at Calicut and British Cochin

⁶Census of India, vo. xx, Cochin Part I (Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1903), p. 101.

⁷M. J. Koshy, Genesis of Political Consciousness in Kerala (Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society, 1972), p. 18.

respectively. The government also maintained a few primary schools for girls.⁸ Later by 1931 the involvement of both the government and private agencies got widened in the area of female education. In spite of all these undertakings, female education as a movement never received a thrust in Malabar.

In fact, it was Travancore which led the whole Kerala in the area of female education. The result was a higher literacy percentage for women. Because of this popular activity women began to come out of their homes and confront the social life of Kerala. The traditions that bound them within the walls of their houses began to break. Women began to realize their role in the society. As many of them, especially Christian girls, began to receive higher education, even living as far as Madras, away from their homes, the inherent capabilities of women began to be recognized by the society. During the first half of this century Young Women's Christian Association played a very constructive role in guiding the young Christian ladies to their appropriate field of education. The new women graduates of high schools and colleges entered into the field of education as teachers. Up

⁸C. A. Innes, Madras District Gazatteers: Malabar and Anjengo (Madras: The Government Press, 1908, reprint 1915), p. 284.

until the 1950's most of the educated women chose to become teachers. It was because a teacher's job was easy to obtain or because a teacher's job was easy for a woman to handle. But the role played by these women teachers in liberating the women of Kerala was great. During the second quarter of this century these teachers became strong influences for the cause of female education as such. Later, when education field could not absorb the increasing number of girls graduating from high schools and junior colleges they became a source of manpower in the medical field as nurses and other paraprofessionals in the area of health delivery. In fact, these ladies in the profession of health are one of the major economic sources of the state at present.

The status of women at present prevailing in Kerala is the result of activities during the past century, especially in the area of female education. And as such, it is the contribution of Christian missionaries.

The exceptionally high rate of women's education in Kerala is undoubtedly related to the high percentage of the Christian population in the state and the fact that Christian missionaries have been actively associated with educational activities since early times. . . The proximity of schools and provision of free school education have also facilitated this development.⁹

⁹ Sindhu Phadke, "Special Problems of the Education of Women", in Gore, et al., ed., Sociology of Education in India, p. 183.

says Sindhu Phadke.

It was the missionaries who opened way for women's freedom and equality in Kerala. Modern education became a tool to effect this social change.

C. Backward Classes and Education

The lower castes of the society never had access to the traditional school systems in Kerala. They were considered unworthy to receive knowledge. Their lot was to work as agricultural serfs for the nobility of higher castes. Their own social inferiority led them to think that they did not deserve an education. It was the British, both as a political authority, and as a missionary group who challenged the prevailing social inequality and injustice in Kerala.

Although the British missionaries during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century established quite a good number of schools for the backward classes like, Izhavas, Pulayas, and Parayas, they were not without their selfish motives; for they admitted only the Christian converts of these castes into the schools. The very act of conversion was a decastification process, although many of the social disabilities yet prevailed. The Hindu untouchables were never admitted either in a public school or private school. The fact

that the missionaries admitted Christian untouchables to their school does not mean that they have not been engaged in the overall uplifting work for the depressed classes. They were always instrumental to upward mobility of the Harijans, not only being school operators, but also being social innovators demanding legislations in favor of it.

Like in many other areas, it was Travancore that has conscientiously worked for the education of the Harijans, although being pressured by the British political authorities. The Grant-in-Aid Code of 1894 allotted funds for the education of Pulaya, Paraya, Veda, Izhava, Shannar, Kurava, Marakkan, Paravan, Mukkuvan, Velan, Tandan, Maran, Barber and other castes and a number of schools were also established in 1894.¹⁰ By 1896 there were 15 schools for backward classes established by the government. In the following year, 15 more were established.

The missionaries also took advantage of the provisions regarding the education of backward classes contained in the Grant-in-Aid Code of 1894, and opened numerous schools. The missionaries alone had 150 schools for the backward classes thereby making the total number of 250 by 1906. In the meantime, there experienced a

¹⁰T. K. Velu Pillai, The Travancore State Manual, vol. III, p. 735.

shortage of teachers; because many teachers, who were mostly caste-conscious, did not want to teach in schools for the Harijans. This led the government to institute 150 scholarships to train teachers for the Vernacular elementary education.

The Grant-in-Aid Code of 1894, which included the Christian converts from the untouchable castes among the beneficiaries, was later amended in 1904 so as to extend the benefits only to the Hindu untouchables. This kind of discrimination from the government was intended to block the influx of backward communities into Christianity. But this also led to some dishonest practices among the already converted Christian untouchables. They began to use Hindu names in schools and declare that they were Hindus, while in fact they maintained membership in their respective churches. Many of the young people educated during this period could not go higher than a primary education, because the program was chiefly geared only to that extent. Most of the people who got an education higher than that were Christians of the untouchable class whose main inspiration came from the missionaries. Many of them eventually became champions of backward classes during the decades to come.

By 1906 the demand for teachers in backward

community schools increased and consequently the government established one normal school each at Nagarcoil, Trivandrum, Quilon and Kottayam. It was a one year training with concentration in lower primary education. Members of backward classes were preferred for admission in these normal schools. A middle school graduate was recognized competent to undergo this training.¹¹

During the same period another development from the part of the government stimulated education among the Izhavas. All the government schools were open to them for attendance along with Nayars, Christians and Nampudiris. Izhava youths began to pour into the local schools to take advantage of the opportunity. The Izhavas had already submitted a Memorial to the Maharajah of Travancore demanding admission in the government schools and to the civil service in 1896 under the leadership of Dr. Palpu. In fact the requests in his petition were denied then.¹² Therefore when the government approved Izhava attendance in government schools, it created an increasing enthusiasm among the Izhavas. To crown this, the Maharaja also declared all Pulaya boys and girls to

¹¹Ibid., p. 736.

¹²P. K. Balakrishnan, Narayanaguru (Kottayam: S.P.C. Society, 1954, rev. ed. 1969), pp. 59-60.

be eligible for attendance in all government schools in 1912. In 1925, again, all schools in Travancore, except seventeen, were open to all castes. In the same year, amendments were made in the Grant-in-Aid Code extending financial aid to schools which only had fewer number of low-caste children.¹³ As a result, by 1930, there was no need to maintain special schools for the backward classes.

The State of Cochin also maintained several special schools in areas where the majority were backward classes. Their children were given free tuition and free school supplies. There were many night schools chiefly intended for the working adults of these communities. "And yet, in spite of these attractions, concessions and facilities, the depressed classes do not appear to be taking kindly to education. . ." says Census of India 1931 Cochin Report.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the enthusiasm for modern education among the backward classes in Travancore was significantly greater, chiefly due to the missionaries in the Roman Catholic

¹³T. K. Velu Pillai, The Travancore State Manual, vol. III, p. 737.

¹⁴Census of India, 1931, vol. XXI, Cochin, Parts I and II (Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1933), pp. 194-195.

and Anglican Churches. One of the major projects engaged in by pastors of mission stations consisted of the educational growth of their converts and the backward community they represented.

In fact, very little was done for the education of backward classes in Malabar, although the Thiya community¹⁵ was active to send their children to schools, which eventually led them to assume several responsible positions with the British government. But lower castes like the Pulayas, Parayas, Kuravans and so on did not receive sufficient educational stimulation chiefly due to "the reluctance of higher castes to allow them to elevate themselves out of their position of serfs."¹⁶

The leadership that Travancore gave to education of backward classes was helpful not only to make them literates or career-holders in a society. They eventually were powerful advocates of democratic civilization. This eventually led to the consolidation of their own social entities and to the establishment of identity for themselves and their communities without being ashamed of

¹⁵ Izhavas are called Thiyas in Malabar.

¹⁶ C. A. Innes, Madras District Gazetteers, Malabar, vol. I (Madras: The Government Press, 1908, reprint 1951), p. 300.

confessing that they were Izhavas or Cheramar, a phenomenon very much characterized among the Negroes in America in the 1960's and 1970's when the Black communities were entering into a new awareness of self-identity and feeling proud of it. The impact of modern education was such that it not only prepared the government and the upper caste to recognize the disabilities and discriminations the backward classes were victims to, in addition to the fact that they became aware of their own social status and of what they wanted to be.

D. Social Upheavals

With the propagation of modern education the second half of the nineteenth century and nearly the first half of the twentieth century noticed strong uprisals within structures of the society. These uprisals consisted of decastifying efforts of the educated, agitation to establish social equality and equal opportunity, and of creation of awareness among even the upper classes to constitute strength for coping with increasing organizational power of Christians and the lower castes. Modern education gave rise to these upheavals and they, in turn, also spread modern education more and more vigorously to strive after their set goals.

1. Decastification Process¹⁷

Modern education began to creep into the huts of poor Izhavas, Pulayas, and other backward classes through their youths who attended hundreds of schools thrown open to them. The privilege, denied to their parents, began to change the attitude of the backward children. They were once considered polluting not only by touch but by distance also. When the missionaries opened their schools for the untouchable, although made Christian, the Christians and Nayars did not like the move. There they had a choice; they could send their children to other private schools or even to a government school. But when all schools were open to all castes including the Harijans, the upper classes did not have any other schools to send their children. It was common that the caste conscious teacher made separate seating arrangement for the upper castes and lower castes. But in spite of such inhibitions children naturally interacted with each other. Here started the strong barriers of caste to break down. The once unapproachable and untouchable person was thus seated

¹⁷The word decastification is coined from the Portuguese/Spanish stem casta for caste. This coinage signifies the process by which the rigidities of caste system are losing importance as its supporting structures are being shattered.

along with the rest of the higher caste children.

The British, unlike Tippu Sultan, wanted only to bring about sporadic changes. Whereas when Tippu invaded Malabar he also attacked the caste system very militantly. Some Brahmans were forced into Islam and eating beef. He stripped all caste honors from the Nayars and Brahmans. He even appointed Muslims newly converted by him from lower castes, as chiefs of villages where Nayars and Brahmans were in great majority. He wanted to treat the people alike without discrimination of caste.

But when Kerala fell under the British their approach was different. They did not want to offend a traditional society and fail instantaneously. They even went to the extent of preserving the rights of the superior class of subjects as far as in consistence with the common good.

But when members of the lower castes came out successful after their education the British appointed them to appropriate career positions without regard to their social background. Moreover, the Indian Penal Code made everyone equal in the eyes of the law. So, in the Malabar area, trends towards social emancipation started earlier than in the other two regions. Caste was not observed in public places and thoroughfares. Hindu caste system

began to deteriorate. What Tippu decided to bring about in two months, the British wanted to do gradually.

When modern facilities like the public vehicles, schools, colleges, and government offices began to multiply, physical closeness of humans was inevitable. Since the underprivileged were permitted entry into the power structure of the government earlier in Malabar region, the members of the higher caste had to bear with them and break each of the trends of caste rigidity slowly. However, the privilege of government service was not meant for low castes in Travancore and Cochin until 1930's.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first two quarters of the twentieth century it was a period of uprisals against caste regimentation.

The political historian would describe the changes as due to governmental action, but the social legislation against untouchability, temple entry act and the tenancy acts were the culmination of a long process which really started with the beginnings of westernization of India and the impact of Protestant Christianity. The political policy of the British was not to interfere in social affairs and there was no direct administrative interference with caste procedures, but there was informal, unstructured sort of action against some of the barbarous aspects of caste which both the western missionary and administrator found repugnant to their notions of human dignity.¹⁸

¹⁸A. Aiyappan, Social Revolution in a Kerala Village (London: Asia Publishing House, 1965), pp. 8-9.

says A. Aiyappan. Modern education was the main tool of the British operation against the caste system. It created a new middle class consisting of the pride of an English education and the power-attached careers associated with it. This middle class got stronger and the old middle class began to get weaker. Moreover, higher status of the upper castes could not be maintained due to their erosion of economic standards. These changes began to affect the deference structure of the society which was also essential to maintain caste relationship. For example, Nayars and wealthy Christians were addressed Thampuran (master) by inferior castes. The deference structure also consisted of appropriate physical postures like inclining or bowing to express respect toward a member of the higher caste, and of using servile self-expressions like adiyan (me-the-slave). Similarly, a member of the superior caste always addressed a member of the inferior caste calling the latter with second person singular. After the structures of caste system began to break, a new deference structure began to be accepted by the low castes. When the upper and lower caste children would interact between themselves, they would naturally call each other by their names. Honorific titles would not have any place in their social relationship. Similarly, when these children came out of the

school they called the member of upper castes not Thampuran but "Sir". Likewise, instead of the menial self-expressions, they would use "I" which is more self-assertive in front of the members of the superior castes. Similarly, members of the upper castes began to call the members of lower castes who became teachers and government employees, "Sir" instead of the derogatory caste suffixes attached to their names like Pulayan, Chovan and so on.

As the deference structure began to disintegrate the foundations of caste system began to crack. At least among the educated the grip of the caste rigidity began to loosen in public places, although unconsciously he was within the barriers of the caste while at home. Modern education introduced a new deference structure based on educational achievement and social mobility in contrast to the traditional deference style based on caste.

Understanding the fact that it was education which was liberating them from the grip of caste more and more depressed castes participated in the educational process. The more educated a Harijan was the more free he was from the disabilities of the caste. For example, a Harijan college graduate collected more respect than a mere high school graduate.¹⁹ This trend, of course, motivated

¹⁹K. C. Alexander, Social Mobility in Kerala (Poona: Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute, 1968), pp. 172-175.

several youths to strive after higher education which would take them to high hopes.

2. Communal Uprisals

When the British appeared on the political scene of Kerala, we have observed, it had reached a climax of disabilities on account of casteism. Some of the communal agitations took place soon after the British controlled the helms of governments of the three former administrative units in Kerala. Christian and upper class women were only permitted to wear blouses and jackets to cover nudity of the upper half of their bodies. Women of lower castes were not even permitted to throw over a loin breast-cloth to cover the upper part of their bodies. Likewise, the depressed classes were not permitted to adorn their bodies with ornaments made of precious metals. They were forbidden to have tiled roofs for their houses. With a new social philosophy sweeping through the British missionaries and bureaucracy, such social inequalities could not be maintained without suffocation. The "blouse agitation" in southern Travancore shook the social conscience of the whole Kerala; and yet it brought about the privilege of covering breasts only of the Izhava ladies converted to Christianity,²⁰ chiefly because the missionaries pressed

²⁰P.A. Seyd Muhammad, ed., Kerala Charithram (Malayalam, Compilation of Kerala History), vol. II (Ernakulam: The Kerala History Association, 1974), p. 161.

the Regent for it. The rights to have tiled roofs and golden jewelries without being additionally taxed (paying adiyara) were promulgated only in 1817 by Regent Rani Parvati Bai.²¹

Slavery was a commonplace in Kerala during the former part of the nineteenth century. Slaves were the means of production for the landlords; and therefore they were part of their assets. They could be sold or bought with the land or separately like cattle. The price of a slave ranged from three to fourteen rupees.²² Early British observers like Buchanan and Hamilton had noticed that the slaves in Kerala were leased and sold and that the cost of a slave was equivalent to that of two buffaloes.²³ In northern Kerala they were the properties of Jenmis who were mainly constituted by the Nampudiris, and in southern Kerala (Travancore) of the Nayars, native Christians and the Travancore royalty; and Travancore royalty alone owned one-fourth of the slaves.²⁴

²¹T.K. Velu Pillai, The Travancore State Manual, vol. II, pp. 535.

²²P.S. Raghavan, ed., The History of Freedom Movement in Kerala, vol. I (Trivandrum: The Government Press, 1970), p. 56.

²³P.A. Seyd Muhammad, ed., Kerala Charithram, vol. II, p. 153.

²⁴Ibid., p. 153.

It was in Malabar that laws against slavery began to be first enforced. By a Proclamation in 1792 the East India Company prohibited slave trading. In 1819 the practice of siezing slaves for arrears of payment of revenue was discontinued, and by 1843 all sorts of slavery were completely abolished.²⁵ In Travancore, it was Colonel Munro and the missionaries who caused the Proclamation in 1812 prohibiting purchase or sale of slaves except those attached to agriculture. In fact, this Proclamation liberated only 136,000 Izhava slaves. Other depressed classes were still under slavery. During this time the movement to abolish slavery became prevalent in England and the British missionaries in Kerala became deeply conscious of the immorality of slavery. In Kerala, there had been individual cases of the British missionaries themselves freeing slaves living in their land. In 1849 they submitted a petition to the government through the British Resident requesting complete abolition of slavery. Consequently the Proclamation of 1853 declared the children of government slaves free.²⁶ Still slave trade was going on as usual. The missionaries were still preaching

²⁵William Logan, Manual of the Malabar District (Madras: The Government Press, 1906), p. 151.

²⁶K. V. Krishna Ayyar, A Short History of Kerala (Ernakulam: Pai and Company, 1966), p. 148.

against it in their churches and schools. They even bought slaves and freed them. Some of the slaves received modern English education and reached higher social order as social reformers.²⁷

It was also common to sell slaves to foreigners at that time. British missionaries Mead, Mart, Baily and Baker petitioned to the government demanding total abolition of slavery making slavery illegal, and giving property rights to former slaves. And finally the cruelty of slavery came to an end by the royal Proclamation of 1855.

In Cochin too, there were similar proclamations. Coloney Munro, who was Divan of Cochin from 1812-18, suppressed all taxes levied on slaves. Slave trade was declared illegal in 1821, and in 1854 all the slaves were declared free. As a matter of fact, abolition of slavery was a movement not from the depressed classes themselves or from the educated upper castes of Kerala, the former did not have the aspiration for it because they never knew what freedom was, the latter did not have the courage to launch a program like it even if they were convinced that slavery was immoral and inhuman. It was a movement for which the Christian missionaries were totally responsible. They had to exert immense pressure on the

²⁷ P. A. Seyd Muhammad, ed., Kerala Charithram, vol. II, p. 75.

rulers of Kerala through the British Residents to bring it to an end. Despite proclamations of the rulers and efforts of the missionaries the social disease, of which slavery was a symptom, did not get cured. Although the depressed class was liberated from slavery, they became victims of prejudicial treatment and severe handicaps based on the caste. The treatment by the upper class just became more bitter. The lower castes did not have a street to walk, a temple to worship and a place to hide from the sight of the upper castes. It became worse than slavery. In slavery, they did not have the fear of being evicted until sold, and they maintained a minimum sense of security because they received some rice for subsistence. But in the liberated stage light offense was enough to arouse the anger of the upper castes on whom they totally depended for a day's job and its payment in kind, often unshelled rice. So it was natural for them to look for ways of further emancipation. Their religion kept them socially crippled. Whereas, conversion to Christianity generally complimented them with more social freedom. Moreover, the Christian missionaries offered their children free education. Nagam Aiya says:

Continuance in their birth-religion means to them a continuance of their present degraded condition for all time to come. No wonder then that they have transferred their allegiance to the European missionary

and his religion which has brought with it deliverance to them from the trammels of the old-world civilisation.²⁸

It is true that quite a number of Izhavas, Pulayas, Parayas and other lower classes accepted Christianity, an action stimulated by social pressure and missionary activities. But this did not offer a substantial solution to the problem; because whatever might be their social handicaps, it was not easy for tens of thousands of the backward classes to immediately transfer their age-old religious allegiance. Thus, efforts were mobilized to strengthen one's own caste or community in order to, first of all, withstand the pressure of the oppressing classes, and then to engage in strategic movements against them which would in turn achieve them freedom. During the second half of the nineteenth century and nearly the first half of the twentieth century, it was an era of consolidation of castes, and unification of factions of the community in order to set agitations for equal opportunity and freedom. Almost all caste communities had active participation in these popular movements. Although some castes had its own organizations they did not endure long enough to witness the progress of these popular movements which they had championed for. But the organization which led the depressed classes towards

²⁸V. Nagam Aiya, The Travancore State Manual, vol. II, p. 115.

freedom and later came to uplift them through the delivery of educational and social services was that of the Izhavas. Before we discuss the social and cultural impact of the organization of the Izhavas, a brief sketch of its background is illuminating.

(a) The Malayali Sabha and the Malayali Memorial:

A few students of the Maharajah's College in Trivandrum founded the "Malayali Social Union" in 1877 to perpetuate noble ideas like the dignity of physical work and to discuss the needs and problems of the community. In fact, this acted like a sounding board for the emerging educated community in the capital. This organization also received the encouragement of the college principal, Mr. Ross, and Professor Harvey, both Englishmen. Eventually, it was open to qualified members of the community; and lawyers, judges and other such professionals became its members. In 1886, the organization was renamed the "Malayali Sabha" with a set of objectives. Six out of the seven objectives were of educational importance. They are:

1. To propagate western education among Malayalis by giving stipends to poor bright students.

2. To establish a hostel for those students who come to the capital for higher education.

3. To reform the schools.
4. To establish girls' schools for the spread of female education.
5. To open technical and industrial schools.
6. To publish pamphlets for the intellectual growth of the people.
7. And to do other things for the welfare and progress of Malayalis.²⁹

As the first fruit of modern education Malayali Sabha began to create social awareness within a community and champion the cause of education. It was also the first social organization which came into existence with set goals and objectives as a result of English education in the history of Kerala. The Sabha also began to publish a newspaper in 1886 as its organ. Social, educational, and religious topics relevant to the society were discussed there. As a policy, it did not want to interfere with political issues. The Sabha was eager to embrace all the people of Kerala irrespective of religious preference; although the membership was basically composed of Nayar youths. It extended its activities in several towns in Travancore by establishing branches. Several schools were established by it. Although the royal family

²⁹P. K. Paramesvaran Nayar, Nair Service Society Charithram, vol. I (Changanacherry: Nair Service Society, 1972), p. 88.

became patrons of the Sabha, the higher echelons of the government chiefly constituted of foreign Brahmans did not particularly like the surge of the Malayalis; chiefly because the Sabha was considering to press the Maharajah for fair and equal treatment of the citizens in employment practices of the government. This was the time the Sabha slipped into politics. This was necessary because, the nepotism practised by the Divan, an appointee of the British government, provided all higher positions for his relatives or members of his caste, who were, of course, foreigners in Travancore. As the Sabha became involved in politics, its primary aims were forgotten. The Sabha found a strong inspiration for its activities in G. Paramesvaran Pillai, popularly known as G. P., who was in Madras, leading journalistic campaigns against the corruptions and nepotistic practices of the Travancore government. He was then leading a running crusade with his team of friends by contributing series of articles to the press with a nom de plume, a lover of his country.

Political agitation as is commonly understood by the term began in Travancore with G. Paramesvaran Pillai, for it was he who for the first time carried on a regular crusade on constitutional lives, against the autocratic administration of the state, with unabated vigour and unflinching courage. His strenuous efforts made the people politically-minded and conscious of their inherent rights and responsibilities and for this reason, he may well be regarded

as the Father of Political Agitation in Travancore.³⁰

Dr. Palpu, an Izhava educated by Christian missionaries but never converted to Christianity, who had secured a Licentiate in Medicine and Surgery, and was denied job in Travancore, was in the Mysore Service during this period. He was also engaged in press campaigns against the Travancore government. G. P. and Dr. Palpu were some of the organizers of the famous Malayali Memorial of 1891. This Memorial submitted to the Maharaja highlighted the fair share of the government for the citizens of Travancore in accordance with their education. This represented all the major communities in Travancore including the Izhavas. The Memorial accused the government of having refused admission to Izhavas in government schools and of neglecting to safeguard their rights. However, the reply to the Memorial said that Izhavas were quite satisfied with their traditional occupations like agriculture, toddy tapping and coir-manufacture; that they were not interested in higher education or government service and that they were included among the signatories to the Memorial in order to increase the numerical strength.³¹

³⁰M. J. Koshy, Genesis of Political Consciousness in Kerala (Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society, 1972), p. 27-28.

³¹P. K. Balakrishnan, Narayanaguru, p. 49.

In fact, Dr. Palpu, long before the Malayali Memorial, had been engaged in agitation by way of Memorials to the government as well as through newspaper columns, demanding that Izhavas should receive those rights which they would get if they had become Christians. Yet the government remained silent.

(b) An Organization for the Untouchable is Born:

To strengthen the Izhavas as a community Dr. Palpu decided to form an organization and he founded the Travancore Izhava Sabha. The Izhavas submitted a Memorial to the Divan in 1895 and another one to the Maharajah in 1896 under the leadership of Dr. Palpu. They pointed out the absence of encouragement by the government to foster education among the Izhavas and the denial of employment opportunities for the Izhavas in the government. The Izhavas still had to wait for such favors to be granted by the Maharajah.

It was during this period Swami Vivekananda returned from his American visit and started his all-India tour with a view of reforming Hinduism. There was a guru among the Izhavas who was moving in the same direction. He was Swami Narayana (1854-1928) who had achieved his spiritual enlightenment after years of ascetic exercises. He was not only a reformer but also a savior of the

depressed classes. This was an epoch which did not permit a member of low caste to enter even the premises of a Hindu temple. Worship in the temple was totally denied to the low castes. Guru Narayana could not tolerate this discrimination. He had the courage to install a Siva idol and consecrate a temple at Aruvipuram despite the opposition of the Brahmans. The guru founded an association (Yogam) to carry on the affairs of the temple in 1898.

This period in Kerala is also characterized by the impact of other religious organizations like the Ramakrishna Mission, Brahma Samaj and the Arya Samaj engaged in the reformation of Hinduism. They should also have influenced the guru along with his contemporary, Swami Chattampi, a fellow Keralite belonging to the upper class.³² The guru and Dr. Palpu were old friends and the former had a clear spiritual vision to solve the problems and the latter a militant social approach. Palpu was a product of modern education nurtured by the unselfish social service of the missionaries, and the guru was a product of traditional indigenous education moulded by Hindu asceticism. When both of them came to the field

³²R. Ramakrishnan Nair, Social Structure and Political Development in Kerala (Trivandrum: The Kerala Academy of Political Science, 1976), p. 16.

of social action, it was a most desirable blending of two humans. By this time, the famous poet laureate of Kerala, N. Kumaran Asan, also an Izhava, joined them. In a special session, the guru's Yogam accepted a new name, the Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (S.N.D.P.) with the objectives of enhancing spiritual and secular education and of helping the economic prosperity of the Izhavas. "The combination of the holy swami, the efficient organizer Dr. Palpu and the hard-working Asan, made the Yogam well-known throughout Kerala. . ." ³³

Guru Narayana was a man of electrifying personality. Kerala had given birth to two great Hindu reformers. Sankaracharya of Kaladi, who lived in the eighth century A.D., was the first one; and the guru the second. When the unbeatable intellectual acumen of Sankaracharya placed Hinduism on metaphysical plain for the philosopher the unartificial spiritual wisdom of Guru Narayana placed it on the plain of natural simplicity for the unsophisticated. Guru Narayana's messages were simple: strengthen yourself by organization and liberate yourself by education. His spiritual teachings can be synthesized in one sentence: For man; one race, one religion and one God. He regarded humanity as one race, the universal brotherhood of man as one religion; and the all-embracing Divinity, of which

³³ E.M.S. Nampoodripad, The National Question in Kerala (Bombay: People's Publishing House, 1952), p. 101.

humanity is part and parcel, as one God.

Parenthetically, the Guru also influenced leaders of other backward classes in the organization of their communities. Ayyankali (1866-1941), leader of the Pulaya caste founded the Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangham in 1907 to start agitations for their rights. He even went to the extent of demanding Pulaya women to conceive progenies of upper class men in order to produce a quality hybrid which would bring forth a more intelligent and handsome people among the Pulayas in the coming generations³⁴ to compete with the upper classes. He and his organization are credited for the right secured for the low castes to walk along public streets. A leader of the Parayas, Kandan Kumaran, established a similar organization for his caste, which is said to be the predecessor of the present Sambava Sabha representing the Parayas. However these organizations did not create a political or social impact. Yet their contributions during a particular period of time were never insignificant.

In fact, it was Guru Narayana's S.N.D.P. which championed the cause of all the depressed classes. The Guru himself went about establishing temples and schools.³⁵

³⁴R. Ramakrishnan Nair, Social Structure and Political Development in Kerala, p. 17.

³⁵P. K. Balakrishnan, ed., Narayanaguru, p. 303.

Later the emphasis was on establishing schools, because he believed that God stays within a person and only education can illuminate a person and he, in turn, will be directed to God. The S.N.D.P. has now produced a number of political and social leaders during the last three quarters of this century. It is still a powerful leader in the social and educational fields of Kerala. Two of the former chief ministers were Izhavas uplifted by S.N.D.P. The organization is one of the major agencies providing educational leadership in Kerala with several first grade, post-graduate and professional colleges and many schools. Nearly twenty percent of the college students in Kerala are educated in the S.N.D.P. colleges. Thus, the people who were enlightened by modern education liberated themselves and continue their services in perpetuating the same tradition of modern education creating admiration and prestige. Now the people S.N.D.P. represents are no more an untouchable class, but an emerging working class, an educated middle class and a sizable minority of economically upper class. Thanks to the Guru, Dr. Palpu and other dedicated men who toiled hard for economic and social liberation and educational enlightenment of a depressed but industrious people.

(c) A Survival Kit for the Nayars: Nayars were

the only community that was more adversely affected by the arrival of the Europeans. Their military culture began to disintegrate. When the Kalaris had no use most of them were closed. In fact it was the Kalari and its training that really made a Nayar. In those days Nayar was an honorific title given to a trained soldier; and as such he was respected by the community. It was considered a prestigious title by his community. When the Nayar race began to be stripped of its military traditions, it was also getting politically and socially weaker. The glory of Nayar military achievement thus became a mere memory. It was this time onwards Nayar men began to suffix their name with titles like Nayar, Kurup or Panikkar (military school teacher or a captain in the army), Pillai or Menon (scribes) and the like in order to retain emotional continuity of the glorious past.

The presence of the British actually reduced them powerless. Since the time of Martanda Varma, the eighteenth century prince of Travancore, the Nayars became politically and socially a weak community, although they boasted about their caste under the patronage of the Nampudiris. Being tax collectors or managers of temple and Nampudiri estates they had the opportunity to show their arrogance to the lower castes. Nevertheless, most

of the Nayars were unemployed as they were no more needed in the military.

The Nayar community began to disintegrate on account of the following reasons: In the absence of the traditional career, most of the young men stayed home unproductive. It was very common for them to get into family quarrels which eventually took them to the newly installed judicial courts of the British. This process was wealth-consuming. Many families finally met with their destruction as a result of the judicial battles.³⁶

We have observed elsewhere that the younger Nampudiri youths were not permitted to contract a Brahman marriage; they had to establish informal relationship with Nayar women to meet their sexual and psychological needs. The children of these relationships were denied right to their father's property and even their support while they grew. Thus it was an added burden to Nayar families to raise these children by providing them education, medical treatment and so on. This led to the erosion of family wealth. Moreover, the Nayars were particularly interested in conducting various traditional celebrations connected with marriage, first menstruation and so in the

³⁶R. Ramkrishnan Nair, Social Structure and Political Development in Kerala, p. 5.

most pompous manner.³⁷ The financial pressure of these obligations prompted to sell most of the inherited land and other properties of the family to a growing middle class, especially of Christians who happened to be the first beneficiaries of modern education and its effects on economic mobility. Besides these debilitating economic factors, Nayar community also had to suffer "various inequalities in relation to castes that are above them, e.g. the Namboodiris."³⁸

The Syrian Christians of Kerala, engaged in agriculture and trade, began to emerge as a powerful middle class after the spread of modern education.

They realized

that landlordism in Kerala, tied up with joint family system, was not an impregnable fortress. With the help of liquid cash, that group of industrious, hard working and shrewd men could wind their way up in the economic sphere. Through banking, trade, commerce, chitties, kurries, printing presses, and such other lucrative business the middle class rose up in the ladder and then started asserting their rights. In the course of a few decades the Christian community became the most powerful community both in the political and economic sphere.³⁹

Similarly, the Izhavas were on their way to assert their middle class status sooner or later as a result of modern education.

³⁷ P.K. Paramesvaran Nayar, Nair Service Society Charithram, vol. I, p. 84.

³⁸ E. M. S. Namboodripad, The National Question in Kerala, p. 101.

³⁹ R. Ramakrishnan Nair, Social Structure and Political Development in Kerala, p. 10.

Being economically worn out and anxious to compete with emerging middle class communities, the Nayars began to launch some rescue efforts in their own behalf. The priority was set to vie with this new "status group based on education, income and occupation and not on caste or community."⁴⁰ It was this group, predominantly composed of Christians in the process of modernization, who helped the Nayars to open their eyes to realities such as, their exploitation by the Nampudiris, their outdated system of inheritance and succession, the need for economic and social uplift and so on.⁴¹ It was the Christians that the Nayars had to basically compete with. For that they adopted the same measures which brought the Christians right on top. By this time Nayar youths were encouraged to get as much English education as they could like the Christians. The Christians were united under their hierarchical heads. The Nayars very well comprehended that the strength and progress of Christians were based on their organizational unity and leadership. The same growth and upward mobility were observed among the Izhavas who were also organized under the leadership of Guru Narayana.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 5.

⁴¹ Ibid.

Nayars began to found several local organizations called Karayogas in some areas and Nayar Samajas in other areas. The famous Hindu religious leader, Swami Chattampi, who had been preaching reformation of Hinduism, was a constant inspiration to the Nayars.⁴² Some of the organizations were operating on Taluk levels. Finally the need for a state-wide organization was felt by the Nayar leaders, and in 1914 Nayar Servants Society was founded.⁴³ Six months later the organization assumed a new name: "The Nayar Service Society." Mr. Padmanabhan Mannath became its first secretary. Ever since Mr. Mannath, a lawyer by profession and a social worker by vocation, worked for the Society until his death. His unequalled organizing capacity stimulated grassroots participation of the Nayars in the activities of the Society. Several branches (Karayogas) of the Society sprang up in the subsequent decades. Like the S.N.D.P. the Nayar Service Society also set their priorities on establishing schools. Their first school was started in 1915 at Karukachal; it was an English school. Through education, the Society found economic and social progress for the Nayar community.

⁴²P. K. Paramesvaran Nayar, Nair Service Society Charithram, vol. I, p. 137.

⁴³Ibid., p. 154.

Under the leadership of Mannath the Nayar community and the Society were progressing year by year achieving its set goals. The major contribution of the Society was in the field of education although the field of health also was a beneficiary of the Society. Even now the Society is an active agency of education. It is running several schools, and first grade, post-graduate and professional colleges, besides a few hospitals. The Society is equally powerful as the S.N.D.P.

Although the Nayar Service Society was founded as an organization of a privileged class, it was sympathetic towards the causes of the underprivileged, especially in the agitations which led to the Proclamation of Temple Entry in 1936. However the hidden motive was consolidation and unity of Hindus as a single community to withstand the powerful threat of Christians.

The tendency of caste consolidation did not just stay within the Nayars or the depressed classes. The Nampudiris also began to get organized as a community. The Yoga Kshema Sabha of the Nampudiris founded in North Kerala in 1909 championed the cause of Brahmans in encouraging modern English education and in reforming age-old Nampudiri practices. Although they were the most privileged class,

Their system of the family, marriage and inheritance was as outmoded as that of any other caste. It, therefore, raised various problems the solution of which was considered by the enlightened representatives of the community as necessary for their advancement.⁴⁴

This organization encouraged widows to remarry and women to go for higher education.

The process of social upheaval was contagious during this period. The Muslims also felt the need of reformation and progress to become a viable community. They were the only community least affected by modern education. The Muslim clergy were opposed to any change whatsoever. It was at this time that Vakkom Maulavi (1872-1932), a Muslim leader, dedicated his life for the social progress of the Muslims. He pressed English education among the Muslims. The social revolution he launched among the Muslims brought forth cultural awareness and the need of establishing a self-asserted Muslim identity. The newspaper, Muslim, published by him, carried messages of Islam in particular, but suggested ways of enhancement in tune with modern education within the Islamic framework. He founded the Travancore Muslim Mahajana Sabha to spread his social revolution. Although there were Muslim upheavals in other parts of Kerala,

⁴⁴E. M. S. Namboodripad, The National Question in Kerala, p. 102.

especially in Malabar, they turned to the form of riots, hence cannot be legitimately called a social revolution for intellectual and cultural advancement.

Among all the class movements of this period, the Nayar Service Society is considered the most effective source of social and cultural inspiration as a counter organization to the Christian hierarchy and the Izhava S.N.D.P. Without the Nayar Service Society, the Nayar community would have been reduced to politically and socially the weakest majority of the state. The social wisdom and leadership genius of the late Mr. Padmanabhan Mannath, who designed a survival kit for the Nayars, will always inspire the generations to come in the areas of community action and social progress. At this point, it is insufficient to reduce the Society just as an agency for social progress of the Nayars. All the communities in Kerala are beneficiaries of its laudable efforts. An innocent competition is always a healthy symptom of the progress of the entire society because it would move the various sections of the society towards the same direction.

(d) Towards Religious Equality: Despite the social emancipation efforts of the various organizations, religious equality was not granted to the depressed classes. The Izhavas and other exterior castes had to pray and make

their offerings to the temple keeping a distance ranging from 50 to 100 yards away from the Gopuram (outer gates) of the temple. The British did not want to get into this conflict because it only pertained to one side of the social life. It could be reasonably concluded that their non-interference in this matter was not entirely without the touch of selfishness. We have already observed that the British were instrumental to promulgations of edicts related to the abolition of slavery and granting freedom in covering the upper part of the body. The same pressure would have motivated the native ruler to put an end to religious discrimination. However, they did not want to press the Maharajah for it. The British should be validly suspected that they were eager for this struggle to reach its climax so as to utilize it to their own advantage, i.e. a frustrated depressed community would seek conversion to Protestantism as a last resort.

Guru Narayana, the leader of the Izhavas, was never interested in an agitation to establish the rights of worship. Instead he was trying to found temples and Hindu congregations as a parallel Hindu religion. He consecrated temples like the Brahmans did. He trained Izhava youths for temple services and ordained them to

be celebrants to lead the worship; which were conducted in Sanskritic tradition. This procedure kept the resources of Izhavas within their own institutions, besides establishing a religious identity for the Izhavas. This also helped the Izhavas to test their power in the society, especially in independent and positive action for themselves.

The notable movement in the form of an agitation against social inequality took place only in 1924 when the satyagraha at Vaikom was staged.⁴⁵ This agitation was chiefly mobilized by the Izhavas; but were supported by Nayar leaders and the Congress Party. T. K. Madhavan, C. V. Kunjuraman, Kelappan, M. K. Gandhi and Padmanabhan Mannath were some of its leaders. In fact, the agitation was not led against denial of worship by the low castes within the temple premises. It was for the right of the low castes to use the roads adjacent to the temple.⁴⁶ This was the first time Gandhi visited Kerala. In spite of the long agitation the right of the low castes was not granted.

⁴⁵Satyagraha literally means "holding of truth", but it is the non-violent form of agitation chiefly adhering to the principle of civil disobedience. It is the deliberate violation of laws that are unjust and the voluntary submission to punishment for breaking those laws, as proposed by M. K. Gandhi, the leader of Indian freedom struggle.

⁴⁶K. Balachandran Nayar, ed., In Quest of Kerala, vol. I (Trivandrum: Accent Publications, 1974) p. 124.

Another notable incident in pursuit of obtaining equality in religion was the satyagraha in front of the Guruvayur Temple in 1932. Leaders of low castes as well as higher castes participated in this agitation. However the Zamorin of Calicut, under whose titular jurisdiction was the Temple, did not yield to the demands of the agitators.

The depressed class understood that the institution of caste perpetuated only inequality and injustice for the privilege of a few. They began to look for avenues through which they could attain their goals. There was talk about a mass conversion to Christianity. Some educated Izhavas thought about embracing a kind of rational Buddhism proposed by Dr. Ambedkar. In fact some did actually become Christians and Buddhists, although the latter were mainstreamed to Hinduism after the temple entry proclamation. During this period, the veteran statesman, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar became the Divan of Travancore. His intuition was great that he realized what would happen if the demands of the low castes were not met. The Nayar community leaders also warned him about the consequences; they did not want the Hindus to be reduced to a weak minority, because in Kerala the numerical strength of a religion controlled the power structure. Finally on the advice of the Divan, the

Maharajah of Travancore issued a proclamation on November 12, 1936, permitting all the depressed classes to enter and worship in the temples controlled by him and his government.⁴⁷ In the absence of such a timely proclamation "a large number of people of the lower classes would have been converted to Christianity or Buddhism."⁴⁸

Although the proclamation was received with admiration throughout India, the Raja of Cochin and the religious leaders in Malabar were insensitive to the issue. Therefore Kelappan, the celebrated Congress leader of Malabar and a disciple of Gandhi started a fast at the Guruvayur Temple, but nothing was achieved. It was after Independence, the Madras Legislature passed the Hindu Religious Disabilities Removal Act in 1947 which permitted all Hindus irrespective of caste admission into the temples. Cochin also opened its temples to the low castes in the meantime.

Thus came to an end the struggle for social freedom which was denied to a majority of the Kerala population for centuries. The process itself germinated as a result of enlightenment received from modern education and

⁴⁷T. K. Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual*, vol. II, p. 767.

⁴⁸R. Ramakrishnan Nair, *Social Structure and Political Development in Kerala*, p. 19

western ideals of equality and fraternity. In the next section we will see how the democratic ideologies of western education caused the evolution of political awareness in the state of Kerala.

E. Evolution of Political Awareness and Nationalistic Movement

From the very start English education began to create admiration for western institutions. The changes demanded by the people in social institutions are sufficient examples. The institution of monarchy was considered sacred and unquestionable. Whatever the king granted was a favor, because it was not considered a right. His privileges were only a few and only a very few selected minority received them. The subjects could not expect much from a king except that he was pleased with them. However, they had to pay him taxes and owed allegiance to him. In return they got nothing except his pleasure. The king and his minister appointed outsiders within the government in key position to preclude the presence of the citizens in order to keep them safe without local intervention.

Western education made the new intelligentsia to think in terms of responsible government and democratic practices. The call for a corruptionless government sensitive to the needs and grievances of the citizens

was evident in the Malayali Memorial organized by G. P. Pillai, Dr. Palpu and other community leaders. It was also a presentation of communal grievances. But in Kerala this memorial could be considered the conception of political awareness as a mass reaction to the policies of the Travancore government; although it was not the first petition in Kerala history.⁴⁹

It was the English education which prepared the ground for such political actions.

The propagation of the English language naturally facilitated the consolidation of national opinion and the free exchange of ideas. The great treasures of the west were opened to the people of this country, which undoubtedly accelerated intellectual growth and cultural development. It encouraged men to freely express their views on political activities and ideals. People became conscious of the fact that the evils from which they were suffering were the direct outcome of the political system under which they lived.⁵⁰

Agitations for administrative and social reforms took the form of press campaigns on most occasions. Madras Athanaeum, Indian Statesman, Calcutta Review and others were some of the English periodicals which ran articles

⁴⁹ A petition was submitted to the Cochin Government in 1854.

⁵⁰ P. S. Raghavan, ed., The History of Freedom Movement in Kerala, vol. I, p. 75.

and letters connected with the socio-political conditions of Kerala. However, there were a few Malayalam periodicals which came into existence as a result of modern education, and promoted literacy and served the people in shaping their political ideas.

1. The Role of the Press

The first Malayalam journal in Kerala was Vijnana Nikshepam published by the C.M.S. missionaries from Kottayam in 1840. The second one, Rajya Samacharam, was published by Herman Gundert in 1847 from Tellicherry. Then in the same year Rev. Muller published his Paschimodayam. It was Kerala Patrika published in 1884 which first began printing political matters in Kerala.⁵¹ In 1864 an English magazine Western Star was published from Cochin along with a Malayalam edition, Paschima Taraka. There came up a dozen other journals in the same period, but all of them were short lived. Most of them were predominantly religious periodicals.

It was the Kerala Patrika published from Calicut in 1884 by Kunjurama Menon which encouraged the development of Malayalam language and literature.⁵² During

⁵¹P. A. Seyd Muhammad, Kerala Charithram, vol. II, p. 771.

⁵²K. Balachandran Nayar, ed., In Quest of Kerala, vol. I, p. 158.

the same period appeared a few other periodicals including Malayali from Trivandrum and Keraliya Sangama Bodhini, the first women's journal in Kerala.

An important step in the development of press in Kerala took place when the Nazarani Deepika began publication in 1887 from Mannanam near Kottayam; and it is considered the oldest Malayalam daily newspaper in Kerala. This assumed a new name Deepika and began to be published from Kottayam since 1932. The daily has a circulation of 70,000 at present (1980). Deepika has been active in dealing with politics, literature and social issues.

Before the turn of the century there were over thirty periodicals in Kerala. Although they had only a short span of life, they served the people of Kerala in the areas of language and politics. Likewise there were half-a-dozen journals, predominantly literary magazines, after the dawn of the century. Eventually they also disappeared.

However, the impact of some of the major newspapers on socio-political conditions requires special treatment. Because they were chief tools of formulating political awareness among the people of Kerala.

(a) The Malayala Manorama: Malayala Manorama was given birth by Kandathil Varughese Mappillai in 1890.

It was first a weekly. It began to encourage young writers first. Its first editorial was on the education of the depressed classes. Varughese Mappillai also edited the Bhashaposhini, a literary magazine and organ of the Bhashaposhini Sabha, since 1893, for some time. However, Malayala Manorama was his primary concern.

In 1904, K.C. Mamman Mappillai took over the editorship of the newspaper. He nurtured it to become a journalistic institution with a mission. According to him the newspaper is the new weapon which is used for the extermination of corruption and injustice.⁵³ The newspaper actively supported the social causes and severely criticized governmental policies which infringed upon civil liberties. During the administration C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar in 1938 Manorama's throat was cut by the government for having created misunderstanding and promoted disaffection against the government.⁵⁴ It was a great price the newspaper had to pay for being a champion of the people's cause; it gave its own life.

When India became free in 1947 Manorama resurrected and has ever become a major newspaper serving the people of Kerala. It has now a circulation of over 416,000. The

⁵³ Ibid., p. 162.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 163.

contribution of Manorama for nearly a century to the shaping of a democratic society was great.

(b) Svadesabhimani: Svadesabhimani was founded in 1906 by K. Ramkrishna Pillai (1878-1916). "He was the first journalist who sent a sense of devotion, sacrifice and adventure into the domain of Malayalam journalism."⁵⁵ He started his journalistic career even when he was a student. He was a courageous truth-loving writer. He became first the editor Kerala Darpanam, later the editor of Malayali, the organ of Malayali Sabha. When he was seriously involved in journalism, the British government was about to strangle the press because of its support of the nationalistic movements. Henceforth, he became a leader of journalistic campaign for nationalistic movements. It was at this time he founded his own newspaper, Svadesabhimani. Although it was first published from Vaikom, it was later transferred to Trivandrum.

Svadesabhimani began to oppose the press laws of the State, because he believed in the freedom of the press and freedom of speech. He vehemently attacked the anti-social policies of the government. Once when he was summoned to the court for "abusing" press privileges he defended himself:

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 160.

It is the duty of the press to bring to light the failures and corruption of the government. . . It is the duty of the journals to come forward to reveal the grievances of the oppressed classes. The reports must be general but must be specific and pointing to individual concerned. The first duty of the journalist at present is to crush the supporters of the status quo.⁵⁶

At a time when the rights of the press were not freely approved, these were heroic words. For his brave criticism of the unjust and undemocratic policies of the government in 1910 he was exiled from Travancore. He died at the age of 38 in exile.

His life and career always manifested a vibrant political activity in Kerala in those days. He is considered the first Keralite who began to assimilate Marxian ideas in an era which totally anathematized and considered sacrilegious even to study Marxism. Even before the Bolshevik Revolution brought Russia under Communism, he had analyzed Marx. His book, Karl Marx, a biography, is the first book on Communism, published in 1912, in any Indian language.⁵⁷ With him, the Kerala middle class elites entered into the political arena. His deportation made strong impact on the national scene.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 161.

⁵⁷ E. M. S. Manboodripad, The National Question in Kerala, p. 114.

⁵⁸ Svadesabhimani means "the one who is proud of his country." Ramakrishna Pillai is generally known as Svadesbhimani.

(c) Matrbhumi: The newspaper, Matrbhumi, was born at a critical juncture of the history of Kerala, at the height of nationalistic awareness, in 1923. The name denotes motherland. It was founded by a group of politicians, under the leadership of K. P. Kesava Menon who had his higher education in England. From the very outset the paper was working for the nationalistic movement. Its goal was the independence of India. It was a friend of the depressed class, a fighter against social inequality and a sharp critic of the repressive policies of the government.

Like Malayala Manorama, Matrbhumi also had to stop publication for awhile. One of its editors in the early 1940's was imprisoned under the Emergency Powers Act of the British government. Under the leadership of K.P. Kesava Menon, who was totally immersed in the activities of the freedom struggle, the newspaper enlightened the Keralites in matters of political freedom, social justice and patriotism. Its enormous services in promoting literacy and education are also laudable.

(d) Kerala Kaumudi: It was first published from Quilon in 1911 by C. V. Kunjuraman. Later it was shifted to Trivandrum under the editorship of C. Kesavan, the first Izhava chief minister of Travancore-Cochin. This

newspaper, being run by the leaders of Izhava community, naturally became a strong critic of the discriminating policies of the government, and eventually supporter of the nationalistic movement. When Travancore became a political battlefield in the 1930's during the tyrannical administration of C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar, its editor, C. Kesavan was jailed, and in 1938 its publication was also suppressed. The newspaper regained its license in 1940; and keeps on serving the state since then. Its present circulation is 113,000.

Although there were several other journals and newspapers which shaped the political consciousness of Keralites, these journalistic institutions had been unique in their services to the people. All of their efforts reflect how much they have been imbued with democratic ideals transmitted by Western education. Without the press, there would not have been a popular movement toward creation of a political mind. Although it was English education that sowed the seeds of nationalism, it was the press that fomented it among the people. The press was also instrumental in eliminating illiteracy by promoting curiosity. Kerala's greater number of journalistic publications⁵⁹ are indicative of their strong

⁵⁹ There are 48 daily newspapers, 24 bi-weeklies, 52 weeklies and 138 monthlies in Kerala. (1973).

influence among the citizens. Even now, they keep the people actively interested in politics in addition to their role in social and literary education.

2. An Overview of Popular Movements

It was in Malabar that popular movements with political motives had started first. It was an extension of the activities of the Indian National Congress founded in 1885 in Bombay. The initial purpose of Congress was to advise the British government about Indian affairs. Leaders of Malabar were active in the Congress since 1897. An all-India Conference of the Congress was held in 1903 at Calicut and since then there was a District Committee of the Congress in Malabar.⁶⁰ In 1916 a Committee of the Home Rule League founded by Annie Besant was established in Malabar. Home Rule Leagues, later, were established all over Malabar. In 1920, under the auspices of Congress, the Malabar District Political Conference was held at Manjeri. With that Congress was accepted as a democratic-political organization in Malabar. By 1919 a District Congress Committee came into existence in Cochin, but it was only in 1938 that

⁶⁰K. V. Krishna Ayyar, A Short History of Kerala, p. 183.

Cochin as a state endorsed the Congress as a political party.

Much earlier there erupted an agitation under the leadership of Changanacherry Paramesvaran Pillai for a legislature in Travancore. Thus the first legislature in any of the Indian states was created in Travancore with eight members in 1888. Later in 1898 the membership was enlarged. But there was no popular representation in this Legislative Council. Hence the educated class extended their agitation for a popular legislature and finally the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly was established. However this assembly had no legislative power. It was during this time Svadesabhimani Ramakrishna Pillai demanded for responsible government on democratic principles. However, it was only in 1922 that a few reforms were adopted for the Legislative Council. Accordingly the number of members was raised to 50.

By this time, in 1920, Travancore accepted the Indian National Congress as an ally in the cause of freedom and supported it in its civil disobedience and non-cooperation. In 1931 the younger generation in Travancore founded the Youth League. In Travancore the period of political agitations to last for over a decade was set in motion at this time. C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar became an advisor to the Maharajah and a repressive era in Travancore began with his appointment. However,

political goals were being defined on account of his autocratic policies. On the advice of C. P. R. Ayyar Legislative Reforms Act was passed and it established two houses of the legislature. It was also decided to organize the legislature on the basis of a wider franchise with wider powers. But there was no sufficient representation for the minorities.⁶¹ As a result, the Congress organized under a coalition party to boycott the elections and to dissuade the electorate from voting. This is popularly called Nivarthanam or abstention agitation.

In 1936, C. P. R. Ayyar became the Divan. The Coalition Party was still continuing its agitation. Finally, as a political party, its candidates ran for membership in the legislature, and they won the majority of seats in the legislature.

In 1938, the Travancore State Congress was founded under the leadership of some of the Coalition Party members because the Indian National Congress had resolved not to interfere with the affairs of the native states. In fact these leaders were demanding for the abolition of the princely states. Later in the same year, the entire Coalition Party was absorbed into the State Congress; and the Travancore National Congress was

⁶¹Mammen Varghese, ed., Manorama Yearbook 1980, p. 601.

dissolved. C. P. R. Ayyar was aware of the political plans of the new party. He knew he was going to face constant agitations led by the State Congress. Hence he induced Padmanabhan Mannath and the Nayar Service Society to form another party in order to weaken the State Congress. They created the Travancore National Congress.

However, when the State Congress set its agitations against the government for responsible government, and the Travancore National Congress was ineffective to render adequate support to the Divan, he started to suppress the former with police intervention. Its leaders were arrested. During this period all the major newspapers and banks were closed by the Divan, either because the bank owners were associated with State Congress or their papers openly supported the agitators. The Divan's oppressive regime ended in 1947, four days after India became free. In the same year in September adult franchise was established by the Maharajah as the first step towards responsible government; and on March 24, 1948, the first democratic ministry in Travancore took charge of the government.

In 1949 Travancore and Cochin were united as a single state. Kerala, comprising Travancore, Cochin and Malabar, came into being only in 1956. The Communist

Party was not strong in Travancore or Cochin; but when Malabar was annexed to them in order to form the State of Kerala, the first election after that elected a majority of Communist candidates to the legislature. It was in Malabar that Communist Party obtained its foothold.

In 1934 the Malabar Congress Party was split into two. One became a socialist party, which eventually became the Communist Party in 1940 under the leadership of E. M. S. Nampudiripad. Ever since it was growing rapidly due to socio-economic conditions peculiar to Malabar.⁶² The influence of the Malabar Communist Party was enormous on the working class in Travancore. But C. P. R. Ayyar tyrannically suppressed it and declared it illegal along with the State Congress and the Youth League.

It was really Malabar that elected the majority of Communist candidates to the Assembly in the election immediately followed the formation of Kerala. Thus, for the first time in the political history of any nation, a Communist government, under the leadership of E. M. S. Nampudiripad, came into power through democratic process.

It took almost a century for Kerala to travel

⁶²E. M. S. Namboodripad, The National Question in Kerala, p. 149.

from social disability through inequality, injustice and political oppression and to finally reach social equality and justice and democracy. Agitations after agitations, it was a long way; but modern education prepared the mind and intellect of the people to move ahead with vigor, courage and confidence. The press, an invention of modern education, inspired them with democratic principles. The English language itself became a vehicle for nationwide exchange of ideas.

F. Conclusion

Our contention is that the social changes taken place in Kerala are the immediate results of the spread of modern education. The presence and inspiration of the British missionaries had influenced the people to look at their own social systems. The major changes were in the area of attitude of the people. Their attitude to the concept of the role of women began to change; hence, along with the missionaries, they worked to better the condition of women by spreading education.

Similarly, their attitude towards the downtrodden classes began to change. It was difficult to accept them equals. But education and western culture began to condition their minds for it. So it was necessary to

not only educate them, but also to help lift the social disabilities and inequalities. It was also necessary to educate them to accept the new responsibility in the society; and to motivate them to be benefited by education and then become productive in the society.

The same is true with female education. For centuries they had been held inferior. It would take a long time to convince them the need for education. May be, it was easy for an educated female or an educated member of the depressed caste to motivate the next one in line towards education. It was the process of education begetting education--an ongoing process.

It is not safe to think that the government had offered all the facilities, and so education reached its people. No government can educate its people unless the people are ready for it. Money and textbooks would not conduct education. Only an educated person can prepare another person for education. It is a serial action. This was especially true with the backward classes. They were a people who had no interest in education. It was their first educated brethren who motivated the rest of them towards education.

It was after receiving an education many of the depressed classes realized their own conditions. The educated among them gave their community leadership to

fight for their rights and privileges. In the initial stages they had received help from British political authorities and missionaries; but later they themselves came to the forefront to vindicate their rights. The depressed classes gained their demands of social and religious equality. As we know, it did not take place by violence or force. Naturally the grantor must have changed his value system to yield to the demands of the grantee. The social changes in Kerala took place on the basis of adopted values. The upper class, whether the Maharajah or the nobility, absorbed these values from modern education. It was a corporate action.

The absorption of new values and the formation of a new society led them to political awareness which, of course, took the form of agitations. Often they were peaceful demonstrations. And finally they achieved their goal; political freedom and responsible government.

The power house was modern education which supplied western values of freedom, equality and democracy, and the power lines were the eternal values of non-violence and truth which are indigenous. This does not mean that Indian culture was devoid of democratic principles.⁶³ But they did not inspire the masses in Kerala for positive

⁶³Theresa Kalathiveettil, Teaching of Civics in the State of Kerala, Ph.D. Dissertation (Chicago: Loyola University, 1958), p. 4.

action toward social equality and political emancipation. The people had to wait for another source of enlightenment until the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER IX

EDUCATION SINCE INDEPENDENCE

A. Prelude

When India became free, the States of Travancore and Cochin became part of free India although Travancore made attempts to remain an independent sovereign country.¹ Malabar, being part of the Madras Presidency, naturally came under the new political leadership of India. Even though there were political yearnings for a United Kerala, it did not come to realization till 1956.

When the erstwhile Travancore, Cochin and Malabar became free, the impact of modern education was almost universally felt in cultural, social and political life of the people as we have seen. People had developed an interest in modern education, because it only promised upward mobility in a society which was bound to an almost stagnant agrarian economy. Despite the higher percentage of literacy in contrast to that of other states, Kerala had to further strive after spreading modern education in order to achieve total literacy.

The leadership of Christians, Nayars and Izhavas in

¹Mammen Varghese, Ed., Manorama Yearbook 1980, p. 605.

the field of education considerably raised the literacy level of the State along with governmental efforts. However, for a state within a newly liberated country, the process of education needed to be redirected according to the demands of the people and the ideals of a free democracy. Consequently the State started several reforms since Independence to accelerate the growth of education. This was especially necessary as the focus of education during the British period was primarily humanities-oriented rather than vocational. The new government also had to meet the manpower demands of an emerging economy and bureaucracy. Moreover, there was a deep conviction among educators of the State that the system of education should be reconstructed to absorb more indigenous values in order to inculcate Indian ideals among students. Although colonial educational system had promoted the perennial values of freedom and equality; values peculiar to Indian culture, such as non-violence, continence and the like were not properly promoted far enough. Hence reforms were adopted one after another.

B. Reforms

Reforms in Kerala took place in all the three levels of the educational system; i.e., primary, secondary and post-secondary levels.

1. Primary Education

Prior to Independence, most of the primary schools were thatched sheds. After Independence the government

began to establish schools with permanent buildings. More furniture and equipments also were provided. A textbook committee was appointed to standardize curriculum contents. The government also undertook the publication of textbooks so that students could purchase them at a reasonable price.

A sizable number of primary school teachers were in the classrooms without adequate training. After Independence teacher qualifications were rigorously upgraded. As the teacher salaries went up, more and more graduates were attracted to the teaching profession. Soon after Independence there was an increase in the primary school enrollment. Existing buildings were insufficient to accommodate the pupils. Hence a shift system was established for the first four classes of the primary school. Unfortunately the system continued until the early 1970's when the enrollment began to decline. However, with the shift system, the number of working days went up from 180 to 200 days a year.

Another noticeable change was the introduction of Basic Education into primary schools. It is one of the educational ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the Indian Nation. "By education he means an all-round drawing out of the best in the child and the man-body, mind, and spirit."² This all-round development is possible through

²T. M. Thomas, Indian Educational Reforms in Cultural Perspective (Delhi: S. Chand and Co., 1970), p. 122.

crafts. This is the foundation of Basic Education. Handicrafts are central to all learning. Through the manipulation of handicrafts a child understands the why and wherefore of every process. Gandhi believes that "the highest development of the mind and the soul is possible under such a system of education."³ It is a perfectly balanced education in which the body, mind and intellect play an active role for the development of the whole person. Man is composed of body, mind and soul; education of all these components is the ideal education. It also consists of the intelligent use of bodily organs. The development of mind and body should go hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul. Spiritual training is the education of the heart. Gandhi emphasized the three H's; i.e., Head, Hand and Heart, rather than the three R's; i.e., Reading, Writing and Arithmetic.⁴ The development of personality takes place in society. Individual and social developments are interdependent. It is based on these postulates that he founded his scheme of Basic Education.

It is in the Wardha Conference of 1937 that the scheme received momentum in educational circles. The Conference also appointed Dr. Zakir Husain to draw a

³M. K. Gandhi, *Toward New Education* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1953), p. 53.

⁴M. S. Patel, *The Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1953), p. 32.

curricular outline in accordance with the ideals of the scheme.

In a Basic School the curriculum is project-oriented, an innovative step different from the traditional curriculum which is subject-oriented. Each project is a unit of work to be completed successfully by the student within a prescribed time frame; and as such it is a mastery approach. The curriculum consisted of spinning, weaving, carpentry, agriculture, gardening, leather work and other crafts peculiar to a particular region. The social setting is that of a rural life.

During the First Five Year Plan, a Standing Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education was appointed to advise the Central and State governments in matters pertaining to Basic Education. A National Institute of Basic Education was established to conduct researches, prepare literature and to train personnel. The Central Education Ministry appointed an Assessment Commission for Basic Education in 1955. This Commission noted that the personnel training was inadequate; hence the inability to conduct viable and fruitful Basic institutions.

Many of the teachers who started in Basic schools began to employ traditional methods. Some schools were called Basic, but carried out a traditional curriculum. Thus the Commission found out that the State Educational Departments were minimally informed about the implications

of Basic Education, hence less concerned and less effective.

During the Second and Third Five Year Plans emphasis was again given to the scheme, with provisions of establishing such schools even in urban areas. Despite all these efforts of the Central government, they could not attract public opinion in favor of it. Some educators even expressed their discontent to the scheme.⁵ Since 1956 there was no detailed government study of Basic Education except causal or indirect treatment of it in general commission reports. In fact, the Report of the Education Commission of 1964-66 even advised to discontinue the then existing Basic programs in elementary schools.⁶

One of the major reasons why the public opinion was not in favor of Basic Education was the change of attitude of the people. Gandhi almost identified India with its villages. Basic Education was meant to retain the rural image of India through cottage industries. The people on the other hand were craving for urbanization which would promise them an escape from rural depressed economy. Basic Education did not guarantee it despite its indigenous character and promise of nationalistic ideals which might

⁵T. M. Thomas, Indian Educational Reforms in Cultural Perspective, pp. 133-135.

⁶Report of the Education Commission 1964-66: Education and National Development. (New Delhi: Ministry of Education, Government of India, 1966), p. 224.

become foundations of a national system of education.

Basic education as an innovation was started in Karala a year before Independence. But the progress was slow. By 1951 there were only four such schools. In the 1950's, in order to comply with Central government guidelines, the State started an active campaign for Basic schools by establishing Basic Training schools. By 1960 there were 372 elementary schools providing Basic Education. However, the progress was sluggish. In fact, Basic Education came to Kerala at a time when the nationalistic consciousness, which provoked the creation of a national system of education in retaliation to British values, began to subside. Thus the enthusiasm for the promotion of Basic Education was arrested by the time it reached Kerala. Moreover, Kerala as a whole was not apprehensive about British educational system. In fact, the people of Kerala only admired the modern system. In addition to this, the rural image of India envisaged by the proponents of Basic Education had no reference to Kerala village structure. Kerala villages are not nucleated like those of other parts of India. The people of Kerala are more individualistic than the people of other states where villages are compact and the houses are in continuous lines with the wall of adjacent houses juxtaposed or even common. Due to ecological reasons Kerala villages do not require this residential structure, although in some busy and densely populated towns one can observe it.

In a nucleated village Basic Education has more relevance.

Besides, the rapid progress in elementary education required more of the State resources which were not sufficient to undertake another program. Since the majority of Kerala parents cherished the idea of sending their children for higher education the new scheme did not appeal them either. Since most of the educational agencies were private enterprises, the State could not induce them to experiment an innovative program.⁷

2. Secondary and College Levels

In Chapter VII we have seen that with the introduction of modern education, there were two parallel systems of education in the State, i.e., the English schools and the Vernacular schools. After Independence, within a couple of years this dual system came to an end. English schools were discontinued; but the structure of the primary and secondary systems was retained. The primary education consisted of the first five years; the middle school, three years; and the high school, three years. The first five years were called 'classes', and the first year of the middle school and the final year of the high school were respectively called 'Form I' and 'Form VI', according to the British system. However, the medium of instruction in the Forms was changed from English to Malayalam; and English

⁷T. M. Thomas, Indian Educational Reforms, p. 239.

became a second language in middle and high schools.

In 1947, the system of elective subjects was introduced to offer proficiency in some major areas. However, this system was dropped after two years due to emphasis on general preparation in all subjects. In addition, the high school students began to learn a new language, Hindi, as a third language.⁸

In 1954, like the primary education, middle school instruction was also offered free of charge. In 1956, Forms in middle and high schools were dropped; instead, all the grades, one through eleven, of the entire school system were renamed as 'standards'. Thus, in order to obtain a high school diploma, one had to pass through eleven years of study.

In the early 1950's Multi-purpose schools were introduced to the high schools as Higher Secondary. Up until that period, after the eleventh grade, those who enter the college had to do two years of Intermediate before being admitted to a two year degree program. One of the purposes of higher secondary schools was to emphasize a three year degree program, by adding the one year of study between college and high school to the secondary level. However, the State was not financially equipped to assume the responsibility of instructing those college-bound

⁸IBID., p. 242.

students in secondary schools since it was already burdened by the increasing elementary enrollments due to the post war baby boom.

Consequently, the year after the eleventh grade was added to the college as a temporary arrangement, while establishing a three year degree program in college by abolishing the Intermediate; and the one year in between high school and the degree program was called Pre-University class. However, the State began plans on creating a higher secondary level in between high school and college. Accordingly, in 1958 the duration in primary school was set for four years renaming it the Lower Primary school, and the middle school retained its three years with the name, Upper Primary school. In the same year, those students who passed the fifth grade and the fourth grade together came to the fifth standard of the Upper primary school, with the deletion of one year from the academic records of those who passed the fifth grade in the Lower Primary school.⁹ These students thus had only ten years of study in the school, and in 1964 the first graduating class came out with ten years of schooling behind them.¹⁰

Although, thus the two years of higher secondary

⁹IBID., p. 244.

¹⁰Fr. Thomas Moothedan, "Educational Pattern in Kerala," in Education in New India. Ed., N. B. Sen (New Delhi: New Book Society of India, 1966), p. 63.

were separated from the high school, they were, in 1964, added to the college with a new nomenclature, the Pre-University course. These two years are still under way to be classified as higher secondary with focus on technical, vocational and academic preparations in order for the students to make choices of career at that level or to go further for collegiate education. The aim is to filter degree applicants from those who would not have aptitude for higher education and enforce career training for those who are not bright enough to enter a college.¹¹

For the last two years of high school, there was another reform introduced in 1956. The curriculum was divided into academic and diversified; the former being an intensive study of academic subjects, and the latter being a vocational preparation. Students had a choice of one of them. But they had to study three languages; i.e., Malayalam, English and Hindi; and general studies in science, mathematics and social sciences; in addition to their chosen electives. The electives consisted of a detailed study of three subjects. One of the major problems confronted with this system was that almost all schools offered the academic pattern as they were not financially equipped to offer diversified courses which required expensive investment in equipments. Consequently, the

¹¹Mammen Varghese, Ed., Manorama Yearbook 1980, p. 674.

emphasis on this system was dropped in the following year, and the high school curricula began to concentrate on academic preparation of traditional subjects in addition to the study of three languages. It is this system that the high schools in Kerala are currently following.

As we have already seen, for the first degree one has to study for three years after the Pre-Degree course. The universities in Kerala grant the following undergraduate degrees; the Bachelor of Arts, Science, and Commerce. The Bachelors of Laws and Education are graduate degrees. The basic degree in medical sciences is also a Bachelor's degree (M.B.B.S.), but is academically equivalent to a Master's.

Since May 1966, there are two types of B.Sc. degrees granted; the general B.Sc. and the special B.Sc., the latter being equivalent to a B.Sc. (Honours) in other universities. The general B.Sc. students have to study English as the first language and another language as a second language which constitutes Part I of his final examinations. His Part II consists of the main subject and two minors. The special B.Sc. students will have to study only one language, i.e., English, but the major area of study would be intensive and concentrated with the addition of History of Science and Scientific Methods. In fact, this curriculum is inclusive of some of the syllabi

prescribed for a Master's degree in the same field.¹²

Similarly the B.A. degree also has two patterns. In one, there will be six examinations in the major area with two more examinations in ancillary subjects. In the other pattern, there will be two majors with four examinations for each.

The Master's degree consists of two years with concentration in one area. At the end of the second year six or more examinations are conducted in the student's major. For a Ph.D. generally there is no course work required. However, it is an intensively individualized instruction into a specific theme with methodology of research, the completion of which usually takes three to five years.

Although the State is trying hard to upgrade the standard of education in all levels through various reforms, many educators are not happy with reforms one after another. A veteran college administrator, Fr. Thomas Moothedan states:

A poor country like India can not afford to squander money on these experiments. The best thing is to have a uniform pattern of education for the whole of India with more or less the same syllabi everywhere in the High Schools and Colleges.¹³

¹²Fr. Thomas Moothedan, "Educational Pattern in Kerala" in Education in New India, p. 64.

¹³IBID., p. 65.

Although these reforms are expensive they are not insignificant in view of the advancement in education Kerala has made over the other states in India since Independence.

C. Administrative Structure and Progress

During the British period the Department of Education was under a director of education with inspectors as his subordinates. This system continued up until the middle of the 1950's. With the enforcement of the Kerala Education Act of 1958 reforms in educational administration began to be effective.

1. Bureaucratic Control. The office of the Director of Public Instruction was retained intact. However, inspectorates under him phased out with the introduction of educational districts. Educational administration of the State is divided into several Educational Districts, each comprising specified areas. An Educational District is in the charge of a District Educational Officer who is accountable to the Director of Public Instruction. Each Educational District is again divided into subdistricts, each of which is under an Assistant Educational Officer who is accountable to the District Educational Officer.¹⁴ At present there are 28 Educational Districts and 148 -

¹⁴The Kerala Education Act and Rules. (Trivandrum: The Government Press, 1969), p. 121.

subdistricts in the State of Kerala.¹⁵

Schools below the collegiate level are classified under four categories; schools for general education, schools for special education, schools for the handicapped, and other institutions associated with the educational system of the State. Lower and upper primary, and high and higher secondary schools fall under general education. In Kerala special education comprises all normal schools, fishery schools, physical training schools, music academies and fine arts schools. Schools for the deaf, blind, retarded, and leppers fall under the category of the handicapped. By other institutions associated with the educational system the State means the Scouts, National Cadet Corps and the Auxiliary Cadet Corps.¹⁶

Among them, all the high and higher secondary schools, normal schools, and special schools are under the direct supervision of the District Educational Officer. All the primary schools, including Basic primary schools, are under the Assistant Educational Officer. However, experimental schools, which are called model schools in Kerala, attached to government training colleges are under the direct supervision of the principals of the respective institutions. Parallel to this structure,

¹⁵Mammen Varghese, Ed., Manorama Yearbook 1980, p. 673.

¹⁶The Kerala Education Act and Rules, pp. 3-4.

there is an inspectorate of Muslim Education to enhance the teaching of Arabic in the schools of the State where Muslim students constitute a majority. The Inspector of Muslim Education is directly under the Director of Public Instruction.¹⁷

The headmaster is the chief administrative officer of any school, being supervised by the Assistant Educational Officer if it is a primary school, and by the District Educational Officer if it is a high or any other schools mentioned earlier. If a high school has an upper primary section, the high school headmaster is still the head of both sections.

The University of Travancore was formally constituted in 1937; and it became the University of Kerala in 1957. The administration of the university is relatively autonomous, although many of its functions are politically restricted. India has a unique system of higher education in which a university has several colleges affiliated to it. It is the university that prescribes syllabus, conducts examinations, and declares successful candidates for degrees. Kerala follows the same system. Before Independence there were only few colleges in Kerala. Although there were a few more founded in the 1950's, considerable progress in collegiate education was achieved only in the middle of the

¹⁷IBID., p. 121.

1960's when several junior colleges were founded by both the government and private agencies. Many of these junior colleges were made first grade colleges in subsequent years. All of the colleges are either run by the government or by private agencies. There are altogether 167 higher educational institutions affiliated with the universities in Kerala; out of them 123 are run by private agencies, constituting about 74 per cent private monopoly of collegiate education.¹⁸

The State has founded three more universities a decade ago; the University of Calicut came into being in 1968, the University of Cochin and the Kerala Agricultural University at Trichur was founded in 1971. The University of Cochin is geared to researches of industrial and commercial importance on postgraduate level. Whereas, the Agricultural University embraces all the agricultural, veterinary, horticultural and fisheries colleges of the State in addition to special departments of soil biology, biochemistry and the like. The Universities of Kerala and Calicut foster higher learning in traditional academic subjects and in professional areas like education, law, medicine and engineering. All universities are autonomously run by a Senate; and the Vice-Chancellor is the chief

¹⁸Mammen Varghese, Ed., Manorama Yearbook 1980, pp. 674-675.

executive officer.

Higher learning is generally classified as university education, technical education and vocational education. All the arts and sciences, teacher training, law, and medical colleges affiliated to the university are under the directorate of collegiate education. All the engineering colleges, polytechnics, and industrial training institutes offer technical and vocational education. They are under the Director of Technical Education. There are 6 engineering colleges, 3 of which are private; 18 polytechnics, 6 of which are private, and 41 industrial training institutes, 29 of which are private, in Kerala at present.¹⁹ The Engineering College at Trivandrum, founded in 1939, was the only technical institution in Kerala until 1958. All the other institutions reflect the progress in this field since then. The escalation of the number of other collegiate institutions is also a phenomenon during the 1960's.

Today, 95 percent of the student population between ages 6 and 11 attend school. In the 1978-79 school year the government spent Rs 66.83 per child for his education. In fact, 38 percent of the total budget has been spent for the progress of education alone. There was a steady increase in the number of primary and secondary schools; and the number of pupils attending schools also

¹⁹IBID., pp. 675-676.

correspondingly increased. The years immediately following Independence had only a slow progress; however, since the 1960's, the government took active interest in establishing more schools either by its own initiative or by promoting private enterprises in education. Towards the end of the 1970's, we can observe a phenomenal progress in education (See Tables XI, XII and XIII) as the government has increased its financial expenditure on education year after year.

Private enterprises in education was largely encouraged by the government always ever since the inception of modern education by providing incentives of grants. Currently about 62 percent of the schools are run by private agencies. During the British period, and until the late 1950's, the salary of private teachers was paid by the government. However, the salaries were distributed by the manager when he was reimbursed the amount by the government. This system led to many unhappy and often unethical incidents. It was easy for the manager to punish a teacher under this arrangement. When the Kerala Education Bill, sponsored by Professor Joseph Mundassery, the minister of education in the first Communist ministry of Kerala, was passed by the Kerala Legislature in 1957, this system came to an end. Ever since, through the respective headmaster of the school, salary of teachers is directly paid by the government. There was great resistance from the managers to this new

TABLE XI

KERALA

PROGRESS OF EDUCATION

Pupils in Attendance

YEAR	PRIMARY SCHOOLS	SECONDARY SCHOOLS	TOTAL
1961	2,939,408	330,893	3,270,301
1971	4,074,808	724,724	4,799,432
1972	4,229,533	750,198	4,979,731
1973			
1974	4,404,716	865,861	5,270,577
1975	4,423,247	936,042	5,359,289
1976	4,377,461	907,896	5,285,357
1977	4,350,016	1,003,665	5,353,681
1978	4,405,592	1,088,166	5,493,758
1979	4,340,729	1,197,403	5,538,132

Source: Mammen Varghese, Ed., Manorama Yearbook 1980, p. 673

TABLE XII

KERALA

PROGRESS OF EDUCATION

Government Expenditures in Education

YEAR	GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE IN EDUCATION (Rupees in Millions)	EXPENDITURE PER CHILD (Rupees)
1962	185.48	10.72
1971	601.23	28.25
1972	661.48	30.30
1973	710.47	31.73
1974	823.45	36.07
1975	1,031.70	44.38
1976	1,289.70	54.93
1977	1,410.28	58.88
1978	1,515.63	62.14
1979	1,645.37	66.83

Source: Mammen Varghese, Ed., Manorama Yearbook 1980, p. 673.

TABLE XIII

KERALA

PROGRESS IN EDUCATION

Distribution of Schools

YEAR	LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOLS		UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOLS		HIGH SCHOOLS		TOTAL
	GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE	GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE	GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE	
1962	2,835	3,910	576	1,409	276	653	9,659
1971	2,804	4,091	809	1,734	442	942	10,833
1972	2,804	4,091	811	1,740	446	947	10,839
1973	2,798	4,089	811	1,739	448	951	10,836
1974	2,807	4,097	809	1,739	452	952	10,856
1975	2,900	4,075	857	1,731	536	962	11,061
1976	2,910	4,065	880	1,726	566	955	11,102
1977	2,883	4,109	883	1,835	590	1,076	11,376
1978	2,849	4,120	888	1,830	594	1,081	11,362
1979	2,870	4,118	888	1,829	594	1,094	11,393

Source: Mammen Varghese, Ed., Manorama Yearbook 1980, p. 674

practice. The Bill also made provisions of taking over management of private schools when the managers did not adhere to the guidelines of the State Department of Education or were found guilty of mismanagement.²⁰ In fact, the sponsor of the Bill was a Roman Catholic, who was reported to have suffered discriminatory treatment from his manager when he was a professor in one of the church-run colleges; and consequently he had to resign as professor. His own Bill, therefore, was considered as an act of revenge against private management. It is said that he was warned by his own colleagues in the Communist cabinet that he should not take a radical step which would infuriate the public so as to be detrimental to the existence of the Communist government. And it was this Bill that first set agitations against the Communist government which climaxed in the Vimochana Samaram (Liberation struggle) that drove the Communist ministry out of power in 1959.²¹ The same Bill, that became Act in 1958, also provided statutes regulating the physical and sanitary conditions of the school, office facilities, floors, windows, doors, roofs, dimensions of classrooms, ventilation, latrines and urinals,

²⁰The Kerala Education Act and Rules, pp. 137-142.

²¹Susanne H. Rudolph and Lloyd I. Rudolph, Ed., Education and Politics in India. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972, p. 402.

and the safety of school equipment and appliances.²² The Act also spelled out the separation of religion from school activities. As of this time, the Kerala Education Act of 1958, with amendments made from time to time, is the text of state statutes regulating the operation of both government and private schools; and as such they have improved the bureaucratic administration of schools.

Nursery education is the most neglected area in Kerala. Although in 1951, attempts had been made to develop a pre-primary system, it has not received sufficient momentum due to lack of financial resources. But it was in the 1960's modern pre-school system emerged as an educational experience for the young children and obtained approval of the people and recognition from the government. In 1963 it was officially accepted as an educational program by the State, and was incorporated within the Department of Education. The Department officially adopted a syllabus to be followed in nursery schools in the same year.²³ The same syllabus was revised and published in 1971.

This does not mean that the State nurtured the system as it did the other sectors of public education.

²²The Kerala Education Act and Rules, pp. 11-20.

²³Guidebook for Pre-primary Teachers. (Trivandrum: State Institute of Education, Department of Education of the State of Kerala, 1971), p. 1.

This was basically a monitoring of the system already in existence due to private efforts, through the professional bureaucracy of the State in accordance with the scientifically established criteria of pre-primary education. They established the norms and watched if the schools followed them. Some agencies also have received grants from the government, provided they are Malayalam medium schools.

There are not enough nursery schools to meet the needs of the society. The government is not financially capable of undertaking the responsibility of this sector of education. Therefore, it is a service provided by religious communities, women's societies and other charitable institutions.²⁴

2. Popular Participation in the Process of Education. Popular participation in the educational administration is a characteristic feature of democracy. The Kerala education system is basically patterned after the British bureaucracy. However, after Independence there is a tilt towards democratic process in educational policy-making; but it is not a total responsibility exercised by the people. It is again bureaucracy that controls popular participation.

The Kerala Education Act and Rules has provisions for the establishment of a Local Educational Authority.

²⁴Mammen Varghese, Ed., Manorama Yearbook 1980, p. 673.

It says:

For the purpose of associating people with the administration of education and to preserve and stimulate local interest in educational affairs, the Government may, by notification in the Gazette, establish Local Educational Authorities to exercise jurisdiction in any local area specified in such notification. ²⁵

It will have seven members:

1. The District Educational Officer,
 2. One member elected by the private school managers from among themselves.
 3. One member elected by the degreed teachers from among themselves.
 4. One member elected by non-degreed teachers from among themselves.
 5. One member elected by the panjayats or Municipalities or City Corporations in the District; and
 6. and 7. Two members appointed by the Government.
- Thus, most of the members come from the very system; hence there is very little grassroots participation. There are a few such authorities in various regions. Nevertheless, they do not function in any way except one or two meetings a year without a clear agenda. The bureaucracy is such that it would not permit even the so-called elected members to exercise their functions freely. According to the Act, their functions are to assess the educational needs of the

²⁵Kerala Education Act and Rules, p. ix.

area and make suggestions to the government accordingly, to supervise noon-feeding programs, to promote educational conferences and exhibitions which would create public interest in education, and to carry out such other functions as may be prescribed. In other words, the authority does not hold any authority in itself; it is to do what the government tells.

There is also a State Education Advisory Board for the purpose of advising the government on matters pertaining to educational policy and administration of the Department of Education. It is up to the government to constitute such a board consisting of officials and non-officials. The ex-officio members are the vice-chancellor of the University of Kerala, and the directors of the Department of Public Instruction, Technical Education and Health Services. The rest of the members are appointed by the government. The membership is limited to a maximum of fifteen persons. The chairman of the Board is always appointed by the government, not elected by the Board members.²⁶ Here again, there is very little participation by the citizens. The government controls the members in whatever way they want. There is also a considerable degree of political intervention in all of these processes. Hence, political consideration will guide the process of

²⁶IBID., p. iii.

educational policy-making.

From the way these bodies are designed and are directed to function, one can gather that a democratic approach to citizen participation in the administration of Kerala Schools is not satisfactorily maintained. Kerala being the most highly educated State in the Union, one cannot expect a shortage of educationally competent citizens to justify the encroachment by the officialdom in bodies that are constituted for popular participation in the educational process. However, the importance of guidance to be given by professional educational administrators in the deliberations of such bodies is no way undermined.

D. The Language Question and Education

English language is one of the major contributions of the British to India and the people of Kerala took pride in learning that language because it opened the door of higher education and upward social and economic mobility for them. Even after Independence, when attempts have been made to demote the national importance of English, Kerala encouraged the study of English by retaining it in College education and governmental administration. Since the adoption of Hindi as the national language by the central government, the attitude towards English is slowly changing. The status of English is at present that of an associate national language. Kerala's language, Malayalam,

is one of the fourteen official languages. Now a Keralite student has to learn Malayalam, English and Hindi.

The language question in education is generally handled as a political issue; which in itself is damaging to the educational process. The current trend is to replace English with Malayalam in administration and education. Kerala never resisted the study of Hindi because it was necessary for the Kerala graduates to find jobs in north India where Hindi is the language. However, educators are seriously concerned about the new trends which would strip the status of English. An impartial researcher can easily recognize the fact that all the progress Kerala achieved so far is due to its association with the English language. This is not to say that the administration of government should be conducted through the medium of English language. If Malayalam is grown to replace English on the administrative level, the use of the former will be easier for the ordinary citizens in their dealings with the government.

Malayalam has already reached a stage of maturity due to its association with the English language. Modern styles of narration, and literary forms such as short stories, novels, prose-poetry, lyrics, science literature and so on in Malayalam are indebted to the influence of western education, particularly of the English literature. The English language itself is still developing in accordance

with the speed of technological advancement and international communication. If Malayalam is denied its present association with English, it would even tell upon the progress of the former. Therefore, any attempt to oust English from university education will be a serious threat to educational advancement of the State of Kerala.

C. Rajagopalachari says:

"On the English medium hangs the unity of the universities and colleges in India; and on this hangs the solidarity of the elite of India... English must be the language of the universities in India if we desire that India should not be cut up into isolated islands. It would indeed be a very bad bargain for the nation, this fourteen languages plan in exchange for English. All mobility in occupation and the public services would be lost for our young men and coming generations..."²⁷

Mahatma Gandhi endorsed Hindi to take the place of English. In the Second Gujarati Education Conference at Broach held on October 20, 1917, he spelled out the characteristics of a national and integrating language and he found only Hindi as the only Indian language suitable to take that role.²⁸ In addition to the constitutional demands that Hindi should be the national language; in August, 1961, during a conference of State Chief Ministers

²⁷C. Rajagopalachari, "The Pitfall of Fourteen Regional Languages," *Swarajya*, Madras, September 2, 1967; reprinted in The Great Debates, Edited by A. B. Shah, Bombay: Lalvani Publishing House, 1968, pp. 59-60.

²⁸Ram Gopal, Linguistic Affairs of India, Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1966, p. 180.

and Central Ministers, Hindi was made compulsory in secondary level. In May, 1963, the parliament passed a Bill allowing the use of English despite the expiration of the period of fifteen years from the commencement of the Constitution (January 26, 1965) along with Hindi for official purposes of the Union. It appears that Hindi may be imposed on university education under the guise of its national status.

However, it is evident that neither Hindi nor Malayalam can successfully meet the complex demands of higher education. The educated elite generally feel that administration, academic life, the courts and such agencies of the society should function in a common language. For the continuous dialogue of scientist which is constantly enhancing the modernization of industry in a developing nation should have a link language. At present, only English can function in that role. Translations into regional languages will not create original works. The adoption of regional languages as media in universities would eventually isolate these institutions restricting admission of students from other regions. It was to this problem Rajagopalachari was referring to. Mr. M. C. Chagla, who resigned from the Cabinet of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1967 due to the Central government's language policy, vehemently opposed a sudden change-over from English to regional languages because it was a threat to national

unity and educational cohesiveness.²⁹ The same fear is still prevalent.

One of the aims intended by the proponents of this sudden change-over was to "reduce the gulf between the intelligentsia and the people".³⁰ If English is responsible for widening this gap between the people and the intelligentsia, the present reform is going to keep it wider and wider. Because, due to the particular advantage of the English language, the wealthy will be sending their children to institutions where English will be kept as a medium of instruction. Many parents who can afford an expensive English medium education in the regular school system do send their children to such schools. These children will have an added advantage of moving higher in education, especially abroad, and of securing prestigious positions in the society. The same trend will continue in the university education. Therefore, it is likely that the gap will grow wider.

At present, Kerala employs the three language formula in upper primary and secondary schools. In view of the employment possibilities of students graduating from high schools and colleges, the study of Hindi is essential; and in view of educational advancement, the

²⁹A. B. Shah, Ed., The Great Debate, pp. 121-123.

³⁰IBID., p. 7.

mastery of English is also essential. According to the present curricular arrangement, the study of English in schools does not warrant a mastery of English language. However, by the time a student completes his college study, he should acquire a satisfactory proficiency in English; and it would serve him to further his postgraduate studies and researches, the resources of which are mostly contained in the English language.

Kerala education should approach this problem more realistically, beyond political barriers and blind nationalism. In fact, the study of English will strengthen our nationalistic goals. During the decades after Independence, English has only gained greater currency than ever before, about ten times the number using English today compared with the situation in 1947 despite efforts to curb it. This is especially true with Kerala. This is an indication that the people demand it. English is still the language of important national conferences and meetings, establishing its claim as a link language. It will be unwise to arbitrarily replace it. Although English is a foreign language, its functions are not foreign. "English has become a part of the India culture, assimilated into it as modern technology has been. What is assimilated into the India culture cannot be considered foreign."³¹

³¹T. M. Thomas, Indian Educational Reforms in Cultural Perspective, p. 281.

Education in the primary and secondary level should be in the mother tongue, as is conducted in Kerala. Because it enables the child to think in his own mother tongue and internalize the basic concepts of language and other subjects much easier. However, it would be appropriate, if the educators can design a curriculum model which would enhance content learning in all the three languages in the secondary level. This would only develop proficiencies in Malayalam, Hindi and English. In view of the advantages of the English language, English should be continued in university education in order to equip our graduates with a broader opportunity of career and educational advancement.

E. Political Overlap

Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement of 1920 initiated mass agitation all over India under the leadership of the Congress. Travancore also was an active participant in that agitation. Thus, for the first time in Kerala, students also got involved with politics. In March, 1922, college students led their agitation in favor of the Non-Cooperative Movement, and particularly for representative government in Travancore. Student participation in the political struggle was intensified in the 1930's. The Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930 especially brought the students into politics. "The emphasis in the universities at this time was on the liberal arts, and students in this area have traditionally been more concerned with intellectual

and political issues."³² The leaders of student activities of this period later became political leaders during the period before and after Independence. In 1938 students were actively involved in the political agitations against the oppressive rule of C.P.R. Ayyar, who in turn used police forces to suppress student activism.

In the early 1940's, All-India Students Federation, a wing of the Nationalistic Movement of the Congress was divided on the basis of ideology. The Federation came under the Socialist control, which eventually developed into a students' wing of the Communist Party. All-India Students Congress, consequently, was organized by the nationalists in 1945,³³ which eventually became a students' wing of the Congress. After Independence, both of these organizations have been actively represented in Kerala.

In fact, every major political party in Kerala has used students to achieve their goals or to intensify agitations against the government of the opposition party. In front of almost all the agitations led by the Communists, students were lined under the auspices of the Students Federation. Similarly, the right wing political parties also have instigated the students for their own selfish

³²Philip G. Altbach, Ed., The Student Revolution: A Global Analysis, Bombay: Lalvani Publishing House, 1970, p. 105.

³³IBID., p. 104.

motives. For example, the student agitations in Ernakulam against the State Transport Workers who had reportedly assaulted the students, and in Kuttanad against fare increase by State Water Transportation Department were all calculated by the right wing parties. "Of the eight student organizations in the State, excepting the Communist-led Students' Federation, all the others were arrayed against the Government."³⁴ In truth, without student participation, the Vimochana-Samaram (liberation struggle) to topple the Communist government would never have achieved its desired goal.

At present, one can observe two kinds of political overlap into Kerala education. The first is the political intervention in education by leaders of political parties to manipulate the system for their own advantage. For example, it is easy for a minister of education or the leaders of his party to establish educational policies which are politically motivated, but detrimental to quality education. In other words, the conduct of education is not freely left with professional educators. It is not unthinkable that a minister who has not even completed the high school could regulate policies for university education; because in politics it is one's leadership and the

³⁴Kainikara Padmanabha Pillai, The Red Interlude In Kerala, Trivandrum, The Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee, 1959, p. 137.

consensus of the people by ballots that give mobility for a person, not his academic qualifications or experiences. Such a minister may have a Cabinet Secretary who would be capable of properly guiding him. However, he becomes ineffective when the minister would have to protect the interests of his own party.

The second political pressure on education is manifested in the way all the political parties try to exploit the student power. From secondary through college level, the students are agents of agitations and demonstrations. With the exception of none, all political parties make the students and their organizations as tools to attain their ends. When the students are pushed into political activities quite often, no school can systematically and efficiently function. This becomes detrimental to learning. Many educators decry the erosion of standard and quality of education as a result of political activism of students.

Is there any solution to this problem? Kerala's political condition is such that students will be easily dragged in to demonstrations and agitations. School officers do not seem to have much control over the students when political leaders utter slogans outside the classroom and incite the students to join with them. However, parents can exhort their children about the dangers of excessive political activities during student life. Unless the students are kept away from damagingly excessive extra-

curricular political activities, it is learning that is going to suffer.

F. Conclusion

When India became free, one of the major fields of reconstruction was education. Education as a state responsibility, Kerala had to mobilize all its efforts in eradicating illiteracy and in developing an educated generation. It was a complex task. First of all the process of education had to be given a national outlook. Reforms were inevitable to turn the total process to that direction. The number of schools had to be increased corresponding to the growing number of school age children. The government also had to meet the manpower demands of the developing school system. A competent bureaucratic structure had to be framed.

The government alone could not shoulder all this burden. Hence, private enterprises in education had to be promoted. Although the Communist government tried to nose-ring the private management by interfering with their rights and privileges, all the private agencies were committed to the cause of education. The Christian Churches, Nayar Service Society, The S.N.D.P. and other charitable organizations, and even private individuals came up to share the responsibility of imparting education. Kerala would have never achieved its high literacy without the unreserved cooperation of private agencies in education.

In spite of this, it often appears that the government has been trying to bridle the private management as a way of punishing them for the services they have rendered to the society. Standardizing and regulating the process of education in the private sector are conscientious attempts from the part of the government to improve public education. Nonetheless, when those actions infringe upon the rights of the private agencies to conduct educational institutions, the very progress of education is at stake.

One of the critical areas of education was the language question. Although during the early 1960's the State had to face public opposition and student demonstration against Hindi being imposed on the South to replace English, the people of Kerala are relatively passive to the study of Hindi. Although they never wanted to discourage the study of English, they welcomed Hindi with warm hearts; chiefly because the latter would help their children find gainful employment outside the State. Hence, the State could not find it difficult to establish an educational pattern based on the three-language formula.

The political zig-zagging in education at present prevailing in Kerala would bring forth irreparable damage to education, especially when it affects learning and imparting of knowledge. The only solution one can envisage is to free the students from the grip of politics and to grant a relatively justifiable autonomy to the professional

educators in the areas of educational policy planning and curriculum design.

The increase in the number of schools or teachers would not automatically boost the quality of education. It is the general feeling of the educators in Kerala that the standard of schooling is deteriorating. Now the State has adequate number of institutions of learning; hence rather than multiplying the number the State should seek adequate measures of improving the quality of education which alone will equip the growing generation to face stiff competitions in higher education and job market.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

A. Summary

This treatise has dealt with educational development in the State of Kerala commencing from their early forms. For comprehensive planning of education for the future, the understanding of all the relevant development is necessary. Kerala, with the wealth of past educational resources, can launch a meaningful planning for education. Modern education can become a viable institution only when it relates to its past heritage and achievements, though they might be undeveloped and unscientific.

Chapter II gives a background information about the physiography, climate, economy, origin, anthropology, social stratification, religions and a brief historical sketch of the State of Kerala. These descriptions are necessary in order for the reader to understand what Kerala is before getting into the issues brought forth in the work.

The third chapter deals with the development of Malayalam language. It explains the etymology of Malayalam and the various theories associated with the origin of the language. It also describes the origin of the Malayalam

Script and the development of early Malayalam and Malayalam literature. The roots of educational development is thus traced back to the very development of the language. In any culture, the early beats of an educational development start with its language.

Chapter IV goes on to examine the role of aesthetic forms which enhances the educational awareness of the people of Kerala through its folk literature and art forms. For a geographically isolated community, like that of Kerala, they were the sole vehicle of verbal and emotional expression to convey their messages and to exchange their ideas; and consequently they were carriers of culture which, of course, is one of the purposes of pre-modern education.

Chapter V deals with the indigenous stream of education which provided the contents of the ancient practical and speculative learning of Brahmanism through the Nampudiri system, and the rudimentary preparation in reading, writing and arithmetic through the Ezhuthupallis and training in martial skills through the Kalaris. They were responsible agencies of education before the dawn of modern education. They also shaped an intellectual elitist class as well as a practical machinery to conduct agriculture, trade and government business. The role of the indigenous systems of education cannot be overlooked when an investigation into the roots of Kerala education is conducted; and their importance is stressed as a foundation of the

educational development in this State.

The sixth chapter is an exclusive treatise on the pre-British European activities in education. In a broader sense, the pre-British educational activities can be considered the onset of modern education in Kerala. Despite the Portuguese activities in education being sectarian, their impact created a revolution in the field. Their literary activities, contributions to modernize Malayalam language, and introduction of printing presses had gathered momentum for the spread of education. Unfortunately, their activities were confined with Roman Catholicism and therefore there was little room for popular participation. It could be also possible that they could not create a long-lasting impact due to deterioration of their political power as the Dutch, the French and later the British reduced them to ignominy. Yet the clerical education their missionaries had founded was continued and developed in course of time and it has served a sizable portion of the people by uplifting them in its own way. On the whole, their contributions were unquestionably important to prepare the ground for the British to initiate their activities.

Chapter VII is a fairly elaborate discussion of the British educational activities which introduced modern education in Kerala. With a brief description of the British educational policies, the chapter deals with their activities in the erstwhile State of Travancore, Cochin

and in the Malabar district. The efforts of the missionaries are highlighted in order to disclose their role in constructing a system of European education in Kerala. Simultaneously, the role of the native governments in propagating modern education by cooperating with the British political authorities and supporting the efforts of the missionaries is also brought to light in order to establish the fact that modern education was a collective and cooperative undertaking. The chapter also deals with the enthusiasm with which the people of Kerala welcomed and participated in modern education.

The eighth chapter concerns one of the most important results of modern education, i.e., social change. Kerala is not a homogenous community; it is a society composed of various castes and low-castes.

Caste system appeared in Kerala in its most cruel form. Social inequality and untouchability were rampant when the British came to Kerala. The chapter explains how modern education became an emancipating agency. The lower classes began to realize their social conditions and became assertive of their rights in the society. Western ideals and modern education opened the eyes of the upper classes so as to yield to the demands of the down-trodden through their agitations and demonstrations. The promotion of female education rendered a new awareness to the role of women in the society, which eventually opened avenues for

them to be active in the society rather than being confined within the household as mothers and wives. The result was that these social changes have further promoted education as a way to economic and social redemption of the people. Another important change resulting from modern education was the germination of political awareness for responsible and representative government in the State. The democratic ideals received from European books and masters nurtured the political consciousness of the educated elites; and they became leaders of nationalistic movements which finally became instrumental to liberate India from the same people who directed their path to freedom.

Chapter IX deals with education since Independence. It emphasizes the responsibility of the State of Kerala in formulating education for a free democratic State. Reforms in the structure of education were the first steps taken by the State after Independence. Reconstruction of education is an ongoing process, because as years go by needs and demands also change. A description of the present administrative structure is furnished to provide a comprehensive picture of the post-Independence system of education in Kerala. Popular participation in education is also briefly treated in order for the reader to assess the democratic participation in the administration and policy-making process of the educational system. India being a multi-lingual country, the question of languages is a very important issue

in education. The chapter also focuses on how the State deals with the issue of the three-language-formula without creating public resistance. It also brings forth the question of the influence of politics in education, particularly the impact of politics on students and their learning.

B. Final Remarks

This investigation has identified the major forces underlying the current educational system. The success of future education largely depends on how the system utilizes the various roots identifiable in the past centuries. In order to construct a sound system, Kerala should be able to absorb essential components of education, not only from the national heritage but also those peculiar to the culture of Kerala. Its past and present social structure, the wealth of literature, the beauty of its art forms, the basic approach of the traditional indigeneous system, the intellectual sophistication of the orthodox philosophical schools, the innovation of European academic style and the scientific approach of British inquiry into knowledge should be sound bases of an educational edifice.

In the current educational structure, technological inquiry enjoys a prominent place. An educational system, which serves a scientifically advanced society should be able to concentrate on current issues in science and technology. It is especially imperative when the goal is to get out of an unproductive agrarian economy. In spite of the

thirst for immediate industrialization and the quest for urbanization through technological education, Kerala is likely to remain a predominantly rural state for the foreseeable future. Urbanization is not in itself a summum bonum for a people whose values are closely associated with the unartificial simple life of traditional Kerala. The complexities and tensions invited by industrialization and urbanization will only break down the cultural harmony of a traditionally conservative people. The ideal will be the creation of an innocent co-existence of the values of the present society and those of modern technocracy. One of the primary motives of Kerala education should be this harmony, lest the social equilibrium be destroyed. It is achieved only through a proper understanding of the cultural foundations of the society, which are also foundations of a sound educational system.

Kerala is a pluralistic society despite the unifying principle of a single language. People of the same caste have different cultural traits. Each caste has its own behavioral patterns different from those of other castes, although there is a growing tendency among the lower classes to catch up with the life style of the upper classes. There are three major religious influences. Among the Christians there are at least three streams of beliefs which even shape their life styles. Is the current curriculum in the primary and secondary schools adequate enough to deepen the

understanding of cultural and religious differences? Does it foster respect for all these differences equally? This researcher, who had the opportunity of obtaining primary, secondary and post-secondary education in Kerala, feels that this cultural and religious cohesiveness is not sufficiently stressed in Kerala education. Students should be able to respect differences of each other while upholding their cultural and religious identity. Without it, modern education, which has a broader foundation on the concepts of democracy, would be defeating its own purpose.

Kerala is a state of its own history and culture since at least two millenia. Many students who graduate from high schools, in fact, know more about India than Kerala. It is praiseworthy that they learn much about India as a nation. A Malayali's first identity is with his native State which has a rich past compared to several other states. There is a tendency to defocus the importance of history and cultural contributions of Kerala's monarchies because many think they are obsolete in a democratic country. Let the social studies curriculum of many new democracies, even Communist Countries, be a lesson to our educators. Some African countries, after obtaining freedom, are said to be engaged in creating culture history in order to establish identity for their past. Kerala does not have to create history; in fact it was its own past history and culture that created Kerala a distinct people and country.

Any school student in Kerala should be exposed to its history and culture first before he moves to the study of India as a nation. The identification of the roots of Kerala education is always necessary to construct a culturally and historically cohesive educational system.

Since Independence educational institutions have numerically grown. An infant democracy was responsible to provide educational opportunities for all children. The schools have been overcrowded; there is a wider gap of ratio between teachers and students. Despite all the claimed achievements in the overall growth and spread of education, an impartial observer can notice a downward trend in student achievement. This is not only true with scientific knowledge. It is observed that the present graduates are not competent to write Malayalam prose without committing errors in grammar and letters. It may be argued that the students at present have more to learn, more areas of science, mathematics and social studies. However, if a high school graduation cannot guarantee a satisfactory proficiency in at least one's own mother tongue, the concept of literacy is at stake. One can observe that a student carries heavy stacks of books. Most of the mathematics and science text books are said to be containing advanced contents which the present teachers themselves cannot intelligibly explain to the students. The basic qualification of a teacher in high school is a Bachelor's

degree. Can these teachers properly teach in the classroom with their present qualifications? Many advanced countries require a Master's degree holder to teach in a high school classroom. It is high time for the Kerala State to either offer incentives to the present teachers to uplift their education or employ highly qualified teachers in the high school classes. Otherwise the State educational system may not be able to catch up with the scientific advancement of the time. Quality can not be sacrificed for quantity. Without properly qualified and trained teachers, the State cannot promise a quality education which would prepare students for a competitive higher education and job market.

Another possible factor responsible for the decline of standards is over-bureaucratization in education. It is the basis of "institutionalized rationality, uniformity of procedure, and hierarchically distributed power"¹ in education. For the efficiency of the administrative machinery of State education, there exists a powerful bureaucracy in Kerala. It has its advantages in a new democracy. However, when it infringes upon academic freedom which should always strive after quality, the effects are damaging. For example, at present the government prescribes syllabi and textbook, and the government also sets the questions for final

¹Torsten Husen, The School in Question, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979, pp. 115-116.

examination. All that a teacher has to do is to teach the syllabus; and all that the students have to do is to prepare answers to questions within the syllabus. Naturally learning becomes an activity to pass the examination and to obtain a certificate. The students are not concerned with mastery.

The knowledge that he gains, he gains not for its own sake and not for constant later use in a real life situation - but for the once-and-for-all purpose of reproducing it in an examination. And the learning and reproducing is all just a means to an end - the end of getting a certificate...²

Two years ago, this writer had the opportunity to go through the answer papers of some B.Ed. degree candidates. The majority of the answers did not even qualify for a pass. But the evaluator was giving a passing grade to most of them. He also said that he had instructions from his authorities to pass at least sixty percent of his answer papers whether they qualified for it or not. One can only imagine the depth of scholastic achievement of these B.Ed. degree holders who would be also teachers in high school. How much intellectual activity can such teachers produce among the students?

While maintaining its role as a standardization agency, Kerala's educational bureaucracy should be able to

²Ronald Dore. The Diploma Disease, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976, p. 8.

grant each educational agency academic freedom which would foster competitive scholarship in all levels of education. Rather than absorbing a high school or college graduate immediately into any career positions, the State or competent agencies can test their academic abilities before he is hired. This way, a broader scope of education would be encouraged and competitive learning for future careers would be stressed rather than the preparation in syllabus for a certificate or degree. After all, these certificates have recently become meaningless in terms of employment opportunities which we will touch later in this chapter. For many problems resulting from over-bureaucratization, Torsten Husen, an eminent international-comparative educator, suggests decentralization as a solution.³ More freedom at least in areas of syllabus selection and examinations, of course under vigilant supervision of proper authorities to guarantee the public the minimum standards, to individual institutions would earmark improvement in scholarship. However, this might require conscientious efforts and detailed study as it will be an innovation in view of the present educational set-up which has been in existence ever since the introduction of modern education in India.

At present, 650,000 students are newly enrolled into the schools of Kerala. And over 350,000 students (1979)

³Torsten Husen, The School in Question, p. 120.

take school final examinations every year. Nearly half of them graduate with a school leaving certificate. A good percentage of them aspire for a college education. Several thousands are coming out of colleges every year. Everyone seeks an education because education leads to prosperity. The investment in education is considered by the government as an investment in mankind. Parents also are eager to invest money in the education of their children.

Education is regarded by nearly all Malayalis as the only real escape route from poverty, and by the better-off it is also considered to be the only exit from agricultural economy, from which escape has become an urgent necessity during the last twenty years as a consequence of land reform policies, which have fixed a maximum area of land-owning for the household. For those with large land-ownings, the reforms have destroyed the traditional notions that land is the best security and agriculture the most prestigious occupation.⁴ A good job now takes the place that land once held,

says C. J. Fuller. As a result, every parent would try hard to give the maximum education to his children even by selling his properties. Hence, the colleges are crowded. Even without considering the aptitude of a student, he is pushed to achieve a higher education. But the growing number of high school and college graduates create a serious problem of the State. The complex problems of over-population and the desperate inability of the government to enlarge an industrial economy pose great difficulties

⁴C. J. Fuller, The Nayars Today. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976, pp. 31-32.

in providing jobs for those educated thousands. The educational optimism of the 1950's and 1960's is no more a reality. The result of educated unemployment is "the process of qualification escalation or certificate devaluation."⁵

For example, for a job that requires just a high school leaving certificate, there are several hundreds of B.A. degree holders as applicants. For the job of a bus conductor a high school graduate easily qualifies. But in Kerala most of the new recruits are college graduates. For clerical jobs in a bank or government office, one can also see several M.A. degree holders. This, of course, will interfere with privileges of a high school graduate to obtain a job for which he qualifies; and he will have to wander jobless.

There is no effort from higher educational institutions to curb the growth of the number of college graduates. The university also has to pass a certain percentage of the examinees. There is no filtering process anywhere along the line. In addition to this, the universities also encourage external students to appear for B.A. and M.A. examinations. There are only six or eight examinations to be passed to obtain an M.A. degree. Many private agencies prepare answers for possible examination questions, and what

⁵ Donald Dore, The Diploma Disease, p. 6.

an external student has to do is learn them and write the examinations. The majority of external students obtain their Master's degree, when serious students attend a two year course leading to that degree. Thus, learning is inflated and degrees are devalued. When the degrees are meaningless, naturally their holders will be satisfied to get a job for which a high school graduate qualifies.

It is high time for the university and government authorities to realize that external degree programs, in whatever disciplines they be, are a bane to scholarship and learning. A student in a regular class acquires more knowledge and research capabilities within the instructional supervision of his teachers under a university or college setting. Whereas, an external student only prepares to get a pass in his examinations and a degree. One of the ways to emphasize scholarship and stabilize the value of a university degree is to abolish external examination systems in universities.

The government has recently taken policy measures to reduce the intensity of educated unemployment through educational planning. One of the steps is to control the influx of students to degree courses. It has been suggested to convert the present pre-degree program into higher secondary, which could prepare at least fifty percent of

the students for careers through vocational education.⁶ If implemented, these suggestions might check the growing rate of unemployed degree-holders although a complete remedy for the problem cannot be predicted.

Education was one of the major concerns of the State of Kerala after Independence. Hence, the State spent a major portion of its revenue for education. In spite of several reforms across the board, the structure of education is basically western. Although modern education was a product of religion in England, in Kerala, since Independence, the State has maintained a secular educational policy, although religious groups are actively involved in the process of education. In Kerala's pluralistic society, the policy is only constructive.

Even though Kerala has advanced in education to a greater degree after Independence, its educational policies have not yet reached maturity; education is still in its experimental stage. Equality of educational opportunity has been basically achieved. But there are several thousands of unemployed educated persons as we have observed. This phenomenon stares at the educational policy-maker. Kerala is not industrially and economically wide enough to absorb its educated men and women. Where should Kerala look for a model to solve this problem as many of the

⁶Mammen Varughese, Manorama Yearbook 1980, p. 674.

developed countries are also engulfed in the same problem? There is a Herculean task ahead for Kerala educators. It is up to the new leaders to reconstruct education and offer it to Kerala's millions so that it will play a constructive and contributive role in the society.

GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

- Aiyappan, Ayinipalli. Social Revolution in a Kerala Village. London: Asia Publishing House, 1965.
- Alexander, K.C. Social Mobility in Kerala. Poona: Deccan College Post Graduate and Research Institute, 1968.
- Altbach, Philip G. Student Politics in Bombay. Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1968.
- _____. Student Revolution: A Global Analysis. Bombay: Lalvani Publishing House, 1970.
- Ambrose, Kay. Classical Dances and Costumes of India. London: A & C Black, Ltd. 1950, Reprint, 1957.
- Anathil, George M. The Theological Formation of the Clergy in India. Poona: Pontifical Athenaeum, 1966.
- Ayyar, K.V. Krishna. A Short History of Kerala. Ernakulam: Pai and Company, 1966.
- Azariah, Isaiah. Lord Bentinck and Indian Education, Crime and Status of Women. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1978.
- Balakrishnan, P.K. Ed., Narayanaguru. (Malayalam) Kottayam: S.P.C. Society, 1954. Rev. Ed., 1969.
- Barbosa, Duarte. A Description of the Coasts of Malabar. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1867. Reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970.

- Bowers, Faubion. The Dance in India. New York: Columbia University Press, 1953. Reprint, New York: AMA Press, 1967.
- Brown, L.W. The Indian Christians of St. Thomas. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956.
- Buchanan, Francis, M.D. A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar. Vol. II. London: Cadel, 1807.
- Caldwell, Robert. A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1913. First Indian Ed., New Delhi: Oriental Books, 1974.
- Chaitanya, Krishna. A History of Malayalam Literature. New Delhi: Orient Longman Ltd., 1971.
- Chatterji, Suniti Kumar et. al., Ed. The Cultural Heritage of India. Vol. I. Calcutta: The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1937, Rev. Ed., 1958.
- Cheriyian, M.K. Bhasha Charitra Chintakal, (Malayalam, Thoughts on Language History). Kottayam: C.M.S. Press, 1970.
- Conze, Edward. Buddhist Thought in India. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1962. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1967.
- Coomaraswamy, A.K. History of Indian and Indonesian Art. New York: Dover Publications, 1965.
- Correio-Afonso, John. Even Unto the Indies. Bombay: St. Xavier's High School, 1956.
- Dames, Mansel Longworth, Ed. The Book of Duarte Barbosa, Vol. II. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1921.

- Daniel, David. The Orthodox Church of India, Vol. I. New Delhi: Printaid, 1972.
- Day, Francis. The Land of the Perumals or Cochin, Its Past and Its Present. Madras: Gantz Brothers at Adelphi Press, 1863.
- Di Bona, Joseph. The Context of Education in Indian Development. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Program in Comparative Studies on Southern Asia, 1974.
- Dore, Ronald. The Diploma Disease: Education, Qualification and Development. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976.
- D'Souza, Austin. Anglo-Indian Education. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1976.
- Edwardes, Michael. British India. New York: Taplinger Publishing Company, 1968.
- Fernando, Singarayer. The Teaching of English in Madras' Secondary Schools before and after Indian Independence. Ph.D. Dissertation. Loyola University, Chicago, 1960.
- Ferroli, Domenico, S.J. The Jesuits in Malabar, Vol. I. Bangalore City: The Bangalore Press, 1939.
- Frohnmeier, L.J. A Progressive Grammar of the Malayalam Language for Europeans. Mangalore: Basel Mission Press, 1913.
- Fuller, C.J. The Nayars Today. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976
- Gandhi, M.K. Toward New Education. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1953.
- Geevarghese, P.K. A Changing Small Town in South India. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979.

- George, K.M. A Survey of Malayalam Literature. London: Asia Publishing House, 1968.
- _____. Ramacharitham and the Study of Early Malayalam. Kottayam: The National Bookstall, 1956.
- _____. Valarunna Kairali (Malayalam, Growing Keralite). Kottayam: S.P.C. Society, 1954. Reprint, 1963.
- Gerber, William. Ed. The Mind of India. London: Fetter & Simmons, 1967; Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1977.
- Godavarma, K. Indo-Aryan Loan-words in Malayalam. Mavelikara: Ramavarma and Brothers, 1946.
- Gopal, Ram and Dadachanji, Serozh. Indian Dancing. London: Phoenix House, Ltd., 1951.
- Gopal, Ram. Linguistic Affairs of India. Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1966.
- Gopalan, A.K. Kerala Past and Present. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1959.
- Gore, M.S.; Desai, I.P.; and Chitnis, Suma: Ed. The Sociology of Education in India. New Delhi: National Council of Educational Research and Training, 1967.
- Gundert, Rev. H. A Malayalam and English Dictionary. Gesamtherstellung, West Germany: Proff and Co., Kg., Reprint, 1970. Original Ed., 1871.
- _____. Ed., Keralolpatti. (Malayalam). Mangalore: Basel Mission Press, 1843; 3rd Ed., 1874.
- _____. Kerala Parama (Malayalam). Mangalore: Mission Press, 1868.
- Husen, Torsten. The School in Question. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979.

- Hutton, J.H. Caste in India. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1946. Reprint, Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1961.
- Iyer, L.A. Krishna. Social History of Kerala. 2 Vols. Madras: Book Centre Publications, 1968, 1970.
- Iyer, L.K. Ananthakrishna. The Cochin Tribes and Castes. 2 Vols. Madras: Higginbothams Co., 1909 and 1912.
- Iyer, N.E. Viswanatha, Compiler. Dr. Herman Gundert: A Study. (Malayalam). Cochin: University of Cochin, 1972.
- Jacob, K. Folk Tales of Kerala. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1972.
- Jones, Clifford R. and Jones, Betty True. Kathakali: An Introduction to the Dance Drama of Kerala. San Francisco: The American Society for Eastern Arts, 1970.
- Jordanus, Friar. The Wonders of the East. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1863.
- Kabir, Humayun. Education in New India. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1956.
- Kalathiveettil, Teresa. Teaching of Civics in the State of Kerala, Ph.D. Dissertation. Chicago: Loyola University, 1958.
- Kareem, C.K. Kerala Under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan. Ernakulam: Paico Publishing House, 1973.
- Ketkar, Shridhar, V. The History of Caste in India. Vol. I. Ithaca, New York: Taylor and Carpenter, 1908.
- King, Edmund J. World Perspectives in Education. New York: Bobbs-Merril Company, 1962.

- Koshy, M.J. Genesis of Political Consciousness in Kerala. Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society, 1972.
- _____. K.C. Mammen Mappilai: The Man and His Vision. Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society, 1976.
- Koshy, Ninan. Caste in the Kerala Churches. Bangalore: The Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, 1968.
- Kurian, George Thomas. Historical and Cultural Dictionary of India. Metuchen, New Jersey: The Scare Crow Press, 1976.
- Kuriyan, George. India: A General Survey. New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1969.
- Kurup, K.K.N. Aspects of Kerala History and Culture. Trivandrum: College Book House, 1977.
- Law, Narendra Nath. Promotion of Learning in India by Early European Settlers. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1915.
- Luniya, B.N. Evolution of Indian Culture. Agra: Lakshmi Narain Agarwal. First Ed., 1951; Fourth Revised Ed., 1967.
- Lyall, Alfred. The Rise and Expansion of British Dominion in India. New York: Howard Fertig, 1968.
- Majumdar, R.C. History of the Freedom Movement in India. Vol. II, Second Ed. Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1975.
- Mankekar, D.R. The Red Riddle of Kerala. Bombay: Manaktalas, 1965.
- Mathew, K.M., Ed. Manorama Year Book, 1980. Kottayam: Manorama Publishing House, 1980.

- Mathur, V.S. Education and Future of India. Ambala: The Indian Publication, 1962.
- Mayer, Adrien, C. Land and Society in Malabar. London: Oxford Univeristy Press, 1952.
- Menon, A. Sreehhara. Cultural Heritage of Kerala: An Introduction. Cochin: East-West Publication, 1978.
- _____. A Survey of Kerala History. Kottayam: S.P.C. Society, 1967.
- Menon, C.A. Ballads of North Malabar, Vol. I. Madras: University of Madras, 1935.
- Menon, Chelanat, Achyuta. Ezzuttaccan and His Age. Madras: University of Madras, 1940.
- Menon, K.P. Padmanabha. History of Kerala, Vol. I and III. Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1924, Reprint, 1933.
- Moulavi, C.N. Ahammed and Abdul Kareem, K.K. Mohammed. Mahataya Mappila Sahitya Parampariam. (Malayalam, The Great Literary Tradition of Malabar Muslims). Calicut: Parasparasahayi Cooperative Press, 1978.
- Mohammed, P.A. Seythu, Ed. Kerala Charitram, Vol. II. (Malayalam History of Kerala). Ernakulam: Kerala History Association, 1974.
- Mookerji, Radha Kumud. Ancient Indian Education. London: Macmillan and Co., 1947; Fourth Ed., Delhi: Motilal Barnarsidas, 1969.
- Mukerji, S.N. History of Education in India. Baroda: Acharya Book Depot, 1966.
- Nair, P.K. Parameswaran. History of Malayalam Literature. New Delhi: Sahitya Academi, 1967.

- _____. Nair Service Society Chrithram, Vol. I
(Malayalam, History of Nair Service Society)
Changanacherry: Nair Service Society,
1972.
- Nair, R. Ramakrishnan. Constitutional Experiments
in Kerala. Trivandrum: The Kerala Academy
of Political Science, 1964.
- _____. Social Structure and Political Development
in Kerala. Trivandrum: The Kerala Academy of
Political Science, 1976.
- Nambiar, P. Sankaran. Malayala Sahitya Charitra
Samgraham, (Malayalam, A Short History of
Malayalam Literature). Kottayam: S.P.C. Society
1922. Reprint, 1964.
- Namboodiripad, E.M.S. Kerala: Yesterday, Today and
Tomorrow. Calcutta: National Book Agency,
1967.
- _____. The National Question in Kerala. Bombay:
Peoples Publishing House, 1952.
- Nikam, N.A. and McKeon, R., Tr. and Ed.
The Edicts of Asoka. Chicago: University of
Chicago Press, 1959.
- Nayar, S.K. Keralathide Natoti Natakangel (Malayalam,
Folk Dramas of Kerala) Madras: University of
Madras, 1955. Second Ed., 1962.
- Nayar, K.Balachandran, Ed. In Quest of Kerala, Vol. I.
Trivandrum: Accent Publications, 1974.
- Paniker, K. Ayyappa. A Short History of Malayalam
Literature. Trivandrum: Government of Kerala,
Department of Public Relations, 1977.
- Panikkar, K.M. A History of Kerala 1498-1801.
Annamalai: Annamalai University, 1960.

- _____. A Survey of Indian History. Bomaby: Asia Publishing House, 1964.
- Parett, Z.M. Malankara Nazaranikal, Vol. I. (Malayalam, Malabar Christians). Kottayam: Manorama Publishing House, 1965.
- Patel, M.S. The Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1953.
- Peanius, Clemens. Alphabetum Grandonico - Malabaricum Sive Samscrudonicum. Rome: 1772.
- Peet, Rev. Joseph. A Grammar of the Malayalam Language. Cottayam: C.M.S. Press, 1860. Reprint, Osnabruck: Biblio Verlag, 1980.
- Perumalil, A.C. The Apostles in India. Patna: Xavier Teacher's Training Institute, Second Enlarged Ed., 1971.
- Piggot, Stuart. Prehistoric India. Baltimore: Penguin Books; Reprint, 1961.
- Pillai, Elamkulam Kunjan. Studies in Kerala History. Kottayam: National Book Stall, 1970.
- Pillai, Kainikara Padmanabha. The Red Interlude in Kerala. Trivandrum: The Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee, 1959.
- Pillai, P. Govinda. History of Malayalam Literature. (Malayalam). Kottayam: S.P.C. Society, 1956; Reprint, 1965.
- Pillai, P.N. Kunjan. Kerala Bhashayute Vikasa parinamangal, (Malayalam, Evolution of the Malayalam Language). Kottayam: S.P.C. Society, 1953, Reprint, 1967.

- Pillai, P.K. Sivasankara, Kunchan Nampiyarude Thullal Kathakal (Malayalam, The Thullal Plays of Kuchan Nampiar). Trichur: Kerala Sahitya Academi, 1970; Second Impression, 1976.
- Pillai, Suranad Kunjan, Malayalam Lexicon, Vol. I. Trivandrum: The University of Kerala, 1965.
- Pillai, T.K. Velu. The Travancore State Manual, 4 Vols. Trivandrum: The Government of Travancore, 1940.
- Pothan, S.G. The Syrian Christians of Kerala. New York: Asia Publishing House, 1963.
- Puthiakunnel, Thomas. Keralathile Seminarikal (Malayalam, Seminaries of Kerala). Ernakulam: Janatha Book Stall, 1968.
- Radhakrishnan, S. and Moore, Charles, A Source Book in Indian Philosophy. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957.
- Ranson, C.W. The Christian Minister in India. London: Lutterworth Press, 1946.
- Rudolph, Susanne Hoerber and Rudolph, Lloyd I., Education and Politics in India. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972.
- Sargent, Sir John. Society, Schools and Progress in India. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1968.
- Sen, N.B., Development of Education in New India. New Delhi: New Book Society of India, 1966.
- Shah, A.B., The Great Debate: Language, Controversy and University Education. Bombay: Lalvani Publishing House, 1968.
- Sharma, C. Gyan. Early Brahmanic Education: An Historical Monograph on the Ancient Indian Education: Ph.D. Dissertation. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1926.

Siquera, T.N., S.J. The Education of India. Bombay: Oxford University Press, 4th Edition, 1952.

Sreedharan, C.P. Innathe Sahityakaranmar (Malayalam, A Critical Directory of Contemporary Malayalam Writers with a Brief History of Malayalam Literature). Kottayam: Sahityavedi Publications, 1969.

Shrimali, K.L. A Search for Values in Indian Education. New Delhi: New India Press, 1971.

_____. The Wardha Scheme. Udaipur: Vidya Bhavan Society, 1960.

Strickland, W. and Marshall, T.W.M. Catholic Missions in Southern India to 1865. London: Longman, Green and Co., 1865.

Thomas, P.J., Dr. Malayalam Literature - Contribution of Christians (Malayalam). Kottayam: Sahitya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society, 1935. Rev. Ed., 1961.

Thomas, T.M. Indian Educational Reforms in Cultural Perspective. Delhi: S.Chand and Co., 1970.

Thirunallur, Karunakaran. Malayalabhasha Parinamam, Sidhantangalum Vastutakalum (Malayalam, Evolution of Malayalam: Theories and Facts) Trivandrum: Prabhatam Printing Co., 1965.

Trueba, et al. Bilingual - Multicultural Education and the Professional: From Theory to Practice. Rowley, Mass. Newburry House Publishers, 1979.

Ulloor, S. Parameswara Iyer. Kerala Sahitya Charithram, Vol. I., (Malayalam, History of Kerala Literature) Trivandrum: University of Travancore Department of Publications, 1957.

Varghese, Mammen, Ed. Manorama Year Book 1980 (Malayalam) Kottayam: Malayala Manorama Co., Ltd., 1980.

- Varma, A.R. Rajaraja. Kerala Paniniyam (Malayalam Grammar): Kottayam: S.P.C. Society, 1967.
- Varriar, M.S. Chandrasekhara. Bhasha Sahityam, Malayala Piravikku Munpu (Malayalam, Malayalam Literature before the birth of Malayalam) Kottayam: S.P.C. Society, 1969.
- Vettam, Mani., Ed. Malayala Sahitya Charitram, Vol. I. (Malayalam, History of Malayalam Literature). Kottayam: Gurunathan Publications, 1971.
- VonFurer - Haimendorf, Christoph, Ed. Caste and Kin in Nepal, India and Ceylon. New York: Asia Publishing House, 1966.
- Zinkin, Taya. Caste Today. London: Oxford University Press, 1962; reprinted, 1963.
- Zacharias, Fr. An Outline of Hinduism. Alwaye: S.H. League, 1959.

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS AND DOCUMENTS

- A Hand Book on Kerala Trivandrum: The Kerala State Department of Public Relations, 1959.
- Aiya, V. Nagam The Travancore State Manual 3 Vols. Trivandrum: The Travancore Government Press, 1906.
- Basic Education in India: Report of the Assessment Committee on Basic Education. New Delhi: Ministry of Education Government of India, 1956.
- Census of Native Cochin 1875 Madras: The Scottish Press, 1877.

Census of Travancore 1875 Trivandrum: The Travancore Government Press, 1876.

Census of India 1881 Vol. II. The Presidency of Madras Madras: The Government Press, 1883.

Census of Cochin 1891 Part I Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1893.

Census of India 1891 Vol. XIII Madras Madras: The Government Press, 1893.

Census of Travancore 1891 Madras: Addison and Co., 1894.

Report on the Census of Travancore 1891 Madras: Addison and Co., 1894.

Census of India 1901 Vol. XX Cochin Part I Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1903.

Census of India 1901 Vol. XXA Cochin Part II Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1902.

Census of India 1901 Vol. XI-B Madras Part III Madras: The Government Press, 1902.

Census of India 1901 Vol. XV Madras Part I Madras: The Government Press, 1902.

General Report of the Census of India 1901 London: Darling and Son Ltd., 1904.

Census of India 1911 Vol. XII Madras Part I Madras: The Government Press, 1912.

Census of India 1911 Vol. XXIII Travancore Part I Trivandrum: The Ananda Press, 1912.

Census of India 1911 Vol. XXIII Travancore Part II Trivandrum: The Ananda Press, 1912.

Census of India 1921 Vol. I Part I Calcutta: The Government Press, 1924.

- Census of India 1921 Vol. XXV Travancore Part I
Trivandrum: The Government Press, 1922.
- Census of India 1931 Vol. XXI Cochin Parts I and II
Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1933.
- Census of India 1931 Vol. XIV Madras Part I Madras:
Madras: The Government Press, 1931.
- Census of India 1931 Vol. XIV Madras Parts I and II
Calcutta: The Government of India Central
Publications, 1932.
- Census of India 1931 Vol. XXVIII Travancore Part I
Trivandrum: The Government Press, 1932.
- 1951 Census Hand Book, Malabar District Madras: The
Government Press, 1953.
- Census of India 1951 Vol. XIII Travancore-Cochin
Parts I, I-A and II Delhi: Government of India
Publications, 1953.
- Census of India 1961 Vol. VII Kerala Part IX
Trivandrum: Superintendent of Census Operations,
1967.
- Guidebook for Preprimary Teachers Trivandrum: State
Institute of Education, Department of Education
of the State of Kerala, 1971.
- The Imperial Gazetteer of India Vol. X Oxford:
The Clarendon Press, 1908.
- The Imperial Gazetteer of India Vol. XVII Oxford:
The Clarendon Press, 1908.
- The Imperial Gazetteer of India Vol. XXIV Oxford:
The Clarendon Press, 1908.
- The Imperial Gazetteer of India Vol. IV Oxford:
The Clarendon Press, 1909.

Innes, C.A. Madras District Gazetteers: Malabar and Anjengo Madras: The Government Press, 1908, reprint 1915.

_____. Madras District Gazetteers: Malabar Vol. I Madras: The Government Press, 1908; reprint 1951.

Kareem, C.K. Ed. Kerala and Her Culture Trivandrum: The Government of Kerala, 1971.

The Kerala Education Act and Rules Trivandrum: The Government Press, 1969.

Logan, William Manual of the Malabar District Madras: The Government Press, 1887; rev. ed., 1906.

_____. Malabar 2 Vols. Madras: The Government Press, 1887; reprint 1951.

Memon, C. Achyuta The Cochin State Manual Ernakulam: The Cochin Government Press, 1911.

Pillai, T.K. Velu The Travancore State Manual 4 Vols. Trivandrum: The Government of Travancore Press, 1940.

Raghavan, P.S. Ed., The History of Freedom Movement in Kerala Trivandrum: The Government Press, 1970.

APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Fr. Kurian Cherian Thottupuram has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. John M. Wozniak, Director
Professor, Foundations, Loyola

Dr. Gerald L. Gutek
Dean, School of Education and Professor,
Foundations, Loyola

Dr. Jasper J. Valenti
Associate Dean, School of Education and Professor,
Administration and Supervision, Loyola

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

April 24, 1981
Date

John M. Wozniak
Director's Signature