

division of labour, there is very little need to elaborate upon the greatness of *Varnaashramas* discovered by our *Rishis*, the creators of the *Smritis*.<sup>69</sup>"

So also, it was felt that the traditional Sanskrit-based education could be effectively reformed into a means by which the Individual could be fashioned. It recommended that the *Brahmacharyashrama* (celibate life prescribed for young Nambutiri men) could be converted into a full-fledged period of training in which

"..the discipline enjoined in education, true humility, regulatory practices by which self-control is instilled and the means by which Vedic knowledge and knowledge necessary in practical life..... are provided."<sup>70</sup>"

Side-by-side it was also suggested that Nambutiris should acquire English education and Western knowledge in institutions of learning organised according to "the principles inherent in the *Gurukula* system of the olden days..... which would promote also a true understanding of "eastern knowledge"<sup>71</sup> and lauded the educational endeavours of Tagore, Gandhi and Munshi Ram.<sup>72</sup> It further noted that "according to the *Parashara Sruthi*, Brahmins are not prohibited from entering professions like agriculture prescribed for Vaishyas....."<sup>73</sup> and hence recommended trades like finance, banking etc. as well as the formation of Agricultural Co-operative Banks.<sup>74</sup> But, at the same time, it suggested that "this must be done without much interruption of *Tapas*.<sup>75</sup>" On the one hand it insisted that spiritual pursuits be retained as the distinguishing feature of the Nambutiri (even recommending that they preserve and further their 'spirituality' so that others would retain their faith in Nambutiris' spiritual powers, thereby retaining traditional sources of income, like *Pratigraham*<sup>76</sup>). On the other hand, it allowed that customs and practices appropriate to the adopted professions, as well as those necessary for the "preservation of the body" (in all the vagueness of this specification) may be accepted even in preference to established ones.<sup>77</sup>

The *Memorandum* and E.T. Divakaran Moos' suggestions, however recommended that the internal hierarchies of the community must remain more or less intact. E.T. Divakaran Moos held the view that intra-caste marriage of younger men,<sup>78</sup> and

altering of control over property in *Illams* need be allowed only according to specific circumstances.<sup>79</sup> Both rejected ending *Sambandham*, refusing to characterise it as immoral or wasteful.<sup>80</sup> Both are silent about female education; *Moos* suggested permission of intra-caste marriage with some more frequency as a solution to the 'problems related to marriage of girls<sup>81</sup>', the *Memorandum* rejects the proposal to allow Antharjanams to travel by rail on the ground that it will cause *Sambarkkadosham*.<sup>82</sup>

Reforming, in these proposals, seemed to involve two things. First, it meant acquiring certain new skills like English education; second, it meant setting right internal 'imbalances'. *Moos* went on to discuss the crisis of the community in the language of *Ayurveda*, diagnosing it as basically due to internal aberrations, and prescribed a cure that would restore the 'disturbed humours' to their normal state.<sup>83</sup> The reformist organisation was conceived to be one that would not only provide the essential skills for modern life but would also work as an agency that settled internal disputes.<sup>84</sup> Specific suggestions like the limited support for intra-caste marriage are considered to be measures that would redress imbalances. The reformed community is to be marked not so much by increased population or material prosperity as by better internal regulation and a bare minimum of modification absolutely essential for the preservation of a specific way of life in a rapidly modernising society. These proposals too accept the present to be a sorely lacking one; however, they propose to remedy the lack by rejuvenating a lifestyle they consider truly characteristic of Nambutiris.<sup>85</sup>

A second pair of proposals that may be considered here are the *Nambutiri Family Regulation Committee Report*<sup>86</sup> (1925) and the *Nambutiri Female Education Commission Report*<sup>87</sup> (1927), both of which, again, have important sharings, and which articulate a specific position vis-a-vis Re-form. In both, the reformed community is one which has adopted modern arrangements of family life; which has reorganised property-rights, inheritance and management; which has clearly accepted the modern domestic-public demarcation as the key manner of organising social life. There is the firm conviction that unless such modernisation was not undertaken, survival in modern society was impossible. It argued at the same time for the greater exclusivity of the Nambutiris—for instance, through strong resistance to *Sambandham* marriages. This inhered in the very

definition of the family accepted in the *Family Regulation Committee Report* in which the family was accepted as consisting of the householder (the eldest male member), the younger men, the women and children.<sup>88</sup> This is different from the definition preferred by E.T. Divakaran Moos, in which the *Taravad* is not only the immediate family but also includes the *Adiyar* (the Nair servant-class), *Veluthedan* (the washerman), the *Velakkathulavan* (the oil-man) etc. who are seen to have certain distinct rights over the *Taravad*.<sup>89</sup> Besides being a more exclusive unit, the modern Nambutiri community was also to be strong in numbers and this too was found necessary to bargain effectively in one's own interest in modern society :

"If the war of life is to be won, then an army is necessary. Guns, swords and spears might not be needed for community-life, but tongues, arms and legs are all needed in great numbers. We have known from experience that the Janmi-Kudiyam Bill and the Religious Institutions Regulation all are the victories won by groups which are energetic and populous, over those who are not....."<sup>90</sup>

In both these proposals there is a strong plea for the transformation of the Nambutiris and the Antharjanams into modern Men and Women. This is regarded as the single most necessary step in reforming the community. Nambutiris were continually urged to engage in gainful agriculture, industry, finance and other professions, and to acquire modern knowledge. The *Family Regulation Committee Report* cautioned that

"We must not consider it very fruitful to enter the struggle of life with our share in the family property as the sole source of support. Only he who is capable of earning through his own labour will be successful in these times."<sup>91</sup>

Women of the community were to receive an education that would equip them for modern domesticity—indeed, it was not so much the complete lack of education that seemed the problem.<sup>92</sup> The sort of education received by the Antharjanams was found useless in modern life, and hence to be replaced with a new scheme that would prepare them to be efficient housewives and good companions to modern-educated husbands.<sup>93</sup> The difference between the two is well-evident in the responses obtained to the questionnaire circulated by the Female Education

Commission. While the well-known Sanskrit scholar Punnashery Nambi recommended a scheme that would be helpful in preparing Antharjanams for performance of daily rituals and practices carried out in *Illams* and the essentials of kitchen-management,<sup>94</sup> the other responses, on the contrary, suggest a form of training that would prepare Antharjanams for modern domestic life.<sup>95</sup> The Report agrees with the latter, laying down a curriculum that included languages, music, history, geography, painting, cures for children's ailments, post-partum care, sewing and enough of mathematics for house-management.<sup>96</sup>

Such a clear-cut definition of roles is also well-evident in the Draft Regulation prepared by the Nambutiri Family Regulation Committee, in which control and management of property is firmly entrusted to men. These changes, however, did not seem very drastic. In the traditional way of life, there was already a strong division of space, with women being assigned the inner-quarters of the *Illam* (the word *Antharjanam* means 'inner-people'), and men, the outer world. It seemed quite possible to modernise without drastically violating divisions—the *Report* put forth the suggestion that young girls be educated in *Illams* by lady tutors,<sup>97</sup> even though it was critical of the seclusion of Antharjanams.<sup>98</sup> When faced with criticism of the apparent assent given to the *ghosha* system (seclusion) in the *Report*,<sup>99</sup> its defenders described it as a 'practical, viable strategy' to spread modern female education.<sup>100</sup> In both proposals, Re-form was not to be achieved through a violent and direct confrontation with the established order, though there was a clear perception of the power-stakes involved in re-forming. The Draft Family Regulation sought not to uproot the established family structure but to institute an effective set of checks and balances that would ensure good management by the *Karanavar*—even when it strongly recommended measures for improving individual initiative of younger men. The position of *Karanavar* was made into one that could be potentially occupied by any adult male member who sought to form a separate family-unit on his own and, not just the eldest son.<sup>101</sup> All adult male members could interfere in the management of properties and resources, unlike in the earlier arrangement. Reforming here appears as a subtle process of change by which existing structures are altered by allowing new institutions to proliferate in and through older ones, and not

through sudden or violent measures. The reformist organisation is expected to play the role of initiator of this process. The Family Regulation Committee Report rejected the possibility of the reform organisation playing the role of mediator in disputes working to maintain status quo; it rather preferred to conceive of the reform organisation as a platform which would discuss ways and means through which Re-form could be attained,<sup>102</sup> and as an agency working to implement measures found necessary, mobilising the necessary support from both inside and outside, such as petitioning the State to initiate legislation etc.<sup>103</sup>

The conception of the ideal modern collectivity and the project of Re-form found in the speeches and writings of V.T. Bhattatiripad—the core of ideas that came to be identified as the 'radical' position—was one that called for a thoroughgoing modernisation to be achieved through directly attacking and demolishing established institutions. Modernising the economic life of the community was thus conceived as involving not only modernising agriculture as enterprising landlords but also the removal of feudal relations themselves.<sup>104</sup> Acquiring modern education was to be only the obtaining of a necessary skill for modern life but a means towards developing resistance towards the older order.<sup>105</sup> Modernising family life was seen to need much more than the promotion of intra-caste marriage or the provision of training in modern domesticity to Antharjanams—it also seemed to need promotion of the remarriages of widows and even the separation of young women forced to marriage with old men, and providing a more open education to women that would expose them to the world. The debate over the suggestions of the Female Education Commission demonstrated the specificity of this position quite well. While a section argued that giving a limited education to Antharjanams in *Illams* was adequate to the needs of the community,<sup>107</sup> there was the strong counter-argument that the transformation of Antharjanams into Women cannot be achieved without providing them with an exposure to the world outside, effectively breaking the *ghosha*.<sup>108</sup> The ideal modern Nambutiri community thus reformed would be one that had no rigid boundaries with larger collectivities such as the 'Nation', 'Keralam', 'Hindu' etc. At the same time the identity of the new Nambutiri—the Nambutiri-Man—was to be completely distanced from the identity of the Nambutiri given by the traditional order. This, however, did not seem to require the total abandonment

of the name. As E.M.S. Nambudiripad remarked in the Ongallur meeting of the YKS,

"The only request I make of you is to emulate the model of the early leaders of the *Yogakshema Sabha*. What did they do? They saw that without English education the community would be the laughing-stock of society—they were willing to sacrifice that amount of *Brahmanyam* in order to spread English education. In the same way, if we do not destroy our lazy life—if each man and woman of the community do not begin to live through labour—we will become the target of not just the ridicule but also the hatred of others. Destroy the *Brahmanyam* so that each person may be sent to work (*destroy it only to that extent*)—this is all I ask.<sup>109</sup>"

Along with this, the task of the YKS was defined as forging an identity for the Nambutiris which was completely separated from the identity of the Nambutiri given in the older order, preparing them to live "like the ordinary citizens of Keralam" and "co-operating with the progressive forces that were working to build a free, socially-just and prosperous united Keralam". However, he clarified that "a Keralam devoid of *Jati* and Community" need not be accepted as the final aim of the YKS.<sup>110</sup> Remarking that such a Keralam was inevitably in the future, he pointed out that "our programme must be aimed at making the Nambutiris capable of playing the rule they deserve" in that society.<sup>111</sup> Drawing out the implications of such a stance, he went on to say that the exclusivity of the Nambutiri community must be ended,<sup>112</sup> and that active efforts must be initiated to form a common front among modern community-building organisations to end *jati* hierarchy and mobilise people towards building a united and progressive Keralam.<sup>113</sup> While the identity of the 'Nambutiri' was not to be necessarily given up, it was to be transformed into one that would not clash with the larger identity of being 'Malayalee'.

In the 1930's the YKS meetings witnessed charged debates over these different positions, with proponents of each trying to discredit and displace others. As E.M.S. pointed out later, this was based upon the mistaken notion that the different positions articulated were completely incompatible with one another.<sup>114</sup>

The notions of *Swatantryam* and the Individual that recurred in all these proposals were not drastically different; the fashioning of the Individual was commonly accepted as the goal of reformist activity. But also striking is another commonality which runs through all these proposals : the way in which they conceive of the relation between the Reformer and those subjected to reform, especially between the reformist Nambutiri-Man and the Antharjanam subjected to reform.

### Reformer's Burden

Reforming Antharjanams was an intense concern within Nambutiri reformism which gained considerable momentum by the end of the '20s. Suggestions regarding this involved many elements—preparing Antharjanams for modern domestic life by instructing them in modern housewifery; the promotion of monogamous intra-caste marriage; making Antharjanams desirable sexual partners for modernised Nambutiris by altering their dress-conventions; making them informed companions by adding to their understanding of modern society, its norms, rituals, practices etc.; equipping them with the necessary skills for greater interaction with the modern world. There was even the argument that reforming Antharjanams would remain incomplete until they "attain education and success in examinations, employment and assets like the women of other communities, put an end to all sorts of restrictions, and enrich the community's inner and outer domains."<sup>115</sup> Reforming Antharjanams was, however, always at the centre of debate; reformers differed very significantly in their conception of the reforming that the Antharjanams were to undergo, the best means through which they could be reformed, the priorities that were to be kept in mind in formulating the means of reforming etc.

Thus, some reformers argued that Antharjanams were to be reformed without any depletion of the 'special virtues' that, they claimed, were to be found in them;<sup>116</sup> others held the view that they should be reformed by removing all particularities that may be found in them;<sup>117</sup> some felt that a modern education that introduced Antharjanams to modern domestic life provided in the seclusion of *Illams* was sufficient;<sup>118</sup> other strongly argued against this, favouring greater exposure to the world outside;<sup>119</sup>

there was also the argument that Antharjanams should voice their demands and opinions through *streesamajams* which did evoke alarmed responses that this went against the spirit of complementarity expected in ideal modern family life.<sup>120</sup> There were also arguments that *swatantryam* would be attained only when Antharjanams actively entered public life;<sup>121</sup> against this it was argued that encouraging women to overstep their role as managers of the domestic domain would lead to war between the sexes that would ultimately undermine social life itself.<sup>122</sup>

There was, however, little doubt that the Reformer—self-proclaimedly the active agent of change who seemed to possess true insight into the past and the present of the community, who seemed to possess the capability to suggest and initiate measures that would shape the future community, and hence seemed privileged to suggest and implement alterations in the established way of life, potentially affecting all members—was male. The formation of the YKS was significant in transforming the nature and extent of male power within the community. The annual meetings of the YKS became for a in which *all* (male) members who could be counted as mature men who attended the assembly could express opinions regarding the general affairs of the community<sup>123</sup> (despite the fact that women's attendance at the YKS meetings rose steadily, especially by the 1930's). This authority was often posed as opposed to the traditional sorts of male-centered authority within the community, to the authority of the *Smarthans*, the *Vaidikans* and the *Addhyans*. In these struggles Antharjanams continued to remain 'Anthar-janams'—people who inhabited the 'inner' space of *Illams*. They came to be conceived of as objects of re-forming, not as its agents. Antharjanams were to be 'led out', 'rescued', 'liberated', ushered on 'the frontstage from the kitchen', by the Reformer-Nambutiri. Here the distance between different positions vis-a-vis reforming Antharjanams is considerably reduced—whether the Antharjanams were to be 'protected' (as E.T. Divakaran Moos and the *Kutumba Regulation Committee* recommended in their different ways) or 'empowered' (as V.T. Bhattatiripad and E.M.S. Nambutiripad argued, again, in their very distinct ways). It is no surprise that the theme of the liberation of the hapless Antharjanam from the clutches of tradition through the agency of the Nambutiri-Reformer happens to be strikingly recurrent in reformist literary



writing.<sup>125</sup> The corresponding 'reverse' theme—that of her death and devastation in the absence of such a guiding light—is equally common. And in texts like *Ritumati*, Antharjanams are warned against seeking to venture into the world on their 'own'—that is, without the aid of a Nambutiri-Reformer.<sup>126</sup> When the Antharjanam makes an alliance with a man of a different community, it may be made under the guidance of the Nambutiri-Reformer—then it becomes legitimate.<sup>127</sup>

But it is critical to note that the new sort of male-centered authority was significantly different from older forms not only in extent but also in nature. Thus the relation between the Nambutiri-Reformer and those whom he sought to reform, especially Antharjanams, was envisaged to be decidedly different from the relation between the Nambutiri and the Antharjanam within the strictly Patriarchal *Illam*. Kanippayur in his Memoirs remembers that the submission of the female members to males was fostered in *Illams* by a number of means, like, for example, preferential consideration towards boys.<sup>128</sup> Boys and girls were strictly segregated from an early age physically, and very different daily routines were prescribed for boys and girls.<sup>129</sup> The obligations and bonds of marriage too were apparently quite different—indeed the nature of marriage in the traditional way of life was the target of some of the most severe criticism of the reformers. It was pointed out the tie of marriage in *Veli* involved no bonds of sentimental affection, and that it was contracted merely for the sake of maintaining the ritualistic practices of the *Illam*, for obtaining heirs, or worse, to facilitate the marriage of daughters. Reformist criticism of married life in the *Illam* often claimed that the husband's power over the wife was a violent, coercive one, which could even send the wife to her grave. M.R.Bhattatiripad's explosive play *Marakkudaikkullile Mahanarakam* (The Hell Beneath the Cadjan Umbrella) which dwelt upon the violence inflicted by a husband upon his wife, it is claimed, was based upon a true incident.<sup>131</sup>

In contrast to this, the relation between the Reformer-Nambutiri and the Antharjanam he rescues is not one in which the latter is made to obey the former through an ever-present, if veiled, threat of violence. In fact, the Reformer is expected to guide the Antharjanam by helping her to develop her own internality (marrying her was often projected as the first move in

this direction). Thus the Reformer-Nambutiri was to take the responsibility of developing the Antharjanam into modern Womanhood, and willingness to accept the 'Nambutiri-Man's Burden' was often found crucial in the making of the ideal Reformer-Nambutiri: ".it is not befitting to reject the plea of an orphaned woman to take her in, being a devotee of the community, or a man (*Manushyan*). I have abandoned my community-life for the future-welfare of a hapless woman.." <sup>132</sup>

Radical reformers tried to suggest measures by which the element of Love would be brought into the marital union, so that the traditional bonds of marriage would be completely transformed. V.T. Bhattatiripad, for instance, suggested that Antharjanams should adopt modern dress, acquire modern knowledge and familiarity with modern ways of life in order to establish a new sort of relation—one of companionship—with their modern-educated husbands. <sup>133</sup> But besides these suggestions V.T's literary re-creation of the young Antharjanam as active agent in Love elsewhere deserves attention. <sup>134</sup> The Reformer-husband thus appeared to be teacher, guide, protector and lover to whom the Antharjanam, besides being the object to be reformed, is also the object of desire. This non-reciprocal relation of power was justified by projecting an ideal future in which Antharjanams would fully attain Womanhood and exercise that specific sort of authority attributed to Woman in and through the domestic domain. It was expected that in such an ideal society, this non-reciprocal relation, which seemed to be 'the need of the hour', would be unnecessary.

The appearance of the Woman-Reformer <sup>135</sup>—Antharjanams like Parvati Nenminimangalam who abandoned *ghosha* and actively entered reformist circles—complicated this relation but did not overturn it. In the writings of the Antharjanams who participated in discussions there is a tense acceptance of the Nambutiri-Reformer's key role in their liberation. O.C. Devaki Antharjanam, writing in 1928, opined:

"....It is not enough that they (Nambutiris) become ready to liberate us.... we too have to get ready to embrace that freedom.... So the first thing that Nambutiris should do today is to prepare us for this. Mental preparedness is difficult to create. In this condition we will not desire proper freedom (*swatantryam*); we should not, at this time, strive

for it. What we Antharjanams request you urgently is to endeavour to secure our liberty to wear clothes and ornaments according to our husbands' tastes, to travel freely with them and to pursue proper married life. *In reality this freedom is not for our sake alone; you, too, will have freedom in precisely the same proportion as we do. As long as this lacuna remains unremedied all your efforts are bound to end as farcial exercises.*"<sup>136</sup>

Here there is no doubt regarding the acceptance of the Nambutiri-Reformer's role in preparing Antharjanams for *swatantryam*; however, there is also the hint that the *swatantryam* of men is dependent upon that of women.<sup>137</sup> Antharjanams who wrote in contemporary journals and newspapers and spoke in reformist meetings were critical of the lethargy they perceived in the Reformer-Nambutiris' fulfilment of their 'responsibility' towards Antharjanams. Parvati Nenminimangalam's speeches are especially worth noting in this regard—her challenge to radicals whether anyone in the audience would be willing to wed a widow;<sup>138</sup> her criticism of radicals like V.T. and E.M.S. regarding their self-distancing from community-reform.<sup>139</sup> But the criticism of the Nambutiri-Reformer's power over the Antharjanams figures more stringently in some short stories by Lalitambika Antharjanam written in the 1930's, notably 'Itu Ashayamano'<sup>140</sup>? (1935) and 'Prasadam' (1939).<sup>141</sup> The former mocks at the Reformer-husband's blind faith that his wife must be necessarily his inferior and demonstrates how the non-reciprocal relation between the Reformer and those who were to be reformed by him actually cancels out the establishment of the ideal complementary sexual exchange between the sexes in the family. In the latter, the male Reformer's expectation of gratitude from the women whom they 'rescue' and turn into reform-workers, receives a sharp and biting retort.

Above all the differences that mark the proposals regarding re-forming Antharjanams, the pervasiveness of the projection of the above-mentioned non-reciprocal relation between Nambutiri-Reformer and Antharjanam specifies a level of correspondence. If the goal set up in most of these proposals is the fashioning of a community organised according to the order of gender (in which complementary exchange between the sexes was to prevail), *the*

*chief means toward its achievement seemed to be the institution of a non-reversible relation of power between those who came into contact with the norms and mores of modern society earlier, and those who could not.* That the nature of this relation was envisaged to be of a 'pastoral' sort does not in any way make it any less a form of power.<sup>142</sup>

Making the Nambutiri family a site of reform also implied that it was also to become a site of pastoral power. Within the ideal reformist family (consisting of the Nambutiri-Reformer, the Antharjanam whom he brings out of the *Illam*, and children) the agent of such power was definitely the male.

### End-Note

In this brief examination of Nambutiri reformism, modern community-formation appears as a complex process envisaged to occur through the shaping of Individuality.. The ideal modern community, the goal of reformism, is most often conceived as organised by the order of gender, and thus the fashioning of Individuals also involves the development of gender—the fashioning of Men and Women. The reformist project saw a number of proposals that put forth ways and means towards achieving this end, all of which were based upon creation of knowledge of the community and its members resulting from self-examination (which, however, was heavily reliant on modern notions of the ideal Individual and Community, working as an ideal standard). In reformist self-knowledge both the Nambutiri and the Antharjanam of the traditional order appeared as 'lacking' figures, largely devoid of the qualities of Man and Woman. Further, it projected the *Illam* as the complete opposite of the modern family, in which women were in submission to men. However, this also seemed to require that Antharjanams be projected as passive figures, incapable of their own liberation. Given this, the liberation of Nambutiris and Antharjanams seemed to call for different strategies. While reformist speech and writing exhorted men to actively take up the challenge of self-transformation through a variety of means, ranging from adoption of the techniques of agricultural management etc. to mounting open challenge to authority in the *Illam*, the reform of Antharjanams was expected to occur through the agency of the Nambutiri-Reformer, mainly in the role of modern husband, father or brother.

The ideal modern community that would be constituted through complementary relations between Man and Woman was to be realised only in a hazy future when self-transformation would finally be complete.

However, there is no attempt here to generalise about community movements of the early twentieth-century Kerala from this brief look at Nambutiri reformism. It might be possible to agree that all movements that set up the building of a modern community as their goal were implicated, in one way or the other, to a greater or lesser extent, in the project of fashioning the Individual. Yet the specific ways in which this was dealt with could have been quite different and it is probably very important to focus upon this difference. Also the different sets of 'initial conditions' that reformers had to work with could have been significant --for example, the strict delineation of space between men and women in the *Illam* might have been important in the making of reforming strategies aimed at Antharjanams. But say, among the Syrian Christians, Nair groups, *Ambalavasi*<sup>143</sup> groups etc, the established delineation of space, duties etc. which were quite different from that in *Illams* could have worked to throw up reformist strategies quite different from those of Nambutiri reformism. Again, it might be true that reformist activity of most sorts were initiated mostly by men. But this does not render the enquiry into different reformist strategies pursued by different groups redundant.

As far as the Nambutiri community is concerned, the modern community organised according to 'the order of gender' continued to figure as a distant dream for very long, even in the post-reformist, post-Independence times. The play *Patanam* (The Fall) (1976) which dwells upon the post-Independence Nambutiri *Illam* depicts a gloomy scenario of devastation of the *Illam* by the new forces unleashed by modernisation.<sup>144</sup> The familiar stereotypes—Antharjanams, passive, suffering and victimised; the young Nambutiri, angry and frustrated—all appear with interesting touches here too. However, the oppressive force is no longer tradition, but a modernity that has 'betrayed' the Nambutiri, and the ideal modern community continues to be located in the future, yet to be actualised.

## Notes

1. P.K. Gopalakrishnan, *Keralathinte Samskarika Charitram*, (The Cultural History of Kerala), Thiruvananthapuram : State Institute of Languages, 1994, p. 525-26. Here the comparison is explicitly with the 'Bengal Renaissance' conceptualised by Liberal-nationalist historians.
2. A. Shreedhara Menon, *Kerala Samikaram* (The Culture of Kerala), Kottayam : SPSS, 1992, p. 181.
3. *ibid.*, p. 181.
4. A. Shreedhara Menon writes: "It is interesting to note that it is the community-organisations that have played the major role in ushering in social change in Kerala" (*ibid.* p. 174). Also, P.K.K. Menon, *The History of the Freedom Movement in Kerala*, Vol.II, Thiruvananthapuram : Govt. of Kerala, 1971, p. 455.
5. Mannath Padmanabhan in his *Smaranakal* (Memories) (Kottayam : SPSS, 1968), justifies his participation in community-building despite his disbelief in caste, in these terms. He had abandoned his caste-name, 'Pillai'. Also see, preface written by M. Govindan to M.K. Sanoo, *Sahodaran K. Ayyappan*, Kottayam : D.C. Books, 1989. Several other public figures active in nationalist and communist movements have attempted such justification. For instance, in a recent autobiography by V.R. Krishnan Ezhuthachan, it is mentioned that he was active in both the nationalist movement and in the *Ezhuthachan Samajam*, the community-movement at the same time, and that the two did not really clash. See, *Armakatha* (Autobiography), Thrissur, 1997, p. 33.
6. P.K.K. Menon, *op.cit.* n.4., p.455; P.K. Gopalakrishnan, 'Samudaya Parishkarana Prasthanangal' (Community Reform Movements), in *Keralam Charitram* Vol.I, Kochi : Kerala History Association, 1987, p. 1205.
7. P.K. Gopalakrishnan, *op.cit.*, n.1, p.523. E.M.S. Nambudiripad, however, has argued that the politicisation of the masses which community reform movements made possible was limited, and that they did not necessarily aid the formation of movements wider in scope. He views the social reform movements and the nationalist movement as distinct from each other, which, however, exerted mutual influence. The limited nature of the reform movements is found to lie in that they were often opposed to wider nationalist interests. E.M.S. Nambudiripad, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi* (Kerala: Motherland of Malayalees), Thiruvananthapuram : Deshabhimani Publications, 1981, pp. 269-70. E.M.S. himself admits later that the communities were able to insert a progressive agenda into many community-movements without altering their community-base. *Ibid.*, p. 336. Maybe this indicates that the community-organisation and the nationalist movement are both modern

collectivities which have striking similarities in the manner in which they pre-suppose the Individual and the Individual's positive relation to the Collectivity, even when opposed to each other in political interest

8. Examples are K. Ayyappan, *Social Revolution in a Kerala Village: A Study in Culture Change*, Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1965; C. H. Heimath, 'The Function of Hindu Social Reformers in Kerala With Special Reference to Kerala', *Indian Economic and Social History Review* Vol. 15(1) January-March 1978, pp. 27; R. Jeffrey, 'The Social Origins of a Caste Association, 1875-1905: The Founding of the SNDP Yogam', *South Asia* 4, October 1974, p. 40.
9. M.S.A. Rao, *Social Movements and Social Transformation: A Study in Two Backward Class Movements in India*, New Delhi, 1979; P. Chandra Mohan, 'Social and Political Protest in Travancore: A Study of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (1900-1938)', Unpublished M.Phil. Dissertation submitted to JNU, New Delhi, 1981, pp. 101-103.
10. P. Chandra Mohan, 'Popular Culture and Socio-Religious Reform: Narayana Guru and the Ezhavas of Travancore', in *Studies in History* Vol. 3(1) n. 2., 1987, pp. 63-78.
11. See, among innumerable articles of this sort, K. C. Narayanan, 'Verunangatha Vakku' (Ever-green words) in *Mathrubhumi Weekly* Vol. 74 (45), January 5, 1997, pp. 6-10.
12. Toshie Awaya, 'Women in the Nambutiri Caste Movement' in T. Mizushima and H. Yanagisawa (ed) *History and Society in South India*, Tokyo: Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 1996, pp. 51-52. She concludes that "...In order to establish the castes as discrete entities, it has been essential for the caste leaders to manipulate the sexuality of female members of their own caste" *ibid.*, p. 54.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
15. *Op.cit.* above, n. 2, n. 3.
16. See for instance, Kanippayur Sankaran Nambutiripad's description of the *murajapam* ceremony in which the pre-modern collectivity of Malayala Brahmins as a loose collection of groups, hierarchically linked, figures clearly. Kanippayur Sankaran Nambutiripad, *Ente Smaranakal* Vol. III, (My Memories) Kunnampulam: Panchangom Press, pp. 80-100. The phrase *Purathekku Kodukkal* (clumsily translated as 'Giving to Outside'), interestingly, meant both the practice of serving food to the Nair *Adiyar* (servant-class) after serving first the male members and then the female members of the *Illam*, and the practice of marrying off a woman from a group of higher up in the hierarchy (say *Addhyan*) into a group lower down (say *Ayyan*), usually, out of financial difficulties. The former meaning is given by Kanippayur in *Ente Smaranakal* Vol. I, p. 32, and the latter