

by the *Malayala Manorama*, which published an editorial in 1906, attacking it as a social evil, causing much pain to families. Apparently, women who were thus married off were treated as *Aryan* -- members of a group lower on the hierarchy—when they returned to their natal homes on special occasions etc. See, *Malayala Manorama* (henceforth, *M.M.*), Editorial, 'Puraththekku Kodukkal' ('Giving to Outside'), August 1, 1906. Kanippayur also hints at the lack of a unified set of rules governing conduct among the Nambutiris—he refers to clash between different authorities regarding interpretation of rules of penitence etc. An interesting instance of such disagreement is mentioned—here the issue was the penitence prescribed to a certain Nambutiri accused of adultery which was finally taken to court in 1877. The court apparently came to a decision by the argument that the procedure of trial by ordeal was not universally accepted among the Malayala Brahmins. *Ente Smaranakal* Vol. III, pp. 134-44. Here one may see how the notion of the modern community and the tendency of the community to possess 'universally accepted' rules are operative in the court's ruling, and how they are employed to make decisions regarding practice within the pre-modern collectivity. For another version of this incident see, K.P. Padmanabha Menon, *History of Kerala*, Cochin : Government of Cochin, 1929, pp. 267-70. He quotes the eye-witness account of O. Chandu Menon here. For an interesting account of power-differences fostered in and through the hierarchical groupings within 'Nambutiris' written from the view-point of a person born lower-down on this hierarchy as a *Moosad*, see K.V.M., *Atmakatha*, Kottayam : SPCS, 1966.

17. An incident reported by the *M.M.* in the 'Swadeshavartha' (Local News) column of January 16, 1930 illustrates this well. This was about an attempt to form a common front of Tamil and Malayala Brahmins to respond jointly to political issues. Apparently a meeting was called at Kilimanoor. However, the whole effort turned out to be a non-starter, with not a single Malayala Brahmin even approaching the venue.
18. The large number of articles appearing on this topic in contemporary Malayalam journalism all participate in this. Academic perspective on social reform movements in the all-India context has, however, undergone remarkable change in the recent years—traces of hero-worship are being steadily erased. See, for example, the collection of recent essays, Patricia Uberoi (ed.), *Social Reform, Sexuality and the State*, New Delhi : Sage Publications, 1996.
19. Editorial, *M.M.*, 'Smarthavicharithinu Idavarunnatinte Karnanagal' (The Reasons for Occurrence of Smarthavicharam), 12 July, 1905.
20. This was the *Smarthavicharam*—the ritual trial of offenders of the norms of sexual conduct among the Malayala Brahmins, in which the Antharjanam

suspected of such breach was stripped off her status as Antharjanam and labelled *Sadbanam*—literally, 'a thing that makes (*the trial*) possible'—and then subjected to a highly ritualised procedure of questioning, and excommunicated if proven guilty. The *Sadbanam* could be excommunicated only if she confessed to the breach of conduct; if a confession could not be extracted, she was returned to the *Illam* as Antharjanam. If proven guilty, all the men whom she named as her accomplices in the offence would also be excommunicated along with her without any further enquiry into the truth of her statements. The excommunicated men, however, were permitted to obtain *pampu*, which was a formal permission to undergo trial by ordeal in order to prove themselves not guilty. This was to be granted by a *smarthan*, an important authority in *Smarthavicharam*. The trial by ordeal could be sought not only by the excommunicated man but even by his male progeny on his behalf. But this was not available to the woman. For a detailed account of *Smarthavicharam*, see, Kanippayur Sankaran Nambutiripad, Chapter 7, *ibid.*, pp. 115-130. The incident mentioned here was the *Smarthavicharam* of the Antharjanam named Tatri (Savitri) of the *Illam* called Kuriyedathu, which occurred in 1905, which was exceptional in that she named sixty-four paramours, which included scions of the most esteemed and powerful families of the Malayala Brahmin aristocracy. The extraordinary nature of the case prompted the Raja of Kochi to allow a *Purushavicharam* in which the accused men were allowed to cross-examine Tatri. But no one escaped. All sixty-four, along with Tatri, were excommunicated.

21. See, 'Marumakkathayathalulla Doshangal' (The Disadvantages of Matriliney) in *Vidyasangraham* Vol. 1(5), July 1865, pp. 347-48. This was a magazine published by the CMS missionaries from Kottayam, as the magazine of the CMS College.
22. V.T. Bhattatiripad, *Karmavipakam*, Thrissur : Best Books, 1988, p.2; Also see, Interview with V.T. Bhattatiripad in *V.T.-ye Kandethal* (Discovering V.T.), Mezhatthoor, 1984, conducted by D.D. Nambutiri et.al., also see, Kanippayur Sankaran Nambutiripad, *op.cit.*, n.16, p. 117.
23. The *Nambutiri Yogakshema Sabha* was started in 1908.
24. A Royal Proclamation issued in 1822-23 A.D. dated *Karkadakom* 31, (July-August), 1998 M.E. in the name of Rani Parvati Bhayi expressly criticised the high rates of dowry among "Nambutiris and Pottis", observing that the *Brahmasvom* endowments granted to the Malayala Brahmins were being alienated as a result of this. It fixed the rate of dowry at a maximum of 700 *Kalayan Panam* per marriage, and ordered the girls of these groups must be wedded between the ages of ten and fourteen. Further, it ordered that all unmarried young women of these groups above fourteen years of age must be given away in marriage within two years

- from the date of the proclamation. This proclamation has been reprinted in Kizhakke Madathil Govindan Nair and Dr.B. Pushpa, *Charittrathinte Aedukal (988-1022)*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1992, pp. 181-82.
25. *The Nambutiri Kutumba (Family) Regulation Committee Report and Draft Regulation*, Thrissur : Mangalodayam, 1925, pp. 92-93.
 26. Dismissal of identities given in the older order, wholly or partially, for new ones, both secular and religious, was a familiar strategy in Keralam by the 1930's. A section of the *Pulayas* under the leadership of John Joseph Pampady adopted the name *Cheramar* to denote a new collectivity they formed; in 1918, *Parayas* petitioned the Maharajah of Tiruvitamkoor to allow them to change their name to *Sambavar* (T.H.P. Chentarasbery, *Ayyankali*, Thiruvananthapuram : Prabhatam Publications, 1989, p.126, C. Abhimanyu, *Ayyankali*, Thiruvananthapuram : Dept. of Cultural Publications, Govt. of Kerala, 1990, p. 216). In Kochi, Pandit K.P. Karuppan suggested the surname *Dheevaran* for the members of *Araya* community; before, a member of the *Araya* community, Dr.Velukutty, had called himself 'Velukkutty Arayan'—see, Ettumanoor Gopalan, *Dewer Enna Karmadheeran* (Biography of P.K. Dewer), Kochi : Dewer Smaraka Samiti, 1993, pp. 14-15. In a pamphlet written in 1920, Sahodaran K. Ayyappan questioned Ezhava reformers thus : "Is it enough to remain ezhavas for all times ? Our Swami (Sree Narayana Guru) has been advising us to abandon the narrow pride of being Ezhava, and embrace the sacred and noble pride of being 'human'. (Sahodaran K. Ayyappan 'Jati Vyatyasam' (1920) (Caste-Difference), reprinted in M.K. Sanoo, *Sahodaran Ayyappan*, Kottayam : D.C. Books, 1989.) In the wake of nationalism, individual activists were giving up local names for 'universal ones' : Kunhappa Nambiar became 'K.A. Keraleeyan', Vishnu Nambisan became 'Vishnu Bharateeyan' (K. Gopalan Kutty, 'The Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar' *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. 26(4), October-December 1989, p.461). Several new religious identities also emerged in such rejection of established ones—one may remember the revival of Buddhism in Malabar among Tiyyas by reformers like C. Krishnan. Also important is the emergence of new religious sects like the *Pratyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha* (Society of the God of Immediate Salvation) centered around the remarkable figure of Poikayil Yohannan, later called Shree Kumara Guru Devan, which attracted the untouchable *Jatis* (See, Vijayan Kangazha, *Shree Kumara Gurudevan—Jeevacharithra sangraham* (A Condensed Biography), Thrissur, 1978; *Shreekumara Gurudevan*, Kottayam : Shree Kumara Dharma Samajam, 1983). For a recent study of the *Sabha*, see, P. Sanal Mohan, 'Religion, Social Space and Identity : Construction of Boundary in Colonial Keralam', *Paper*

- presented at the Conference of Subaltern Historians, January 3-8, 1998, at Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow.
27. M.R. Bhattatiripad, *Valkkannady* (1930) (*Hand-Mirror*), Thrissur : Mangalodayam, 1963, pp. 13-14.
 28. M.R. Bhattatiripad, 'Kaal Noottandinullil' (*Within Quarter Century*), *Mathrubhumi Annual Number*, 1936, p. 51.
 29. Parayil Raman Nambutiri (ed) *Nambutirimar* (The Nambutiris), Thrissur : Yogakshemam Vayanasala (Library), 1917, p. 1.
 30. The *Malayala Manorama* covered the case in detail in a series of reports from June 1905 until mid-1906. Kanippayur Sankaran Nambutiripad in his *Ente Smaranakal* also mentions the *Mitavadi's* comments, *op.cit.*, n. 20, p. 116.
 31. K. Sankaran Nambutiripad, *Ente Smaranakal* (My Memories), Vol. III, *ibid.*, above, pp.116-117. For a detailed account of *Smarthavicharam* as it was practiced in the early twentieth century in Malabar, see, C.A. Innes and F.B. Evans (eds.), *Madras District Gazetteers: Malabar* (1908), Madras : Govt. Press, 1951, pp. 383-84.
 32. V.T. Bhattatiripad confirmed this possibility in a fictional recreation of a conversation between anti-reformist Nambutiris. In this conversation, the Raja of Kochi who conducted the *vicharam* is hailed as the guardian of *dharmam*, safeguarding the health of pre-reform Nambutiri power, and its internal mechanisms of regulation. One participant, arguing that times were adverse for the Nambutiris, points out that this Raja alone tried to set the example of "earlier Kings". "He was a sturdy-minded man. It was he who conducted the *Smarthavicharana* of that *Sadbanam* from Kuriyedath. It was his courage that made it possible to ostracise all the sixty-five that slut named." The Raja of Kochi emerges as a "*Dharmaraja*" in the "age of *Kali*". Here the authority that would effectively turn *Smarthavicharam* into an instrument for ousting transgressors of norms of conduct is recognised as the saviour of the community (V.T. Bhattatiripad, *Karmavipakam*, *op.cit.*, n.22, pp. 198-99).
 33. Edappally Narayana Raja, 'Samayathinte Vila' (The Value of Time), in V.S. Narayanan Nambutiri (Compiler), *Samudayabodhanam* (Instructing the Community), Thrissur : Edappally Yogakshema Upasabha, 1916, p.66.
 34. Patirishery Narayanan Nambutiri, 'Antharjanangalum Bandhusamudaya Streekalum' (Antharjanams and Women of Related Castes), *Unny Nambutiri* Vol. 9 (3), 1933, pp. 201-202.
 35. *Ibid.*, above, p. 202.
 36. M.P. Bhattatiripad, *Ritumati* (1944), Thrissur : Current Books, 1991. Incidentally, this was a play written with the conviction that "women should struggle for their own freedom, no one else will" (preface).
 37. *Ibid.*, above, pp. 75-76.

38. V.T. Bhattatiripad, *Karmavipakam*, op.cit., n. 22, pp. 284-96.
39. N. Lalithambika Antharjanam, *Irupatuvarshathinu Shesham* (After Twenty Years), Kottayam : SPSS, 1952, p. 7.
40. Madampu Kunhikuttan, *Bhrasht*, Kottayam : SPSS, 1991.
41. Ibid., above, p.185.
42. op.cit., n. 39, p. 41.
43. V.T. Bhattatiripad, op.cit., n. 38, p. 285.
44. Speech by K. Devaki Antharjanam in the Shree Mulam Assembly, 26 July, 1937, *Proceedings of the Shree Mulam Assembly* Vol. 10, 1938, pp.214-15.
45. About the 'Bramenes' of Calicut, Duarte Barbosa wrote early in the 16th century, "They believe and respect many truths, yet do not tell them." (Duarte Barbosa, *The Land of Malabar*, Source Series No.1, The Making of Modern Keralam, Kottayam : School of Social Sciences, MGU, 1991, p.35). The distancing of the Nambutiris drew severe criticism from Europeans in the 19th century, particularly from missionaries like Samuel Mateer. "Arrogant and oppressive, vindictive and cruel", wrote Francis Day, "these Brahmins will turn aside than tread on a worm or on any other insect, but will think the murder of a slave no crime, should he provoke his death by too near an approach to one of his bigoted race.." (Francis Day, *The Land of the Perumals—Its Past and Its Present* (1863), New Delhi : AES, 1990, p.306). Here the Nambutiris are not found to be devoid of respect for life, but those who scrupulously avoid wilful destruction of minor life-forms will give no concession to human life which, to Day, seemed the highest form of life. Such behaviour seemed quite alien to Western notions of mercy, compassion, humanity and so on, and the 'Nambutiris' were easily cast as 'inhuman'.
46. Rev. Samuel Mateer, *The Land of Charity : A Descriptive Account of Travancore and its People* (1870), N.Delhi : Asia Educational Service, 1991, p. 183.
47. T.K. Gopal Panikkar, *Malabar and its Folk* (1900), New Delhi : AES, Reprint, 1983, pp. 11-12.
48. *Nazrani Deepika*, 'Nambutirimarude Vidyabhyasasthiti' (The Condition of Education of the Nambutiris'), December 5, 1906.
49. Editorial, 'Malayala Brahmanarude Adhunikavastha' (The Condition of Education of the Nambutiris'), December 5, 1906.
50. V. Nagam Aiya, *Report on the Census of Travancore* Vol.1, 1891, pp.686-88. Writing in 1881-82 about the *Murajapam*, the occasion in which large numbers of Malayala Brahmins were accorded lavish hospitality at the Padmanabha Swamy temple in Thiruvananthapuram, Nagam Aiya commented upon the 'Nambutiris', depicting them as a strange mixture of discipline and excess, innocence and cunning, ignorance and scholarship. Here the 'Nambutiri' appears an alien breed, but no more fear-inspiring,

indeed, as a strange species that need not be feared, one that may be observed. Quoted in *Nagam Aiya : A Biographical Sketch* by 'An Old School-Fellow and Friend', Thiruvananthapuram : Keralodayam Press, 1911. It is interesting to note that even traditional ceremonies like the *Murajapam* were by now occasions for collecting information, not just modern Censuses.

51. E. Thurston and R. Rangachari, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* Vol.V(1909), New Delhi : AES, 1987, pp.159-60. For other accounts of the Nambutiri's anachronistic nature, see, F. Fawcett, 'Notes on Some of the People of Malabar', *Madras Government Museum Bulletin* Vol. III (1), 1990, p.85; L.K. Ananthakrishna Iyer, *Cochin Tribes and Castes* Vol.II(B), London, 1909-1912, p. 288.
52. T.K. Gopala Panikkar, op.cit., n. 47, pp. 69-70. Now, whether this story was really the product of the Nambutiris' 'Othering' of Europeans is not confirmable. The same belief (that Europeans have tails) was attributed to the Nairs of North Malabar by Francis Buchanan in the early 19th century. See, F. Buchanan, *A Journey from Madras Through Mysore, Canara and Malabar* (1807) Vol. I, New Delhi : AES, 1988, p. 514. For another version of the story of the 'origin' of the Europeans, See K.P.S. Menon, *Atmakatha*, Kottayam : SPSS, 1971, p. 64.
53. O. Chandu Menon, *Indulekha* (1889), Kottayam : D.C. Books, 1991.
54. Potheri Kunhambu, *Saraswativijayam* (1892), Reprinted in Dr. P.V.G. Irumbayam (ed.), *Nalu Novelukal*, Thrissur : Kerala Sahitya Akademi, 1985.
55. V.T. Bhattatiripad, Speech titled 'Punarvivaham Athava Vidhavavivaham' (Re-marriage or Widow-marriage), Appended to *Karmavipakam*, op.cit., n. 22, p. 345. However, there were others within Nambutiri reformism that did not take very kindly to such depictions. Kanipayyur Sankaran Nambutiripad, for example, noted that enacting plays by Nambutiri reform enthusiasts was a way "of exposing their own faults" and not an pretense for insulting "other communities". He blames the Nairs for using the dramatisation of *Indulekha* as a rod for hitting the Nambutiris. See 'Nammude Prahasanabhinayam (Anyasamudayakkar Pathikkatte)' (Our Dramatics—Let Other Communities Learn), *Nazrani Deepika*, January 29, 1930.
56. *Nazrani Deepika*, op.cit., n. 48.
57. *Indulekha*, op.cit., n. 53, p. 44.
58. V. Nagam Aiya, *Travancore State Manual* Vol.II (1906), New Delhi : AES, 1989, p. 272.
59. Such importance was granted to this item in the agenda of Nambutiri reformism that to other observers, sometimes it was as if the significance of this movement lay mainly in this. See, C.J. Thomas, 'Nambutirimare

- Patti' (About the Nambutiris), *Dhikkariyude Katal*, Kottayam : SPSS, 1960, p. 8.
60. M.M. Report on *Smarthavicharam*, 22 July, 1906.
61. M.M. *ibid.*
62. An interesting analysis of reformist retellings of the story of Tatri is to be found in K.M. Savitri Devi, 'Kuladayaya Devata : Kuriyedathu Tatriyude Avatarangal' (Goddess who is a Whore : The Incarnations of Kuriyedathu Tatri), in *Kerala Padhanangal*(7), Forthcoming. She analyses three retellings—the *Malayala Manorama's* ; Lalithambika Antharjanam's *Pratikaradevata* and Madampu's *Bhrasht*. Besides it is interesting to note that V.T. Bhattatiripad upheld the reformist reading, arguing that if only Tatri had been permitted to wed a suitable man of her choice, she would have not taken such a path (V.T. Bhattatiripad, 'Kuriyedathu Tatri Enna Sandhanam' (The Sadanam called Kuriyedathu Tatri), Appended to *M. Govindante Kavitala*/Vol II (Poems by M. Govindan), Changanachery : Renjima Publications, 1989). Other than the strictly reformist versions there are others that link Tatri's act to a 'higher purpose' like M. Govindan's poem 'Oru Koodiyattathinte Katha' (The Story of a Koodiyattom (*ibid.*, above, pp.171-215). See also his article 'Kalayum Kamavum' (Art and Bodily Desire), appended to *ibid.* K.M. Savitri Devi (*ibid.*), mentions that the story of Tatri circulated in *Illams* by word of mouth, and that it served as a warning to Antharjanams, indicating to them what they should not be.
63. V.T. Bhattatiripad, *Adukkalayil Ninnu Arangatbekku*, (1930) (From the Kitchen to the Frontstage), Kottayam : D.C. Books, 1994, pp. 22-23.
64. Moothiringode Bhavatratan Nambutiripad, 'Nambutiri Streekal' (Nambutiri-Women), *Unny Nambutiri* Vol. 9 (2), 1933, p. 157.
65. This way of characterising Antharjanams is found to be carried over not only into reformist literature, such as Moothiringode's *Aphante Makal* (1932) (Uncle's Daughter) (Thrissur : Kerala Sahitya Akademi, 1989), but also in depictions of Antharjanams in texts like P.K. Kocheapan Tarakan's *Balikasadanam* (1922), Thrissur : Kerala Sahitya Akademi, 1993, in which the young Antharjanam who acquires modern education and ways of life represents pure, ideal Womanhood, simply purified and perfected by modern education.
66. For an account of the conflict between factions characterised in this way, see, V.T. Bhattatiripad, *Karmavipakam*, *op.cit.*, n. 22, pp. 181-83. The editorial of the *Kesari*, published in December 1933 makes use of this frame of reference, Appendix, *ibid.*, pp. 360-62. Here we use the term 'Re-form' to denote the ideal vision that is projected in reformist proposals. The conflicts between the YKS and the *Nambutiri Yuva Jana Sanghom* which began as the Youth Wing of the YKS but later became a separately-

registered organisation in 1928, were intense by the late 20s. But this too had its stages, it was not as if these two factions uncompromisingly faced each other in hostility throughout. For a detailed account, see I.V. Babu, *Keraleeya Navoathanavum Nambutirimarum* (Nambutiris and the Kerala Renaissance), Kottayam : SPCS, 2001, pp. 111-115. By the late '40s, the entry of party-politics into reformism became a key factor structuring internal differences. One faction accused the other of fostering communist hegemony over reformist institutions. A play that lampooned this tendency published by the 'Nambutiri Youth Congress' is a noteworthy product of these tussles. See, Devaki Nilayangode, *Sakhavinte Parivarttanam* (The Comrade's Transformation), Nambutiri Youth Congress, 1948.

67. *Swadharmanusthanam* (Performance of One's Own Dharma), Memorandum presented to the YKS by the Kottakkal *Upasabha* (sub-unit), 1917.
68. E.T. Divakaran Moos, *Replies to the Questionnaire of the Nambutiri Family Regulation Committee and Some Opinions*, Thrissur, 1925.
69. *Memorandum*, p.4.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 17, p. 21.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
77. *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.
78. E.T. Divakaran Moos, *op.cit.*, n. 68, p. 14; p. 63.
79. *Ibid.*, pp. 22-32.
80. *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72; pp. 16,17; *Memorandum*, *op.cit.*, n. 67, pp. 11-12.
81. E.T. Divakaran Moos, *op.cit.*, n. 68, p. 14.
82. *Memorandum*, *op.cit.*, n.67, p.24. Roughly translated as 'pollution through contact'.
83. E.T. Divakaran Moos, *op.cit.*, n. 68, pp. 62-66.
84. *Ibid.*, p. 22; pp. 68-69.
85. It may, of course, be asked whether this was really characteristic of the Nambutiris or not, or whether one single such life style was identifiable at all.
86. *Nambutiri Kutumba (Family) Regulation Committee Report and Draft Regulation* (henceforth, *N.K.R.C.R.*), 1925. The Committee was presided by Desamangalathu Guptan Nambutiripad (AKTMK).
87. *Nambutiri Stree Vidyabhasa Commission Report* (Female Education) (henceforth *N.F.E.C.R.*), 1927. This Commission was also presided by AKTMK Guptan Nambutiripad.

88. N.K.R.C.R., op.cit., n. 86, p. 2.
89. E.T. Divakaran Moos, op.cit., n. 68, pp. 24-25. That the N.K.R.C.R. focussed on the family—the *Kutumbam*—and *Replies*, on the *Taravad*, may itself be a significant difference (here, the term *Taravad* was used by Moos to indicate the Nambutiri homestead).
90. N.K.R.C.R., op.cit., n.86,p.84. This was one common argument that was put forth in favour of intra-caste marriage of younger men of the *Illam*. These legislations, i.e. the Janmi-Kudiyar Bill, and the Religious Institutions Regulation were opposed in the YKS as detrimental to the interests of Nambutiris. See *Malayala Manorama*, Report of the 18th YKS *Sammelanam* at Chovvara, January 9, 1926.
91. Ibid.p.93.
92. According to the *Census of India*, 1931 (Travancore, Part I), the Malayala Brahmins had the third-highest number of literates among women, 43.2%. The number of literate women among the Nair and Syrian Christian groups were 29.1% and 34.8% respectively (p.290).
93. N.E.E.C.R., op.cit., n. 87, p. 6.
94. Punnashery Nambi Nilakanta Sharma, *Response to Questionnaire*, appended to *ibid.*,p.32. He advises teaching girls their mother-tongue and basic arithmetic that would aid them in domestic duties. Besides it is suggested that they must learn to ascertain *Rashis* (asterisms), to know time by measuring shadows by day and the position of stars by night, and to calculate the *Panchangom*(almanac). "This is not for the sake of knowing alone. It has effects upon Fortune as well" (*ibid.*). It is further recommended that Antharjanams may be given adequate knowledge of Sanskrit, not for the attainment of a 'cultured mind' but for avoiding mistakes in chanting *Sthothrams*. To cause such mistakes, Nambi reminds, would cause *Dosham*. *Dosham* is neither sin nor simple injury. It is that particular negative consequence that is seen to result from the transgression of a certain norm, or the incorrect performance of a ritual. Most *doshams* could be mended through *Prayaschittam* (penance) or other *Pariharams* (ways of 'making amends'). It may be also remembered that it was precisely this routine of Antharjanams organised around rituals that was the target of criticism of reformers : ".....they (Antharjanams) start working in the kitchen by the age of eight..... when a few years pass in this fashion other tasks are loaded on.... what is called *Nedikkal* (making offerings)... from early morning to 10 O'clock there is nothing but *nedikkal* and *namaskaram* towards east, towards south, what more, to every corner. To *Guruvayur Appan*, *Vaikkathappan*, *Kavil Shastavu* and every other deity. Then the two *Nazhikas* (the Malayalee measure of time) in the afternoon are set apart to reading *puranas* and *Charadu Pidichu Japikkal* (repeating holy chants a certain number of times everyday with one's

- fingers upon the thread worn around the neck). * Madampu Narayanan Nambutiri, *Response to Questionnaire*, Appended to *N.F.E.C.R.*, *ibid.*, pp.65-66.
95. See, for instance, the response of the Raja of Chirakkal, *ibid.*, pp. 29-30.
 96. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.
 97. *Ibid.*, p.16.
 98. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8. The preservation of existing norms in modern institutions like the *Nambutiri Vidyalayam* (School) and for quite some time, in the meetings of the YKS, was scrupulously advocated (for a brief account of the routine of the *Vidyalayam*, see Madampu Kunhikuttan, *Abhivadaye*, Kottayam : SPSS, 1986, p.18). Sometimes this was described as a strategy to disarm conservative resistance to modern education. See, for instance, V.T. Bhattatiripad's recounting of the explanation given for such rules by the manager of the *Nambutiri Vidyalayam* while he was a student there in *Karmavipakam*, *op.cit.*, n. 22, p. 149.
 99. Editorial, *Unny Nambutiri* Vol. 9(5), 1927, pp. 406-409.
 100. M. Rama Varma Tamban, 'Nambutiri Balikavidyabhyasam' (Education of Nambutiri Girls,) in *Unny Nambutiri* Vol. 8 (5), 1926, pp. 815-16.
 101. The position *Karanavan* occurs both in connection with the joint family and the separated family unit in the *Draft Regulation*, pp. 1-8.
 102. The YKS also became, in time, a forum which organised protest against measures it found objectionable. For example at the YKS meeting at Edakkunni in 1930 it was decided that Nambutiris must observe a day of fasting in protest against the Raja of Kochi's reluctance to give approval to the Nambutiri Bill. See accounts in the *Malayala Manorama* as Editorial, January 15, 1930; and as a report, 'Tirunalniraharavratam' (Vow of Fasting on the Birthday of the Maharaja), January 25, 1930.
 103. Indeed, State effort in Tiruvitamkoor towards modernising Nambutiris was almost at least as old as the YKS. The State which supported the *Othootus* (Vedic Schools) was by 1909 diverting funds to popularising a modern school for them at Kulakkada. (*The Travancore Administrative Report*, 1911-12, p. 69). Later the State in Kochi was urged to frame legislation that would direct the funds of such institutions as the *Mathams* to the promotion of modern education among Nambutiris. This was much debated in 1926 See, *Malayala Manorama*, 'Kochi Nambutiri Matadharma Sthapana Regulation' (Kochi Nambutiri Religious and Charitable Institutions Regulation), January 21, 1926; also articles in *Malayala Manorama*, January 28, 1926; reports of meetings against and in favour of the Bill, February 6, 1926, article on the Bill, February 13, 1926.
 104. V.T. Bhattatiripad, 'K.N. Kuttan Nambutiripad' (Originally published in *Unny Nambutiri*, 1948), Appended to *Karmavipakam*, *op.cit.*, n. 22, p. 200.

- 105 V. T. Bhattatiripad, 'Nambutiri Penkilangalkku Oru Ezhuthu' (A Letter to Nambutiri Girls), published in *Unny Nambutiri*, January 19, 1930. Appended to *Karmaripakam*, op. cit., n. 22, pp. 310-21. In this text he prescribes a 'modern education' for those young Anthonjanams who were denied access to it.
- 106 V. T. Bhattatiripad, 'Punavivahan Allengil Vidiyavivahan' (Remarriage or Widow Marriage), Speech at Alathur *Upasabha*, November 14, 1930. Appended to *Karmaripakam*, ibid., pp. 344-47. But V. T.'s radical position ultimately led him to a full fledged rejection of the Nambutiri identity, and acceptance of that of 'human being'. This latter was mainly characterised by the capacity to labour. His later project was the creation of the *Vibuddha Keralam* (Enlightened Keralam) Colony which was envisaged as a model collective where people of different castes lived and worked together subsuming their differences as labouring and learning subjects. I. V. Babu, op. cit., n. 66, p. 146.
- 107 See the opinion of the *Tiyakkhemam*, appended to *N.F.E.C.R.*, op. cit., n. 87, pp. 93-95.
- 108 See Editorial, *Unny Nambutiri*, op. cit., n. 99, also Kuroor Narayanan Bhattatiripad, 'Samudayika Swatantryam' (Community Freedom), in *Unny Nambutiri* Vol. 9 (1), 1927, p. 88.
- 109 E. M. S. Nambutiripad, Presidential Address to FKS, 34th Annual Meeting titled 'Nambutiriyē Manushyanakkan' ('To Make Man out the Nambutiri'), December 24, 1944, Desabhimani, 1945, pp. 25-26.
- 110 Ibid., p. 34.
- 111 Ibid., above.
- 112 Ibid., pp. 34-35.
- 113 Ibid., pp. 43-48. However, Nambutiripad's was by no means a consistent position. In 1946, he was arguing against the continuation of the Nambutiri Special School at Trivishur on the grounds that it perpetuated exclusivity and narrow mindedness. See I. V. Babu, op. cit., n. 66, pp. 144-45.
- 114 Ibid., pp. 5-6.
- 115 V. T. Bhattatiripad, *Karmaripakam*, op. cit., n. 22, p. 339. From the speech titled 'Nambutiri Manushyanayi Maranamenkil' (If the Nambutiri is to turn into Man) made in 1930.
- 116 Kamppayur Sankaran Nambutiripad in an article titled 'Stree Vidyadyasam' (Women's Education), *Unny Nambutiri* Vol. 9 (12), 1928 remarked thus: "Though they possess little — indeed none at all — of the abilities essential for contemporary life, our female world is radiant with several rare and universally valued virtues. To allow such virtues as simplicity, mildness of disposition, self control, self sacrifice and compassion to get worn out will not contribute to our welfare — if

- (*Antharjanams* are) sent to public schools, these will suffer... but this is not to say that status-quo must be preserved. Only that many of these virtues, which are eternal and desirable in anyone, but which are not abundant, are to be found in Nambutiri women, and that these must be preserved." (pp. 724-25). Also see, M. Lakshmikutty Amma, 'Nambutiri Balikamarute Vidyabhyasam' (Education of Nambutiri Girls), from *Unny Nambutiri* Vol. 9(1), 1927, pp. 76-8. The same caution was voiced by some respondents to the Female Education Commission's questionnaire. See, for instance, responses of Tottaikattu Madhavi Amma and O.S. Nambutiripad in the Appendix, *Nambutiri Female Education Commission Report*, op.cit., n.87, p.26 and pp.72-74 respectively.
117. Kuroor Narayanan Bhattatiripad, 'Samudayika Swatantryam' (Social Freedom), *Unny Nambutiri* Vol. 9(1), 1927, p. 88.
 118. M. Rama Varma Tamban, 'Nambutiri Balikamarute Vidyabhyasam' (Education of Nambutiri Girls) in *Unny Nambutiri* Vol. 7(5), 1926, p.815-16 in which the recommendation of the Female Education Commission's report is defended.
 119. Editorial, *Unny Nambutiri* Vol. 9(5), 1927, pp. 406-9.
 120. See, for instance, Kanippayur Sankaran Nambutiripad's response to a speech made by a radical that Antharjanams must be encouraged to take decisions on their own through *Streesamajams* in an article titled 'Stree Samajam' in *Unny Nambutiri* Vol. 7(6), 1926, pp. 347-57. Also see the presidential speech at the Edakkunni meeting of the *Nambutiri Yuva Jana Sangham* in 1930, reported in the *M.M.*, 'Vanita Pangti' (Women's Column) titled 'Antharjanangalum Parishkaravum' (Antharjanams and Reform), February 6, 1930, in which *Streesamajams* are recommended.
 121. V.T. Bhattatiripad, op.cit., n. 115, p. 339.
 122. Kanippayur Sankaran Nambutiripad, 'Dambatya Bandham' (Marital Relationship) in *Unny Nambutiri* Vol. 7 (7), 1926, pp. 423-32.
 123. See, *Draft Law of the N.Y.K.S* prepared by Patirisherry Narayanan Nambutiri, 1923.
 124. E.T. Divakaran Moos expressed regret and discontent about such struggles in his *Replies* op.cit., n.68, pp.1-8. See also, report of a resolution passed at the 7th Annual Meeting of the *Nambutiri Yuva Jana Sangham* at Chovvara in 1926, in *M.M.*, January 19, 1926. Also see, report of the request made to the Tiruvitamkoor *Sarkar* by Vanneri N. Raman Bhattatiripad regarding the *Murajapam* ceremony in *M.M.* Oct.1, 1929 in the 'Swadesha Vartha' (Local News) column. Such conflict was already evident in the traditional institutions of learning of the Nambutiris by the 1910's. One such protest was led by Kuroor Neelakantan Nambutiripad (later to become prominent in the nationalist movement)

- as a student at the *Brahmasvam Matham* (traditional school) at Thrissur against a corrupt *radhyan* (teacher). See, E.K. Krishnan Ezhuthachan, *Kuroor* (Biography), Kumaranilloor, 1997, pp. 18-22.
125. Reformist literary effort produced shortstories—the early shortstories of N. Lalitambika Antharjanam such as 'Yatravasanam' in *Adyathekathakal* (Early Stories), Kottayam : SPSS, 1953; M.R. Bhattatiripad, *Valkannadi*, op.cit., n.27, Moothiringode Bhavatratan Nambutiripad, *Atmahooty*, Thrissur: Mangalodayam, 1943; V.T's. short stories collected in *V.T Yude Kathakal*, Thrissur : Kerala Sahitya Akademic, 1990, several plays, from *Adukkalayil Ninnu Arangathekku* (1930) to *Tozilkendruthilekku* (To the Work-place) (1948); novels like Moothiringode's *Aphante Makal* (1932), Thrissur : Kerala Sahitya Akademi, 1989. The importance granted to literature as an effective means of reflecting the 'reality' of the Malayala Brahmins is evident in that M.R. Bhattatiripad's *Marakkudaikkullile Mahanarakam* (the Great Hell within the Cadjan Umbrella) was enacted during the debate on the Nambutiri Bill in the Kochi legislature (1932-'33) "in order to give members of other castes an idea of the condition of the Nambutiri Community". I.V. Babu, op.cit, n. 66, p. 138.
 126. M.P. Bhattatiripad, *Ritumati* (1944), op.cit., n. 36.
 127. See V.T's account of his sister's marriage to a Nair under his guidance and supervision; compare this with his condemnation of 'Uma Behn's choice of marriage to a working-class Muslim in *Karmavipukam*, op.cit., n.22, pp. 262-268, and pp. 284-93 respectively.
 128. Kanippayur, *Ente Smaranakal* (My Memories) Vol. I, Kunnamkulam : Panchangom Press, 1963. 'Antharjanganalum Penkidangalum' (Antharjanams and Young Girls), p.115.
 129. Kanippayur, *ibid.*, 'Antharjanangalute Dinacharya' (Daily Routine of Antharjanams), 'Brahmacharyam' (Celibate Life), 'Vedadhyanam' (Study of Vedas), pp.160-200.
 130. *Ibid.* p.43.
 131. P.K. Aryan Nambutiripad, *Nalukettil Ninnu Nattilekku* (From the Homestead to the Country), Thrissur : Mangalodayam, 1969, p.106.
 132. 'Anthappurathil Ninnulla Aahuanam' (The Call from the Inner-Quarters) in *Valkannady*, op.cit., n.27, pp. 90-91. It may be noted that being a 'devotee of the community' and being a 'man' are not exactly opposed to each other in this passage.
 133. From 'Nambutiri Manushyanayi Maranamenkil', op.cit. n.115, pp. 332-36.
 134. It is interesting that while V.T's short stories like 'Vishukettam' or 'Enkil' (first published in an anthology titled *Rajanirangam* in 1928; reprinted in *V.T.yude Kathakal*, op.cit. n.125) make the virgin-Antharjanam both a desirable object and an active subject in Love, she is liberated almost

inevitably through the agency of the male Reformer -- in fact under his supervision, in much of his other writings, especially his play *Adukkalayil...* (op.cit.,n.63) in which the Reformer-hero Madhavan brings Tety, the Antharjanam he 'liberates' through marriage to the stage, with these words : "Let Woman remain weak for the sake of Man's merit. Yet it is upon her delicate shoulders that the weight of that great institution, the home, rests. The community's development requires the sympathy of her maternal heart." *Adukkalayil...* op.cit, n. 63, p.78). The transition of the Antharjanam from "being wife according to the Books, but practically a slave confined to the corner of the kitchen... to appearing in the front stage as the Mistress of the Home" must necessarily be mediated by the Reformer. The Editorial of the *M.M.* congratulated the Reformers on the performance of this play in so many words (Editorial, January 15, 1930). The writer Keshavadev found it befitting to congratulate V.T. for revealing the 'truth' about Antharjanams : "It had not been known before that Nambutiri women were capable of the quality of Love and that they knew how to kiss the men they loved." ('*Rajanirangam Oru Asvadanam*' originally published in *Unny Nambutiri*, 1932; appended to *V.T.-Yude Kathakal* op.cit., n.125). Here the upturning of the stereotypical figure of the Antharjanam is quite easily discernible. However, 'Liberation' which is the channelisation of such capacity into certain clear-cut roles, must occur through the agency of the male-Reformer.

135. By the end of the '20's, the issues surrounding the 'liberation' of Antharjanams began to be voiced forcefully within Nambutiri reformist circles—female education, dress-reform, monogamy, widow-remarriage, intra-caste marriage, freedom of travel etc. In 1928, an Antharjanam became a member of the *Nambutiri Yuvajana Sangham* for the first time (reported in *M.M.*, December 12, 1928). *Antharjana Samajams* were beginning to be formed numerously in this period. The *Antharjana Samajam* of Kidangoor in 1930 passed radical resolutions among which were requests to the government to grant them government jobs along with other women, and to give opportunity to Antharjanams who had gained basic education to study in London etc. (Report in the *M.M.*, February 15, 1930). The *M.M.* in 1929 made favourable comments on the 'Awakening of the Antharjanams', seeing in this development their imminent liberation. "...They organise *Samajams*. A woman from Changanachery presided over the Karunagappally *Samajam*" (*M.M.* Editorial, 'Antharjanangalute Unarchcha' (The Awakening of Antharjanams), June 8, 1929). Also see, *Nazrani Deepika*, Editorial 'Nambutiri Samudayathinte Kalanusrtamaya Unarchcha' (The Timely Awakening of the Nambutiri Community), April 16, 1929. An Antharjanam, Smt. Parvathy Manezhi, appeared in public at the Edakunni

- Yogam*, for the first time without *Ghosh* (M.M. Editorial, 'Edakkunniyile Nambutiri Sammelanangal' (The Nambutiri Conferences at Edakkunni), January 15, 1939). Antharjanams also participated actively in debates around the legislation proposed to be implemented (the infamous episode in which V.T. Bhattatiripad and M.R. Bhattatiripad created a fictitious 'Vanneri Savitri Antharjanam' and made her voice radical opinions should not obscure this) such as the Nambutiri Bill proposed by Gauri Pavitran in the Kochi Legislative Assembly (reported in M.M., January 23, 1930). In 1930, women students were admitted to the special school for Nambutiris at Edakkunni; a Special School for them was begun at Panjal. At the 22nd session of the YKS at Edakkunni there was but one woman present as spectator; at the 25th session at Karalmanna, 75 Antharjanams were present (P.K. Aryan Nambutiripad, op.cit., n. 131, p. 1122). Several Antharjanams emerged as able speakers and propagandists in the '30's. The President of the *Yuvajana Sangham's* meeting at Vellinezhy in 1929 was a woman. By the '40s, Antharjanams had appeared as full-fledged political activists—notably, Devaki Narikkatiri, Arya Pallom and others—participating in *Satyagrahas* such as the one organised at Paliyam in which the Antharjanams were severely beaten up (See, Cherai Ramadas, 'Paliyam : Samaravum Vivaranangalum' (Paliyam : The Struggle and Accounts of it), *Kerala Padhanangal*(6), January 1997, p.164); by the late '40s, a girls' hostel for college-going Antharjanams was begun at Thrissur; *Antharjana Samajams* were active in 'propaganda urging them to be independent financially, especially in the background of the furore raised around reports that young Antharjanams were being sold off to Sidhipur (Karnataka) and Sirsi (Maharashtra). A *Tozhilkendram*—'Livelihood Training Centre' was begun in these years at Lakkiti which trained Antharjanams in weaving, spinning, first-aid etc. Worth special mention is the play *Tozhilkendrathilekku* (To the Work-Centre) written and performed by women of the *Antharjana Samajam* of Thrissur in 1948 (See, T.K. Anandi, 'Theatre as a Form of Social Protest : Enactment of Plays and Rise of Consciousness among Nampudiri Women of Kerala', *Paper presented at the International Congress of Kerala Studies*, 27-29 August 1994, Thiruvananthapuram. Abstracts Vol III, A.K.G. Centre for Research and Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, pp. 174-75).
136. O.C. Devaki Antharjanam, 'Njangalude Adiyantaravashyam' (Our Immediate Need), *M.M.* February 13, 1928.
137. The Antharjanams who argued in this fashion were often reiterating, albeit with a different stress, the argument put forth earlier by male reformers, that the community's future itself depended upon its women. In accounts which spoke of the 'glorious past' of the Nambutiri community, the golden age was often found to coincide with times in which Antharjanams were

respected and 'liberated'. "The Nambutiris of the Old gave Antharjanams the position of the goddess of the Home", wrote one author, "In those days there were many Antharjanams, who, like 'Kuroor Amma', shone as paragons of virtue." (M.M. Neelakantan Nambutiri, 'Antharjanangalute Adhunikavasta' (The Modern Condition of Antharjanams), in *Vanitakusumam* Vol. 1(5), 1926-'27, p.125). This period is found to coincide with the period of the emergence of Nambutiri 'achievers' like Viluamangalathu Swamiyar, Melpathoor and Adi Sankara. The different stress in the arguments of Antharjanams however, calls for attention.

138. Reported in *M.M.*, December 29, 1930. The odds against which she struggled, of course, were tremendous when she was made member of the Nambutiri Bill Select Committee in 1932, a representation from conservative Nambutiris to the Kochi government pleaded that they could not give evidence before it, as an Antharjanam whose breach of the code of conduct amounted to abandoning here Antharjanam-hood, was a member. See 'Nambutiri Stree Allapol' (Not a Nambutiri Woman, Apparently) in *Nazrani Deepika*, June 10, 1932. At the same time, among the reform-enthusiasts, she was a triumphant heroine. *The Mahila* described her as the "Joan of Arc of the Nambutiri Empire" (*The Mahila* Vol. 12 (4-5), 1932, p. 159), and showered praise on her speech as chairperson of the YKS meeting at Talipparamba. See 'Mahilabhashanam' (Local News Column). *The Mahila* Vol. 12(1), 1932, pp.37-38. Also see, report of Speech congratulating Parvati Nenminimangalam by Mrs. Kannan Nair in a *Streemasajam* meeting at Kochi, *The Mahila* Vol. 12 (11-12), 1932, p. 321; 'Sreemati Parvati Nenminimangalam' in the 'Mukhaprasangal (Editorials) of *Deepam* Vol. III (8), 1932 Meenam (April-May).
139. V.T. Bhattatiripad responded to this criticism in his speech at the Alathur *Upasabha* in 1930. See, *Karmavipakam*, op.cit., n. 22, p. 351.
140. From *Irupatu Varshathinu Shesham*, Kottayam : SPSS, 1962, pp.78-87.
141. From *Kilivatalilode*, Kottayam : SPSS, 1954, pp. 111-17.
142. The notion of 'pastoral' power is elaborated in Michel Foucault's work, notably in 'The Subject and Power', appended as Afterword to H.L. Dreyfus and P. Rabinow, *Michel Foucault : Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1983, pp. 208-226.
143. By *Ambalavasis* one means the groups that traditionally earned livelihood through temple-service-the Variers, Pisharadis etc.
144. K.S. Nambutiri, *Patanam* (The Fall), Kottayam : SPSS, 1976.

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