JOURNAL

OF

INDIAN HISTORY

AND

CULTURE

March 2004   **Eleventh Issue**

CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue has several interesting papers. For example, Dr. Shankar Goyal from Rajasthan has sent a brilliant paper entitled "Factors in the making of Early Medieval Society in India". It helps us to understand the subject at the theoretical level.

Prof. S. Gopalakrishnan, one of the foremost historians in South India has sent a very good review of Prof. Antony Copley's edited work on "Hinduism in Public and Private". It is an Oxford Publication.

Thiru Natana Kasinthan, former Director of Archaeology, Government of Tamilnadu, has sent useful information on a Unique Kalabhra Cave Temple at Melaccheri.

Dr. (Mrs.) B.K. Sarma, Head of the Department of History, Berhampur University, Orissa, has helped us to know Maa Rama Devi, an eminent Gandhian Leader from her State.

Ms. M. Valliammal has contributed a learned work on "Studies in Saiv-Jaina relationship in Early Medieval period – the role of pre-judice and stereotypes".

We thank Dr. P. Taviti Naidu for his patience in getting his paper on "Transport and Communication in Colonial Vizagapatnam District" published in this journal.

We appreciate the contributions of Doctors L. Selvamuthu Kumaraswami, A. Kumaraswamy, G. Gowthaman, K. Palaniappan and Chitra Madhavan. We look forward to their continued association and request the other readers to send papers for the journal.

I would like to specially thank my former Doctoral candidate Dr. Lakshmi Viswanathan and staff members of the Foundation for their assistance. Further, all this would not have been possible but for Dr. Nanditha Krishna.

Dr. G.J. Sudhakar

THE UNIQUE KALABHRA CAVE TEMPLE AT MELACHERI

Natana Kasinathan
Former Director of Archaeology
Government of Tamilnadu

Melacheri, a tiny village situated in Gingee taluk of Villupuram District has a rock – cut cave temple dedicated to Siva. This place is also known as Siva Gingee.

This cave is excavated from the natural rock lying on the outskirts, north of this village. Locally, it is known as the Mattisvarar temple. It has a square *garbhagriha* with an oblong *mukhamandapa* in front of it. This *mandapa* is supported by foursquare pillars having neither ornamentation nor an octagonal shape in the middle, which we distinctly see in the Mahendra type cave temples. An inscription is found engraved on the western face of the Southern pillar[1]. The epigraph is written in Sanskrit and in the *Grantha* character. The said inscription, written in four lines, is stated to have read as follows[2].

1. Karitam-idan-nripatina
2. Chandradityena Sarva(nathe)na (1*)
3. Sri Sikhari-Pallavesvaram-iti
4. Saivam-dha(ma) Simhapure (11*)

The meaning of this inscription is given as follows: "This home of Siva named Sri-Sikhari-Pallavesvaram, was caused to be made at Simhapura (Singavaram) by King Chandraditya who was a Sarvanatha".

Dr. T.V. Mahalingam, in his 'Inscriptions of the Pallavas'[3], has published this inscription with the same version and meaning. But, Mylai Seeni Venkatasamy in his Tamil book entitled

'Mahendravarman'[4] has given a different version of this same epigraph. His reading is as given below:

1. Karitam Itam nrupatina

2. Chandradityena Sarvabhaumena

3. Sri Sikhari Pallavesvaramiti

4. *Saivantama Sittir Ashtukra*

But he also has given the same meaning as stated by K.R. Srinivasan and T.V. Mahalingam. His reading differs in two lines. In the second line he says *'sarvabhaumena'* as against *sarvanathena,* and in the fourth line instead of '*Simhapuri*' he read it as '*Sittir Ashtukra'*. However, he has not explained his different reading and has also not changed the meaning of the inscription.

With the help of the estampage[5] prepared by Viraraghavan of Villupuram, it can be read as follows:

1. Karitamita Nrupatena

2. Chandradityenu Sarvva (bhaume) na

3. Sri Sikhvari or (Sri Sisvari)

4. *Saivandhama Simhapure*

Accordingly, the meaning of the inscription could be changed as follows:

This home of Siva named Pallavesvara at Singapura (Singavanam) was caused to be made by one Sikhisvara, who was a Chandraditya Sarvabhauman. The letters after Chandraditya are mutilated but *sarvva* and *na* are readable. Hence, the reading of the second line by Mayilai Seeni Venkatasamy may be taken as granted.

If the revised reading and meaning are acceptable, the excavator of this temple emerges. It appears that Sikhisvari was the excavator, and she could be the wife of a vassal of the Pallava ruler.

While narrating the details of the architectural features of this temple the author of this cave temple, K.R. Srinivasan has given the following remarks:

"The facade of the excavation consists of two massive pillars and two pilasters-one at either end. All of them are not differentiated into *sadurams* and *kattus,* but are uniformly four-sided throughout, a feature not common in the Mahendra type of temples. The massive corbel (*potika*) is of the bevelled type and has an angular profile without the *taranga* ornamentation and *patta.* The beam on top of the corbel is of about the same width as the corbel. Cut on the central portion of the hind wall of this *mandapa* is a plain oblong opening into the cubical cell, in excavating which a large portion of the central mass of rock has been retained and moulded into a cylindrical 'linga' with an octagonal 'avudaiyar' below. This is the only example of a rock-cut cave temple in Tondaimandalam where the 'linga' and 'avudaiyar' are cut out of the same rock of the cave temple – a feature which is not found in the Mahendravarman caves or even in the caves of the era of Mamalla or Rajasimha. Carved on the ceiling over the Linga is a lotus.[6]"

Regarding the authorship of this cave temple his statements are more interesting. "The absence of any clear birudas of Mahendravarman, the extreme simplicity of the cave temple and the presence of the rock-cut linga with Avudaiyar would all tend to show that this cave temple is later than the time of Mahendra, perhaps the time of Mamalla, if not even later, like the Singavarman cave temple, . But though this cave-temple is aberrant and has nothing characteristically Pallava in it and was not excavated by a Pallava king, it has to be considered here only because of its

location among other Pallava cave temples in the Pallava country[7]. Since this cave-temple is situated in the Pallava region he was tempted to identify it with a Pallava King, which he otherwise could not have done.

Assuming that the word Chandraditya denoted the name of a king, he could not identify the king. But he says that there was a Chandraditya, son of Pulekesin II, known from two records of his queen Vijayamahadeva, who was a contemporary of Mamalla, and speculates about her relationship with the Pallava monarch if, indeed, she existed. Finally, he himself opines that it has to be explained. Hence, it may not be possible to presume that he was Chandraditya, the son of Pulakesin II. In that case, who is Chandraditya?

The word Chandraditya may mean a dynasty to which Kalabhra kings are said to have belonged. The incriptions of Kokkandan Ravi[8] and Kokkkandan Viranarayanan,[9] the Kalabhra kings of Ponnivadi and Vellalur respectively, dinstictly name them Kali Nrupa Kalvan and mention that they are the thilakams (forehead mark i.e. the supreme kings) of Chandraditya kula and Sarvabhauma, one who controls the whole earth. Kali Nrupa Kalvan is the Sanskrit version of Kalabhranenum Kalaiarasan[10] written in Tamil in the Velvikkudi Copper-Plates of the Pandyan Parantaka Nedumjadaiyan. Hence, it leads us to assign this temple to a Kalabhara vassal.

Simhavishnu, the establisher of the Pallava rule in Tamilnadu is stated, in the Kasakkudi plates, to have vanquished the Kalabhras, Malavas, Cholas, Pandyas and Simhalas in the course of his extension of the Pallava territory as far as the Kaveri River. Therefore, the presence of Kalabhras during the period of Simhavishnu is clearly attested. Considering the architectural feature of Melaccheri cave temple it should be assigned to a period earlier, than Mahendravarman, i.e. either to Simhavishnu

or still earlier, as the pillars and the corbels are square shaped and the 'linga' and 'avudaiyar' have also been scooped out of the natural rock. These architectural features can be found only in the earlier cave temples. Hence, in all probability, this cave could have been excavated by Sikhesvari the wife of a Kalabhra vassal for the benefit of his master, a Pallava monarch.

References

1. K.R. Srinivasan, *Cave Temples of the Pallavas*, p. 115 (Reprint 1993).

2. S.I.I. Vol. XII No. 115 ARE. 234 of 1916, Part II, para 6, Dubreuil, Pallava Antiquities, 1, p. 66.

3. Dr. T.V. Mahalingam, Inscriptions of the Pallavar, No. 249, p. 623 (pub. 1988).

4. Mylai Seeni Venkatasamy, Mahendravarman (Tamil) p. 74, (pub 1959) by Saiva Siddhanta Publications.

5. V. Viraragavan

6. K.R. Srinivasan, *Op.Cit*., p. 116.

7. *Ibid.,* p. 118.

8. Natana Kasinathan, *Kalappirar* (Tamil), p.30. (pub. 1981) by the Tamilnadu State Department of Archaeology.

9. Natana Kasinathan, *Kalleluthukkalai* (Tamil), pp 183-187. (pub 1989) by Manivasakar Patippakam. 55, Lingi Street, Chennai – 1.

10. *Ten Pandya Copper Plates*, p. 22 line 40 (pub. 1967) by the Tamil Varalatru Kazhagam, 40, Peters Road, Chennai - 14.

DHENUPURISHWARA TEMPLE, MADAMBAKKAM

Dr. Chithra Madhavan
77/35, Bishop's Garden, Raja Annamalaipuram, Chennai – 600 028

The Dhenupur»¶hvarar temple at M¹©amb¹kkam, a small suburb close to Tambaram, is one of the oldest Choða temples in the city of Chennai. It probably dates back to the reign of Par¹ntaka Choða II, also known as Sundara Choða (956-973 A.D.). It is likely that this temple was rebuilt of stone in the later Choða period.

The main sanctum (*garbha-gÅiha*) of this temple, which faces east, houses Lord ˜iva in linga form. This sanctum is apsidal in shape with a rounded rear end. Apsidal shrines such as these are known in Sanskrit as *gajapÅish–a vim¹na*, literally meaning 'back of an elephant' since in form they resemble the hind portion of an elephant. They are also known as *ch¹pa* (meaning bow) as they resemble a fully stretched bow in shape. Such apsidal temples were a common feature of the Choða age especially in the Toª©aimaª©alam region which was wrested by them from the Pallavas. Such apsidal structures of the Choða period can also be seen in the principal shrines of the ˜iva temples at Tirumullaivayil, Padi, Trisulam, Kodambakkam and other places in Chennai.

In the Dhenupur»¶hvarar temple, the sanctum for Goddess Dhenuk¹mb¹l is located very close to the main sanctum and faces south. In front of these two shrines, and also in the circumambulatory (*pradak¬i ª a*) passage around them, can be seen numerous pillars with characteristic features of the Choᕂa and Vijayanagara styles of architecture.

The front *ma ª ©apa*, with numerous pillars containing exquisite sculptures, belongs to the Vijayanagara period. Various incarnations and manifestations of Vi¬ªu and ˜iva as well as other Gods and Goddesses are depicted in bas-relief, revealing the talent of the sculptors of the Vijayanagara age. There are carvings of a majestic standing Narasimha, Garu© ¹ ru©a Vi¬ªu, KÅishªa killing the demon Bak¹sura, Garu©a, Hanum¹n, ˜iva seated with P ¹ rvat» by his side, Ucchish−a Gaªapati, ˜arabheᚦvara, Durg¹, Shaªmukha and many others, thus making this *ma ª ©apa* a veritable treasure-house of Vai¬ª ava and ˜iva iconography.

The entranceway to this temple has an unfinished gopura above it, constructed in the Vijayanagara times. There is a neatly maintained tank adjacent to the temple where the annual float-festival takes place.

Saint Aruªagirin¹thar who lived in the 15th century A.D., and who wrote the famous '*Tirupugazh*', composed a hymn on his visit to this temple.

Approximately a dozen inscriptions have been discovered in and around this temple. Two of these found near the precincts of this temple are datable to the 10th century A.D. They are both fragmentary and record the gifts of land to this temple, the income from which was to be used for providing food-offerings to the deities[1.]

Many more inscriptions are found etched on the walls of the main shrine, and on the walls of the veranda running around this shrine. They belong to the reign of the Choḍa and Vijayanagara kings. Two of these are of the period of the later Choḍa King Kulottunga Choḍa III (1178-1217 A.D.) and are dated 1188 A.D. and 1214 A.D. respectively[2] . Another record is dated 1218 A.D. and belongs to the period of Rājarāja III (1216-1250 A.D.)[3]. Two epigraphs of Ja–āvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I[4] (1251-1268 A.D.), the most illustrious ruler of the Second Pāṇḍyan empire and one of Ja–āvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya II[5] have also been discovered here. Among the Vijayanagara rulers, the inscriptions of Devarāya II (1422-1446 A.D.)[6] and Sadāṣiva Rāya (1543-1564 A.D.)[7] are found on the walls of the central shrine.

These epigraphs register in detail various gifts given to this temple in the form of land and livestock, the latter having been donated for the supply of ghee for maintaining lamps in this temple. Two of these lithic records also reveal the important part played by the assembly of this village, which consisted of several important persons, in connection with the proper functioning and maintenance of this temple, and the festivals connected with it.

One of these epigraphs, datable to the reign of Sundara Pāṇḍya I, states that the assembly of the village, seeing that it was not possible to maintain lamps, offerings and festivals in this temple from the income available for these purposes, assigned the northern division 'with its wet-lands, garden lands and house sites' to the temple but retained some land for their own use. They decided also to pay the dues on them from their own pockets and agreed that

'if, at some point owing to unfortunate circumstances, we are induced to sell this land, we shall do so for the price at which it then sells to the sacred treasury of this temple'[8].

The inscriptions also reveal that the original names of Lord Dhenupur»¶hvarar were SiÅÅeri ¸ðu©aya N¹yan¹r, SirÅÅeri U©aiya N¹yan¹r and SiÅÅeri Mah¹deva. Goddess Dhenuk¹mb¹l was called Nampir¹--iy¹r. The town of M¹©amb¹kkam was known in the Choða days as Ulaguyyavanda-Choða-Chaturvedimangalam. It was situated in the ancient territorial sub-division of Nedukun©ra-N¹©u, in Puliyør-ko--am alias Kulottunga-Choða-Vaðan¹©u, a subdivision of Jayamkoª©a-Choða-maª©alam. The fact that M¹©amb¹kkam was also known as Aªidh»ramangalam is known from a Choða inscription found in the BhØ-Var¹hasv¹mi temple at Tiruvi©andai which records a donation of gold to the sabha at Aªidh»ramangalam alias M¹©amb¹kkam in Nedukunra-N¹©u from the interest of which they agreed to supply a certain amount of ghee every day for a perpetual lamp in the Tiruvi©avandai-Devar (Var¹hasv¹mi) temple.

Even today a number of festivals are celebrated in this ancient temple, one of the most important being the Panguni Uttiram festival in the Tamil month of Panguni (March-April).

This temple is a protected monument under the care of the Archaeological Survey of India.

References

1. A.R.E. Nos. 188 and 189 of 1961-62.

2. A.R.E. Nos. 318 and 323 of 1911.

3. A.R.E. 321 of 1911.

4. A.R.E. Nos. 191 and 192 of 1961-62.

5. A.R.E. 322 of 1911.

6. A.R.E. No.319 of 1911.

7. A.R.E. No. 320 of 1911.

8. A.R.E. No. 322 of 1911.

STUDIES IN SAIVA-JAINA RELATIONSHIP IN EARLY MEDIEVAL PERIOD THE ROLE OF PREJUDICE AND STEREOTYPES

M. Valliammal,
Department of History,
Lady Doak College, Madurai-2.

Today cultural conflicts are increasing and they are more dangerous than at any time in history. In more than sixty countries violent ethnic conflicts are in progress, resulting in terrible human tragedies and enormous material loss. Some of these conflicts culminate in large-scale genocide, as in the case of Rwanda and Bosnia. With ever-increasing globalisation, our world is shrinking. As a result one can easily perceive the differences and pluralism more clearly, sharply and frequently. Unless we learn and master the art and science of living together harmoniously in spite of our differences, the future of humanity is doomed in this age of weapons of mass destruction.

We look back into our history with a view to learn and to gain wisdom. There are a few civilizations which remained pluralistic all along. India is undoubtedly one such civilization. But here, as every where else, it is not uniformly a success story. There were periods of intolerance, persecution and killings, amidst eras of harmony and understanding. However, such setbacks would be overcome and there was progress in mutual understanding and living together with tolerance.

The feelings of love and hate were expressed verbally, directly and indirectly, and in actions like attacks, tortures, conflicts and, sometimes, massacres. The feelings of anger, jealousy, irritation, malice etc. were sometimes expressed verbally.

Tirugñ[1]nasambandar, a celebrated Tamil Saiva saint, who was mainly responsible for the Tamil Saiva renaissance, directly expressed his feeling of hatred towards the Jains in his songs. He is said to have impaled more than eight thousand Jain monks. This amounts to genocide. Saivite scholars have denied the historicity of this in toto. Recent studies on genocide have shown that there is often a long period of "preparation" or "maturation" for the occurence of actual genocide. This means one can predict genocide and, consequently, prevent it.

Here an attempt is made to examine whether Tirugñ[1]nasambandar was moving in the direction of actualising genocide. There is plenty of internal evidence to show the deep prejudice and bias of Sambandar against the Jains. These may well have culminated in deep hatred resulting in violence.

The songs of Tirugñ[1]nasambandar give a general idea about the body and physical structure of the Jains. The Jains were described by Tirugñ[1]nasambandar as *Talaiparittavar*[1] and *Mo– –ama ªar*[2]. They did not bathe[3]. They did not maintain cleanliness. Their bodies were tainted with dirt and they did not wash the dirt off. They did not brush their teeth[4]. They had distended bellies due to overeating[5]. They were corpulent. They were black and stout like elephants[6]. They were naked and so were scorned and derided by others[7]. They walked in the streets unclothed and appeared devoid of shame.

The men of the Jain household had entangled tresses[8]. Some of them wore clothes made of different materials. They covered their body with small raiment[9]; say a mat made of palm leaves,[10] and with the leaves of the Ashoka tree[11].

The Jains used several things in their day-to-day simple life, and they used to carry these things with them wherever they went. They had with them a small round vessel made of palm leaves to keep food given to them[12]. Sometimes they used the dried shell of a bottle gourd

for this purpose[13]. They also had a water pot with them. They carried *uri*[14] (a bow or hoop in which to place a pot suspended by a string from the roof of the house or from the hand). Probably, since the monks got food from people only in the morning (there are many references to this in Tirugñ¹nasambandar's *T·varam),* they would have carried an *uri* in order to get more food so that they could have it for the afternoon or night. They also used to carry a small plate[15], probably to cover their vessel. There was always a mat of palm leaves with them to sit (î´,°Üñ¼<)[16]. They carried it in their hands (î´,°¬ì, ¬èò˜) or held it under their arms (î´,° Þ´,A)[17]. They had a big umbrella with them[18]. Since they wandered in the hot sun, they would have used these umbrellas.

The Jain monks used to carry a bunch of peacock feathers in order to avoid killing even small insects while they were walking. They always carried a stake with them[19]. Two interpretations are given for this. The first is that, if they defeated people of other religions in a debate, they would impale them. Another interpretation is that they would keep with them a bunch of eagle feathers, instead of peacock feathers[20].

Some of the habits and day-to-day practices of the Jains were also mentioned by Tirugñ¹nasambandar in his songs. The Jain monks wandered in the streets in the morning begging for food, even before their morning ablutions. For example, Tirugñ¹nasambandar said that the Jain monks begged for their food even before cleaning their eyes[21]. They placed the food in the shell of a bottle gourd, or in a vessel made of palm leaves,[22] or mostly in their hands[23]. They ate their food standing[24] and sometimes while walking on the street[25]. They ate the food in lumps without chewing properly. Tirugñ¹nasambandar would have considered this bad manners and so he criticised them as dull men (H‡ìº‡Â< Hó£‰î˜)[26]. They wandered in the hot sun[27]. They used to take dry ginger, betel nut and gall-nut (Terminalia chebula). They applied the gall nut powder[28] and also the paste of flowers and leaves of the *marudam* tree (*Terminalia alate*)[29].

Tirugñ¹nasambandar totally rejected Jainism, and so he very often criticises its doctrines as false doctrines[30]. Their preaching had no moral virtues. They did not know anything about philosophy[31]. They did not have any knowledge about God[32]. So they neither worshipped nor praised God[33]. But at the same time they never swerved from their religious faith, and did severe penance[34]. They meditated under the Ashoka tree[35].

They used to debate with others[36]. They had faith in the philosophy of Yes & No (Acceptance & Negation; existing and non existing)[37]. This is one of the seven aspects of *An·k¹ntavata*[38]. Jainism believes in *An·k¹ntavata. An·k¹ntavata* believes in relative truth and not in absolute truth. But the Saivites have strong faith in Lord Siva who is considered by Tirugñ¹nasambandar and other N¹yanmars as absolute God (º¿ºîŸèì¾œ). It may be because of this that Tirugñ¹nasambandar criticised the religious doctrines of the Jains as false ones. The Jains abused the Vedas and sacrifices[39].

The character of the Jains was also vehemently attacked by Tirugñ¹nasambandar. He described them as slanderers[40], sinners[41], liers[42], and unjust men[43], devils[44]. They had no regard for religious scriptures and ceremonies[45]. They had no goal in life[46], no good qualities[47], no knowledge and wisdom[48], no shame[49], and no sympathy[50]. They were like hoots[51]. They were people of evil character[52].

Most of the above-mentioned comments about the Jains indicate the misconceptions and prejudices about the habits and practices of the Jains, by the Saivites (Vaishnavites also) of the period. For example, the Jains believed that there is life in water and so it should be used as little as possible. Naturally they did not use water excessively for bathing and washing. But it does not mean that they would not have cleaned their body. They might have cleaned their body with wet cloth. But this was wrongly commented upon by Tirugñ¹nasambandar.and other Saivites to the effect that they never took a bath and that they totally avoided water (Ü¬ôò£¼< ¹ù™ ¶ø‰î Üñí˜).

The frequency and intensity of the use of some derogatory remarks about the Jains express Tirugñ¹nasambandar's feelings of hatred towards the Jains. For example, he described the Jains as *Guª©ar* (corpulent) more than 25 times. Misconceptions and prejudice increase hatred and anger, and they play a major role in affecting relationship with others. That was why Tirugñ¹nasambandar decided to destroy the Jains (not only their political power, influence, popularity etc. but also physically) by defeating them in debate[53].

Misconceptions, prejudices, stereotypes about one group as described by the other would only increase hatred, anger, irritation, vengeance and result in treating others as sub-humans. The conflicts between them would not erupt all of a sudden but would be dormant for a long time. When sparked by an incident, it would erupt like a volcano and result in genocide. This should be understood by the people and the State, and is a lesson to us that efforts should be taken from the beginning to promote cordial relations between communities which may have misunderstood each other.

Foot Note:

1.   T·varam I 77:10,69:10, II 97:10, III 26:10

2.   II 40:10, 77:10

3.   "   I   114:10, II 55:10

4.   "   II 38:10, III 28:10

5.   "   III 32:10, III 84:10

6.   "   I 5:10, II 64:10, III 39:10,67:10

7.   "   I 20:10,65:10, II 52:10, III 61 :10

8.   "   I 8:10

9.   "   I 41 :10, 130:10

10.   "   I 13:10,

11.   "   I 46:10

12.   "   I 11: 10

13.   "   I 46:10, III 26:10,32:10, 100:10

14.   "   I 53:10, II 119:10, III 28:10, 100:10

15   "   I 69:10,88:10, 101:10, II 99:10, 119:10

16.   "   I 62:10

17.   "   I 7:10,17:10, III 12:10,73:10

18.   "   I 86:10, II 91:10

19.   "   II 8:10, 91:10, III 22:10,53:10, 104:10

20.   அ.ச. ஞானசம்பந்தன், <u>தேவாரத் திருப்பதிகங்கள்</u>, கங்கை புத்தக நிலையம், சென்னை, 1998, ப.064.

21.   T·varam I 67:10

22.   "   I 11:10

23.   "   I 21:10,55:10, II 6:10,83:10, III 3:10,53:10

24.   "   I 38:10,69:10,99:10, II 121:10, III 73:10, 82:10

25.   "   II 121:10

26.   "   I 27:10, 129:10, II 7:10,108:10, III 69:10

27.   "   I 22:10,45:10, II 60:10

28.   "   III 73:10

29. "   I 6:10

30. "   I 23:10, 118:10

31. "   I 52: 10

32. "   I   15:10

33. "   I   42:10

34. "   II 121:10, III 3:10, 103:10

35. "   I   46: 10

36. "   I 77:10, II 11:10, III 29:10

37. "   I   97:10

38. **எஸ்.இராமகிருஷ்ணன், சமய வாழ்வில் வடக்கும் தெற்கும், நியூ செஞ்சுரி புக் ஹவுஸ், சென்னை, 1979.ப.11.**

39. T·varam I 108:1

40. "   I 1:10,32:10,40:10,88:10, II 39:10

41. "   II 15:10,90:10, III 26:10,66:10, 108:3

42. "   I 88:10, III 29:10,53:10

43. "   I 18: 10

44. "   I 119:10,III47:10

45. "   II 104:10

46. "   I 85: 10

47. "   I 11:10,41:10,49:10

48. "   I 18:10,50:10, II 100:10, 106:10, III 77:10

49. "   I 72:10, II 53:10, III 30:10

50. "   I 3:10, II 64:10

51. "   III 57:10

52. "   I 11:10,77:10, III 39:5

53. "   III 108: 1

Books Referred:

1. F¼ë £ù ê‹ ð‰î ˜ «î Õ£ó‹ (° î ™ Í ¡ Á F¼° ¬øèœ), î ¼ñ¹ó‹   Ý bù‹,   î ¼ñ¹ó‹

2. âv. Þó£ñA¼wí ¡, êñò Õ£› M™ Õì , ° ‹ ª î Ÿ° ‹, GÎ   ª ê…²K ¹,   Ý ¾v, ª ê¡ ¬ù, 1979.   ð.11.

3. Ü .ê.ë £ù ê‹ ð‰î ¡,   «î Õ£ó^   F¼ŠðFèƒèœ, èƒ¬è   ¹ˆî è G¬ôò‹, ª ê¡ ¬ù, 1998. ð.064.

4. ª êƒè™Õó£Ò   ° î LÒ£˜, «î Õ£ó   åOª ï P, è†´¬ó, ê‹ ð‰î ˜, F¼ª ï ™«õL ¬êõ Cˆî £‰î Ë ŸðFŠ¹,   èöè‹   LI †ª ì †,   ª ê¡ ¬ù.

5. Samuel P.Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 1997.

FACTORS IN THE MAKING OF EARLY MEDIEVAL SOCIETY IN INDIA

Dr. Shankar Goyal

Assistant Professor, Department of History
Jainarain Vyas University
Jodhpur, Rajasthan

The Meaning of the Term 'Medieval'

The term 'medieval' implies not only a chronological position intermediate between 'ancient' and 'modern' but also a social and cultural situation different from 'ancient' or 'classical' on the one hand, and 'modern' on the other, and thus connotes that there were certain values and characteristics which were distinctively different, and this is a well-recognized fact in European history. But in the Indian context, scholars have started talking about this classification only in recent years[1]. The main questions before us, therefore, are: Do the terms 'classical' and 'medieval' have any connotative or qualitative significance in Indian History? If 'Yes', what were the factors which transformed Indian 'classical' society into 'medieval'? When did these factors begin to operate? These and such other questions constitute the various facets of the problem of the decline of the Classical and the rise of the Medieval Age in India, which we propose to investigate here with particular reference to the two post-Gupta centuries which we believe, constitute a watershed between the classical and medieval periods.

The question whether or not the terms 'classical' and 'medieval' societies have any qualitative significance in the Indian context must be answered in the affirmative. The term 'classical' usually means of the first rank or authority, an age in which literature, architecture and fine arts reach a high level of excellence to form a standard or model for later times. In the European context, which offers a close parallel to

the Indian example, the classical tradition chiefly meant the Roman concept of the Universal Empire, the cultural heritage of Greece and Rome, and Roman law and jurisprudence. This legacy was transformed in the medieval period under the impact of the immigration and invasions of the barbarians, growth in the supremacy of the Church, feudalism, triumph of faith over reason, ambivalent attitude towards morality, regionalism in political, economic and cultural life, etc. That is why, in the European context, the term 'medieval' has not only a chronological but also a connotative and qualitative meaning.

In India, the situation appears to have been mutatis mutandis the same: the legacy of the Classical Society (the imperial ideal of the *Chakravartin* rulers, the cultural legacy of the classical age when norms or standards of values were laid down in the different walks of our cultural life, and the Smrti law which formed the basis of socio-political organization) was transformed by a number of factors and forces. They were almost the same as those, which operated in Europe in the same period excepting, of course, the supremacy of the Church (for no religion organized in this fashion existed in India; even the Buddhist Church was neither 'universal' nor centralized in the way the Catholic Church was). Then, again, nothing like the caste system (which provided the basic framework for the Indian society) existed in Europe. Consequently, the nature of medieval society as it emerged in India resembles the European medieval society in good measure, though the difference between the two, caused by the difference in their classical heritage and local circumstances, are also many.

The transformation of the Classical Society into Medieval Society did not take place all at once. It was brought about slowly in the course of several centuries between the decline of the Gupta Empire and the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate. That is why the culture of this period, on the one hand, seems to have much in common with the classical culture of the Guptas and, on the other, appears to be

nearer to the culture of the Sultanate period, with the difference that, in the post-Gupta centuries, unlike the Sultanate period, the Muslims were not the dominant political power in northern India. We, therefore, believe that the beginning of the medieval period in Indian history may broadly be traced from the fall of the Gupta empire itself, though it may be readily conceded that the period of about two centuries, roughly from the fall of the Gupta Empire (550 A.D.) and the rise of the Pratiharas (c.750 A.D.) sheds light on the classical and medieval periods both by a sort of *dehal»-d»paka-ny¹ya* (the maxim that a lamp placed on the threshold illuminates both the inside and outside of a room) and thus belongs to both.

Factors of Change: Foreign Invasions

In Europe, one of the main factors that led to the transition from classical to medieval society was the immigration and invasions of the barbarian nomads. On the one hand, it resulted in the barbarization of the classical society and, on the other, imparted a new vigour to it. The immediate consequence of the nomadic pressure, culminating with the Huns, was the breaking up of the Roman Empire. It slowly led to the emergence of the regional kingdoms of the Franks, Germans, Lombards, Slavs, Normans, etc. in the early medieval period. The role of the Central Asian nomads and other foreign invaders in Indian history, in the centuries preceding and following the fall of the Gupta Empire, was almost similar. They belonged to two groups:

(1)   The earlier waves of the Yue-chi, ~akas, ̱bh»ras, and P¹rasikas (including the immigration of the Maga Br¹hminas). To them may be added the Bactrian Greeks and the Kid¹ra Kush¹nas. They all spoke, languages and dialects belonging to the Indo-European family.

(2)   Later waves were of the HØnas, Turushkas and Gurjaras. They were mainly Indianised Turko-Mongols. To them may be added the Tibetans, Arabs and Turks, the last two being the harbingers of Islam in the country.

The first of these groups easily merged into the vast ocean of Indian Society. Then followed a respite for about three centuries, and India found time and opportunity not only to put her house in order but also to reach a high level of cultural excellence. The resultant effect was the Gupta Empire and its classical achievements. However, the arrival of the ferocious Hunas and other kindred tribes which came in their train shook the very foundation of the Gupta Empire, just as their western branches had succeeded in disintegrating the Roman Empire almost at the same time. Like Rome, India also took about a couple of centuries to recover from the shock. But, when she came out of the process of re-adjustment, she found, just as Rome did, that her society had become somewhat different and that the medieval period of her history (the Kali Age of the Purānas) had already begun.

The pressure of the foreign tribes not only shattered the imperial fabric of India, it also corrupted her classical values, modified her social and economic institutions, and generated a sense of pessimism leading to the theory of social decline in the Kali Age, which the post-Gupta literature and epigraphs so vividly describe. On the positive side, the arrival of the foreign tribes imparted a new vigour and vitality to the Indian society, just as the Germanic tribes had done in the Age of decadent Rome. According to N.R. Ray, the emergence of the medieval factor in Indian sculpture and painting was largely due to the impact of the Central Asian nomads, In this connection, the effeminate and irreligious character of the kings of the sixth century A.D., who had been roundly denounced by Yaśodharman of Malwa, offered an interesting contrast to the vigour and vitality of the Gurjara-Pratihāras of Kanauj. Indeed, the age of the imperial Gurjara-Pratihāras has been compared with the period of the Carolingian Renaissance of the medieval Europe. As a matter of fact, not only the Gurjara-Pratihāras but several other Rajput dynasties contained Scythic, HØnna or Gurjara blood in their veins though many of them, in course of time, intermingled with the indigenous people, specially Brāhmins (who, as a result of the growing feudal

tendencies, were emerging as one of the most important elements of the ruling aristocracy of the country), and the ancient republican tribes of the Punjab and Rajasthan, (which had lost political power only recently in the Gupta Age) and probably also the aboriginal tribes of Rajasthan, Bundelkhand, etc. (which, when Hinduised, were readily accepted within the pale of orthodox society). Thus, the *r¹japutras* or the Rajputs who emerged as the rulers of the greater part of North India in the post-classical centuries were a professional class of mixed origin, having blood affinities with a number of social groups which were welded into one and infused with new vitality by the new element of the Hinduised foreigners.

Role of Feudalism

Another factor that played a significant role in the transformation of the classical society in Europe as well as India was Feudalism. But, the feudalism of India greatly differed from its European counterpart, so much so that many scholars have doubted its existence in India[2]. But, if it is believed that the political essence of feudalism lay in the organization of the whole administrative structure on the basis of land and its economic essence in a system of self-sufficient local economy in which peasants were attached to the soil held by the landed intermediaries placed between the kings and actual tillers who had to pay rent in kind and labour, then it may be very well argued that the broad features of feudalism emerged in the Gupta Age, and developed in the post-Gupta centuries. We believe that the differences in the detailed superstructures of European and Indian feudal systems do not mean that the Indian system was not 'feudal' at all. Apparently, a fallacy is involved in first emphasizing the pecularities of feudalism of Europe and then talking of other feudal systems, for how can one call a non-European society feudal unless possibilities of regional variations in feudalism are recognized.

Actually it is very difficult to define the term 'feudalism'. The term is attributed variously to stages of historical development far removed

from one another in time and place, such as the interregnum (2475-2160 B.C.) after the Old Kingdom in Egypt and the Chou period in China (c.1122-250 B.C.); but generally it is applied to European society from the 5th to the 15th century A.D.   Fifth to ninth centuries are considered to be the breeding period of feudalism, whereas the tenth to thirteenth centuries are accepted as its classical age.   Regarding its nature also, there is divergence of opinion.   The central principle of Feudalism seems to have been the holding of land in return for services. The King was regarded as the holder of all land, much of which he let out to his feudal barons who, in return for the property, agreed to perform certain services and to make some payments and supplies.   The barons, in their turn, let out land to others on similar conditions, and the same process was continued down the scale.   When a tenant died, it was usual for his successor to pay a fee to his overlord before he could succeed to his estate.   Fees were also paid when the tenant sold or gave any apart of his land to a stranger.   Payments had again to be made to the master on other recognized occasions, such as the knighting of the latter's eldest son, and the marriage of his eldest daughter, and when he himself had to pay ransom.

Like Europe, the whole of the medieval period of Indian history, including the Turko-Afghan and the Mughal ages, was characterized by a system of feudal assignments.   The germs of this system, called the s¹manta system in the Hindu kingdoms, are traceable in the Gupta Age and even earlier, but it is from the age of Harsha that clear references to the feudal practice of assigning fiefs to officers first appear.   Its growth was facilitated by several factors including the pressure of the barbarians, absence of a strong central power, and the Hindu tradition of *dharmavijaya* (righteous conquest), which enjoined on a victor re-instatement of the defeated princes.   Further, it was concomitant with the trend of economic decline as is evidenced by the paucity and debasement of coins, gradual disappearance of guilds, regionalization of the economic structure, and decline of cities, trade and industry.   As in medieval Europe, so in India

also, in such a condition there was no other option for Kings except to grant lands and estates to the Br¹hmins, Buddhist monasteries, Hindu *mathas*, temples, etc. and also to their officers, army chieftains and others in return for their services.

Impact of Feudalism on Socio-Economic and Political Life

Feudalism brought about significant changes in the classical pattern of socio-economic and political organization. Firstly, ancient Indian economic theorists usually believed in the peasant proprietorship of land, although those who advocated royal ownership of land were by no means insignificant. But now, feudal chiefs emerged as a third claimant to the ownership. Secondly, in ancient India there is no indication that cultivators were tied to the soil like the European serfs. They enjoyed the freedom to migrate to another State if they were oppressed.   But, in the post-Gupta Age, signs of serfdom are found in some parts of northern India. Thirdly, the rise of feudalism had an adverse effect on the economic system in general. Due to the greed and unscrupulousness of the s¹mantas, and the apathy of the kings, the burden of taxation on the people became heavier, and the villagers were brought to a very low level of subsistence. The constant feudal wars were responsible for destruction of the lives and property of people, sacking of cities being a common feature of such wars. Even the march of an army often brought untold misery to the people living in the villages through which it passed. In the Harshacharita, B¹ªa describes the pathetic condition of the peasants at the time of the march of Harsha's army. Sometimes, finding robbery highly profitable, petty s¹mantas molested merchants who passed through their fiefs.

The impact of feudalism on political institutions and ideals was also quite significant. Feudalism led not only to the fragmentation of political authority, but also to its hierarchical gradation, as the inscriptions and literary works such as the 'Harshacharita' testify. As such the monarch, who was at the apex of the hierarchy, became and began to be viewed

more as the lord of the vassal kings and s¹mantas than the ruler of the whole people, while the vassal kings and s¹mantas emerged as the real rulers in their respective areas. Thus, the authority of the ruler became more formal than real. He depended for military support on his vassals and samantas. Yuan Chwang, the Aihole inscription and the Harshacharita testify to the feudal nature of Harsha's army. Coupled with the concept of *dharmavijaya*, this fact rendered permanent absorption of the conquered territories extremely difficult, and made the imperial structure more feudal-federal in character. The tendency began in the Gupta Age itself but at that time, at least, the heartland of the empire was directly administered by the emperor. In the age of Harsha, even Matipura and Mathura, situated close to Kanauj, could be ruled by subordinate kings. This phenomenon is found in the history of early medieval Europe also.

The decline in the position of the king is reflected in the changed concept of royalty. In the classical period, an ideal king was supposed to be the real head of the State, always conscious of the duties attending his kingly office and anxious for the welfare of his subjects. But in the post-classical period, a normal king appears more as a private person spending his time in religiosity, pursuits of pleasure and warfare. Even in wars, he displays his personal desire for victory for the sake of glory or revenge.

The feudalisation and decline of royalty in the post-classical period is also evidenced by the adoption of the vainglorious titles of kings, and a more lavish attribution of divinity to them. Even the bards began to weave rich legends of divinity around the kings. These tendencies do not prove an increase in the actual power of the rulers: they only indicate the pretentiousness of monarchs under feudal conditions, which intellectuals like Bana and Medhatithi highly deplored.

With the feudalization of royalty, the State machinery underwent considerable changes. The provincial and local administration was bound to change with the emergence of *s¹mantas* as local Centres of power. In the central administration also, sometimes, the *s¹mantas* became the chief counsellors of the king at the cost of ministers who now more often that not, displayed greater interest in superstitions and omens rather than in actual statecraft and diplomacy.

Ideal of Chivalry

One of the by products of feudalism in medieval Europe as well as India, was the ideal of chivalry. Chivalry in medieval Europe embraced several virtues such as limitless valour, truthfulness, loyalty to the overlord, generosity, etc. It was also associated with romantic love. In India, though the tradition of bravery was very old it acquired a new flavour with the accentuation of feudal tendencies. A set of chivalric conventions were developed. It emphazised more or less the same virtues which were valued in feudal Europe. Queens were more often than not described as having been 'bought' by paying the price of valour (cf. the examples of *paurusha par¹krama-datta ¶ulk¹* Datta-dev», the queen of Samudragupta, and *par¹kramakr»t¹* Ya¶omat», the queen of Prabhakaravardhana), and numerous *k¹vyas* and dramas describe how the royal hero 'won' the hand of a princess after defeating other suitors. But with the passage of time the ideal of chivalry degenerated into vanity and arrogance, and accentuated the tendencies of family and clannish rivalry and jealousy. The PÅthv»r¹ja-Sa,yogit¹ episode of a later date is a saga of chivalry, romance, clannish rivalry and vanity. Not infrequently such episodes led to futile warfare on a minor or major scale.

Changes in the Nature of Warfare

It is quite obvious that the feudal ideal of chivalry could not be very effective in war. Otherwise also feudalism did not help much in the development of the art of war. Contrary to the practice of the classical

period, armies in this age were generally ad hoc formation dependent on feudal levies. They could swell to huge proportions, but were too heterogeneous to be commanded by the 'overlord' effectively. The practice of maintaining efficient standing armies was given up. Out of the traditional four-fold division of the army, chariots almost disappeared in the post-Gupta age. The cavalry was valued but not much was done to improve its technique, or to procure horses of good breed from abroad. As in Europe, there was an increasing tendency to construct hill fortresses and defensive works around cities. The common method of capturing a fortress was actual siege and assault. No special devices appear to have been used for breaking through a fort. The system of espionage, valued in earlier periods, appears to have suffered a decline. The chief weapon in war in the classical period was bow, but now the sword became a more popular weapon, though archery was not altogether neglected. Much reliance was laid on omens and supernatural support in warfare, and a lot of attention was paid to grandeur, show and luxurious living in military camps, with the result that the Rajput armies became more or less like the later Mughal armies. The earliest picture of such a feudal military camp is preserved in the Harshacharita of Bana.

Impact of Feudalism on Education : Emergence of 'Universities'

In ancient India, [1]¶ramas or hermitages known as *gurukulas* were the seats of learning. But in the early medieval period, feudalisation of Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temples resulted in the institutionalization of education. For the feudal rights enjoyed by the Nalanda Mah[1]vih[1]ra in the age of Harsha himself, evidence is provided by the Chinese sources. Hui-li, the biographer of Yuan Chwang, records that the king of the country, probably the local ruler of Magadha, or Harsha himself, had remitted the revenues of about 100 villages (the number had increased to 200 by the time of I Tsing), for the endowment of the convent. Two hunded householders of these villages, day by day, contributed several hundred piculs (1 picul

= 133 ½ lbs.) of rice and several hundred catties (1 catty = 160 lbs.) of butter and milk[3]. In the same way, clothes, food, beds and medicines were supplied to the inmates[4].

In the seventh century, lavish endowments were made to the Nalanda Mah¹vih¹ra by Kings PØrªavarman, Harsha, Bh¹skaravarman and, probably, A‚¶uvarman of Nepal[5]. Seals of two Maukhari Kings and of Bh¹skaravarman have been found at Nalanda. PØrnavarman is said to have presented to Nalanda, a figure of the Buddha standing upright and made of copper, 80 feet high. He also constructed a pavilion of six stages to cover it. Harshavardhana is usually identified as the king of mid-India who is mentioned by Yuan Chwang as the builder of one of the largest monasteries there. The construction of the boundary wall around the whole establishment (which must have imparted to it the look of a fortress) has also been attributed to him. The construction of a large brass monastery built by him was still going on when Yuan Chwang visited Nalanda.

The feudalisation of the Vih¹ras and their emergence as self-sufficient economic units tended to politicize their administration[6]. It was but natural for kings who gave lavish grants and endowments to the monasteries (and temples) to see to it that they behaved in a proper manner. Harsha himself is said to have 'brought the brethren together for examination and discussion, giving rewards and punishments according to merit and demerit[7]. King Kum¹ra of Mah¹vih¹ra marØpa threatened ~»labhadra, the head of the Nalanda M¹hav¹ra, that he would demolish the institution in case his request for dispatching Yuan Chwang was not complied with. In Kashmir also, the ruler appointed many monks headed by Bhadanta Ya¶a from among the monks to help Yuan Chwang when the latter stayed there[8].

The transformation of the organization of the Buddhist monasteries on feudal lines changed the pattern of Buddhist education also. As pointed out by S.R. Goyal, in earlier periods education in monasteries was

intended for monks and nuns only. However, with the fuedalisation of monastic life and the economy, the monasteries emerged as great organized or corporate centers of higher learning where education was imparted not only to the monks and nuns but to the general public also. In the age of Harsha, Nalanda Mah¹vih¹ra was the foremost of such institutions. The emergence of the Brahminical *agrah¹ra* villages and temples as centres of learning was the Hindu counterpart of the feudalisation of the educational system. The early medieval temple colleges at Salotgi, Ennariram, Tirumukkuda, Tiruvorriyur, Malakapuram and at many other places and also the Kadiyur *Agrahara,* the Sarvajnapoura *Agrahara* etc. described by A.S. Altekar were big corporate educational institutions which had their own land and buildings, paid regular salaries to their teachers, and sometimes even gave maintenance allowance to students. They could not come into existence without the feudal land grants and endowments. The tradition of these temples and *agrah¹ras* was continued by the *mathas* of the early medieval *acharyas*. The feudalized Buddhist monasteries of the Gupta and post-Gupta periods, especially of the age of Harsha may, therefore, be regarded as the forerunners of later corporate educational institutions[9].

Impact of Regionalism and Insularity

In India, as in early medieval Europe, the rise and growth of feudalism in the post-Gupta Age was concomitant and connected with the growth of regional tendencies in life. To some extent foreign tribes which established their own cultural zones (such as Gurjarade¶a), newly emerging ruling elites (such as the Rajputs who paved the way for the emergence of Rajputana), the feudal system (which thrived on localization of industries, emphasis on agrarian economy and decline of trade and commerce) stimulated this tendency. In the classical age, the far-flung corners of the country were linked up through a network of roads and rivers, and traders moved from one part of the country to another, and also to foreign lands. Consequently, regionalism and insularity had less scope due to

the hook-up of the regional economy with the national economic structure. But, in the post-classical period, the absence of a centralized authority increased localism and insularity in economic life. India's trade with other countries declined leading to a decrease in the total profit from exports, probably even to an unfavourable balance of trade. Indian techniques of ship construction and navigation fell behind those of the Arabs and the Chinese. There was decline even in internal trade, and industrial production acquired a local orientation. The bonds which united the craftsmen of any particular industry slackened, for by this time guilds appear to have become mostly fossilized into occupational sub-castes, which retained some form of social control over their members but did not do much in the sphere of economic co-operation. Further, they did not have any organizational connection with their counterparts elsewhere as was the case in the Classical Age.

The regionalisation and decline in economic life is evidenced also by the prevalence of local weights and measures, and by the paucity and debasement of coins. As against the originality, excellence and wide variety found in the coinage of the classical period, those of the early Medieval Age are restricted in number and, with a few exceptions, there is no originality in them. The extreme paucity of gold coins of this period is, indeed, in sharp contrast to the abundance of the Gupta gold coinage: so far only one gold coin of Harsha has been discovered. The silver coins reveal an even more depressing state of affairs. Obviously, like medieval Europe, early medieval Indian society also found the barter system more convenient.

The formation of regional cultural units such as Andhra, Assam, Bengal, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, etc. started from the sixth to seventh centuries. Faint beginnings of regional and cultural personality-consciousness are found in other parts of the country also. Bengal was divided into two main units, Gauda and Va ¡ ga, and, later, the whole region was named Va ¡ ga.

Yuan Chwang mentions several nationalities. According to R.S. Sharma, the Mudrᴵrᴵkshasa of Viꟺᴵkhadatta speaks of different regions whose inhabitants differ in customs, clothing and language while the *Kuvalayam ᴵl ᴵ* (eight century) notes the existence of 18 major nationalities and describes the anthropological character of 16 peoples, pointing out their psychological features, and citing samples of their languages. Thus, this period seems to have been a watershed in the ethnic history of India[10].

Impact of Regionalism etc. on Literature and Lanaguages

One of the notable developments in early medieval Europe was the growth of regional languages. It was in a way the linguistic aspect of the regionalisation of culture, and it ultimately led to the emergence of nation states there. A similar tendency manifested itself in early medieval society. In the classical age, Sanskrit occupied the position of the lingua franca of the country. It enjoyed this position in the post-classical centuries also, though its scope and popularity gradually diminished. This phenomenon is comparable to the decline of Latin in early medieval Europe. In India, in the early Medieval Age, Sanskrit literature lost touch with the common man and became imitative, insipid, artificial, and unnatural. The ornate style in prose and poetry became widely prevalent and strings of adjectives, adverbs and similes are found not only in literary works but also in inscriptions from about the sixth to seventh centuries. The prose style of Bana became a model for the medieval period.

The vacuum created by the decline of Sanskrit in India and of Latin in Europe was filled up by the emergence of regional languages. According to S.K. Chatterji, between c.500 to 900 A.D. the Prakrit languages changed into various Apabhra ‚ ꟺas and between c.900 and 1300 A.D., they turned into modern vernaculars or *bh ᴵshas* of different regions – proto-Hindi, proto-Bengali, proto-Assamese, proto-Rajasthani, proto-Gujarati, proto-Marathi, etc. Although it is difficult to fix the beginnings of regional languages, on the basis of the Vajrayana Buddhist religious writings from eastern India, proto-Bengali, proto-Assamese, proto-Oriya, Proto-Marathi

and proto-Hindi can be traced back to the seventh century. Similarly, on the basis of Jaina religious Prakrit works, proto-Gujarati and proto-Rajasthani are traced back to the same period[11]. The pace of linguistic variation quickened in the country from the sixth to seventh centuries mainly on account of lack of inter-regional communication and mobility. Contracts were mainly confined to the march of soldiers and migration of monks and Brāhmaṇas from northern India into the peripheral areas for enjoying land grants[12].

The local element in languages was strengthened by the insulation of various regions. "On the break-up of the Gupta empire arose several feudal principalities which, in the context of the vast sub-continent, were confined to narrow territorial limits. This naturally hindered countrywide communications. Between the sixth and 10th centuries, lack of communication between different regions is also indicated by the decline of both internal and foreign trade, which is shown by the striking paucity of coins in this period. It is therefore evident that too many principalities, little trade, and less inter-zonal communication created congenial conditions for the origin and formation of regional languages from the sixth/seventh centuries[13].

With the regional languages also developed regional scripts out of the parent script of Brāhmī, which had so far admitted only regional variations in style. But, from the seventh century regional variations became so marked that one has to learn several scripts to be able to read inscriptions of the period. Obviously, the regional scripts came into existence due to regional insulation and the availability of the locally educated scribes to meet the needs of local education and administration. There was no central political authority to enforce a common script throughout the country[14]. This not only threatened to compartmentalize the literary and intellectual life of the country but also tended to divide Indian society into small linguistic nationalities, as was happening in contemporary Europe. Though because of various other factors, in India

separate nationalities did not develop with the same intensity as they did in Europe, yet they certainly hampered the growth of overall social unity and the process of centralization in the post-classical period. Viewed in this light, the political confusion created by the warring states assumes a new significance and becomes the manifestation of the tendency of regionalisation in political life.

Medieval Trends in Art

The growing tendency of regionalism impacted on other aspects of social life also, specially art. For about a thousand years, roughly from the third century B.C. to the seventh century A.D., Indian art has displayed, despite local variations due to local tastes, a common denominator at each stage of its evolution. But towards the end of the seventh century A.D. the regional spirit began to assert itself. For example, the *N¹gara* style of temple architecture, prevalent in the region between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas, developed regional variations. Such variations were caused by local conditions, different directions in development, as well as assimilation of extraneous trends whenever these made themselves felt.

In the realm of sculpture and painting, the post-Gupta centuries witnessed the emergence of a distinct 'medieval' trend with many regional variations. Plasticity of the fully rounded and modelled form had been the most significant characteristic of classical Indian sculpture and painting, but now the movement started towards summarizing the rounded volume in the direction of flat surface and linear angles[15]. Being essentially three-dimensional, sculpture resisted for long the intrusion of this medieval trend while painting, which is essentially two-dimensional, offered much less resistance. According to N.R. Ray, this medieval element was the accumulated result of a continuous ethnic fusion of northern racial elements that poured into the plains of North India from Central Asia in the centuries preceding and following the fall of the Gupta Empire[16].

Art in the Gupta period (c.320-550 A.D.), when feudal tendencies had just begun to appear, reflected the vitality and zest of revived Brāhamaṇism which was associated with the emerging socio-economic structure and supported by the rising class of patrons. In the fourth/fifth centuries, Vātsyāyana made *nāgarakas (*and not *sāmantas*) the centre of his *Kāmasūtra*. But in the sixth / seventh centuries, the "arts patronized by the rich (both the old commercial class and the new feudal lords) reflect artistocratic tastes in their embellishment and in the dignified countenance and elaborate coiffures of both male and female figures. The aristocratic lovers of Badami, Ajanta, Ellora, Deogarh, Nachna, etc., indulging in madhupāna (drinking of wine) or enjoying music and dance, attended by women with chaurŝs or wine jars, certainly betray the feudal outlook of the age"[17].

New Trends in Religious Life

The post-classical Indian society was greatly disturbed by the new religious thought currents also. In this period, as in the Classical Age itself, Indian rulers generally followed the policy of religious toleration and did not confine their patronage to any one particular religion or sect. In the social sphere, the spirit of toleration manifested itself in the spirit of accommodation usually shown by the members of the various sects towards each other, and in the worship of syncretic deities emphasizing the union or identity of the deities of two or more sects. But, below the surface, one may notice dissensions among various cults, which were actually religious manifestations of the socio-economic conflicts of the time.

In the post-classical period, the majority of the people, of India apparently followed various sects and cults of Purāṇic Hinduism. The study of the Vedas and Vedic religion was still popular, and orthodox Hindus loved to trace all their sects to the ultimate authority of the Vedas, but the cult of sacrifice existed only as

a casual accompaniment of Purāṇic Hinduism. The influence of Jainism was restricted to certain areas, especially Rajasthan and Gujarat, while Buddhism, which was declining very fast, almost totally disappeared from the Indian scene by the close of the twelfth century.

Purāṇic Hinduism itself was divided into a number of cults and sects. Among them are included Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism and Śāktism, not to mention a large number of minor sects and sub-sects centering round the worship of gods like Sūrya, Gaṇeśa, Kārtikeya, Brahmā, etc. Of these, probably Śaivism was the most popular one especially among the ruling aristocracy. It had divided into several branches — Śaiva, Pāśupata, Kāpālika, Kālāmukha, Kaula, and others. Many of these sects become monastic in character. The chief feature of Vaiṣṇavism of this period was the worship of the *avatāras* (incarnations) of Viṣṇu, specially Kṛṣṇa, Rāma and Varāha. Śakti or Devī was worshipped under various names – Durgā, Kālī, Chāṇḍī, Bhairavī, etc.

The popular or conventional form of the Hindu sects was characterized by the worship of numerous deities in temples built by kings, sāmantas and rich people. They were given grants of land, tolls and taxes. Temple and monastery-building activities, which acquired momentum in the later Gupta age, reached their climax during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Great temples and monasteries of this period, as noted above, possessed large estates and enormous wealth, with the result that the priestly class, as in medieval Europe, acquired a mighty hold over the people. Even the Jaina priestly class appears to have been organized on quasi-feudal lines.

The wealth and power made the priests of the period greedy, and lovers of luxury. This psychology was in perfect consonance with, and to a great degree the cause of, craze for the sensual indulgence which dominated the literature and art of the period. The ritualistic aspect of the *Smārta-Purāṇic* religion, i.e. *pūjā* and *vidhis* was influenced by

the T¹ntric elements such as *ma ª©alas*, *yantras, ny ¹sas*. These T¹ntric elements soon became popular through the patronage accorded by the newly emerging feudal class. As shown by S.R. Goyal, from about the fifth century Tantrism underwent changes in its esoteric and *aghor»* (terrible) practices[18]. The Gangadhar inscription of the first quarter of the fifth century A.D. refers to *tantra* and *© ¹kin»s.* There was a general belief that the Tantrics had knowledge of *ras ¹yana* (alchemy) and *v ¹sikarana* (aphrodisiacs) and had gained mastery over magical lore – *sha – karma*, *vas»karana*, *stambhana*, etc. These *siddhis* (achievements) of T¹ntric *¹ch ¹ryas* were considered useful by kings and feudal chiefs in serving their two dominant interests, war and sex. Result - the liberal patronage of the T¹ntric *¹ch ¹ryas* by the new feudal class. In the fifth to seventh centuries, many Brahmins received lands in Nepal, Assam, Bengal, Orissa, central India and the Deccan, where T¹ntric texts, shrines and practices appeared about this time. T¹ntricism permeated Jainism, Buddhism, ˜aivism and Vaishªavism, and from the seventh century continued to hold ground throughout the medieval period[19].

Growth of Rigidity in the Social Organisation

The early Indian social organization was based on the theory of the *ch ¹turvarnya,* which was later on rendered complicated by the emergence of the caste system with further division of labour, functional specialization and social fragmentation. A significant development from about the seventh century A,.D. onwards was the proliferation of castes. The *Brahmavaivarta Pur ¹na* (Brahmakhanda, x. 14-136), usually assigned to the seventh century, counts 100 castes including 61 castes noted by Manu, but the *Vish ªudharmottara Pur ¹na* (II, 81-2) (c.eighth century) says that thousands of mixed castes are produced by the connection of Vai¶ya women with men of lower castes. "In fact, proliferation affected the Br ¹hmanas, the Rajputs, and, above all, the ¶Ødras and untouchables. Increasing pride of birth, characteristic of feudal society, and the accompanying self-sufficient village economy, which prevents

both spatial and occupational mobility, gave rise to many castes. The guilds of artisans, which appear in inscriptions from the first century A.D., were gradually hardened into castes for lack of mobility in post-Gupta times. The absorption of the tribal peoples into the Brāhminical fold, though the tradition was as old as Vedic times, was mainly based on conquests. Coupled with the process of large-scale religious land grants, acculturation assumed enormous dimensions and considerably added to the varieties of the Śūdras and so-called mixed castes[20].

The classical exposition of the caste system is found in the early Smṛti literature, which was the Indian counterpart of the Roman law and jurisprudence of Europe. In the Post-classical Age, however, several factors threatened the very existence of this social order. Among them are included political and social confusion created by the fall of the Gupta empire, the pressure exerted by the growing number of foreigners in Indian society which changed the texture of population of the country very fast, specially of the north-western and western regions, and the rise of Tāntric and other heterodox sects whose attitude was against the very idea of caste organization. All these factors threatened the traditional social organization of the country and generated a sense of increasing chaos and decline. In almost similar circumstances in early medieval Europe, the Church, organized during the later Roman empire, became a bulwark against social chaos. In India, the crisis was faced by making the traditional caste system more rigid, with some modifications to meet the new situation. That is why from the sixth century onwards we find that the efforts at the regulation and enforcements of the chāturvarnya accelerated, and continued to be so throughout the early medieval period. The inscriptions of the Maukharis and pushyabhōtis refer to the efforts made by their kings for the proper regulation of the Varna system. The tightening of the caste rules in the commentaries, digests and the later Puranās, and the increasing efforts at their enforcement by the rulers of the early medieval period, represent respectively the theoretical and practical aspects of these efforts. The

contracting economy of the period with its emphasis on agrarian and local character contributed a good deal to this process.

The emergence of the *s ¹manta* hierarchy had a peculiar relationship with the growing rigidity of the caste system. On the one hand, it helped in the growing rigidity of the caste system, for in their small principalities petty feudal chiefs found it desirable to enforce the rules of caste rigorously with a view to maintaining the local agrarian set-up. The insecurity caused by constant feudal wars also tended to strengthen localism and hereditariness of caste functions. On the other hand, however, feudalism tended to come into conflict with the caste system by increasing the process of social mobility. Social mobility makes the social structure elastic, and breaks caste and class isolation. Feudalism also, by creating a new class of feudal barons drawn from various sections of society, who were gradually accepted within the *Kshatriya* fold, posed a new problem for the supporters of a rigid caste system. The terms *Brahma-kshatra* and *Vaiᵑya-kshatra,* applied to some ruling dynasties of this period, shows that there were some Brahminas and Vaisyas who discarded their caste professions for martial pursuits. Though Harsha has not been called a *Vaiᵑya-kshatra*, yet theoretically he belonged to his category. Yuan Chwang notes that ruling dynasties of the period belonged to all the four *varnas.* This tendency ran in the opposite direction to the tendency of rigidity of the traditional caste system.

As a matter of fact, the social theorists of the early medieval period had to come to terms with the changing realities, not only by making the caste system more rigid but also by giving it a new orientation. This they did by modifying the scheme of the privileges and duties of various castes. For example, with a view to regularizing the fact that a large number of Br¹hmaªas were agriculturists, the social theorists of the period recommended agriculture for the Br¹hmaªas in addition to their six-fold duties. Similarly, the fact that the Sudras were now forced to

work on the fields of their local feudal lords was also regularized by giving them (the Sudras) the right to cultivate the soil in order to serve the upper castes. That is why we notice a pronounced tendency to lump together the Vaiśyas and Śūdras in the literature of this period. It appears that in the older Brāhmiṇical settlements, the Vaiśyas lost a good deal of their land rights to the feudal lords. On the other hand, the Śūdras, who were landless labourers, were granted some land and rose in social status. Further, the decline of trade and towns diverted both Śūdra artisans and Vaiśya merchants to cultivation. In this manner, the Vaiśyas and Śūdras came closer to each in the social hierarchy[21]. This modified Brāhmiṇical order spread from Madhyadeśa into Bengal and south India as a result of land grants to the Brāhmaṇas, many of them migrating from the north from the fifth / sixth centuries. Although the Rajputs emerged as a significant factor in the politics and society of northern India from the seventh century, in Bengal and peninsular India their place seems to have been taken by the landed Brahmins. In the older inhabited areas, the traditional, theoretical fourfold *Varna* system did not fit in with the new feudal and social ranks created by unequal distribution of land and military power. From the sixth century there were attempts to square up feudal ranks with ritual ranks. The earlier texts indicate that the economic life of the people was based on their *Varnas*. But the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* of Varāhamihira, a work of the sixth century, prescribes varying sizes of houses not only in the *Varna* order, but also according to the grading of ruling chiefs. This tendency becomes marked in later times in several medieval texts on architecture[22].

Changing Pattern of Urban and Rural Life

The foreign invasions, rise and growth of feudalism, and regionalization of the economy influenced the life of the people both in the cities and villages. In the Classical Age, the growth of industries, finance and internal and external trade contacts had given a great impetus to the development and refinement of urban life, and cities like Pāṭaliputra and

Ujjain acquired cosmopolitan or international character. In such cities people belonging to different countries, races and religions, wearing strange foreign garbs, and speaking different Indian and alien languages were widely seen, giving rise to what may be called 'universalization of culture'. However, in the centuries immediately following the fall of the Gupta empire, many of the metropolitan and other great cities of North India considerably declined; many of them such as Kanauj were actually sacked several times either by indigenous enemies or by the Tibetans and, later on, Muslim invaders. Now their place was taken by the provincial centres, which became the administrative posts of the local feudal chiefs. This tendency is comparable with the decline of urban life in Europe of the same period, and in both the regions, it led to parochialization of culture. According to R.S. Sharma, the towns, which were active centres of crafts and commerce in the S¹t¹vahana dominions, began to decay from the fourth century A.D. The post-Gupta period proved to be the graveyard of many old commercial cities in northern India. Excavations show that Vai¶¹l», P¹–aliputra, Chirand (Saran district), Rajghat (Varnasi), Kau¶¹mb», ˜r¹vast», Hastin¹pura, Mathur¹, Purana Qila (Delhi), and several sites in Haryana and east Punjab, which generally thrived in the Kusana age, began to decline from the Gupta period and mostly disappeared in post-Gupta times. Evidently on account of the decline of Indian exports, artisans and merchants living in these towns flocked to the countryside and took to cultivation. The decay and disappearance of urban centers created conditions for the rise of self-sufficient regional productive units, which were perpetuated by the political fragmentation of the country, and by restrictions imposed on the movement of artisans and peasants[23].

The system of town planning and prosperity of the medieval Indian cities are found described in detail in the contemporary literature. It must, however, be remembered that much of this literary material is conventional, though some idea of the wealth, prosperity and administrative set-up of these cities may be

obtained from the combined testimony of inscriptions and later Muslim accounts.

Some material is also available for the reconstruction of the rural life of early medieval India. The villages of this period, as of any other period of Indian history, were small. Some of them were caste villages, while other had a mixed population. Sometimes, they were organized into groups for administrative purposes. Most of the villagers lived in humble dwellings and in harrowing poverty. Their misery increased during the times of famine, flood and drought, or when an army passed through their village, or when their immediate lord chose to be inconsiderate, or their local officers became oppressive which was quite often the case. The village chiefs had the tendency of becoming local feudal lords. Village autonomy considerably declined.   The villagers of the early medieval period, more often than not, passed their lives groaning under the weight of poverty, feudal conditions and maladministration.

Ambivalence in Morals and General Attitude Towards Life

The interaction of the new religious ideas and the chaotic conditions created by the feudal pattern of political life wrought havoc with the morals of the people. India was traditionally the land of religion and morality, of yoga and *up¹san¹*. It was still so when the Classical Age came to a close and the famous medieval *bhakti* movement, intensely moral in character, started gaining strength in the south. But for some time the interplay of the Tantric tendencies and feudal culture created an entirely different atmosphere. According to B¹ªa, *PushyabhØti*, the founder of Harsha's dynasty, was greatly influenced by a Tantric Saiva from the South. He also describes the popularity of the T¹ntrics in the court of Prabh¹karavardhana[24].

Many of the new esoteric religious sects reacted against the philosophy of extreme abnegation and austerity and permitted free rein to the sensual desires of man by enjoyment of meat, drink and damsels. Similarly, feudalism also encouraged love of luxury and sensualism. The perpetually

changing kaleidoscope of alliances and struggles of the feudal lords, which generated a sense of instability, intensified the urge to drink the pleasures of life all at once to the last dregs. As a result of this thinking, every standard of modesty and moderation, all the values of decency and refinement were by-passed. That is why we find that in contrast to the Classical Age, in which kings boasted of their high character in their inscriptions and poets lauded them for their moral decency in literary works, in the medieval period, kings and barons were immersed in gross sensual excesses and, what is more baffling, they were proud of it! According to Arnold Hauser, in Europe the courtly culture of the Middle Ages was distinguished by its markedly feminine character. "There is hardly an epoch of Western history" he observes, "whose literature so revels in the description of the beauty of the naked body, of dressing and undressing, bathing and washing of the heroes by girls and women, of wedding nights and copulations, of visits to and invitations into bed, as does the chivalric poetry of the rigidly moral Middle Ages. Even such a serious work, and one written with such a high purpose, as Wolfram's *Parzival* is full of descriptions that border upon the obscene. The whole Age lives in a state of constant erotic tension"[25]. This description applies to Indian society in the Age under review. Here also troupes of danseuses, musicians, bards, poets and dwarfs amused the kings, feudatories, officials, chiefs, and sycophants of the royal courts. B¹na's description of the celebrations during Harsha's birth is the typical early example of this atmosphere.

Thus, we observe that most features of medieval society – feudal political structure, reversion to closed economy, regionalism in languages, art, script, etc., proliferation of castes, rigidity in social organization, ornamentation, emphasis on systematization, and lack of originality in literature, adoption of vainglorious titles by kings abd feudal lords, growth of the popularity of Tantrism, ambivalence in morals, etc. – which developed in medieval times may be traced back to the sixth / seventh centuries. R.S. Sharma, therefore, seems to be correct when he

concludes, "in these two centuries ancient India was coming to an end, and medieval India was taking shape[26].

Paurānic Portrayal of the Kali Age Crisis

In recent decade some scholars have tried to show that the *Purāic* description of decadence in the Kali age portrays the transition of Indian society from the pre-feudal age of antiquity to the feudal age of the middle Ages. The Indian idea of Kali age decadence may easily be equated with that of the decadence, which seems to have prevailed in late classical Europe. The theme of the Kali age was first touched upon by R.S. Sharma in his ~Ødras in Ancient India (Delhi, 1958). It was further discussed by him in 1982 in his article "The Kali Age: A Period of Social Crisis'[27] in which he highlighted the main features of the Kali age in the texts assignable to third to fourth centuries A.D. and concluded that "seen in its totality the Kali crisis of the late third and fourth centuries appears as a prelude to the feudalization of Indian society[28]. Meanwhile, B.N.S. Yadava provided a detailed analysis of the concept of the Kali age to explain the transition from antiquity to the Middle Ages on the basis of the later *Pauranic* accounts which embody in the ideological garb of prediction "the cognition by contemporaries or near contemporaries of the forces and tendencies that were setting off towards the Middle Ages[29]." From all this it has been rightly deduced that the concept of the Kali age may be profitably utilized to explain the transition from ancient to medieval Indian society.

References

1. E.G. Ray, N.R., 7'The Medieval' Factor in Indian History', being the address of the General President of the Twenty – Ninth Session of the *Indian History Congress*, Patiala, 1967, pp. 1-42; Sharma, R.S.., 'Problem of Transition from Ancient to Medieval in Indian History,' in the Indian Historical Review,

March 1974, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 1-9; idem, Perspectives in Social and Economic History of Early India, New Delhi, 1983, idem Early Medieval Indian Society, Kolkata, 2001, Ch. 1-2, Thakur V.K., "Transition from the Ancient to the Medieval Period', in Devahuti (ed.), Problems of Indian Historiography, Delhi, 1979, pp. 79-92; Yadav, B.N.S. 'The Accounts of the Kali Age and the Social Transition from Antiquity to the Middle Ages', in D.N. Jha (ed.), Feudal Social Formation in Early India, Delhi, 1987, pp. 65-112; Goyal, Shankar, History and Historiography of the Age of Harsha, Jodhpur, 1992, pp.243-72.

2. Cf. E.G. Sircar, Landlordism and Tenancy in Ancient and Medieval India, Lucknow, 1969.

3. Beal, Samuel, *The Life of Hiuen-Tsiang*, Second edn., New Delhi, 1973, pp.112-13.

4. *Ibid*., and n.3.

5. Heras, H.., *The Royal Patrons of the University of Nalanda,* JBORS, XIV, 1928.

6. Cf. Goyal, S.R. *Harsha and Buddhism*, Meerut, 1986, pp. 133-35

7. Watters, T., On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, (A.D. 629-645), I, eds. T.W. Rhys Davids and S.W. Bushell, New Delhi, 1961, p. 334.

8. *Life*, p. 69.

9. Goyal, *op.cit*., pp. 134-35.

10. Sharma, R.S., in IHR, March, 1974, I, Pt. 1,pp.7-8; also see his *Perspectives in Social and Economic History of Early India*, New Delhi, 1983, pp.228 ff.

11. Sharma, R.S., in *IHR*, March 1974, I, Pt. 1, p.7.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid*., p.8.

14. *Ibid.*

15. Ray, N.R.., loc.cit.

16. *Ibid.*

17. Desai, Devangana, 'Art Under Feudalism in India (c.500-1300 A.D.),' *IHR*, March 1974, I, Pt. 1, p. 13.

18. Goyal, S.R., *A Religious History of Ancient India,* Vol. 1, Meerut, 1984, pp. 337, ff.; and Vol.2, Meerut, 1986, pp. 389 ff

19. Desai, Devangana, *op.cit.,* p.12.

20. Sharma., R.S., *op.cit*., p.6.

21. *Ibid.,* op. 5-6.

22. *Ibid*., p.6.

23. *Ibid*., p.5.

24. *HC*, Translation by Cowell and Thomas, Delhi, 1968, pp. 135-36.

25. Hauser, Arnold, *The Social History of Art*, I. P. 220.

26. Sharma, *op. cit.,* p.9.

27. In S.N. Mukherjee (ed..), *India: History and Thought*, Calcutta, 1982 and reprinted in D.N. Jha (ed.), *Feudal Social Formation in Early India*, Delhi, 1987, pp.45-64.

28. In Jha, *op.cit*., p.60.

29. *Ibid.*, p.65.

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS IN COLONIAL VIZAGAPATNAM DISTRICT

Dr. P. Tavitinaidu
Lecturer in P.G. Courses
M.R. College, Visakhapatnam- 530 013

Economic benefits that accrue to trade' and commerce depend heavily on the transport and communication systems. All factors of production and all principles of marketing, to be successful, must have the backing of efficient and well-maintained transport and communication facilities. Maximum utilization of natural resources, proper employment of labour power and quick movement of the produced goods to the market, need an adequate transport and communications network.

Road Transport

When the British established their power over the district in the 18th century there were no roads suitable for fast-moving traffic, there were only 'made' roads meant for the movement of troops and artillery. It was only after 1813 that the Government began to take active interest in the construction of roads meant for passenger and trade traffic. The setting up of the Trunk Road Department in 1845, the starting of the Public Works Department 1858, the passing of the District Road Cess Act III of 1866, and the passing of the Local Funds Act IV of 1871, were some of the important steps that the Government took towards the development of roads in the Madras Presidency. The most important road works taken up by the Public Works Department during the last two decades of the 19th century was the improvement of the Great Northern Trunk Road traversing

the districts of Nellore, Guntur, Krishna, West Godavari, East Godavari and Vizagapatam.

Towards the Close of the 19th century, the chief lines of communications were the trunk road from Payakaraopeta to Chicacole (Srikakulam), and the various cross roads which run from this to the sea on the one side and the ghats leading down from the agency on the other side of the roads, the road from Pudimadaka to Madugula, the road connecting Vizianagaram with Bodara, the road from Bimilipatam passing through Vizianagaram to Salur and Jeypore, and the road leading from Vizianagaram to Palakonda, were the important roads in the district.

Even though the British Government began to take some interest in the construction and development of the roads, the amount that was allotted for this purpose was insufficient. As a result of inadequate expenditure on roads by the District Boards, to which the maintenance of roads was handed over, the general condition of the roads continued to be unsatisfactory. Recognizing this, the Madras Government passed the Madras Local Boards Act of 1920. This Act enhanced the powers and financial resources of the local bodies. Even then natural calamities like the floods of October 1924 and the cyclone of October 1928, and the ever-increasing cost of maintenance affected adversely the normal maintenance of the roads in the district. In 1929-30, the District Board took a loan of Rs.2.5 lakhs from the Government to cope with the ever-increasing demand for roads.

Jayakar Committee

Meanwhile, the extension of motor transport necessitated the proper maintenance of roads. In 1927, a Committee was appointed at the central level under the chairmanship of M.R. Jayakar to investigate the condition of roads, and recommend necessary measures for their improvement. The most important recommendations made by the Committee are[1]

i) Road development in the country should be considered as a national interest as this has become beyond the capacity of provincial governments and local bodies.

ii) An extra tax should be levied on petrol from the road users to develop a road development fund called Central Road Fund.

iii) A semi-official technical body should be formed to pool technical know-how from various parts of the country and to act as an Advisory Body on various aspects of roads

iv) A research organization should be instituted to carry out research and development work and to be available for consultations.

Keeping in view the resolutions of Road-Rail Conference held in Simla in 1933, A. Vipan was appointed by the Madras Government as Special Officer for preparing a comprehensive scheme for the development of roads in the Madras Presidency.

Vipan's Report:

i). Special Officer, A. Vipan visited the headquarters of all the districts in the Presidency from 4th October, 1934 to 7th March, 1935[2].

ii). He pointed out that practically the entire road system of the Presidency was in charge of the local boards and municipalities, though a few important roads, chiefly ghat roads, were under the P.W.D It would be seen that out of the total 32,627 miles of the Presidency only 1,854 miles were maintained by the Public Works Department (P. W. D). In addition to the above there were 4,072 miles of road maintained by the Forest Department. "Vizagapatnam district as it is constituted at present is 17,186 square miles in extent, but out of this only about 6,796 square miles will remain when the new Orissa Province comes into being. A portion of this is included in the Vizagapatam

Agency where the roads are looked after by the Public Works and Revenue Departments. The area of the Vizagapatam district over which the District Board has jurisdiction is 4,568 square miles[3]. In 1934-35 the following types of roads existed in the district.

· Class I or Trunk Road

· Class II Roads (Motorable road)

· Class III Roads

· Class IV Roads

a) Roads in special tracts such as Agencies of the Vizagapatnam and Godavari Districts.

b) Ghat Roads

c) River, Canal and Canal bank road.

The total mileage of the above roads was 1854 miles of which 817 miles were under the agencies of the Ganjam and Vizagapatam Districts. In 1936-37 about, 1,215 miles road were maintained by the P.W.D. and the cost of their maintenance during the year was about 7.3 lakh[4] miles.

a) Railways (broad gauge)   : 282 miles

b) Metalled Roads   : 897 miles

c) Improved or motorable unmetalled road : 93 miles

d) Total motorable roads   : 990 miles

e) Other gunmetal roads   : 146 miles

f) Total of all roads   : 1, 136 miles

These lengths excluded the roads maintained by the Public Works Departments.

Trunk Road

Three sections of trunk roads run through the Vizagapatam district, namely:

	Miles
a) Great Northern Trunk Road	117
b) Vizianagaram – Central Provinces Road	66
c) Rambhadrapuram-Itikalavalasa Central Provinces Road	6

The Great Northern Trunk Road for purpose of comparison in so far as the surface was concerned was divided into three reaches, namely:

· Tuni to Vizagapatam

· Vizagapatam to Bimilipatnam

· Bimilipatam to Chicacole

The condition of these roads was not satisfactory.

Second Class Roads

Regarding the condition of the roads in the district, the Report observed as follows:

Most of the repairs to these roads were carried out late in the 1933-34. The consolidation was done in the absence of a sufficient amount of water. For some months before these repairs were carried out the general condition of the roads in Vizagapatam district was "very bad indeed". The Report pointed even though the general condition of the surface after the repairs was on the whole 'fair', "there seems to be little prospect that repairs of such poor quality will last until the roads are repaired again[5]".

The Report particularly stressed that Anakapalli-Madugula road; Palakonda-Chicacole road and Anakapalle-Chittivalasa road and Anakapalle- Pudimadaka road needed immediate attention.

It suggested the reclassification of roads in the district, and that trunk roads and important marketing roads might be maintained from provincial funds. The following is the classification suggested by the Report.

		Miles
1.	Great Northerm Trunk Road	117
2.	Vizianagaram	66
3.	Ramabhadrapuram-Itikalavalasa Central Province Road	6
4.	Anakapalle-Madgole Road	21
5.	Vizinagaram-Modavalasa Road	12
6.	Anakapalle-Chittivalasa Road	32
7.	Vizianagaram-Anantagiri Road	35
8.	Vizianagaram-Bowdara Road	18
9.	Vizianagaram Palkonda Road	41
10.	Narsipatnam-Palavaram Road	21
11.	Narsipatnam-Tallipalem Road	19
12.	Narsipatnam-Waddadi Road	22
13.	Narsipatnam-Kotanandam Road	14
14.	Narsipatnam-Krishnadevipeta Road	16
15.	Chicacole-Palakonda Road	11

16.	Parvatipuram-Palakonda Road	27
17.	Rajam-Rambhadrapuram Road	25
18.	Bobbili-Bahzipeta Road	15
19.	Anakapalle-Pudimadaka Road	9
	Total	527

The grants received from Government for the maintenance of trunk and second class roads was Rs. 1,67,230. If this amount was utilized exclusively on the trunk roads and important marketing roads, the mileage of which was 527 miles, the maintenance grant per mile amounted to Rs. 317/. This amount, the Report felt, was inadequate to maintain the road surface to the standard required to suit modern-day traffic and "will have to be increased if this end is to be achieved[6].

After considering the problem Vipan felt that the amounts received by the District Boards, as grants, were insufficient for the proper maintenance of roads to suit the increasing traffic, and suggested that more finance be allotted. He was also of the view that a key requirement was the metalling of the existing roads and construction of bridges. He also recommended the laying of new roads at an estimated cost of over Rs.8 lakhs.

In 1936, the Raja of Bobbili suggested that the Government should get a loan from the Government of India, and utilize the money for the completion of the schemes recommended by Vipan[7].

In 1936 the Government appointed a Special Engineer (Road Development) as Inspecting and Superintending Officer in respect of all operations of the Engineering Departments of all District Boards[8].

In 1940 they made the Chief Engineer (Buildings and Roads) the controlling authority for the District Board Engineers Service and Local Fund Assistant Engineer Service.

The Board Fund was instituted, in the first instance, for 5 years only. The Indian Road Congress came into being in 1943.

Bridges

Up to the middle of the 19th Century there were no bridges, in the modern sense, in Vizagapatam district. It was only during the last quarter of the 19th century that the Government took necessary steps to take up the construction of bridges in the district. As a result, by the year 1900 some bridges across the important rivers were completed. Of these, the bridges over the river Sarada near Anakapalle, and the bridge across the river Sarada on the Pudimadaka-Madugula road, were completed at a cost of Rs.0.72 lakhs. It was only during the first quarter of the 20th century that serious attempts were made to bridge some of the watercourses in the district[9].

A bridge over the Laangulya river near Sankili, and the 42 miles and 2 furlongs of the Vizianagaram-Palkonda road, Vizagapatnam district, were completed at a cost of Rs. 9,68,100/-. This road is "one of the main arteries of communication within the district supplying as it does the chief outlet for the agriculture products of the area recently developed under the Nagavali irrigation project and other old irrigation systems. Most of these find their way to the central market at Vizianagaram, which is the main distributing and exporting centre of the Vizagapatnam district[10]."

There were no waterways in this district. As some of the important rivers were not easily fordable during the rainy months; ferries were maintained at some of the important places in the district. Of all these, the ferry started in 1904 near the Vizagapatam Port across the river Upputeru was important. In the years that followed, bridges were

constructed across many of the rivers. Consequently, almost all the ferry points were closed but the ferry near the port at Visakhapatam was maintained till the close of June 1969.

Vehicles And Conveyances

The most important factor that conditioned the means of transport in this part of the country was its general topography. In the past, the roads fit for cart traffic were no better than mere paths. A greater part of the general merchandise was, therefore, usually conveyed by men and animals through these paths and passages. The carts in use were of a very primitive type provided with two wheels of solid stone[11]. As time progressed, their design underwent many changes and gave place to the present-day bullock carts. Even in the first decade of the 20th century, the country cart played an important role in the rural parts of Vizagapatam district[12].

The motor vehicle made its appearance in these parts during the early twenties of this century. As it gained in popularity, the number steadily increased until the close of the 1930s. Owing to the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 there was a slowdown in the growth of the number of motor vehicles. After the war, trade and commerce improved considerably and the controls were lifted. Since then, there has, however, been an impressive increase in the number of motor vehicles in the district contributing to the growth of trade in the district.

Railway Transport - Bengal Nagpur Railway

The British Government started the laying of railways in various parts of the country, especially from the later half of the 19th century. As far as the district was concerned the most important railway which served the district was the Bengal-Nagpur Railway. The old Bengal-Nagpur Railway was formed in March, 1887[13]. Under the contract with the Government, the

Company took over the metre-gauge line, Nagpur-Chattisgarh State Railway, of 240 kilometers in length, which according to one of the conditions, was to be converted into broad gauge. The idea of this system was first mooted in 1863 when Sir Richard Temple, then Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces recommended the construction of a light tramway from Nagpur to the granary of Chattishgarh. A metre gauge line from Nagpur to Rajnandgaon was opened to traffic in 1882. In 1895 the Sini-Midnapore-Calcutta-Cuttack extension was sanctioned and the line was opened for traffic in 1900. In the next year there was another railway reorganization and amalgamation and the old railway ceased to exist as a separate unit. This was the State line, the East Coast Railway which constructed the Puri branch, the line Vijaywada to Cuttack via, Samalkot, Vizagapatnam and Ganjam, with branches to Cocanada(Kakinada) and Jagannath. In 1901, the line from Barang to Vizagapatam was merged in the Bengal-Nagpur Railway and Madras to Vizagapatam in the Madras Railway[14].

The most important railway in Vizagapatam district is the eastern coastline connecting Madras in the South and Calcutta in the east. This line traversing the taluks of Yelamanchili, Anakapalle, Vizagapatam, Srungavarapukota, Bheemunipatnam and Vizianagaram and running for a total distance of about 192 K.M. was opened to traffic upto Waltair, in 1893.

The expansion and growth of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway in the Nagpur District and the Bengal-- Bihar coalfields has been a development of the early years of the present century. The Raipur Vizianagaram link started in 1903 was completed only in 1931, a distance of 260.67 miles[15]. This line traversing a long distance connected the Central provinces with the East Coast. The line carried a large amount of traffic in manganese and cotton[16].

Conclusion

As a result of the improved facilities available from road and railway transport the producer was able to transport this produce economically and quickly to the markets. The economical transport facilities as a result of coordinated development of road and rail transport led to the growing prosperity of agriculturists and traders who profited to a great extent by the improved transport facilities.

Reference

1. S.K. Khanna and G.E.G. Justo, *Highway Engineerings*, (Roorkee, 1994), P.23.

2. A. Vipan, *Scheme of Road Development for the Madras Presidency*, 1935, p. 47

3. *Ibid*, p. 185

4. *Administration Report of the P.W.D.* Part I, 1936-37, pp. 21-22

5. *Ibid*, p. 22

6. A. Vipan, *Scheme of Road Development for the Madras Presidency*, Madras, 1935, p. 186

7. *Proceedings of the Madras Legislative Council*, LXXX, 1936, p. 47

8. *Madras District Gazetteer*, Coimbatore, PP 402-40

9. N. Ramesan, *Andhra Pradesh District Gazetteers*, Vizagapatnam, 1979, p. 123

10. A. Vipan, *Scheme of Road Development for the Madras Presidency*, Madras, 1935, p. 32

11. W. Francis, *Vizagapatnam District Gazetteers*, 1907, p, 143

12. N. Ramesan, *Andhra Pradesh District Gazetteers*, Vizagapatnam, 1979, p. 179

13. *History of Indian Railway, constructed and in Progress, Government of India*, 1964 (Railway Board, p. 132

14. *History of Indian Railway, constructed and in Progress, Government of India*, 1964 (Railway Board, p. 132

15. *History of Indian Railway, constructed and in Progress, connected up to 1ˢᵗ March*, 1918, p. 2

16. K.V. Iyer, *India of Today*, Indian, Indian Raiway, Vol. VIII, (London, 1925) P. 36

THE DEPRESSED CLASSES AND EARLY FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN TAMIL NADU

L. Selvamuthu Kumarasami,
M.A., M.Phil., M.Ed.,Ph.D.,
Senior-Scale Lecturer in History,
S.S..Govt. Arts College,
Tiruttani – 631209.

Regional studies are national studies in miniature. In these studies, people receive more attention and appreciation, like main characters in a well-staged play. Amongst them "history from below" occupies an important place in recent historical writings. A study of "the Depressed Classes and Early Freedom Movement in Tamil Nadu" during the eighteenth century is a genuine attempt in that direction.

The depressed classes of the eighteenth century are those who were treated as 'untouchables', 'unseeables' and 'unapproachables' in a caste-ridden Indian society for many years. Different caste names are attributed to them. They have been called Parayar, Pallar, Valluvar, Arundatiyar, Shanar or Nadar, Thevar and by a few other names in Tamil Nadu. Right from the nineteenth century, broadly these are called depressed classes and backward classes.

The depressed classes suffered from age-long oppression from their co-citizens. Their miserable condition limited their participation in the struggle against colonial British rule. However, it is wrong to say that theirs was a negligible role. The ideological blunder committed by many, without understanding the problem of the depressed classes in the right perspective led to the belief that the depressed classes were pro-British. A study based on a thorough analysis of the factors that helped to develop awareness among the depressed classes, and their struggle and role in the national movement in the Tamil Nadu region would prove to be a

useful addition to the historiography of Tamil Nadu. Also, this study would go a long way in recognizing the contribution of this section of society to various national agitations launched during the colonial period.

This research paper is an attempt to explore the active participation of members of the depressed class, members who were predominantly termed sons of the soil or working class people, in the national freedom struggle against British colonialism in the eighteenth century. Tamil Nadu was known for a tradition of valour. There was no dearth of brave leaders and famous warriors. It played a predominant role against the British in the freedom struggle of India. It can be considered that the fight against the British in Tamil Nadu commenced even in the second half of the eighteenth century. The period from 1755 to 1801 witnessed several freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives for the sake of upholding the honour of the soil. They challenged the aliens till their last breath. The important among them were Puli Thevar of Nercatanseval (1755), Muthu Vadukanathar of Sivagangai (1772), Rani Velunachiar (1772), Muthu Ramalinga Setupati of Ramanathapuram (1795), Theeran Chinnamalai (1790), Veerapandia Kattabomman (1799), Oomathurai (1801), and Maruthu brothers and so on[1]. All these leaders chivalrously fought against the British for half a century. The British considered them as strong native foes, and decided that, without suppressing them, it would be impossible to establish their paramount rule in the far south of India. At the same time, they were very confident and felt that it was easy for them to root out the native resisting forces with their powerful and well-equipped arms and ammunitions. But in the military operation they had to face stiff resistance from their native counter parts beyond their expectation. It was because the native soldiers were totally dedicated in their opposition.

The noteworthy factor, however, is that the native troops included a large number of depressed class people. It disproves the common saying that the depressed classes did not participate in the freedom struggle of India. The notable participators among them in the eighteenth century were Oondi Veeran, Periya Kalan, Katta Karuppanan, Sundaralingam,

Potti Pagadai, Potti Madigan, Kulasekarapattinam Moopan, Nallamadan, Chinna Veerian, Periya Veerian and so on.[2] They furnished firstrate valiant fighters in many capacities right from the ordinary soldiers to military generals, and trustworthy second-rung leaders. Without their sacrifice, it would have been impossible for the early Tamil Nadu freedom fighters to withstand the mighty imperial British reinforcements. Their movements and activities sometimes took even the British generals by surprise. They finished their allotted tasks to perfection and to the entire satisfaction of their superiors.

Until now the historians are attempting to bring to the limelight the materials related to the different facets of depressed class front-rank leaders in the freedom struggle which are untapped. In this bid, many Tamil scholars and savants in the early days were involved in bringing out the contents of the palm leaves. Those materials are available in the form of ballads. The important among them are Puli Tevan Sindhu, Puli Tevan Kummi, Khan Sahib Sandai, Kattabomman Kummi-P-Paadal, Kattabomman Koothu, Panjalamkurichi Azhivu Charitra Kummi, Sivagangai Veera Charitra Kummi and so on. The reaction of the people to British aggression is to be inferred from these palm-leaf ballads, which escaped the notice of the ever-vigilant British spies. As official materials on the people and on the intellectual reaction to political developments are scanty, the importance of these sources is that they highlight many unexplored historical incidents[3]. These have been deliberately omitted by British historians and neglected by Indian historians who concerned themselves with the political history of dynastic rule. It can be taken that as the then historians were influenced by the British the native Tamil pandits took it as their responsibility to bring out the role of the native people[4]. As they sang many songs on such historical incidents it is the bounden duty of modern historical scholars to identify and verify the reality and veracity of those sources with a historical bent of mind. In such an honourable attempt it can be asserted beyond doubt that many depressed class brethren participated in the natives' fight against the British.

Their activities can be grouped under the different military chieftains of the eighteenth century. It is known that in the military camp of Puli Tevar, the chieftain of Nercatanseval, there were hundreds of generals like Oondi Veeran Pagadai, Periya Chokkan, Sevatta Chokkan, Karutha Chokkan, Chinna Kaladi, Periya Kaladi and thousands of soldiers belonging to the depressed class. A military general looked after more than 300 soldiers of various disciplines. Among them, General Oondi Veeran was a notable figure who by birth belonged to Arundatiyar caste in the depressed community. He was hailed as the 'Sword of Puli Tevar'. As a military general, he was an expert in guerilla warfare activities. He was very loyal towards his promoter. He showed his valour as the general of Puli Tevar in the battles fought against the British at Nercatanseval, TirunelveIi, Kalakkad, Gangai Kondan, Vasudevanallur and Srivilliputtur. On one occasion, in order to attack Nercatanseval the British forces stayed at Thenmalai. For a while, they callenged the valour of the men of Puli Tevar. Accordingly, if anybody from Puli Tevar's camp took the royal sword and royal horse by sounding the brass flute of the British camp, the British would voluntarily leave the place and retrace their path. This news spread like wild fire throughout the Nercatanseval Palayam. At that time, Oondi Veeran came forward to meet the challenge of the British. Puli Tevar saw in him the needed will, and he sent the general. Oondi Veeran, pretending to be an orphan worked in the British camp where he was asked to serve in the stable, feeding horses. As per his plan, one day Oondi Veeran took away the royal sword but he couldn't hold the royal horse, which being spirited, ran away. When the British soldiers found the running horse, they had taken it back to the stable. Meanwhile, Oondi Veeran had hidden himself by sprinkling grass over himself. As the British hammered a new nail on the ground to tie up the horse, it penetrated into the left hand of the ambushed Oondi Veeran, who patiently bore the severe pain without a murmur. After the exit of the British soldiers, Oondi Veeran cut off his left hand with the royal sword and mounted on the royal horse by knocking the brass flute. Before

he left, he wisely turned the mouth of the artillery towards the camp of the British. When the British heard the sound of the brass flute they got a shock, and subsequently, not seeing the direction of the mouth of the artillery, they operated it. As a result, they themselves became victims to the artillery bombs. This incident showed the courageous and dedicated service of Oondi Veeran. Appreciating his service, he was given a reward by Puli Tevar.[5] It is said that even after the death of his master, he served the cause of the sons of Puli Tevar in the battle of Pudukkottai.

Another depressed class member, namely Periya Kaladi, served in the military camp of Puli Tevar as military general. When the British troops marched towards Nercataneseval under the leadeship of Khan Sahib, Periya Kaladi as a General of Puli Tevar, attempted to check it. It led to a fierce battle in which Periya Kaladi was severely wounded, but he won the battle by driving away the invading forces. However, when he reached the feet of Puli Tevar, it is said that he passed away. In his memory, Puli Tevar planted a commemorative stone for valour. The battlefield where he fought against the forces of Khan Sahib is still remembered as 'Khansa Medu'[6].

Likewise, Nallavan alias Nallamadan, Chinna Veerian and Periva Veerian all of the Palla community served in the military camp of Vandaya Tevar of Kollamkondan Palayam. Among them, the heroic struggle waged by Nalla Madan was noteworthy. He served in Kollamkondan Palayam from 1759 to 1767. In 1767 in the military operation against Colonel Donald Campbell, he lost his life. The place of his death is still remembered[7]. About the sacrifices of depressed class soldiers, Colonel Donald Campbell in his military expedition against Vasudevanallur observed that he was astonished at the contempt for death evinced during the cannonade. As fast as a breach was made, in the midst of shot and shell they went on quietly repairing it with palamyras and straw"[8].

Moreover, it is known that in the military camp of Kattabomman the existence of depressed class members surpassed those of Puli Tevar's camp. It can be understood through the ballads like Kattabommu Kummi-P-Paadal by T.Natarajan, Veerapandiya Kattabommu Kathai-P-Paadal, Katabomman Kummi and Kattabomman Koothu by N. Vanamamalai, and Veerapandiyam, and Panjamkurichi Azhivu Charitra Kummi by Jegaveer Pandianar. From the British side, Col. Collens in one of his letters named some of the depressed class leaders viz., Kaladi Karuppan, Sangalingam and Sobhan Palaniyandi. Kattabomman treated Kaladi Veeran and Kaladi Karuppan, the Arundatiyar and Pallar community members respectively as his own sons[9].

When Kattabomman marched towards Ramanathapuram to meet Jackson, the Collector of Southern Poligar Region, a band of soldiers from Maravars, Nadars and other depressed class members accompanied him. Among them were Satan Kaladi, Sattananan, Mottai Sankaran, Kaladi Kuttayan, Kuttan Kaladi, Mada Kudumban, Kuna Thungan, Palla Karuppanan Kaladi, Muttan Pagadai, Chinna Kodali, Piraperiyan, Potti Pagadai, Muttan Pagadai, Pottayan, Thattaparai Chinna Vakkayan, Sakkayan, Periya Vakkayan, Kandan Pagadai, Kanda Kodali, Kudhiraikara Parayan[10]. In the subsequent encounter of Kattabomman with the British forces, the depressed class soldiers helped him to escape. Among them, Potti Pagadai and Muttan Pagadai played a remarkable role in driving away the enemies[11].

Velliya Tevan and Katta Karuppannan Sundaralingam, the Marava and Palla class members respectively seemed to be the two eyes of Kattabomman. Both were valiant fighters and expert in wielding the sword. For his ability, Velliya Tevan was given the title 'Bahadur' by Kattabomman. Sundaralingam was also the ablest warrior in the camp of Kattabomman. After the lapse of a few months, he also earned good appreciation for his gallantry. When Col. Collens advanced with the British troops towards Panjalamkurichi, Kattabomman at once called for both

Sundaralingam and Velliya Tevan. For a while, Sundaralingam was there. Velliya Tevan was at Vallanadu, a nearby area. Kattabomman searched for someone to summon him. At last, he chose Sundaralingam to call Velliya Tevan at this critical juncture[12]. Sundaralingam proceeded towards Vallanadu and found Velliya Tevan sleeping there. After some risk, he got Velliya Tevan woken up from his bed. Now, Sundaralingam related the entire situation and the need for the latter's presence in Panjalamkurichi. At once, both of them proceeded to Panjalamkurichi even though the wife of Velliya Tevan predicted a bad omen[13]. Knowing the preparation of Kattabomman, the British sent a strong force under Major Bannerman who appeared before the fort on September 5, 1799. Under him, many British captains fought bravely. On the side of Kattabomman, Velliya Tevan and Sundaralingam entered the battle. In the encounter Lieutenants Martagil, Dornieux, Blake, Gunner and Flinny were killed. Further, Col. Collens was killed by Velliya Tevan in an ambush near a garden wall[14]. The death of Col. Collens gave a rude shock to Major Bannerman who announced a cash award of Rs.5000/ - for catching and entrusting Velliya Tevan to the British.[15] As per the wish of the British, Velliya Tevan was handed over by his own uncle. Then the British mercilessly executed him.[16]. However, Sundaralingam and other generals like Kanda Kodali, Kanda Pagadai and Veeramallu Seruvai continued the struggle. Sundaralingam stabbed to death an adjutant of the British army who guarded the British camp. But Kanda Pagadai was shot to death by Major Macaulay, the successor of Major Bannerman. A shocked Sundaralingam and Veeramallu Seruvai managed to escape from the battlefield. On reaching Panjalmkurichi, they informed the death of Velliya Tevan and Kanda Pagadai. Kattabomman was greatly worried and regretted their death. Inspite of the sad news, he did not fail to appreciate the gallantry shown by the others. He honoured them with garlands and gold medals. He himself took the responsibility to bring up the son of the departed Kandan Pagadai.

When the Poligar war grew in full swing, more depressed class members began to take part in it. In addition to Sundaralingam in the heroic struggle, Muthan Pagadai, Potti Pagadai and Kaladi, the depressed class generals gained significance. Muthan Pagadai and Potti Pagadai easily entered into the military camps of the British and plundered the British arms and ammunitions. However, Sundaralingam and Kaladi were badly wounded, and on their way to Panjalamkurichi they passed away. At this continious loss of able and brave front-line depressed class warriors, Kattabomman and his adherents lost all hope and became desperate. They evacuated the Panjalamkurichi fort and went away[17]. In fact, both Velliya Tevan and Sundaralingam were trust-worthy Generals and seemed almost the right and left hands of Kattabomman against the British. In commemorating their valuable service to Kattabomman, the Government of Tamil Nadu, named the two entrances of Panjalamkurichi fort in nearby Ettaiyapuram after them[18]. Further, the Government named the collectorate campus of Tinnelvelli after Sundaralingam, as, 'Sundaralingam *Valakam* or Campus'

It is also known that the participation of depressed class members in the freedom struggle increased in the era of Oomathurai, the younger brother of Kattabomman. It was rumoured that Kattabomman failed to treat well all the depressed class members, except a few. The obvious view was that he did not have much regard for the depressed communities like Nadar, Pallar and so on. The womenfolk of the Nadar community were highly reserved. They feared to wear gold ornaments openly. Besides it is known that Kattabomman exploited the Pallar women without showing any sympathy in the manual work like construction of forts[19]. He had earned the enmity of the Pallars of Paramankurichi, Maravas of Marukalkurichi and Nadars of Kayamozhi, Kurumbur and Arumuganeri. It is said that Kattabomman in the name of *desakaval* duties plundered the properties, and drove away the cattle of Nadars[20]. Even his men badly whipped the depressed people of Manadu and Kurumbur as they failed to pay *kaval* duties.[21] Such nefarious activities earned for him

a bad name among the Nadars who were the predominant depressed class people in the south of river Tambaraparani[22].

As stated earlier, on the execution of Kattabomman the mantle of rebellion fell on the young and energetic Oomathurai. He might have regretted for the mistakes of his brother as he followed an entirely different policy embracing all his subjects alike. Irrespective of caste, all people openly supported Oomathurai with the ultimate goal of liberation of the mother country from the British yoke. When Oomathurai and his adherents were imprisoned at Palayamkottai fort, there was a depressed class member named Potti Pagadai. The British soldiers employed him to gather foodstuff and fuel from the bazaar. It gave an opportunity to Oomathurai to communicate the secret matters relating to insurrection with outside leaders through him. Once, with the intention of escaping from the gaol, Oomathurai, through him, despatched a letter containing the plan of action to his uncle Pulikuthi Naick of Panjalamkurichi. Potti Pagadai reached Panjalamkurichi by walk and entrusted the letter of conspiracy to the concerned person. On his return to the Palayamkottai fort, he felt he had taken a long time. Immediately, he pretended to suffer from stomach ache and thereby convinced the British that all was well. Hearing of this excellent deed of Potti Pagadai, Oomathurai and his men were astonished and praised him highly.[23]

After a brilliant escape from jail, Oomathurai reached Panjalamkurichi where the fort of Kattabomman was razed to the ground. He determined to secure mass support. With that intention, he instilled among the people the thirst for freedom. He united all the people asking them to forget their petty differences. Futher, he asked the people to forget all their bitter experiences in the days of his elder brother Kattabomman as a forgotten chapter[24]. All the people responded to the clarion call of Oomathurai. To suppress the rebel activities Col. Agnew, with more reinforcements,

encamped near the Panjalamkurichi fort which was then re-erected by Oomathurai with the help rendered by all, especially the depressed section. In order to divert the attention of the British, Chakklinyan Potti Madigan, a depressed member, disguised himself as a baboon and performed folk dances in front of the British military camp. The British were enjoying the entertainment and were lax in their duties. At that time, Oomathurai and his men attacked the British. Utilizing this situation, Potti Pagadai plundered the arms and other war materials of the enemies. Besides, when the final tussle was going on between the forces of Agnew and Oomathurai, the depressed class members like Muthan Pagadai, Potti Pagadai and Vakkian took part actively. They performed many miraculous deeds. The former two members killed two British generals named Chinna Pirattan and Periya Pirattan Vakkian and killed a number of British soldiers. However, the well-equipped British troops made Oomathurai and his men evacuate the Panjalamkurichi fort. They fled away to Sivagangai on May 28, 1801 and there itself Oomathurai started his final crusade against the British. The depressed class members, following him reached Sivagangai. The notable among them was Kulasekarapatnam Moopan. He was one among the seventy-three ringleaders who were perpetually banished to the Prince of Wales Island, Penang, by the British on 11th February 1802, subsequent to the fall of the Southern Poligars[25].

Thus, it cannot be accepted that the depressed class people had not played a remarkable role in the Freedom Struggle. From the above facts, it is very clear that the diverse depressed classes like the Maravar, the Nadars, the Totiens, the Kallars, the Paravas and the Kooteans were largely involved[26]. It is even proved in the proclamations made by Marudhu brothers, who called on all the caste people to participate in the South Indian Rebellion, the first war of independence, and thereby drive away the British

from the Indian soil[27]. However, the sad factor was that the depressed class people couldn't play a leading role as the influential and affluent Poligars.did. It is because they were economically and socially treated as slaves. S.R. Lushington, the Collector of Southern Poligar Region reported their pitiable condition thus: "The Poligars entrusted the actual cultivation of land to a caste of workers called Pallars who were the counterparts of serfs in baronial estate in Europe[28]." Nevertheless their social condition restrained their activities. As for the national cause they came forward to fight against British Paramountcy forgetting all the social injustice done to them by the wealthy landlord class. In the later part of the nineteenth and early part of twentieth centuries from among them many leaders emerged not only for their liberation but also for the emancipation of the nation. Such leaders responded to the nation-wide appeal made by the leaders like Mahatma Gandhi. The notable among them were M.C.Rajah, A.S. Swami Sahajananda, V.I. Muniswami Pillia, J.Shivashanmugam Pillai, P.Kakkan and K.Kamaraj. As research scholars of history, it is our duty to bring out their role in the later Gandhian struggle for freedom.

References-

1.   Rajaiah, *N.,MamannanPoolithevan,* (Tamil), Rajapalayam, 1992, p.95.

2.   *Maruda Malar,* (Tamil Monthly), Palayamkottai, September 1993,p.5.

3.   Venkatasubramanian, T.K., 'Role of Tipu Sultan in the Integration of Political Forces of the South in the Second Half of the 18th Century' in *Tipu Sultan,* Souvenir, Mysore, 1989, pp.126-127.

4.   Sivagnanam, M.P., *Gandhiadigalukku Murpatta Kaalathil Viduthalai-* , or, Madras, 1974, pp.17-18.

5.   Vellaiappan, A., *Puli Tevan Kummi Paadal,* Unpublished Tamil ballad, pp.1-12.

6. Rajaiah, N., *India Viduthalai - P- Porin Mudal Muzhakkam,* (Tamil), Madras, 1985, pp. 40 -42.

7. Rajaiah, N., *Vidudhalai -P-Poril Thazhthapattorin Pangu,* (Tamil), Rajapalayam, 1990, pp. 58-59.

8. Caldwell, R, *History ofTinnevelly,* Madras, 1881, p.137.

9. Siranjivi, *Veerapandiya Kattabomman,* Madras, 1959, p.145.

10. Vanamamalai, N., *Veerapandiya Kattabommu Kathai - P - Paadal,* (Tamil Ballad), Madurai, 1971, pp. 33-34.

11. *Ibid.,* pp.54 and 60.

12. *Ibid.,* pp. 92-93.

13. Vanamamalai, N., *KattabommuKoothu,* Madurai, 1972, pp. 50-54.

14. Ganapathy Pillay, W.E., *Ettaiyapuram: Past and Present,* Madras, 1890, p.82.

15. Senthuraimuthu, *Veerapandiya Kattabooman,* (Tamil) Madras, 1980, p.40.

16. Manickkam, V., *Kattabomman Kummi -P- Paadal, Tamil Ballad,* Palayamkottai, 1983, p.47.

17. Rajaiah, N., *Veeduthalai - P -Poril Thazhthapattorin Pangu,* pp. 36 -40.

18. *Daily Thanti,* (Tamil Daily), 27 March 1993, Madurai, p.7.

19. Vanamamalai, N., *Veerapandiya Kattabommu Kathai - P - Paadal,* p.7.

20. Masillamani Nadar, T., *Pandiya Desa Adityavamsa Charitram,* (Tamil), Madurai, 1931, pp.19-27.

21. Devadass Naidu, S., *Panjalamkurichi Charitram,* (Tamil), Kovilpatti, 1928, p.67.

22. Rajadurai,P., *Uravin Murai,* (Tamil), Virudhunagar, 1988, pp. 81 - 84.

23. Vanamamalai, N., *Veerapandiya Kattabommu Kadai -P-Paadal.,* p.I44.

24. Ibid., p.7.

25. Rajayyan, K., *History o/ Madurai,* 1736 –*1801,* Madurai, 1974, pp. 378 - 379.

26. Kamal, S.M., *Maveerar Marudhupandiar,* (Tamil),Ramanathapuram, 1989, pp. 181 - 185.

27. Revenue Sundries, 6 and 10 July 1801, Vol. 26, pp. 432 - 448; Revenue Consultations, 6 July 1801, Vo1.110, pp. 1299-1365.

28. Lushington, S.R., Collector of Tinnevelly, Report, 29 December 1800.

COMMUNAL CONFLICTS IN SOUTH TRAVANCORE STATE

Dr. A. Kumaraswamy
Reader in History
V.O.C College, Tuticorin - 628 008.

Communalism is basically an ideology with which we have lived so long that it appears paradoxically to be a simple, easily understood notion. Conflicts always serve as a dynamic causation for the historical processes. Human society is essentially an interrupted society rather than an integrated one. The interplay and interaction of conflicts and their impact on the traditional superstructure of society offer tempo to the progress of history. The evolution of systematic change that emerged out of structural disintegration brought dynamism to history, and social harmony became the ultimate goal of history. The depressed communities of the Travancore state inaugurated socio-religious movements and suffered pain and persecution for securing symbols of status and, finally, the status of equality. Hence the heroic history of the Travancore non-caste Hindus reveals communal conflicts leading towards social and economic progress.

The most southern of Indian states, Travancore was unique with its physical features, political order, social structures and cultural complex. Travancore was an oriental microcosm, a representative land and a country of striking contrasts[1]. Situated at the south-western extremity of the Indian peninsula, and protected on one side by the Arabian sea and on the other by the Western Ghats Travancore, along with Cochin and the Malabar districts of the Madras Presidency, constituted the ancient kingdom of Kerala[2]. Travancore was pre-eminently an agricultural country, 42.2 percent of the population depending for their means of livelihood almost exclusively upon land. The Southern part of Travancore with the taluks of Thovala, Kalkulam,

Vilavancode and Neyyattinkara, inhabited mostly by the Tamil-speaking people constituted South Travancore[3]. The ruler Marthandavarma (1728 - 1758) united the scattered and divided lands and founded modern Travancore Col. Munro laid the foundation of British paramountcy in Travancore. Rani Parvathi Bai (1815-1829) introduced a new era of social progress and reforms in the State and also helped the church establishments and missionary movements in the state[4]. On the whole, the entire administrative machinery was an engine of oppression. The political system was shaped and maintained to preserve the interests of the upper classes rather than the welfare of the depressed[5]. The entire political authority degenerated into merely a custodian of customs and conventions.

In Travancore society communal ideology has different phases. What is visible as the fundamental unit of the society is the belief that people who follow the same religion have common secular interests such as common political, economic, social and cultural interests. This is the first bedrock of communal ideology. Subsequently, in a multi-religious society like Travancore[6] the elements of communal ideology rested on the secular interests: that is, the social, cultural, economic and political interests of the followers of one religion were dissimilar and divergent from the interests of the followers of another religion. Communalism blossomed in its ugly form when the interests of the followers of different religions and different communities were seen to be mutually incompatible, antagonistic and hostile. This interplay of communal conflict brought out social imbalances, social disruptions and social disintegration. Now communal ideology transplanted itself into the arena of political order of the State. It resulted in group formation and novel political mobilization such as Malayalee mobilization against Brahmin domination[7], and Tamils' separatism[8] against Malayalee domination. These violent socio-politic conflicts were, in fact, the fruit of the communal conflicts, and the outcome was the collapse of the Travancore religious orthodoxy[9], State autocracy and finally the State itself.

Casteism is the steel frame of Hindu society and religion became the handmaid of vices and folly[10]. Caste is nothing but the outcome of the herd instincts coupled with a natural division of labour. Caste is a Brahminical child of the Indo-Aryan culture and was spread throughout the country by the Brahmin groups. In fact, caste is the smoke of malice which comes from the flames of ignorance. This distressing institution of casteism controlled the social structure of south Travancore with all its evils such as untouchability, unapproachability and unseeability. In the rigid division of society on the basis of the caste system, the Brahmins, Nairs and Nanjinad Vellalas who held land control, political influence and religious power became avarnas or upper castes; whereas the Nadars, Ezhavas, Sambhavars and Pulayas who had no social privilege, political authority, economic concessions and religious rights were considered as lower castes. The caste system, in its working, divided the Hindu community into a multitude of almost hermetically sealed groups. Society was so infused with communal and caste division that Swami Vivekananda, during his visit to Kerala in 1882, marked it as a "veritable lunatic asylum"[11]. In fact, the social inequalities that were centred on religious practices and communal traditions had affected social mobility, created extreme disparities, promoted ruthless exploitation and retarded general growth.

Against the long historical enslavement suffered by the lower caste groups of Hinduism there emerged in the South Travancore Society a resistance movement challenging exclusive privileges, extraordinary rights, and socio-cultural ascendancy of the upper castes. Often these resistance movements, perceptible among the caste groups of Hindu communities, were assessed by the historians as forces of revolutionary change[12] and social transformation. The Hindu communal organisations and the social structures they established were first challenged by the non-caste Hindu caste groups. This communal schism was championed by Hindu religious reformers of South Travancore like Vaikunda Swamigal, Ayyankali, Chattambi

Swamigal and Narayana Guru. Following their works communal differences and disturbances broke out in the state.

With the coming of Vaikundaswamigal[13] a new sect of Hinduism, a resurgent Vaishanvism, made its appearance as a curious phenomenon in the religious history of Travancore. He was critical in his teachings and condemned the privileged caste Hindu communities. This provoked the animosity of the Brahmins and Nairs. He mobilized the non-caste Hindus through the cult of a resurgent Vaishnavism and taught them to live in unity, fearlessness and with good faith. He delivered the first blow on the citadel of Brachminical orthodoxy. He carried on a crusade against the caste distinctions imposed upon the society by the caste Hindus and proceeded with his mission to establish 'Dharma Yoga'[14] a land without any discrimination between the haves and have-nots. The mission of Vaikundaswamigal for a non-caste, Hindu, socio-religious mobilization against the privileged classes of people inspired and opened the eyes of the suffering millions to their deplorable and despicable condition. He was the first in Travancore State to raise his voice against 'Brahminocracy' and its predominance. His reform schemes were continued in Travancore by three outstanding leaders of non-Brahmin communities Viz. Sri Chattampi Swamigal 1853-1924 the Nair Sanyasin, Sri Narayana Guru (1856-1928), the Ezhava Saint, and Ayankali (1863-1941), the Pulaya leader. [15] The exhortations of this spiritual trio, and their emphasis on the revival of the glorious traditions of Hinduism gave a new awakening and instilled a new confidence in the middle class elements of Hindu communities. Being Hindu revivalists they helped the rise of their communities, worked for the breakdown of caste barriers, and promoted the life and culture of the oppressed communities. They raised their powerful voice against outmoded social customs and institutions that remained in the domain of Hinduism.

The social awakening among the Nairs that emerged as a sequel to the works of Chattambi Swamigal helped all other non-Brahmin

communities to revolt against Brahmin domination [16]. In a caste solidarity move, the neo-Nair group which was a status group based on education, income and occupation, launched an attack against communal traditions and superstitious beliefs. Following Chattambi Swamigal the trio of political visionaries of the Nair group, Sir C. Sankaran Nair, Dr. T. M. Nair, and G. Parameswaran Pillai championed the non-Brahmin movement and exposed the exploitation by the Brahmins, and the unworkable system of matrilineal inheritance, and stressed the need to challenge the growing Christian community and its share in Government service[17]. Their ideological dictum cherished by the Neo-Nair" protagonists reflected in their slogan 'Travancore for Travancoreans'. The Nanjinad Vellalas, who also held parallel communal traditions and were choked by the matrilineal system, were awakened by the works of the Tamil Poet Kavimani S.Desiga Vinayagam Pillai 1876-1954. In their struggle they founded communal organisations like Malayalee Sabha in 1884 and adopted memorial representation, legislative debate and public demonstration campaigns.

Sree Narayana Guru expounded his liberal principles and carried on a crusade, almost single-handedly, against the social maladies, during a period marked by religious bigotry, communal hatred and social exploitation. Challenging Brahminical Hinduism, he consecrated the Siva Temple at Aruvipuram in 1888. He spread his message, "Strengthen by organisation-liberate by education" for the emancipation of the downtrodden from social evils, ignorance, superstition and the rigours of the caste system[18]. Motivated by him, Kumaran Asan and Dr. Palpu became intellectual leaders of the Ezhava community and launched social. movements against caste oppression and untouchability. Ayyankali, the "Rajah of the Pulayas, organised a movement with a spirit of chivalry to agitate for the rights denied to the untouchables"[19]. He taught his fellow castemen the need for being alert socially and intellectually. He masterminded an open encounter with the

caste Hindus, guided the Pulaya riots, and organised insurgent movements against caste tyranny and caste Hindu organisations.

The caste solidarity movement initiated by these leaders resulted in the grant of civil rights such as the right to wear decent clothes, right to personhood, liberation from free service, civic rights such as right to enter public places of utility, rights to tenants (Kudiyans) for permanent occupancy of lands of jenmies (by the royal proclamation of 8 August 1867), protection of the rights of Nair Viruthikars, and patrilineal system of inheritance by Nair regulations and Vellala regulations. On the whole, the hierarchical order had crumbled, the landed aristocracy was liquidated, and feudalism was threatened with disintegration. However, the untouchable and polluting communities could not change their misfortune of social immobility. The oppressive administration defended untouchability with all organised force. The working of the concept of pollution, an unwilling bureaucracy, uncompromising state autocracy, and orthodox solidarity of caste Hindus worked against the depressed communities.

In South Travancore communal conflict emerged following the spread of the Christian faith among the unprivileged communities. The non-caste groups, who were crushed or made dependent and forced to accept inhumanity and humiliation, began to consider the social restrictions as a sort of insult and humiliation. The movement of the depressed for betterment, and subsequent equality, assumed two forms. The more radical among the oppressed sought to gain social identity through other religions, while the more conservative through Hinduism itself. Finding Hinduism blocked by the communities which claimed a higher status, many of the untouchables sought progress through other religions, particularly Islam and Christianity. Those who went out of the Hindu fold spearheaded radical revolutionary movements, whereas those who remained in Hinduism organised satygraha agitation and sought evolution through legislation. Communal groups functioned in South Travancore in different streams.

The Sambhavars of South Travancore invited William Tobias Rigeltaube to Mylady in 1806 to found his Travancore mission of the London Mission Society[20]. The missionary movement brought converts from Nadars and the Sambavars whose number swelled to 15.37 per cent, in 1854, of the total population of Travancore[21]. They increased the mission districts and established a large number of mission schools, hospitals and industrial units. Their strength increased to 23.6 percent in 1901 and 31.5 percent in 1931. The attitude of the caste Hindus drove the lower order to the fold of the Protestant faith. Conversion gave a new faith for emancipation from slavery, oppression, highhandedness, injustice and many other feudal restrictions. Many factors in the process of conversion created conflict between the two communal groups in south Travancore society. The missionaries attempted to achieve conversion through different agencies. Introduction of education, distribution of lands, and employment of women worked effectively in the evangelical field, but created communal tension[22]. The missionaries were suspected of improper motives in educating the girls-slave girls, widows and orphans. Tracts were distributed among the people at festival gatherings including the Suchindram temple festival and Mondaikadu temple festivals. It created commotion among native gatherings. The missionaries engaged zenana workers and Bible women for the distribution of tracts and by regular visits to the houses of caste Hindus. On several occasions they were blocked and molested. The missionaries sometimes pulled down the heads of Hindu deities and erected churches there. This gave raise to the suspicion of the natives about missionary labour in South Travancore. In addition to that, the converts were encouraged to celebrate their domestic functions and ceremonies in a manner greatly deviant from the custom-ridden simplicity, which kindled the provocation of the caste Hindus. The rise of Christianity offered a threat to the sole right of Hindus to hold key posts in the administration[23]. Also, the London Mission Society (LMS) had the aim of freeing the lowest castes from the fetters of tradition, with Christianity as the instrument. When the persecution of Protestant converts became bitter

and intolerable the Travancore administration issued the Tiruvalla Edict in 1851, to arrest the progress of Christianity. The Edict issued by the Diwan deprived the Protestant converts of the privileges of entering any court of justice, or walking on the public roads. The attempt to convert the emancipated slaves to the fold of Christianity after the Emancipation Proclamation of 1855 also met with reaction from the caste-Hindus. When the converts were freed from free service, service on Sundays, all restrictions on dressing, and restrictions of entering public roads, public wells, and tanks, the caste Hindu reacted with bitterness. The animosity of the caste Hindus was more a reflection of their annoyance over the outcaste's violation of occupational segregation and social seclusion. The caste Hindus thrived on the agrarian economy, and conversion posed a threat to the labour resources of the land. Instances of violence, on breach of social customs and segregation, are also marked. A few cases of mobility on the axis of power and political status also led to occasional conflict.

With the aim of obtaining elevation in social rank and the bettering of their material condition, a great revolt took place in many of the Sambhavar villages of South Travancore, and willingness and readiness and a strong desire among them to yield themselves to Christian teachings became apparent. Slowely, the LMS disappeared from the Sambhavars giving way to the Salvation Army. Subsequently, the Sambhavar revolt manifested in different dimensions and resulted in violent communal conflicts with the caste Hindus.

The Sambhavars as an agrarian community had a 'lingering survival'. Mateer writes "The parayas and pulayas were steeped in the densest ignorance and stupidity; the gospel has been the means of their reclamation from vices and of their social evolution"[24]. Major William Johnson was the founder of the Salvation Army in south Travancore. At Black Rock Estate, Johnson organised the estate workers and formed the First Army's Crop. A native Sambhavar Salvationist Devasundaram received a revelation

during his meditation at Medicine Hill and cried out "I see an army in red coast like a shoal of fish in the seas, tens of thousands, I believe God is going to give this reward for our labour" With his miraculous utterings of his vision and message of salvation, large Sambhavars were attracted to his faith. This process was accelerated with the boom in marches consisting of songs set to popular Indian tunes with musical instruments, flags and banners. Thus the Cape Mission was started in 1892 with Nagercoil as the headquarters. Now the Sambhavars found their own leader in the army coming to their feet to free them from fetters. When they sought the "way cry" to be echoed in their village the caste Hindus created terror and horror with the object of checking the conversion. They set fire to their huts, and destroyed their crops, and forced them into labour on Sundays. The Army officers were persecuted with the help of the caste Hindu officers who had an upper hand in the administration. The judiciary became an instrument of oppression and the local officers of the Army were tortured crudely for small crimes like entering the bazaar during the Hindu festivals, and purchasing goods from shops in the caste Hindu villages. A feeling of bitterness emerged, with the Sambhavars handed over their temple premises for the erection of quarters to the Army officers. The converts to the Army secured a high standard of living and a new outlook in life and clamoured for social equality, economic freedom and civil rights. Opposing the vast improvement of the low caste converts the caste Hindus planned to arrest the onward march of the Army in the villages and attempted to kill the Army officers, and caused misery, through persecution, to the converts. The process of persecution lost vigour when the Salvationists launched social movements for the common development of the Travancore Society through medical and educational missions.

Having suffered the worst humiliation, the polluting communities launched the final struggle for equality through the temple entry movement at Suchindram. The caste Hindu opposition fizzled out when the enlightened Maharaja and Diwan finally opened the temples

for the non-caste Hindus through the historic Temple Entry Proclamation. It ended the era of humiliation suffered by the untouchables. It ushered in the birth of a new era, an era of equality and freedom in the state. In fact, throwing open Hindu temples to all classes became an important milestone in the annals of mobility along the axis of status. Now the conflict regulating mechanism contributed to a compromising synthesis, which in turn brought about a process of evolution in the South Travancore Society. The linguistic isolation and cultural enslavement from the princely regime of the Malayalee Nairs was threatened with the Tamils' identity movement. It was against inequality, oppression, degradation and discrimination based on linguistic consideration.

References

1. Mateer, So *Land of charity*, London, 1871, P. 13.

2. Kunjan PilIai, N. (Supmt), *Census of India* 1931 Travancore, Part 1, Vol. XXVIII, Trivandram, 1982, P.14.

3. Sreedhara Menon, A., *Kerala District Gazetteers* Trivandram, 1962, Po15.

4. Velu PilIai, T.K., *The Travancore State Manual*, Vol. IV, PP.5-6.

5. Rajalingam.R., Social conflict in South Travancore, M.Phil dissertasion, madurai, 1984, P. 14.

6. George, K.M., *Kumaran Asan*, Madras, 1972, P.30.

7. Travancore Government, English Records, Cover File. No. 3234 of 1895.

8. Moni, P.S. *Thiruthanllar Iyakkam*. P.4.

9. *The Hindu*, 22 April 1936.

10. Henry,K. Beauchamp, (e.d.), *Hindu Manners of ceremonies of the Abbe J. Dubois.*Oxford, 1906, pp.17.

11. Swami Vivekananda. *The complete works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. Ill, Calcutta, 1964, P. 292..

12. Department of Public Relations, *Kerala through the Ages*, Trivandrum, 1980, P. 98.

13. Ponnu, R. Vaikundaswamy and Social Reform movement, M.Phil dissertation, Madurai, 1980, P. 38.

14. Bala Prajapathi, R. *Vaikundasamigal Varalaru,* Malai Murasu, July 9, 1978.

15. Alasier, J. Bothers, *Aspects of South Indian History*, Nagercoil, 2000, P. 190..

16. Ramakrishnan Nair, R. *Social Structure and Political Development in Kerala*, Trivandrum. 1976, P.16.

17. S. Ramanatha Aiyer, *Progressive Travancore,*Trivandrum,1923, P.5.

18. Sobhanan, B, *Genesis of the Social Emancipation among the Ezhavas,* Hinstoria, Vol. II. August, 1984,P.87.

19. Saradamoni, K., *Emergence of a slave caste,* Pulayas of Kerala, P. 147.

20. Richard Lovett, *The History of The London Missionary Society,* 1795-1895, Vol. 11, London, 1899, P. II.

21. Kunjan Pillai, N. *Census of India-1931,* Travancore, Part 1, Vol. XXVIII, P. 331.

22. LMS Centenary Report from March 1894 to 1895, 1896, P. 25.

23. English Recors, TVM, Cover File No. 2115 of 1859, *Memorial of the missionaries to CE. Trevelyan,* July 18, 1859. Ninety fifth Report of the LMS, Travancore District Committee, 1893, P. 145.

24. Harry Williams, *Miracle of Medicine Hill,*_P. 12.

ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE LEATHER INDUSTRY IN TAMIL NADU: A STUDY

Dr. G. Gowthaman
Lecturer, Department of Indian History,
University of Madras, Chennai – 600 005

Tanning is an art by which perishable animal hides and skins are preserved from decay and converted into a non-perishable substance, known as "leather". Man knew this art since the dawn of human civilization. Many ancient civilizations had evolved and perfected this art of making leather. The earliest records of such ancient civilizations, those of Egypt, China and India, establish the fact that the art was well known to the ancient people and was widely practised. According to historians, the art of tanning originated before the dawn of recorded history.

Pre-historic people used to live by hunting. Clothes of some sort were perhaps necessary for protecting the body from cold and rain. It is very likely that, for clothing, the pre-historic hunter utilized the skins of the animals he killed. He might have noticed that raw hides and skins putrefied if kept wet and dried out. The dry, hard skin was certainly inconvenient to wrap up his body. It would thus be only natural for him to try to soften the fur while drying it, and in this attempt to render the skin soft and convenient to wear the foundation of the art of tanning was perhaps laid by the pre-historic people. Primitive men might also have noticed that the skins thus treated differed from the untreated ones. So, greasing and drying comprised one among the many ways in which the primitive people tried to preserve animal skins.[1]

It was in the East that the art of manufacturing leather developed to a considerable extent in early times. The Egyptians, the Chinese, the Sumerians, the Babylonians besides Indians, had attained a high

degree of proficiency in making leather. In a museum in Berlin, there is a stone carving in which the operation of dressing a tiger's skin is depicted. A man is lifting up a tiger skin lying immersed in a tub, another is employed at a second tub, and a third person is working a skin on a table. This granite depiction is estimated to be at least 4000 years old[2.] Leather has also been found on Egyptian mummies. Among the articles belonging to Egypt and kept in the British museum one can find a workman's leather apron, besides leather shoes of various kinds.[3]

It is of great interest to know that the Hebrews of Biblical times used oak bark in tanning, and that Romans, Greeks, and Egyptians used lime to loosen the hair on hides, a process which is practised even today. At a very early period the Egyptians became acquainted with the manufacture of leather, which they used as coverings for stools and chairs, as well as for beds and cushions. In no way were the Romans less adept at manufacturing leather.

Pliny has mentioned that gallnuts, bark and sumac were used for tanning skins and hides. He also mentioned that the Roman ladies wore boots and shoes. If we go by his description, that footwear must have been similar to modern footwear. Asians evidently first learnt how to colour and dye leather, and the Romans appeared to have adopted this technique from them. However, the same art of colouring and dyeing seems to have been lost to Europe shortly after the fall of the Roman Empire, centuries later. The invading Moors brought back the art to Spain and revived it as also the manufacturing of coloured leather. It was more artistic than the earlier product. The Cordovan leather, the name acquired from the city of Cordova, which was the capital, was the precursor of the modern variety named 'Morocco' and was very famous in the eleventh century[4]. The two familiar modern terms 'Morocco' and 'Cordovan' have come from those days.

In India, tanning and leather works have been practised since ancient times. These occupations were carried out by a distinct caste called "Chamars". The Rigveda refers to tanners (Chamars) and the leather from animal skin prepared by them. This clearly proves that the Indian tanning industry is as old as the Rigvedic hymns.[5]

The wonderful ancient crafts in India have from early times included leather-work, of which many examples are to be found. Marcopolo, the Venetian traveller (1260-1270 AD) mentions leather costumes of various kinds (goat, ox, buffalo, unicorns and other animals) in the province of Gujarat in India. He also observed beautiful mats in red and blue leather, exquisitely inlaid with figures of birds and beasts, and skilfully embroidered with gold and silver. Regular trade in hides and skins between India and Eastern countries like Siam (Thailand) and Japan existed in early times.

Dressing of skins by the application of fatty and albumin substances like tallow, oil, egg yolk, curd, etc., is practised even today by many. Furs are dressed more or less according to the above process. Modern chamois leather is nothing but flesh splits of sheep or goat skins tanned by using colour fish oil[6].

The preservative properties of wood smoke seem also to have been noticed in pre-historic times and these properties were made use of in making leather. Skins smeared with grease would have been smoked over wood fire, which helped the fat to penetrate the leather[7].

Tanning of hides and skins by treating them in infusion of barks, fruits and leaves of plants developed, perhaps, at a latter date. The use of alum in tanning was recorded, and that of the salts of chromium are of quite recent date i.e., the latter part of the 19th century.[8] The methods of tanning that we find being used now-a-days have evolved from the primitive art practised for thousands of years by the human race. Innumerable methods

might have been tried, according to the intelligence of the Age, and only the most suitable methods have been handed down to the succeeding generations.

For thousands of years, tanning remained a crude and primitive process, handed down more or less as professional secrets from father to son. Like all other ancient human arts the process of tanning remained empirical until the principles of modern science were applied in its practice. It was not till the end of the 18th century that this ancient art attracted the notice of men of science. Sir Humphrey Davy and a few other scientists conducted research in tanning and formed the opinion that the conversion of raw hides and skins into leather was a chemical art, and as such should be conducted with a due amount of scientific method.[9] It is now recognized that tanning is a complex phenomenon in which chemical, physical and bacteriological principles are involved. Despite the advances modern science has made, leather manufacturing is still in the nature of an art, involving a large number of manipulations and adjustments in processes to produce leather of good quality. It is still largely a technique acquired through trial and error, and 'while the general procedure and processes employed in the leather industry are matters of common knowledge, tanning remains even today as much of an art as a science'. The varying nature of the raw material, the complexities and numerous possibilities of tanning and finishing of leather make possible individual adaptation with individual characteristics.

Leather is still bought and sold principally on its appearance and 'handle', the latter being a term about which there may be varied opinions. It follows that the evaluation of leather properties is extremely difficult.[10] None of the civilizations of bygone days can lay claim that it was the first to invent or discover the tanning process. Converting an easily perishable material into a longlasting article is what tanning aims at, and achieves.

In leather manufacture, the most outstanding process is tanning, the object of which is to convert the perishable raw hides and skins into a substance which does not putrefy, dries out soft, and does not swell when 'wetted back'.[11]

Dwelling on what happens to a hide or skin when tanned, there are outstanding differences in the properties of raw pelt and tanned leather. Raw pelt when wet putrefies quickly and is totally destroyed. When pelt is dried it becomes hard and horny. Tanned leather, on the other hand, does not putrefy even when it is wet, and the wet leather dries out soft. Owing to its liability to putrefaction by bacterial attack, raw pelt is perishable whereas, owing to its resistance to bacterial action, tanned leather is non-perishable.

From the use of tree barks, some seeds, herbs, lime and oil to tan skin and hide, we have come to the use of several chemicals. The time taken to tan a skin and hide has been shortened. What had been done manually for centuries is being done now with sophisticated machines.

A Chamar or Chuckliar skinning the carcase of an animal and tanning that single piece in his backyard has become past history. Tanning has become a full-fledged industry needing billion of rupees as capital. All the paraphernalia that has come to be attached to modern industry has equally become indispensable to this industry. With a perennial demand ever on the rise, the industry is guaranteed of a bright future.

Ironically, in recorded history, in the technical sense of the term, only a sketchy treatment of this industry is available as far as our country is concerned. India has been an exporter of raw hides and skin, as well as leather, for thousands of years. Every explorer who came to India made a special mention of the leather material used in the country.[12]

After India became the colony of the British, Tamil Nadu has become the centre of the leather industry. Places like Bengal remained

front rank centres for the procurement of raw material, but tanning remained out of their reach in spite of sincere attempts. Besides other things, the climate was not conducive. The climatic conditions prevailing in Tamil Nadu round the year proved favourable to the leather industry, so that 80 per cent of the total leather products came to be produced in Tamil Nadu.

Thomas Parry, from England, after a thorough study of the availability of raw material and labour established a tannery at Santhome, Madras in 1805. His plan was to procure the raw material available locally and turn it into an exportable commodity. Initially he met with great success. Men were employed for procuring raw material and tanning. He produced so much that he was able to export leather to England and America after meeting the local demand. Though hounded by heavy levy and duty, Parry had been pioneering the cause of an industry, which for all practical purposes, was on its death bed.

Parry could not be deterred by anything. For the first time, he established a factory where raw material was turned into finished products, including boots etc. Parry did not go in for the tanning methods practiced by the natives but adopted the method called the Turkish method of tanning[13].

The other pioneering spirit, which the tanning industry was fortunate to attract, was Charles D' Souza, a French Eurasian. He established a tannery in 1847 in Pondicherry. He introduced the European technique for tanning skin and hide[14]. A skin so tanned and finished was called "Black Spanish Leather".

The company established by Thomas Parry diversified its activities. Confectionery and sugar making was the other field. Though the latter still continues to function, the tannery had been closed in the later half of the nineteenth century.

The leather industry in the Vellore, Ambur, Pernambut, Ranipet and Wallajapet belt of the North Arcot District used to process more than 700 tonnes of leather every day, accounting for 80 per cent of the state's leather exports and 40 per cent of the country's exports.

Out of 1382 registered tanneries in the country 876 are located in Tamil Nadu. There were 22 large tanneries in India and as many as 17 were in Madras; the remaining were in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Bombay. There are 1589 leather units in India and there are 864 leather units in Tamil Nadu. The leather industry earns over Rs.2000 Crores worth of foreign exchange annually. But the unit's pollution has affected 17,170 hectares of farmland in Vellore and Dindigul districts, impacting 36,056 farmers; and 621 tanners in the two districts had to pay a compensation of Rs.30.75 crores to the affected farmers[14].

References

1. Bruce and Carroll, *The Devis Family and Leather Industry -1834 -1934* Ryerson press, Toronto, 1934, P.ll.

2. J.A.Waterer; *Leather in Life, Art and Industry*, Macmillan London, 1955, P.30.

3. *Ibid.*, P.31.

4. Sir Henry Yule, *Travels of Marcopolo*, (Translated), Oxford University Press, London, 1962, Vol. III, PP.393-394

5. Macdonall, *History of Sanskrit Literature*, London, 1925, PP.167 -168

6. Watt Alexander, *The Art of Leather Manufacture*, London, 1934, P.34.

7. Findlary, *The Spirit of Chemistry*, Longman, London, 1934, P .34.

8. *Op.cit*. P.7.

9. l.A.Waterer, *Op. Cit*, P.44.

10. K. T. Sarkar, *Practice of Leather Manufacture*, Oxford University Press, London, 1962 P.33

11. *Ibid*   P. 33

12. *Ibid* P. 34

13. Hodgem, *Thomas Parry And Company*, Madras 1936, P.35

14. *Frontline*, "Indian National Magazine", Chennai August 16,2002, P.94

TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT AND EXCISE POLICY OF BRITISH IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY (UPTO 1920)

Dr.K. Palaniappan
Reader,
P.G. Research Department of History,
Periyar E.V.R. College,
Tiruchirapalli - 23.

Source materials of the *Sangham* period indicate that drinking toddy was not unknown to the Tamils of the period, Different kinds of toddy such as *mattu*, *madu*, *naravu*, *theral* and *topi*[1] were used during the *Sangham* period, and all these kinds of toddy were basically made from the juice of palm and coconut trees. *Mattu* came from honey. *Madu* was extracted from flowers like *illupai*[2]. Rice cooked in toddy was known as *naravu*. *Theral* was the distillate of toddy. *Topi* was extracted from paddy[3] or fruits[4]. Toddy was also derived from a coarse grain called *thinai*[5]. Generally speaking the toddy used in the *Sangham* age was derived from honey, rice, fruits, coconut, etc.

People of the Sangham age looked upon toddy as a kind of food[6]. To promote intoxication or 'kick', the people who drank toddy also ate fruits like *kala*, *thudari* and *novel*[7]. They also ate the flesh of tortoise and prawns[8]. They were served toddy and the fried flesh of the male pig which had been fattened by being confined in a pit and fed for many days on rice flour.[9]

Liquor kept for a long time was said to sting like a scorpion[10]. People enjoyed drinking liquor that was at once sweet and stinging[11]. The biting taste of liquor is compared to the stinging of a snake[12].

Toddy kept the consumer quite warm[13]. People used to offer it to the stones they worshipped in honour of the dead[14]. Toddy flowed like water[15]. "Toddy was spilt while people ran into sodden pools in which elephants played"[16]. From such references in the *Sangham* literature we can infer that the habit of drinking toddy was widespread[17].

Soldiers drank toddy to the extent possible: eyes red with the intoxicant, they plunged into battle[18]. They used to drink while fighting on the battlefield. They celebrated their victories with drinking and merrymaking[19]. Liquor, with quantities of rice was consumed on the battlefield[20].

A philanthropist called *Periyan* of *Porayar* enjoyed himself drinking toddy[21]. A chieftain called Pittam *Kotran* offered toddy to minstrels[22]. When the king was seated on the throne administering the affairs of state and offering prizes to the Iiterati, he used to drink[23]. A king called *Adhivaman Poguttezhini* offered a drink called *theral* to Porunan and his relations[24]. Athiyaman also gave toddy to a woman poet called Avvaiyar[25]. From this we learn that women, too, used to drink. The *Kuravas* used to drink *madhu* and take part in a group dance called *Kuravai*[26]. Women used to serve drinks in fish-shaped gold vessels[27]. From these references in literature, we can infer that the drinking habit was prevalent in the society of those days.

Toddy drawn from the coconut palm, and palm toddy trees, was drunk by poor classes such as labourers, soldiers and wandering minstrels. Scented liquor manufactured from rice and the flowers of the *Thathaki,* (Bhuhinia Tomenrosa) and fragrant substances, were used by the richer classes. Cool and fragrant wines brought by *Yavana* (or Greek) ships were the favourite drinks of the kings[28].

A poem refers to the cool and fragrant wine brought by the *Yavanas* in beautiful vessels poured into gold cups held by damsels wearing bright bracelets, drunk by the king and his guests[29].

Hence delicious wine imported from the land of the *Yavana* was a special and favourite drink of the kings who drank the clear liquid, while they served crude liquor to guests[30]. Wine imported by *Yavanas* was in great demand even by others[31]. *Kumattu Kannanar* assuming the role of a minstrel, praised Imayavaramban Nedunseraladhan, and called upon all to drink toddy and eat rice with chopped mutton and varieties of roasted chillies. Eating mutton was always accompanied by the drinking of toddy. The king ate and drank in the company of his guests and relatives, and presided over a boisterious table[32].

This kind of drinking habit continued to prevail in Tamil Society in the post - Sangham period also. Even during the Pallava[33], Chola[34], Pandya Vijayanagar and post – Vijayanagar period[35], the sources indicate the prevalence of it among the Tamils. For example, people in the Vijayanagar period enjoyed drinking liquor freely on festive days like New Year, Deepavali and Holi. We have also some evidence to indicate that the Pandya Kings imported a lot of liquor.

Moral Restraints On Drinking Habits

In general, Tamils were fond of drinking. At the same time, some sections of the population considered it as an evil. However, we have no conclusive evidence in the Sangham literature to indicate any moral prohibition in the Sangham period. But the post-Sangham literature like Thirukkural and Thirumandiram clearly condemn the drinking habit. Thiruvalluvar, the author of Thirukkural, condemns killing, lust, stealing, eating flesh and drinking liquor. He praised abstinence from meat eating and drinking as virtues to be emulated. He devotes ten verses to expose its evil and dissuades people from all such iniquity;[36] likewise Thirumoolar in his Thirumandiram is very categorical about the evil and advises people to abstain from the habit[37].

Even the Siddhas of the later period exhort people to avoid drinking. For example, Badragiri Kaduvelli Chithar, Azhugani Chithar, and Madurai Valaisamy have spoken strongly against this addiction[38].

We have evidence to indicate, especially from the Pallava period, that the popular Hindu legal codes of the North were in force in the Tamil country. Hence, in this context it may not be irrelevant to quote Manu and other *Dharma Sastras* and *Sutras* regarding drinking habit. Manu (IX) 215) says, "Let the King instantly banish gamblers and sellers of spirituous liquor from the town". *Apastamba Sutra says*, "All intoxicating liquor is forbidden"[39].

Not only the Hindus but also the Buddhists and the Jains who had a sizeable following in the Tamil country, condemn this evil habit as a vice to be scrupulously avoided. In fact one of the five Buddhist commandments is ----"Ye shall drink no intoxicating drink"[40].

No wonder pussyfoot W.E. Johnsen wrote, "There is not a Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Jain or Sikh in the world but feels that, according to his religion, alcoholic drink is an evil. No member of any of these religious bodies can drink intoxicants without being disloyal to his religion"[41].

Even Islam and Christianity, which converted a sizeable section of the Tamils to embrace their respective religions, also condemn drinking as an evil. For example, the Koran says "intoxicants are nothing but an uncleanness and Satan's work. Shun them that you may prosper. Their harm is greater than their advantage". Christianity also advises its votaries to abstain from drinking[42].

Hence, drinking as an evil has been instilled in the minds of the people all along. However, all the above teachings embraced only some proportion of the people, and others were slaves to the habit of liquor.

British Moral Tradition

For Britishers, alcohol and crime are intimately associated. The Chief Justice of England believed that "but for drink we might shut up nine out of every ten jails". Hence a judge of England said, "I do believe that nine-tenths of the crime committed in these countries is engendered in drinking houses".

Lord Richie, the then Home Secretary, was also of the view that eighty per cent of crime was due to alcohol. As F.C. Andrew Ivy rightly felt "Alcohol is an important cause of poverty, parental and juvenile delinquency, divorce and crime, and the debasement of human dignity[43]."

In fact Christianity discourages only excessive consumption of liquor. In all churches, wine is required for ritual. In Anglican Churches it is partaken by the priest and the congregation, and in Catholic Churches it is required for the ritual of Mass and is taken by the priest alone. In Catholic institutions the quantity of wine used is only about an ounce, but in Anglican Churches it is a little more than that. Without wine the communion service cannot be held in Anglican Churches, or the ritual of Mass in Catholic institutions[44]: Though it was in small quantity, Christians have constant touch with liquor, which led to the war against prohibition.

Legal Restraint

Till the arrival of the British none of the kings, whether the Pallavas, Cholas, Pandyas, or the Vijayanagar or post Vijayanagar kings, introduced legislation prohibiting drinks. However, slender evidence left by foreign travellers during the Vijayanagar period indicates that the people given to drinking were barred from naval service[45].

Tamil kings did not introduce prohibition; yet it appears some of them did not miss the opportunity to derive income by taxing drinks. The earliest

reference that we have is that of the Pallava Kings who levied 18 taxes including taxes on palm and coconut trees. In addition, a separate tax was levied on extracting liquor from trees[46]. Likewise we have evidence about the later Cholas who levied a tax called *Ealam Pootchi* on toddy tappers for extracting toddy from palm and coconut trees[47]. Such taxation measures of Tamil Kings are supported by Manu Dharma Sastra, which says that levying taxes on liquor is the proper way of raising funds for governance.

This leads to the speculation that maybe the number of drunkards was small, and hence the Tamil kings never thought of introducing prohibition legislation. Probably, the Tamil kings might have thought moral restraints imposed by religion were sufficient to wean people away from this evil. Another reason could be the absence of a western-educated elite in pro-British Tamil Nadu. Modernisation and westernisation of Tamil education, and the birth of the Tamil educated elite in the later 19th and the early 20th centuries, resulted in the birth of the Prohibition Movement in Tamil Nadu.

British Policy

The British, too, after establishing their rule in India, followed the system of levying taxes on liquor in order to enhance their revenue.

The British Government described such rules governing the taxation on liquor as excise laws. And the British followed a systematic method in framing and executing these excise laws. In 1790 excise laws were enacted on the basis of these rules[48]. The British introduced important measures to limit liquor consumption, which had been tried by the British Government in the Madras Presidency in the 19th Century. These were the Central distillery system, the free supply system, the monopoly supply system, the guaranteed minimum system, the modified distillery system, the out-still system and the contract still system.

Under the central distillery system distilleries were maintained by the Government and persons who had obtained the necessary permission were allowed to set up stills and manufacture spirit under Government supervision. The distillery paid a duty on each unit of liquor manufactured and a rent for the still. The right to manufacture was separated from that of sale. A licence fee was levied on each shop and the number of shops was limited.

The free supply system allowed freedom to manufacturers to set up distilleries of their own to produce liquor under Government supervision on payment of a fee. Under this system, a licensed shopkeeper could obtain his stock from any manufacturer, not necessarily from a specified distillery.

The third system, namely the monopoly supply system, provided for a monopoly in favour of an individual, of the right to manufacture in a particular area. The right to manufacture was distinguished from that of sale, and the rate of supply to the vendor was fixed. The monopoly was granted to the highest bidder of the tender.

The guaranteed minimum system was that under which the right to manufacture and the right of sale were sold together. The number of shops was limited and their location was fixed: the limits of the rental and the prices were also specified. A fixed duty was levied on each gallon of liquor issued. Tenders were invited and the successful bidder of the tender paid duty on a minimum quantity, and if that limit was exceeded, on each gallon of the excess.

The central distillery system was modified and called the modified distillery system. Under this system the monopoly for both manufacture and sale was granted to a person who, instead of guaranteeing the payments due on a minimum number of gallons, paid a lumpsum besides the fixed duty on each gallon[49].

Under the outstill system the tax on the sale of country spirits was to be levied as a daily duty upon stills, and each was to be sold separately with one or more shops attached and the right to manufacture and sell the spirit by auction on the highest bidder was introduced in a few places. In 1815 the outstill system was abandoned in favour of the farming system, except in Madras City where a special system of direct management was maintained. In 1820 the Government had the power to determine the sites of shop and stills, and to control toddy sales. In 1864 further changes were made; Government levied tax on liquor as an excise duty on the quantity manufactured instead of an annual payment for the farm, and also suppressed the home manufacture of toddy, as this right, had been abused or used as a cloak for illicit sale[50].

The outstill system which had been the subject of severe criticism, and which had prevailed in Bengal for a considerable time, provided for sale to the highest bidder. Each still was sold to an individual, and one or more shops were attached to each still. Under the farming system, though a monopoly was granted to an individual tax was imposed on each still. Payment of this tax required large capital, and only rich men who could invest this capital sought the right of sale. But in the case of the out-still system each still was sold separately and any person could set up a still. This arrangement led to an enormous increase in the number of stills and resulted in intensifying the evil of alcohol consumption.

Under the contract still system an approved person was allowed to set up a still. The right of sale was kept separate from that of manufacture.

In spite of the various improvements introduced from time to time in the system of control it was found that the consumption of liquor had not decreased appreciably. About 1870 the Government of India impressed on the provinces the need for effective control over liquor traffic, and for safe and sound methods to check consumption[51].

From 1874 what was called an "improved excise system" was followed in most districts under which the monopoly of supply of arrack or toddy in each district was given to one contractor who also maintained the shops on certain conditions namely, that he paid a duty on every gallon of spirit issued fixed with reference to the prevailing selling price, that he did not sell above a fixed maximum price, and that he paid a premium guaranteed revenue which was arrived at by tenders in the open market. It had also been laid down that the spirits should be sold at specified strengths and at retail rates between a certain minimum and maximum. This excise system, though superior in some ways to the farming system, which it had replaced, resulted in many serious faults. It also tended to eliminate some substances and ensured that the revenue was got without risk or difficulty. But "it was, at the same time, responsible for a serious growth of illicit practices, which multiplied to avoid the taxation of the Government". Under the old system it was in the interest of the farmer to prevent the manufacture and sale of illicit liquor, but under the new system there was no such inducement. Since all the shops were in the hands of the manufacturer, and since he had to pay duty on the quantity he issued to them, it mattered little to him if the shops sold illicit liquor[52].

Though the British Government introduced various systems to control liquor consumption, still the evil continued to be serious, and in 1874 Keshav Chunder Sen said: use of intoxicating liquors has done more than anything else to degrade the physical, moral, and social conditions of my countrymen, and has proved a stupendous obstacle in the path of reform[53].

Under the new system, to save themselves from the expense and trouble, the vendors failed to keep in outlying tracts, and there being no limit to supply in those tracts, the consumers resorted to illicit manufacture. They had pushed down the profit of the retailers to such an extent as to force the latter to seek profit by adopting illicit practices.

They entirely failed to maintain the preventive staff which it was their duty to maintain to put down the illicit practices fostered by the system. It is in the light of this background that the change introduced in the excise system in 1886 assumed importance[54].

In a dispatch to the Secretary of State for India in 1887, Government of India stated that, for the past few years, the Governments of Bengal, Bombay and Madras had revised their liquor control systems with a view to restricting consumption. The tax on drink being raised, the revenue had increased. While in 1855-56 the total revenue was Rs. 22.5 lakhs, by 1869-70 it had swollen to Rs. 61 lakhs. In 1884-85 the revenue was over Rs. 70 lakhs. From this, it could be inferred that the evil had spread widely[55].

In 1886, on the recommendations of the Excise Committee appointed in 1884, the Government of Madras passed an Act to place the excise administration on a stable footing. It reformed the excise system in various ways, and was known as Madras Abkari Act of 1886[56].

As directed by the Act of 1886 the excise and revenue establishments were separated, and a strong preventive force was organised to put down illicit practices. In regard to the making and selling of country spirits it was decided :-

1. to sell the privileges of manufacture and of retail sale separately.

2. to break up the district farms into taluk farms, or even smaller divisions in certain localities.

3. to fix a standard excise duty on country liquor on issue, and differentiate the total taxation in respect thereof by licence fees or other methods of payment by retail vending (e.g. by auction).

4. to abolish the surcharge system in municipalities where it existed and to substitute for it the sale of shop licences by auction.

5. to throw open to competition, subject to the payment of a moderate licence fee, the right to manufacture or supply in certain selected areas, i.e. to adopt the free supply system, and to eventually abolish the Madras Abkari system and to assimilate it to the system proposed for excise districts in general.

As regards toddy it was decided:

1. to introduce tax system i.e. to levy a tax on each tree tapped;

2. to issue licenses for the sale of toddy in shops;

3. to issue licenses for the distillation and sale of weak spirits distilled from today;

4. to farm the right to collecting tree-tax in small areas together with or apart from the exclusive right of vending toddy and of manufacturing and selling toddy, and spirits; and to replace gradually the system of farming the tree-tax by the direct issue of licence to the tappers[57].

We have evidence to indicate that, that the Sangham period, a section of Tamil Society, irrespective of the class to which they belonged, was addicted to the evil of drink. As per the evidence available, we understand that there were only moral restraints. Tamil Kings never favoured prohibition as a part of financial management. They followed this taxation system in the 19th and 20th centuries in a more systematic way in order to fill up their coffers.

Till 1886 no one in Tamil Nadu thought of seeking the favour of the British Government to reduce drunkenness in this part of the country. This was probably because the Tamils had no such legal tradition to prompt them to seek such an aid. In addition, the new elite class with modern ideas was yet to emerge as a strong force to put forth its views on Prohibition and similar other issues. Hence, even the Renaissance Movement of 19th century, an off-spring of westernisation, did not initiate such a social reform movement.

It appears that the propaganda for reducing drunkenness in India was spearheaded by the British intellectual class. They introduced the tradition of the common people questioning the authority of the British Government, as well as advising the Government to introduce policies required by them in order to promote the wellbeing of all. The propaganda for reducing drunkenness, initiated by the Britishers in India, was a part of their democratic tradition. And even anti-drink propaganda started by the British intellectuals did not originate in Tamil Nadu but in England and, later on, in other parts of India.

The leaders of this British intellectual and anti-drink democratic tradition in India were William S. Caine and Hall. Caine and Hall only propagated the reducing of drunkenness, and not total prohibition of drink. Propaganda for reducing drunkenness was described by them as Temperance Reform Movement. William S. Caine and Hall, leaders of the Temperance Movement, in 1886 took a lead in passing a resolution in the House of Commons condemning the excise policy of the Government of India, and directing the Government of India to bring about steps to reduce drunkenness in the country[58]. Hall visited the Madras Presidency even as early as 1886[59].

He visited India as part of the Temperance Movement in 1886. William S. Caine (1842 - 1903) a pioneer of this movement was a Liberal Member of the Parliament and a philanthropist of old puritan and non-conformist antecedents[60], with twenty years of experience in temperance work in England. For over twenty years he was the President of the Liverpool Temperance Union, and he was the Vice-President of the United Kingdom Alliance, the British Temperance League, and the National Temperance League.

He was greeted in Bombay by a deputation consisting of some of the leading gentlemen of that city "who expressed a strong

desire that some organisation should be formed in England with a view to creating parliamentary action and also for promoting and guiding agitation throughout India for reform". The deputation chose William S. Caine as the leader. He threw himself heart and soul into the cause of temperance in India, and worked with the same intensity and enthusiasm that had characterised his activities in England.

Immediately after his return to England, Caine convened a small gathering of liberal politicians and advocated temperance in the London residence of Samuel Smith, who was a Member of Parliament at that time. The group constituted itself into the Anglo-Indian Temperance Association with Smith as President and Caine as Honorary Secretary.

Virtually the first official act of the newly formed organisation was to depute Caine to conduct a 'temperance tour' in India to stir up temperance sentiments, and organise branch societies to be affiliated to the London-based association[61].

During his initial temperance tour in the winter of 1888, Caine made a point to attend the Allahabad session of the Indian National Congress at a time when the Congress was viewed with open disfavour by the Lieutenant Governor of the North Western province and Oudh.

Caine invited Reverend Thomas Evans, a retired Baptist missionary residing in Mussoorie, to accompany him on his tour. Evans readily accepted. As a veteran of thirty years of missionary work in India, he was fluent in Hindustani and was a powerful speaker. It was his linguistic ability that induced Caine (who knew no Indian language) to seek his assistance on the tour. But Caine found to his astonishment that the meetings he and Evans addressed were attended by Indians who understood English quite as well as they did the vernacular.

Evans addressed the meeting first in the vernacular, and Caine followed in English. This was their practice everywhere. In almost every instance, at these huge meetings, the audience understood Caine's English as well as Evans' vernacular. The knowledge of English by young men all over India enabled them to understand Caine's message[62].

Inspired by Hall's and Caine's humane speeches on temperance the Indians organised the National Social Conference. It must be stated here that the Tamil intellectuals did not start a separate Tamil Temperance Movement. Tamil educated elites did not think narrowly but began to think of India as one nation. The gradual development of the concept of political self-awareness of all Indians influenced Tamil educated elites also, and hence the temperance movement which originated in Tamil Nadu around 1886 was a part of the All India Temperance Movement, as well as part of the International Temperance Movement under the leadership of Caine and Hall.

The National Social Conference on Temperance was organised by the Indian educated elites including South Indians like Sir T. Madhava Rao. Tamil Nadu had the honour of conducting the first National Social Conference on Temperance in 1888 at Madras.

The leader was M.R Ranade. Sir.T. Madhava Rao presided at the first conference. Afterwards the most prominent place was usually taken by Rao Bahadur Y. Raghunatha Rao belonging to the Madras presidency who had been the Prime Minister of the State of Indore and was older than Ranade. Representatives met from every part of India. The subjects on the agenda were discussed, and resolutions were passed on temperance[63].

The conference reiterated that all social reform bodies should take strenuous efforts in favour of temperance[64]. Due to the tours, visits and speeches of Hall and Caine, according to a contemporary report there

had been a decrease in the consumption of liquor during the year 1898-99 in the Madras Presidency. There was also a falling off in the number of liquor shops.

Caine politicised the temperance issue in India, and his success in doing this accounts in a very large measure for the popularity that the cause enjoyed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The Indian National Congress reiterated its condemnation of the excise policy of the Government of India and the provincial conference also annually discussed the policy at their meetings year after year. The cause of temperance was taken up by Bipin Chandra Pal* who visited India as the Honorary Secretary of the Anglo-Indian Temperance Association.

By raising the issue to the political plane, and putting pressure on the Government in regard to its excise policy, a policy which he characterised as one ignoring higher moral considerations for the sake of increased revenue obtained at the cost of the demoralisation of the Indian people, Caine gave the Congress another plank in its moral indictment of British rule, and won for himself allies and supporters for his cause[66]. He lauded the Allahabad session as one of the most impressive sights he had ever seen. For the first time, and in his presence, the Congress recognised prohibition of alcohol as a subject fit for inclusion in its political programme, rather than one more appropriately confined to the deliberations of the National Social Conference[67].

The meetings that Caine and Evans addressed during their initial temperance tour of 1888-89 were organised by the supporters of the Indian National Congress or the missionaries (particularly the missionaries connected with educational institutions). Evans had missionary contacts. The annual report of the Anglo-Indian Temperance Association expressed satisfaction at the assistance rendered to their movement by the Indian National Congress and its branches throughout the Indian Empire. The

practical help given by the representatives of the Congress in all the great centres of population, to Caine and Evans, was very great. With one or two exceptions the whole cost of their meetings in India was borne by Congress representatives and their friends[68].

In these favourable circumstances, journals like 'Pioneer' and 'Englishman' severely criticised Caine, and the latter demanded that the Government of India should send him back. In April 1889, a motion on the Indian Excise Administration was moved in the House of Commons. It was strongly opposed by the Under-Secretary. However, it was carried by a majority of ten votes. For this motion in the House of Commons the Congress in its 1889 Session unanimously passed a resolution to thank Caine and Smith the members who voted with them in connection with the debate on the excise question. In fact, the resolution in the Congress Session was moved by Rev. G.M. Cobban, Madras, seconded by Dinsha Wacha Bombay, and supported by Rev. I R.A. Hume, Deccan and Rev. T. Evans. It is interesting to note that among the above four, three were missionaries[69].

Evan's services as an interpreter soon proved superfluous under the circumstances and they parted company in order to cover more territory and address more audiences. As a result of this first tour in 1888-89 more than 40 native temperance associations were formed and affiliated to the Anglo-Indian Temperance Association[70]. But there was no such organisation in the Madras Presidency in 1888-89.

Caine repeatedly demonstrated a knack for dramatically identifying himself with issues of concern to the Indian public, and for framing the temperance question in terms that appealed to Congressmen[71]. Evans toured alone in the winter on 1889-90. Caine estimated that they had, together, addressed at least three lakhs Indians all of whom were sufficiently educated to thoroughly understand the language of the speakers[72]. In 1893, for instance he suggested to Congress a resolution that called upon the Government of India to suppress the common sale

of alcohol, opium, hemp, drugs and other intoxicants, and so cease to derive any portion of its revenue from the degradation and misery of the people.

In 1900 the Indian National Congress appealed to the Government to "pass measures like the Marine Liquor Law of America and Sir William Lawson's permissive Bill or the Local Option Act" relating to liquor and suggested the imposition of an additional tax upon intoxicants not intended to be used as medicine.

By 1900 it was found that "the free supply system" (introduced in 1886) had led to unhealthy competition and threatened to develop into a danger of monopoly. Therefore, it was abandoned in almost all districts and what was known as the contract distillery system was introduced in 1900. This system combined some old principles with new ones. Under this system:

1. The privileges of manufacture and vending were separated.

2. The manufacturer was given the privilege of setting up a distillery for a series of years

3. The Government supervised the processes and saw that the liquor was pure

4. The privilege of retail vend of liquor supplied by the manufacturer was sold by auction to individual shops, the purchasers of which knew exactly where they had to obtain their liquor and what they had to pay for it, and the prevention of illicit practices was retained in the hands of the Government. It might be noted that this system continued unchanged in essence until prohibition was introduced in the Madras State.

It was when these systems were being tried that attempts were made to implement the policy of temperance formulated by the Government of India. And there was evidence to show that,

as a result of this policy, during the period 1883-1904 a further revision of excise policy was made by the Government of India, and consumption increased because, during this period, the total number of arrack and toddy shops was reduced from 35,750 to 29,938, the area and the population served by each shop were increased considerably by nearly 100 percent in the case of arrack shops, and the general incidence of taxation was largely increased by raising the duty on spirits, the tree-tax on toddy, and the vend rents. In the same period, however, revenue increased from Rs. 59,55,843 to 1,59,75,643 and consumption also increased from 7,69,214 proof gallons to 7,89,444 proof gallons. This was attributed by the Government to increase in taxes and the increase in population; but the temperance reformers were not satisfied with this explanation.

In 1904, Lely, an Additional Member of the Imperial Legislative Council, submitted a memorandum to the Government of India stating that there was a general impression among all people that the Government was deliberately fostering liquor traffic for the sake of the revenue that it yielded, and that the time had come when something more should be done to minimize the evil of drinking. He recommended that the number of foreign as well as country liquor shops should be reduced, that shops in objectionable sites should be removed, that the licenses granted to temporary liquor shops during fairs and festivals should be revoked, and that grants for premises which provided accommodation for private drinking should be revised. The Government of India thereupon constituted a committee in 1905 for reviewing the entire excise administration in India[77].

The Excise Committee 1905

The Excise Committee of 1905 made a series of recommendations, some covering the entire country and some special to Madras[78]. Among the Committee's special recommendations for Madras were:

1. That the number of foreign liquor taverns should be reduced

2. That the duty on country spirits should be increased

3. That the rates of tree-tax should be raised and the number of toddy shops reduced.

4. That the reduction of liquor and toddy shops in Madras city should be taken over by a special committee appointed for the purpose

All these recommendation were accepted by the Government of India and ordered to be implemented by the local governments concerned. The only exception related to the suggestion that a substitute should be sought for the auction system. As to this suggestion, the Government of India held that any other system would lead to the growth of vested interests and to corruption and chicanery in the disposal of licenses, and that no system superior to the auction system (like the one followed in Madras) was likely to be found suitable for India[79].

The Excise Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1905 was of the opinion that, though toddy was the least noxious of alcoholic drinks, yet it should be consumed only in moderation, and that only in a fresh state. The safe limit of time was fixed i.e. 24 hours after the toddy was drawn. If it was used later the deleterious effects were more pronounced than when used within the safe time limit[80].

The general lines of excise policy for the guidance of provincial Governments were laid down by the Government of India in their Resolution No.5001-Exc dated September 7, 1905 as follows. "The Government of India have no desire to interfere with the habits of those who use alcohol in moderation and it is necessary in their opinion to make due provision for the needs of such persons. Their settled policy however is to minimize temptation

to those who do not drink and to discourage excess among those who do, and to a furtherance of this policy all consideration of revenue must be absolutely subordinated. The most effective method of furthering this policy is to make the tax on liquor as high as it is possible to raise it without stimulating illicit consumption to a degree which would increase instead of diminish the total consumption and without driving people to substitute deleterious drugs for alcohol, or a more or less harmful form of liquor shops should be restricted as far as possible and their location should be periodically subject to strict examination with a view to minimise the temptation to drink and to conform as far as is reasonable to public opinion.. It is also important to secure that the liquor, which is offered for sale is of good quality and not necessarily injurious to health[81]".

A few years later, as a result of the increasing tempo of the temperance agitation, some special directions were issued by the Government of India to the local Governments. In 1907 and 1912 temperance rulers were vested in the Secretary of State and they pressed for further reforms. They insisted that the licences for the sale of intoxicants should be reduced to the minimum, that the hours of sale should be restricted, that the system of excise advisory committees should be extended to all municipalities, that these committees should be made more representative and given power to deal with all licences, that the auction system of licensing should be replaced by a system of fixed licence fees, that the licensing function should be removed from the control of the Revenue Department and placed in the hands of local committees or some other independent authority, and that temperance teaching should be introduced in schools[82].

About the same time, in 1912, the Indian Temperance Association submitted a memorandum to the Viceroy for urging

similar reforms, as also the provision of a hospital for inebriates and of counterattractions, like tea and coffee stalls to fight intemperance.

Temperance Measures

The Government of India was, however, not prepared to adopt any radical measures. But the Government wanted to introduce some measures to reduce the consumption of liquor. The following measures were implemented in the Madras Presidency till 1921. The next landmark in temperance policy was the rise of the Non-Co-operation movement.

1. Reduction Of Shops

As a first step the Government reduced the number of arrack and toddy shops[83] gradually as shown below.

Year	Number of Arrack Shops	Number of Toddy Shops
1883-84	17,023	18,727
1906-07	10,239	18,684
1920-21	6,088	10,463

2. Enchancement of Duty

The duty on arrack and the tree-tax was increased two-fold and three-fold to reduce the consumption of liquor[84].

3. Reduction In The Issue Strength of Arrack

The alcoholic content of the arrack which was sold in the shops was sought to be reduced by raising the water content so that the liquor consumed might not be very injurious. This arrangement did not, however, work well.

4. Limit Of Private Possession

An attempt was made to reduce the limit of private possession of arrack and toddy in rural and urban areas. This attempt became successful when the Madras Local Option Act 1923 was passed.

5. Licence Conditions And Restrictions On Hours Of Sale

The licence conditions prohibited games and entertainments at liquor shops, sale of 1iquor to women, and to all those who were under 18 years of age. The closing hour for liquor and drug shops was fixed at 8 p.m and the opening hour at 9.30 a.m. Collectors were empowered to close shops within three furlongs of factories, mills and other large centres of labour. They were also authorized to insert special conditions in issuing licenses, and to close the liquor shops during fairs and festivals, on market days and on days of elections. While the Government claimed that the policy of securing the maximum of revenue with minimum consumption proved successful, critics pointed out that the growth of revenue show a substantial increase of consumption of certain classes of liquor.

6. Excise Advisory Comittees 1914

Reduction in the number of shops was made mostly on the advice of the Excise Advisory Committees, which were confined to municipalities, and in the case of those at the headquarters of districts with a population over 30,000 the Committee consisted of the Collector, the District Superintendent of police and the Chairman of the Municipality. In other municipalities, they consisted of the Divisional Officer, the Chairman, and the Assistant Superintendent of Police or some other local police officers appointed by the Superintendent of Police. Their functions were to advice what changes should be made in the number and location of toddy and arrack shops, and to fix the maximum and minimum number of shops for the town in question[87].

In 1914, Advisory Committees were formed for bigger Panchayats also: they consisted of the Tahsildar, the Panchayat Chairman and the Police Inspector[88].

In 1917, the constitution of the various committees was broadened: It was laid down that they should, in the case of municipalities, consist of (1) the Collector, (2) the Chairman (3) the District Superintendent of Police, (4) the local Abkari Inspector or the Assistant Inspector and (5) two non-official members of the Panchayat Union elected by that body. In each case the president was given the power to co-opt an additional non-official member from the classes of the community which did not regard drinking per se as a vice, when representatives of these classes did not find a place in the committee[89]. A further extension was made in 1919 when the Collectors of Districts were authorised to form advisory committees, in all Panchayat Unions having a population of over 8,000 inhabitants. In addition, the Collectors were requested to consult the District and Taluk Boards, and Municipal councils generally, on the lists of shops proposed to be opened for any locality, and specifically on any proposals that might come up for consideration in the course of the year. The collectors were also required to consult large employers of labour whenever they proposed to set up any shop which affected the labour which they controlled.

In Madras City a fuller measure of local control was conferred in 1918 by the establishment of an Excise Licensing Board consisting of (1) the Collector (2) the Commissioner of Police, (3) the Assistant Commissioner of Excise, (4) the President of the Corporation, (5) and two Commissioners elected by the Corporation, (6) a large employer of labour and (7) a representative of the temperance societies. This Board was given full power to determine the number and location of abkari and opium shops within the municipal limit of the City, subject to the general control of the Board of Revenue[91].

7. Temperance Teaching

Temperance teaching was introduced in schools from 1915. In that year the Inspecting Officers were asked to take advantage of their visits to schools and teachers' associations to address the teachers on the benefits of temperance, and on the wisdom of instilling into their pupils habits of temperance. Syllabi were drawn up for schools dealing with temperance, not only in connection with alcohol but also in connection with tobacco, opium and other drugs. They were also made to fit in either with moral and religious instruction, or with the teaching of physiology and hygiene and general knowledge. Additional means employed were illustration materials, or stories from the ancient classics of India, charts and pictures showing diagramatically the effect of temperance, and lantern slides. A more direct means adopted was the employment of text books in English or Indian language containing lessons on temperance[92].

8. Removal of Liquor Shops from Town

The Government tried a number of measures for weaning the people away from drinking. There were 14 arrack shops and 12 toddy shops in Salem town in 1917. Three arrack shops and three toddy shops were left in the town, and the rest were shifted outside municipal limits. This measure, however, did not bring about any appreciable decrease in the consumption of liquor. The removal of the shops outside the municipal limits merely led to an abnormal increase in liquor consumption in the rural shops, and to the production of illicit liquor in the town. The shops were, therefore, brought back into municipal limits. It was realiesed that mere preventive action could not cope with the problem[93].

9. Restrict the marking of trees

Another measure taken was to restrict the marking of trees for shops within five miles of the area to the average of the previous five years. To start with, the experiment showed a sign of success and the dry areas were further extended. But later, as enthusiasm faded, illicit distillation increased, and a number of representations were received by the Government for the re-opening of the liquor shops[94].

10. Opening Of Tea And Coffee Shops

The experiment of opening tea and coffee shops as counter attractions to liquor shops was tried in 1916 – 19 with the help of local boards of municipalities and market contractors. Over 20 shops were opened but it was soon reported that they failed to attract men accustomed to stronger drinks[95].

11. Experiment In Partial Prohibition In Two Taluks Of Ramnad

In 1919 - 1920 the Government ordered the closure of toddy shops in the toddy-drinking areas with a view to helping people cut down drinking. This was first introduced in the taluk of Tiruvadanai and Paramakudi of Ramnad District. No shops were permitted to be opened within five miles around the area under experiment[96].

Such were the temperance measures pursued by the Government from 1907 to 1921 for reducing consumption. In spite of all these measures consumption failed to decrease in any appreciable manner, while revenue rose greatly. This was clear from the following statement.

Consumption Of Arrack

Year	Quantity consumed in proof gallons	Consumption per hundred of population in proof gallons
1908 – 1909	1,707,136	4.6
1920 – 1921	1,7-23,,868	4.2

Consumption

Year	No. of trees tapped in terms of accounts.
1906 – 1907	2,105,323
1920 – 1921	2,285,415

Imports of foreign spirits and locally made foreign spirits from distilleries

Year	Import of foreign Liquor in gallons	Issue of locally made foreign spirits from distilleries in gallons.
1906 - 1907	8,78,966	6,810
1920 - 1921	3,71,817	37,779

Consumption of Beer

Year	Issues of beer from breweries in gallons
1906 – 1907	7,35,725
1920 – 1921	6,58,487

Consumption Of Opium And Drugs

Year	Opium in seers	Hem drugs in seers
1906 – 1907	38,100	44,735
1920 – 1921	36,211	44,735

From the above, it is clear that the Government of Madras followed the policy of furthering temperance up to 1921 by making the tax on liquor as high as possible without encouraging illicit distillation: after 1921 it restricted the number of shops as far as possible with a view to minimise the temptation to drink and this was the policy which it was following since 1906 - 07.

Excise Revenue

Year	In lakhs of Rupees
1906 – 1907	204 – 31
1920 – 1921	543 – 57

The people of Tamil Nadu were of the opinion that the reduction of shops as done by Government did not mean that any area was left dry. A shop here and a shop there were removed, so that the costomers increased in the shop left over in those areas, and the Government revenue therefrom proportionately increased[98]. For example, the excise revenue of the Government was 22 percent of the total income in 1917 – 1918[99].

To sum up, the year 1886 was a turning point in the history of Tamil Nadu relating to public opinion on Prohibition. Before 1886 great religious teachers and other famous literary figures of Tamil society taught the evils of drink but such teachings were not politicised and were only advisory in nature. But in 1886 the temperance movement started by William S. Caine and Hall in England and in India including in the Madras

Presidency added a new dimension to "the issue of the evil of drink and this was the political dimension to the issue of the evil of drink and hence for the first time the evil of drink was politicised, and public opinion was mobilised to bring about steps to reduce drunkenness in the country". Such a kind of political environment created by Caine and Hall led to the emergence of a new Tamil elite class.

The initial opposition did not go in vain. The British Government too began to think in terms of reducing drunkenness in this part of the country. It is certainly to the credit of Caine and Hall, Evans and Smith, Madhava Rao and Raghunatha Rao, Ranade and Bipin Chandra Pal and others, to have planted the concept of temperance in the minds of the Indian rulers for the first time on the political plane. Such initial political exercises might not have yielded rich dividends. But still they persuaded the British government to take certain step to reduce drunkenness. To that extent the Caine-Hall Temperance ideology movement was a success.

The British Government in their efforts to reduce drunkenness experimented with the following methods from 1907-1920: appointment of an Excise Administration Committee, reduction of arrack and toddy shops, enhancement of duty on arrack and toddy tapping trees, reduction in the issue strength of arrack, restrictions on hours of sale with certain conditions, issuing licences reducing the limit of private possession of arrack and toddy, introduction of temperance teaching in schools, removal of liquor shops in certain towns like Salem, restricting the marking of the trees, opening of tea and coffee shops, and experiment in partial prohibition in two taluks of Ramnad. In spite of all such sincere measures taken by the Government the consumption of alcohol failed to decrease in any appreciable manner. This was because of the lack of awareness among the drunkards about the evils of drink, as well as due to increase in population. "Had the people responded with much more awareness, the British policy would

have probably yielded better results" The British had made only a beginning relating to a temperance movement, and such a beginning was only a half-hearted attempt and did not yield the anticipated results.

References

1. M. Rajamanickam, Pathu Pattu Araichi, Madras University, (Madras - 1970) P. 508

2. *Ibid*,   p. 507.

3. *Ibid*, p.. 506.

4. Aghananuru *Perumozhi Pulavar Urai*, *Saiva Siddhanadha Kazhagam*, (Madras 1970) P. 130

5. *Agham* 284, 8.

6. *Puram.* 172, 1- 2..

7. *Puram* 177,6- 11.

8. *Puram* 212, 2 – 5 I.

9. V. Kanakasabhai, *The Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Age*, Asian Education service (New Delhi 1979).

10. *Puram,* 392, 16.

11. *Natrinai* 10, 5 – 6.

12. *Puram*, 376, 14.

13. *Puram*, 384, 12

14. *Puram,* 232, 3 – 4.

15. *Puram,* 343, 9.

16. *Puram*, 68, 15 – 16.

17. *Agham*, 368, 14 – 15.

18. *Agham*, 157, 1 – 4.

19. *Puram*, 178, 18.

20. *Agham*, 268, 13 – 15.

21. *Natrinai,* 131, 7 – 9.

22. *Puram*, 170.. 12 – 13.

23. *Puram*, 123,. 1-4.

24. *Puram*, 392, 16 – 17.

25. *Puram*, 235, 1 – 3.

26. *Puram*, 129,1 – 3.

27. *Puram*, 178, 18.

28. V . Kanakashabhai, *op, cit,* P. 125.

29. *Puram,* 56, 18 20 Yavanar nankalam thantha thankamazhi theral poncey Pavaikal thenthi nanadha ponpodi makalir maduppa.

30. *Puram*, 298, 1 – 2.

31. Kurinchi, 155 – 156.

32. N. Subramanian, *Sangham Polity*, Ennes Publication (Madurai, 1980) pp 320 - 321.

33. M. Paranthakan" 'The Treatment of Prohibition in Twentieth Century Tamil Literature; unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Madras, (Madras 1987) pp. 19 - 20.

34. T.V. Sadhasiva Pandarather, *Pirkkala Sozhar Varalaru*, *Later Cholas,* Annamalai University (Annamalai Nagar, Chidambaram) 1974 p. 524

35. M.. Paranthakan *Op.Cit,* P. 20

36. *Thirukkur*al, 921 – 930

37. Thirumoolar, *Thirumandiram*, Poems, pp. 311 - 317. 322

38. M. Paranthakan, *Op. Cit* 15

39. C. Rajagopalachari, *Prohibition* Kamala Prachuralayam (Madras 1931), p. 24

40. Ibid, pp 24 – 25

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid

43. C. Rajagopa1achari, *Indian Prohibition Manual*, current Thought Press   (Madras 1931) p. 26

44. Atreya *Towards Dry India* Dikshit Publishing House (Madras 1938) p.11.

45. M. Paranthakan, *Op.Cit.*, p. 20

46. Ibid, pp. 19 - 20.

47. T.V. Sadhasiva Pandarathar, *Op. Cit,*   p. 524

48. B.S. Ba1iga, *Compendium on Temperance and Prohibition* in Madras, *Op.Cit* P.3

49. Atreya Towards Dry India, Dikshit publishing House (Madras 1938) PP. 35 – 36

50. B.S. Baliga   *Op.Cit,* P. 3

51. Atreya, Towards Dry India,   *Op.Cit,*   p. 37

52. B.S. Ba1iga,   *Op.Cit,* P. 3

53. Atreya, Towards Dry India, *Op. Cit.*, .37

54. B.S. Baliga, Compendium on Temperance and Prohibition *Op.Cit,* P. 4

55. Atreya Towards Dry India, *Op.Cit.*   P. 38

56. Report on the Abkari System of the Madras Presidency, Office of the Superintendent of Government printing (Calcutta, 1874) P - 1. I

57. B.S. Baliga, Compendium on Temperance and Prohibition *Op.Cit* p. 4

58. A. Ramasamy, *Tamilnadu District Gazetteers: Ramanathapuram* (Government of Tamil Nadu 1972) P. 805

59. A. Ramasamy, *Madras District Gazetteers: Salem*, (Government of Madras, 1967), p. 590

60. Ducy Carrol, Papers on the Temperance Movement in Indian Politics and Social Reform, Modern Asian Studies10, 3 , University of California, Berkeley 1976, p. 418.

61. Ibid, p. 418

62. Ibid, p. 419

63. J.N. Farguhar, *Modern Religious Movement in India*, Munshiram, Manoharlala. Oriental Publishers, Delhi 1967, p. 391.

64. Ibid, p. 393

65. C. Yajaneswara Chintamani (Ed.) *Indian Social Reform,* Minerva Press (Madras, 1901) p. 93.

Bibin Chandra Pal was at this time an honorary lecturer of the Anglo-Indian Temperance Association; when he returned to India in 1900 after his studies in England, he was made a paid lecturer.

66. Lucy Carrol, *Op.Cit*, p. 420.

67. ** The resolution was moved by D.E. Wache (Bombay) who congratulated the Congress on his departure in its programme, and lauded the work of Samuel Smith, Rev. T. Evans and W.S. Caine. W.S. Caine who was present was honoured with continued cheers when his name was mentioned. (Report of the Fourth Indian National Congress held at Allhabad, 1888, pp. 60-63)

68. Lucy Caroll, *Op.Cit*. pp. 420-421.

69. Ibid, p. 421.

70. *Ibid*, p. 419.

71. *Ibid*, p. 421.

72. *Ibid*, p. 419.

73. *Ibid*. p. 422.

74. Gopalakrishna Gandhi, *Tamil Nadu District Gazetteers*: *Pudukkottai,* Government of Tamil Nadu, (Madras 1983), p. 729.

75. *B*.S. Baliga, *Compendum on Temperance and Prohibition in Madra,* Government of Madras, (Madras 1960) PP. 4-5.

76. *Ibid*, p. 5.

77. *Ibid*, pp. 5-6.

78. *Ibid*, p. 6.

79. *Ibid*, p. 7.

80. Atreya, *Towards Dry India,* Dikshit Publishing House, (Madras 1938) p. 16.

81. *Report of the Prohibition Enquiry Committee* Government of India (New Delhi 1955) pp. 4-5

82. B.S. Baliga, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 7-8.

83. *Report of the Madras Prohibition Enquiry Committee*, 1948, Government Press, (Madras 1948), p. 13.

84. Ibid.

85. *Ibid*.

86. *Law* (Legislative) G.O. No. 26 – 27, January 24, 1923.

87. *Revenue* G.O. No. 3 Feb. 17, 19146, October 24, 1910.

88. *Board of Revenue Proceedings*, G.O. No. 150, Feb. 17, 1914.

89. *Separate Revenue,* G.O. No. 644, June 22, 1917.

90. *Revenue*, G.O. No. 60, January 8, 1919.

91. *Separate Revenue*, G.O. No. 41, January 17, 1912.

92. Separate Revenue, G.O. No. 884, October 20, 1916.

93. A. Ramaswamy, *Gazetteer of India, Madras and Salem*, Government of Madras (Madras 1967), p. 592.

94. *Ibid*.

95. *Separate Revenue, G*.O. No. 884, October 20, 1916.

96. A. Ramaswamy, Op.Cit, pp. 805-806.

97. B.S. Baliga, *Op.Cit*, pp. 13-14.

98. C. Rajagopalachari, *Indian Prohibition Manual*, p. 56.

99. Eugene, F. Irschick *Tamil Revivalism in the 1920 s* Cre – A Publications, Madras 1986, p. 209.

MAA RAMA DEVI : PROFILE OF AN EMINENT GANDHIAN LEADER OF ORISSA

Dr. (Mrs.) B.K. Sarma,
Reader and Head,
PG Department of History
Berhampur University,
Orissa

Introduction

Indian women through the ages have played key a role in bringing about transformation in our socio-cultural and political setup. One such woman of Orissa was Maa Rama Devi, who dominated the socio-political life of Orissa for more than half a century. Her role model was Mahatma Gandhi, from whom she derived all inspiration to build up her career as a great leader. Her commitment to Gandhian ideology and movement made her discard her secluded, conservative private life and enter into public life. Though, basically, she belonged to a political family[1], most of the male members being prominent freedom fighters and Congress leaders of that time, initially she had no interest in that line. The greatest influence upon her life was that of Mahatma Gandhi. All through her life she followed the ideas and ethics of Gandhi. She was a hard core Gandhian, and to her goes the credit of implementing in Orissa most of the ideologies and programmes of Gandhi and the Indian National Congress. She was the most eminent female leader of Orissa who played a notable role in the Gandhian political and social movement. Even after independence, and after the death of Gandhi, she continued her social work and social service in true Gandhian spirit till her death in 1985.

It is worth mentioning the social background from which she emerged. Though she belonged to an aristocratic affluent family she had no formal education, and was brought up in the midst of orthodoxy and social rigidities. Born in 1899, and married at the age of fourteen, she was subjected to all difficulties in family life in those days including seclusion, household responsibilities, childbearing and rearing etc.

Rama Devi and the Gandhian Political Movement

She came under the spell of Gandhi during his first visit to Orissa in 1921. She attended the first Gandhi public meeting on 24th March 1921 with her mother-in-law in purdah. In that meeting Gandhi appealed to the womenfolk of Orissa to work for their country's independence i.e., social and political[2]. Since then she was convinced that women had a great role to play and the awakening of the country was not possible without the awakening of women[3]. Being inspired by Gandhi she became committed to the cause of the country. Gandhi wanted women first to engage themselves in constructive work. There is no denying the fact that the period from 1921 (advent of Gandhi into Indian politics) to 1930 (Civil Disobedience Movement) was a preparatory period for the women of Orissa, as elsewhere in India. During this period some ladies belonging to Congress workers' families in particular were changing their lifestyles to participate in the nationalist movement. But, prior to that, they were trained and educated in the fundamentals of organized activity and propaganda at the local level through the Constructive Programme of Gandhi. Rama Devi also, at the instance of Gandhi, worked hard for the promotion of Charkha and Khadi, propaganda of Congress ideas and ideologies, enrolled members for the Congress, and collected funds for the Tilak Swaraj fund*.

In the meantime she attended the Indian National Congress session held at Gaya in 1922[4]. In June 1924 she attended the

first Orissa Provincial Conference held at Cuttack[5]. She became very active in public life after attending the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress in 1928. A change in her life came from 1928 as she mentions in her memoir that she made up her mind to fully involve herself in nationalist politics from1928[6]. There was a great transformation in her lifestyle after being associated with the Congress Ashram at Jagatsinghpur under the inspiration of Gandhi. She had become the inmate of Alakashram by 1930, which she was occasionally visiting since 1921, and was doing Khadi work there[7].

Her first direct and active involvement in politics began in 1930 during the Civil Disobedience movement. In the Salt Satyagraha campaign in Orissa, apart from manufacturing and selling salt and breaking salt laws and defying the British authority her main role was of motivating and mobilising people, more particularly women, for the movement. On 18th April 1930, at Inchudi, one of the salt manufacturing centres of Orissa, she first addressed a meeting of women and appealed to them to participate in the Salt Satyagraha*. Again, on 22nd April 1930 she organized an important meeting of women Satyagrahis[15] in her residence under the leadership of her husband Sri Gopabandhu Choudhury, a veteran freedom fighter and a Congress leader of Orissa. The aim of the meeting was to involve women in large numbers in the Civil Disobedience Movement as instructed by Gandhi. She toured even remote villages, organized and addressed meetings to enlighten women about their role in the Civil Disobedience Movement[8]. Due to her tireless efforts, about 1500 women and even the local queen of Kujang, Rani Bhagyabati Devi came out with baskets and took part in the breaking of salt laws[9].

After the imprisonment of male satyagrahis during the time of the Civil Disobedience movement she carried on the organizational

work of the Congress, and kept up the movement along with some other women. She organized meetings and urged the people to carry on peaceful picketing before opium, ganja and liquor shops[10]. The programme of Charkha, and Khadi was popularized by her in rural areas as per Gandhi's instructions. A large number of women, including housewives, spinsters, old and young responded to her call and joined the movement. That was a great achievement on her part as she could involve the tradition-bound conservative Oriya women in the nationalist movement as desired by Gandhi.

On the resumption of the Civil Disobedience movement Rama Devi and her son Manmohan Choudhury were arrested while reading the Independence Declaration on 26 January 1932[11].

The Quit India call given by Gandhiji on 9th August 1942 again drew Rama Devi into the mainstream of politics and national life. During that time she was put under arrest along with her husband and had to undergo nearly two years of imprisonment in the Cuttack jail. Moreover, during the Quit India Movement, government declared their Ashram at Bari illegal and set fire to it because of their anti-government activities and participation of inmates and workers in the movement[12].

By 1931 Rama Devi's stature as a Congress leader was very high. From 26th September 1930 to the first week of November 1930 i.e. till her arrest, she was the President of the Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee[13]. She presided over the Conference of the Cuttack District Congress Workers held on 20th March 1931 attended by top ranking Congress leaders[14]. She attended the Karachi session of the Indian National Congress in 1931 and canvassed to obtain support for holding the next session of the Indian Congress in Orissa[15]. She was elected the Treasurer of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee in May 1931 and was entrusted with the task of organizing a centre for the training for women workers[16].

Though she was honoured and rewarded in recognition of her leadership abilities and qualities, she was punished also by the government for anti-government and nationalistic activities. She was arrested and imprisoned for years together several times for her active participation and involvement in the national movement and was fined also *.

Her Role in the Gandhian Social Movement

An ardent believer in the Gandhian philosophy of social development through constructive programmes she dedicated her entire life to the implementation of that programme. On Gandhi's advice she, along with her husband, chose Bari, a flood-prone area in Orissa, to work out the Constructive Programme. They propagated and implemented such items of the Constructive Programme as removal of untouchability, women uplift, rural reconstruction etc. Rama Devi made her best efforts to spread Gandhi's message of self-reliance through Khadi, Charkha, cattle care, dairy, bee-keeping, agriculture, tanning, village sanitation, adult education, health care etc[17]. Training was also imparted to several batches of women workers. After completing training women started similar centres in different other villages. In fact, within a period of three years, the people in and around Bari woke up to the potentialities of self-effort and self-reliance.

In working out the Constructive Programme of Gandhi, she played a major role in the Harijan uplift programme. She had the honour of being the first Secretary of the Orissa branch of the Harijan Sevak Sangha. With her co-workers she took up the anti-untouchability work in its true sense when the Harijan movement began in Orissa in 1932. In fact she rendered the greatest services in this matter. She went to scavengers' colonies, rendered cleaning services, taught their children, distributed medicines, preached healthy practices etc[18]. In Gandhi's historic Harijan

Padajatra or foot march which began on 9 May 1934, at Puri, she actively participated and was there all through from the beginning to the end[19]. Highly appreciating the role of Rama Devi and her co-workers in this campaign Gandhiji remarked: "I hope therefore that the example of women of Cuttack will prove infectious and that the work began by Smt. Rama Devi and her companions will be continued in spite of the difficulties and disappointments that they might have to face".

As desired by Gandhi for the promotion of national language she worked hard in propagating Hindi in Orissa through the' Rastrabhasa Prachar Sabha' formed in Orissa in 1933. She also played a pioneering role in the introduction of basic education in Orissa. In 1938 she set up about 15 such schools in different places. Simultaneously she also organized teachers' training programmes. She had to make great efforts for the maintenance and continuance of those Institutes because of non-allotment of government grants due to the resignation of the Congress ministry in 1939. Yet, due to her persistent efforts, she could manage to ensure that seven out of fifteen Institutes kept functioning with public support.*

She set up a hostel at Ramachandrapur for the children of imprisoned Congress workers and Harijans, during the time of the Quit India Movement. After her release from jail in 1944 she again concentrated on Khadi work, basic education and training of women workers. She became a trustee of the All India Charkha Association.

In order to fulfil the cherished desire and dream of Gandhi she formed the "Kasturba Nidhi" on 6th May 1944 in Orissa for the welfare of women and children. Within a short period she opened a number of such centres at different places and took up various welfare schemes. On Gandhi's advice and suggestion

she became a member of 'Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust' representing Orissa[20]. In 1945 she established a maternity centre at Cuttack known as 'Kasturba Nari Mangala Kendra'. Due to her efforts and initiative a 'Nivajivan MandaI' was formed in 1946 for the uplift of the tribals.

Conclusion

The main achievement of Rama Devi as a promoter of Gandhian ideas and programmes was her effort to awaken women and the response of the women of Orissa to the freedom struggle. From the above discussion it is known to what extent she made her best efforts to translate the ideas and vision of Gandhi into reality. She tried to fulfil the most cherished desire of Gandhi, i.e. the awakening of women and their involvement in the national movement. Gandhi was firm in his conviction that no movement could succeed if women (half of the population) remain indifferent and passive. He stated "the women of India should have as much share in winning Swaraj as men". This responsibility of awakening and involving women was taken up by Rama Devi, who made her own efforts in various ways and methods. As we have seen, the response of women was remarkable. The kind of inspiration and motivation she provided to women ultimately brought out a large number of women from different strata, caste, category, age and area to participate in the freedom struggle. We come across many interesting instances and account in her memoirs about women who left behind their family, their comforts, purdah, social restrictions, children and everything just for the sake of the country. She gave all moral support and encouragement and shelter to such women who left their home to join the movement. Therefore allegations were brought against her of misguiding and kidnapping village women, and on that charge she was sent to Hazaribagh jail. In the true spirit of Gandhian ideology, even after

independence, Rama Devi along with her husband, son and daughter preoccupied herself with social work. All through her life she remained a hardcore Gandhian.

Notes and References

1. Mahatab, H.K. (ed.), *History of Freedom Movement in Orissa,* V Vols.

2. Choudhury Rama Devi, *Jeevan Pathe* (Oriya), Auto Biography, p.53.

3. Ibid, pp.IO5-107.,

*By her strenuous efforts along with her co-workers she could raIse Rs. 30,000/- for the Congress Fund. V.P.C.C. & A.I.C.c. Files (Nehru Memorial Museum Library)

4. Choudhury Rama Devi, *op.cit.,* p.70.

5. Ibid

6. Ib id

7. Ibid, p.86

The significance of this meeting lies in the fact that it marked the beginning of organized participation of women in the nationalist movement. Desakatha, 15 April 1930.

8. Choudhry Rama Devi, *op.cit.,* pp.92-97.

9. Ibid., pp.89-91.

10. Utkal Dipika, 28 March 1931.

11. Choudhury Rama Devi, *op.cit.,* p.103.

12. Ibid.

13. Ni1amani Pradhan's Report, A.I.C.C. Files.

14. Utkal Dipika, 28 March 1931.

15. Choudhury Rama Devi, *op.cit.,* p.101.

16. Utkal Dipika, 9 May 1931.

    Valijee Govindjee Desai while introducing Rama Devi put the following lines in *Harijan* dated 13 January 1934: "Gandhiji has" as he puts it "fallen in love" with this lady of remarkable capacity. She is conducting an Ashram at Cuttack. Gandhiji has suggested its removal to a village where she could train the girls under her charge for service.

17. Mohanty Gopinath, *Dhulimatir Santha,* p.599.

18. *Ibid.,* p.600.

19. *Ibid.,* p.600.

Extract of the letter, from Gandhi to Smt. Rama Devi:

CHI RAMA

I was very happy to read your letter. Congratulations to the teachers who have made up their mind. I hope that other teachers too will make a similar sacrifice and will not leave their schools. Congratulations to the villagers also. If this work succeeds, it will be a great service.

Blessings from

BAPU

20. Choudhury, Rama Devi, *op.cit.,* p.130.

BOOK REVIEW

by

Antony Copley (ed).
Hinduism in Public and Private
—Reform, Hindutva, Gender and Sampraday

The volume under review is a collection of essays edited by the British historian Antony Copley. These essays were first presented before a panel on religious reform movements at the European Conference of Modern South Asian Studies held at Edinburgh during September 2000. They have been revised by the authors in order to highlight their contemporary relevance. Antony Copley's exploration of the paradigms of public and private spheres is his own. One wonders at the manner in which the concepts of Hinduism and Hindutva have become a matter of great concern and endless debate in contemporary India.

It remains something of a mystery as to why the majority Hindu community should behave as a minority and fear other religions, especially Islam in India. One explanation could be the humiliation suffered by the Hindus during the Muslim rule. It is mentioned that the Hindus experienced a loss of manliness. This seems to have continued during the later colonial rule.

Antony Copley has divided his book into two parts: (1) Varieties of nationalism (2) Public and private spheres. Of the four papers in the first part, the most interesting is the one by Gwilym Beckerleegge entitled "Saffron and Seva: The Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh's appropriation of Swami Vivekananda". The author here has attempted to tell us the different approaches to the study of Swami Vivekananda. It appears that Vivekananda's reputed activism has caught the imagination of many including the RSS Within the literature of the RSS it is not uncommon

to find Vivekananda's name linked with a succession of 19th century Hindu thinkers and leaders beginning with Dayananda Saraswathi. However unlike the RSS, the Ramakrishna Mutt never believed in intervening in political matters. The Vivekananda Kendras in India are devoted to service. Peter Heehs has contributed a valuable paper entitled "The Centre of the Religious Life of the World". Spiritual Universalism and Cultural Nationalism in the work of Sri Aurobindo". He has clearly brought out the universal appeal of the spiritual message of Sri Aurobinda. One of the problems posed by all the author's in the volume is: Did Hindutva and the Religious Reform Movement remain time the catholicity of Hinduism. Or did it become exclusive and so, communal? In whatever causes it crossed over from the private to the public sphere did it became overly political without being in a position to compromise with tradition? Says Antony Copley: The greater temptation the Devil put to the Christ was to rule the world — a moral litmus test that has its parallel in the great religions.

With the rise of Hindu nationalism and the present ascendancy of the B.J.P, one is called upon to re-examine India's recent past. Did the past lay the seeds of the future? This is the issue before the historian of contemporary India.

In a brilliant essay Theresa O'Toole discusses the story of cow protection, at the centre of the Hindutva theory, from the late 19th century right through to the 1950s. The cow became a symbol that could bridge the divide between the reformers and the conservatives. The author raises some awkward questions. For example, on the issue of the cow what exactly was the difference between the Congress nationalist and the Hindu communalists. In Gandhi's presentation the protection of the cow was not to be a bargaining counter with the Muslims. The Hindus were criticised for their cruelty to cows in the late 1920s. The Muslims were asked not to slaughter cows and the Hindus were asked not to play music before mosques.

In part II of the book Antony Copley has raised the question of the relationship between a political Hindu nationalism and the religion reform movements. One contributor in this section calls it "slippery". Another confesses that it is "not unitary but protean". The nation is a public arena within which a search for identity is pursued. In this section, the question is raised: if the Hindutva movement in one of its accounts is seen as a bringing together of the sects into a united movement, just how do we fit the Hindu core structure of the sampraday" story? Indeed, Indian pluralism defies generalizations and Indian sects are enormously varied.

Maya Warrier's essay entitled "The Seva Ethic and the spirit of institution – building in the Mata Amritanandamayi Mission" makes very interesting reading. The author who holds a doctorate degree on the subject has very clearly brought out the apparent contradiction between the other worldly quest of the renouncers and their involvement in the affairs of the world. In recent times India has witnessed the phenomenon of the "Avatar – Guru". Its implications help us to understand the changing modes of the contemporary Hindu world. The best example of this is Sathya Sai Baba of Puttaparti in Andhra Pradesh in South India. Sathya Sai Baba's meteoric rise to prominence in the 1940s as a spiritual leader rests on his claims to be an earthly incarnation of Shiva and Shakti. The purpose of his life on earth, he claims is to fulfil a particular divinely ordained mission – that of restoring to then modern world and its people the four principles of satya (Truth), Dharma (Duty), Shanthi (Peace), and Prema (Divine Love). Another star like Sathya Sai Baba in the Hindu firmament is Matha Amritandamayi of Kerala. The Matha (mother) is believed to have descended to the earth from the specific intent of alleviating sorrows of humanity. The Matha Amritandamayi mission (MAM) owns and manages schools, colleges, hospitals, orphanages, engineering and computer institutes which indicates the success of the Matha's divine enterprise.

The volume is well brought out with extensive references in the form of end notes. The present reviewer hopes that in a volume that may follow on the subject some matters and persons who have been left out would be included. One such person in the footsteps of Matha Amritandamayi is Prema Pandurang who has a very large following, with a network of Ashram in different places.

Prof. S. GOPALAKRISHNAN.