

ENGLISH EDUCATION, SOCIAL MOBILITY AND CULTURAL PRACTICES: THE MALABAR CASE

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Abstract

The paper discusses the role of English education in shaping the social and cultural milieu of the Malabar in the backdrop of colonial modernity. While studying the social and economic history of Malabar, the breakthrough provided by colonialism and its cultural apparatus in reducing the grievances of downtrodden and the people belonged to the back ward castes is a pertinent point to be noted. It acted as a catalytic agent in the transformation of the social and economic life Malabar. European thought and knowledge were decisive factors in the cognition of socio-cultural reality. The ideology of progress which tagged along with it has shaped a new condition for social mobility in Malabar.

English emerged as the language of power in the nineteenth century India and its vibrancy was felt in every walk of life. Kerala in the colonial period was comprised of three regions- the British state of Malabar, and princely states of Travancore and Cochin. As a place directly ruled by the British, presence of colonial modernity was at first directly felt in Malabar. The reorganisation of the family structure, urbanization of economy, new concept of time, improved employment opportunities etc. were some of the visible outcomes of Malabar society groomed by the western education system. In the background of English education Malabar witnessed the transformation of a conservative caste society into a more democratic, liberal minded middle class society imbued by the ethos of modernity. Its political and cultural expression is visible in the socio –religious reform movements of the nineteenth century, emergence of printing press, educational progress, emergence of new middle class, developments in science and medicine, cultural associations, clubs and new aesthetics. Most of these developments and movements were crucial to modernity.

The novels like *Sukumari* present detailed sketch of the slow development of Malabar as a cosmopolitan centre. There is a description about the landscape of the region with special reference to the cities, fort, army, barracks, armoury, camp bazaar, clubs and beaches. It also makes reference to different trading groups in north Malabar like *Parsis*, *Gujarath Sethis* and *Baniyas*. Malabar with colonial cities like Tellichery and Cannanore provide the presence of Portuguese, Anglo- Indians and the natives and slowly it emerged as a cosmopolitan centre. *Parangodi Parinayam* a novel in the 1880's has narrated the change in the life style and food habits among the educated class. Tea, biscuits, cakes etc. became the part of middle class family.¹ *Sweet Houses* appeared in major towns of

Kerala had the potential to break the social code related to the intake of food by lower sections of the society. Tea and coffee shops with *putu* and *dosa* provided a substitute to the consumption of *Kanhi* (rice soup) two times in a day by a labourer who spent most of his time in paddy fields. Venkatachalapathy speak of the emergence of a new drinking culture in the backdrop of colonial modernity in south India. Novel *Indulekha* provide us the nature of debate taken place in a feudal *tharavad* dominated by a *karanavar*. In the novel, we see the heated argument between the English educated Madhavan and Panchu Menon, the *karanavar* of the *taravad* over the question of the education of one Shinnan, who belongs to a lesser *tavazhi* of the *taravad*.

Charm of new language and its vitality is explained by Sir C Sankaran Nair in the following words:

From our school days, great English writers have been our classics; English history is taught to us in our schools. The books we generally read are English books, which describe in detail all forms of English life, give us all the English type of character. Week after week, English newspapers, journals and magazines pour in to India for Indian readers. We in fact, now live the life of the English².

Before the formal school system introduced by the British, dress form the basis to identify the social position of an individual. School system and corresponding social and cultural changes brought remarkable changes in the dressing pattern. Education helped the people of Malabar to develop a sense of decency in dress. As Ellen Roach and Joanne bubluz Eicher observed, the cloths and adornments have significance far beyond utilitarian functions and they reflect social distinctions and cultural identities³. As Panikkar stated, dress often acts as an active agent in the articulation of social relations, though there is no uniform code in all cultures which governs this articulation, norms and customs in the West and East are vastly different⁴. In Malabar, till the end of the 19th century, dress and ornaments served to mark social difference and hierarchical distinction. Most of the low caste people and converts had been denied the freedom to cover the upper part of their bodies. There was a practice in Nair *taravads*, in which clothes were distributed among the members of the *taravad* twice a year on the occasions of *Onam* and *Visu*. *Konakam* (loin cloth used as an under wear), *mundu* (dhoti) and *tortu* (towel) were given to men and *tuni* (cloth used as underwear), *pudava* (double cloth) and *neryatu* (upper garment) to women. It is significant to note that no *Kuppayam* (blouse) was supplied from the family funds as it did not fall under the traditionally accepted pattern of dress for women⁵. In the backdrop of colonial modernity and with the emergence of schools as a new public sphere, some notable changes occurred in the dressing pattern of Malabar

region. South Kerala witnessed a series of protests in the form of *Channar agitation (Melmundu Kalapam)* to get the right to wear proper dresses. The light and the heat of these struggles were not affected by the Malabar region. Even in the 18th century, Tiyya ladies of Malabar followed a particular style of breast covering. Following the Parsi ladies, the Tiyya ladies of the elite started wearing saris. As Nagam Ayya pointed out, it was a revolution in the dress system of Malabar women⁶. Gundert's dictionary made reference about the dress style of Tiyya ladies. It read thus: 'Tiyya women to cover their breast with a cloth thrown over the left shoulder brought toward under the right arm and tuck in behind or in front, *cann* to *ca'l*'⁷. Murkoth Ramunni, then governor of Nagaland said: "in the *Kudipallikoodams*, children came to study with their loin clothes (*Konakam*); but it was banned in English school. I went to the school, where we sat on the ground and spread sand on the ground and wrote figures. My classmates were without shirts and had only a *dhothi*."⁸ But with the introduction of English education the dress code for the school teachers and students were transformed. Head Masters started insisting that the teachers should go to the class wearing the English suit.

Malabar had a long tradition of printing press and journalism and it is associated with missionary activities, efforts of colonial administration and national movement. The printing press revolutionised the education system and now the emphasis was shifted from personal, oral communication to impersonal communication of ideas through books, journals and other media. With the widening of the communication system and improved transparency in the teaching-learning process, knowledge was no longer the sole property of the privileged upper castes. As a result the religious texts and scriptures were made available in the printed form and were widely studied by the newly educated middle class and the European scholars. Print capitalism had its powerful presence in the Malabar homes through which the people came into know about the heat of political currents prevailed at that time. The development of professional groups along with salaried occupations led to the growth of a middle class⁹. It may be noted that most of the occupations under the colonial system had only developed in England and other parts of Europe with the rise of commercialism and industrialism. Thus the occupational groupings formed an important basis for the development of the new class structure in north Malabar¹⁰. In the background of English education and employment generated by it, organic solidarity began to take shape in Malabar. As Max Weber observed, in the changed class situation, the possession of property is no longer the sole determinant of life chances for the non-propertied. The life chances created by education credentials in the modern class situation placed the outright 'naked' ownership of property and class privilege arising from it into the background¹¹.

The decline of indigenous education corresponded with the disintegration of the pre-colonial social order in Malabar. Even the life style of the Nambudiris and the Nairs were affected by the rise of western education. Many of the central features of the caste system in north Malabar, such as the polygamy of the Nambudiris, the polyandry and loosely structured *sambandham* marriage system of the Nairs, and the institution of slavery were considered immoral by the colonialists and these practices were abolished over time.¹² Legislation was also passed that permitted the partitioning of joint family land to the individual members. All the laws which were passed since the second half of the 19th century led to the gradual dismantling of the traditional structure of the caste system¹³. For the first time at least a minuscule minority from different social groups could attend schools and colleges and benefited from the education by internalizing colonial values. This was in tune with the argument made by Ashis Nandi that, with the coming of the British, even a traditional rural parent begins to send their children to modern urban schools for western education partly to fulfill their status ambitions and partly to create a manageable bicultural space or an interface with the modern world within the family¹⁴.

The western education came as a relief to the women community of Malabar. They were a group who had succumbed under the weight of the oppressive caste system and the social regulations imposed by it. Social reformers ably supported by the educated people voiced their concerns on issues such as sati, child marriage, female infanticide and widow remarriage. In Kerala it prompted a barrage of questions to be raised on women's education, marriage reforms and ritual practices. Along with imparting self confidence, the growth of women's education led to the creation of the category of 'career women', who sought employment in specific professions such as teaching, medicine, and various white collar jobs.¹⁵ Some of them settled down into the roles of good house wives as envisaged by the British policy makers. For instance, the arguments in favour of English education emphasized the notions that knowing English would make women better homemakers and would increase the pleasure of home life, and that women's grasp of English would increase the pleasure of communication between 'the modern educated' husband and wife, or that it would throw open a whole world of books on house wifery, child care or other womanly skills, or that mother's competence in English would rub off on her children¹⁶. *Kerala Patrika* makes a reference about the desire of educated youth in the changed situation. It says: "a young Nair who was educated and employed or having a profession like *vakil* dressed up in a new form of shirt, coat or *mundu* desired that his wife be educated, dress neatly and be a real partner and also be able to guide their children"¹⁷. It is also argued that, female education was to be such that women were trained to become overseers of the modern home, regulators of altruistic exchange between family members

and agents of ‘civilising their desire.’¹⁸ The curriculum for women education prepared by the British administrators and missionary agencies has made a stress on this aspect of education. Their curriculum included needle work, domestic economy, music, drawing, painting, lace making and dress making¹⁹. The British official reports and contemporary literatures on Malabar have noticed the significant progress that achieved by educated women in the beginning of the 20th century. It is visible in the formation of various women organizations like *Vanitha Samajams*, *Strivedi’s*, *Mahila sangams* etc in various parts of Malabar. Murkoth Kunhappa in his preface to *Sahasra Poornima* of Revathi Amma makes a reference to the functioning of a *Stree Samajam* at Thlassery. It home delivered books to women and conducted social activities in the area²⁰. Women magazines were published and articles, writings and cartoons, citing women empowerment appeared in newspapers and journals. Special columns were set apart for addressing the women issues.



Source: Mathrubhumi weekly 1933, August 7

This cartoon *Purushanu stanamevide* which appeared in *Mathrubumi* weekly, illustrates the overall progress that was achieved by women in the beginning of the 20th century and it ridicules the present status of men.²¹

Naregal's study shows the ways that colonial rule in South Asia restructured social hierarchies by altering the nature of relation between 'high and low languages'²². Identity of English as the new language of 'power', received passionate response from the less privileged sections in Malabar society whose present cultural resources were not adequate for dislodging the actual basis of inequality. The progress of Tiyyas, lower castes in Malabar indicate the emergence of 'community of equals' by imbibing the spirit of English education and employment opportunities generated by it. There formed among the Tiyyas a generation of magistrates, teachers, writers, nurses, compounders, bankers, clerks, police, supervisors, builders, contactors, site engineers and officials in the British firms. They were also engaged in abkari business and rice and coconut selling. Traditionally they were toddy tappers and were engaged in manual works in the houses of *Janmies*. Tiyyas attained some amount of control over resources like formal knowledge and skills for arts and production even in the initial period of the British rule²³. They also practiced Ayurveda, medicine and astrology. Menon's study on north Malabar indicates the social responsibilities assigned to the Tiyyas by upper caste *janmies* and elites in the region. It was the responsibility of the Tiyyas to carry the message of the death of a Nair *Jamie*. They were acted as couriers bearing the news of their Nair land lord's death. Tiyya tenants were usually called upon to cut down a mango tree for the funeral pyre whenever there was death in the family of a Nair landlord.²⁴ When the British introduced English schools, Tiyyas had no caste inhibition to send their children in the school. As first entrants in the 'English school,' the community benefitted much from the new employment avenues opened by colonial firms and institutions. During the British period, Tiyyas were in a better position while comparing to their Ezhava counter parts in south Kerala. Robin Jeffrey suggests that, related prosperity of Tiyyas in north Malabar was connected with the availability of land and attainment of education. The basic knowledge in English language which they acquired through Missionary schools and consequent access to colonial institutions and occupations contributed to the breaking of the power structures and caste equations in the north Malabar region.²⁵ Sir Narayan Chanda Varker a judge in the Bombay High Court, in his letter to *Times of India*, says: 'I think that the social reformer who desires to tackle the problem of the depressed classes should study the history of Tiyyas in Malabar. They are not exactly a depressed class now. They have practically been elevated rather than they have elevated themselves. Tiyyas are now to be found in government offices and in every occupation.'²⁶ Lord Willington in his tour report on Malabar indicates the prominent presence of

Tiyyas in British administrative service. In the revenue department, large numbers of appointments carrying a salary of over Rs 50 were held by Tiyyas. Out of 31 Tahsildars and Magistrates in the Malabar district, 8 were Tiyyas and that in the clerical ranks of the revenue department held 22% of the appointments. In the local bodies there were 3 Tiyyas out of 24 members in the Calicut Municipal Council, 4 out of 17 in Cannanore and 4 out of 18 in Tellicherry²⁷. Tiyya progress was also evident in the Memorial presented by Dr Palpu to the Diwan of Travancore in 1895. It read thus: “the condition of our brothers, the Tiyyas of British Malabar is completely different. In British Malabar, which is under a foreign Christian government, they are given facilities to reform themselves like other communities. ‘Tiyyas will get appointment to all important offices which are opened to Indians, without any obstacles. In British Malabar majority of the important offices were held by the Tiyyas’.²⁸The government had also recognized the new status of the Tiyyas. In 1903, a group of Tiyyas from south Canara petitioned to the education department and asked to have their caste included in the Grant in Aid Code’s ‘back ward castes’ list. One Under Secretary was unsympathetic. He said: ‘It is not clear how the Tiyyas of south Canara can be differentiated from those of Malabar. People must be backward or not as a class and not according to the districts in which they live. The Tiyyas of Malabar can by no means be classified as indigent or backward²⁹.’

There are certain Tiyya families in north Malabar who benefitted much from the growing commercialisation of economy and western education. Increasing value of the liquor trade and the growing demand for coconut produce in the world market benefitted some sections of Tiyyas. They were also depended upon the government legislations and changes brought about in the land revenue system. Since there were established trading companies in Thalassery and Kannur the newly emergent trading groups turned their attention towards rural areas. They had to compete with the Mappilas and Nairs to strengthen their foothold in the budding business establishments. V.R. Krishna Iyyer offers an interesting account of Tiyya growth in Thalassery and adjacent areas. He argues that, they were making a social revolution on a wider social spectrum of education, occupation and spirituality.³⁰ The Murkoth family of Thalassery offers a growth story of the community at the beginning of the 20th century. Murkoth Ramunni was the head of a company controlling all the liquor shops in Malabar.³¹ His father had worked as a butler in the house of a senior employee of the East India Company. The second generation of the family attained prosperity by receiving western education. Murkoth Ramunni’s son Kumaran began his life as a school teacher and later became a journalist and a short story writer. Murkoth Kumaran’s sons Murkoth Ramunni, Murkoth Kunhappa and Murkoth Srinivasan have occupied prominent positions in Indian Civil Service and in private firms.³² Another illustrious example is provided by Potheri family of Kannur. Potheri Kunhambu, a

famous novelist and a journalist completed his primary education at Taliparamba and then moved to Cannanore Government High School for higher education. He completed his *vakils* examination and became a prominent lawyer at Taliparamba Munsif Court. His son Potheri Madhavan became a member of Madras Legislative Assembly while his daughter Paruamma obtained her higher education in medicine in USA.³³

The growth of Tiyyas in government administration is well reflected in the writings of Edgar Thursten who made the following observation: Tiyyas of north Malabar provides magistrates, sub judges, and other officials to serve the British government. He further refers to a Tiyya lady, a matriculate who was employed as a clerk in the Tellicherry Post Office³⁴. The Tiyya middle class played a vital role in the socio-cultural development of Malabar region. Murkoth Kumaran stated that he did not face much difficulty in collecting Rs 10000 for the construction of Sri Narayana Guru's idol at Thalassery. Major chunk of the money was provided by Tiyya professionals in and around Thalassery. *Mitavadi* has provided a list of Tiyya elites who donated huge amount of money for the construction of Sree Sundereshwara temple at Kannur³⁵. Festivals held at Thalassery Jaganatha temple were a show of strength of the newly emerged middle class.

Along with the re ordering of caste hierarchy corresponding changes were made in the customs and practices of the region. With government employment the individuals are now free to opt their employment and they were free to lead a separate life keeping away from their *taravadus*. Taravadu related customs and practices began to change. In connection with the birth of a child, on 28th day, there was a custom named *palukodukkal* (giving milk to the child) and eye salve was applied (*Kannezhuthu*). Formerly these were performed by the *karananvar*. But now the father or any elder member may act in his place. Western education and the new employment opportunities that came with it brought changes even in the interactions between the lower and higher castes. For example, in the earlier times a higher caste man was addressed by a lower caste using the terms like *Tamburan*, *Tambran*, *Eman* etc. Even an old man had to address a young higher caste boy with the appropriate honorific words. *Eda*, *Nee*, *Than* etc. were used by high caste persons to address a low caste man. When the lower caste people were appointed as clerks or teachers and were economically independent of others, it was not reasonable to call them as *Eda*, *Nee* etc. Now they were addressed by their position such as *Writer*, *Munsif*, *Vakil*, *Master*, *Adhikari*, *Gumastan*, *Amin*, *Constable* etc. The lower castes were gradually granted permission to enter the houses of the higher castes. Diwan Bahadur E.K. Krishnan, sub Judge, refers to the wonderful treatment he received in the house of his Nair friend Karunakaran Nambiar of Taliparamba.³⁶ Generally the upper caste Nair families would not entertain the lower caste in their houses. Another incident which marked the withdrawal of caste

barriers was the giving of houses on rent to the Tiyyas duly recorded by O. Shankaran, a Munsif in 1920. The practitioners of modern medicine even if they belonged to lower castes were permitted to use the roads exclusively meant for the upper castes³⁷

With the spread of education there was much relaxation in the restrictions imposed on the marriages of different communities. The marriage alliance between the people of north Malabar and south Malabar was not common in the past but many cases of educated youth marrying women from distant localities were increasingly reported. A newspaper report indicates this change: the marriage of one Choyi, son of Kattu Kandi Vattam Poyilil Chathukutty, a native of Kannur with a girl from Kozhikode was celebrated with great pomp and show³⁸. Some of the socially well placed *Marumakkatayam* families like the *Koyas* and the *Baramis* of Kozhikode and *Keyis* of Thalassery favoured the new 'change' and tried to implement modifications in ritual and marriage practices according to *Ahammedi* and *Islahi* concepts. For instance, the daughter of Abdul Khader Kutty, the first *Ahmadi* follower of Kannur, Nifiza Beevi was given in marriage an *Ahmadi*. There were no other ceremonies in the *nikah* and dowry was not given, as was the custom with other Mappilas³⁹. Some of the youth organizations like *Nambudiri Yuvajana Sangam* tried to break the caste barriers by conducting intermarriages. For instance, the marriage between Mullamangalath Raman Bhattatiripad (MRB) and Uma Antarajanam, a widow was a radical one. It was attended by the educated youth and elites from different places of Kerala⁴⁰. Felicitation address was delivered by V.T. Battatiripad. There submitted a *Mangala Patram* to the couples. A public meeting also was arranged. Days before the marriage, Parvathi Nemmini Mangalam published an article in *Mathrubumi Daily* (4 September 1934) entitled "*Purappedula MRByude Velikku*" in which she noticed the revolutionary changes that happened in the Nambudiri life due to education and reformist activities. She said: "Nambudiris achieved a scale of social progress which is beyond the dream of even progressive people among other caste groups in the Hindu community. Nambudiris abandoned traditional *marakkuda*, discarded notorious *gosha* practice, casted off traditional ornaments and now Nambudiri women become a free individual. All these are achieved through the tireless efforts of educated youth." The marriage between Parvathi Antarajanam, sister of V.T Bhatatitipad and a Nair youth named Raghavan Panikkar in May 1940 was celebrated as a secular event by avoiding all religious practices and rituals. Marriage function was done in the presence of K. Kelappan⁴¹.

Family as an institution and property rights of individuals was thoroughly reoriented in the background of colonialism and cultural changes brought by it. The spread of English education, emergence of new middle class and socio-economic reforms in the 19th century modified the family structure to accommodate the individual rights in property and education. The novels appeared in the

fad end of nineteenth century provide as the nature of debates and cultural dialogues taken place in the middle class family in the background of English education and the new legal codes introduced by the British in Malabar. Modern education was serving as a channel for internal reform in the family structure of the upper communities. It also offered new opportunities for social transformation of the lower order. The role of Christian missionaries also to be taken into consider. It is argued that the process of urbanization through modern education and absolute land holding system was an important causative factor for the decline of the joint families and consequent disappearance of *taravad* system⁴². The Christian ideology contributed to the emergence of nuclear families in Malabar. The disbandment of the Nair military and the permanent return of Nair men to their home coupled with the new ideas contributed to the end of polyandry and marriage became monogamous⁴³. With the spread of English education, especially among the Nairs, and the entry of many educated people in the government service, and professions like that of the lawyers, which ensured them relative freedom from the hierarchic social order, As Paniker pointed out, the emergence of money economy and socio economic changes followed by it considerably undermined the cohesion and unity of *taravads*⁴⁴. The government employment altered the traditional pattern of family. As the employees of the government were frequently transferred, they had to live in distant places. They then lived with their single family consisting of wife and children. These people when they returned home found it difficult to accommodate themselves in a traditional joint family and started to live separately.⁴⁵ Presidents Supplementary Memorandum to the *Malabar Marriage Commission* stated that, the introduction of modern education and employment followed by it has created a serious dent in the present customs and family practices. Before, the wife and children lived in her *taravad* and it was not the responsibility of the father to look after his children. But the shifting perception of a separate house and family bounded them in a new way.⁴⁶ After the First World War the newly emergent professional groups crusaded for change in Malabar land laws that would benefit them at the expense of old land lords⁴⁷. Now the major issues of concern in north Malabar were class, political agitation and agrarian reforms. While education and employment provided economic boosting to the lower caste families it served as a context for domestic disputes and partition suits in the case of high caste *taravads* of north Malabar. Robin Jeffrey argues that disputes and partition suits in the last three decades of the 19th century was the result of the growth of public education, especially of schools, as well as the increasing opportunities for government employment available in the latter half of the 19th century⁴⁸.

The main issue raised by the educated members in the family was the dominance of the *karanavar* in the sale and management of the property of the *taravad*. The junior members of the

family resented the fact that they had to share their hard earned money for the benefit of entire family members. When younger members demanded money for receiving English education, the illiterate Karanavars objected. There were attempts from junior members to approach the lower courts for the redemption of their grievances. Constant appeals were also made to the colonial state to provide redress. There were dissenting voices against *Marumakkatayam* system from Mappila community also. A case in point was when, E.K. Moulavi, the leader of Aikya Sangam unequivocally stated that, 'the system is forbidden in Islam and it is an accretion from Hinduism. It ruins the unity and fraternity of Islam⁴⁹.' The present form of marriage system was also subjected to serious strain. The Malabar Marriage Commission appointed by the British in 1891 conducted serious discussion on various issues such as present marriage practices, law of inheritance, property relations, status of women, the demands of *anantharavans*, western education etc. There were heated debates on the demands raised by English educated youth relating to the existing marriage practices and customary rights. As a member of Marriage Commission, Chandu Menon argued that majority of the people in Malabar including the aristocracy were not in favour of any change in the existing form of inheritance and marriage practices. C. Sankaran Nair, English educated bureaucrat from north Malabar interpreted the same issue in favour of women. He pointed out that the present form of family system provides supreme power to the *karanavar* who took all the income of the property and gives it to his own wife and children⁵⁰. The immediate result of these discussions and popular struggles was the passing of the Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 which came like a great relief to the *Marumakkatayam* followers of Malabar. It gave their males the opportunity to form their own families, and the females to become the members of their husband's family. New institutions like *Registration of Marriages* were also established⁵¹. Another offshoot of popular pressure was the Tenancy act of 1930 which directly led to the curtailing of power of the *taravad*. It declared that, the cultivating *verumpattakar* has fixity of tenure in his holding. In 1931, the Matriliny Bill, which would become law in 1933, stated that the matrilineal *taravads* was 'no longer the focus' of Nair lives, and that the 'social stream was flowing along more natural channels'. The *Madras Marumakkatayam Act* of 1933, called for the recognition of marriage, the right of free divorce, the enforcement of monogamy and crucially the right of individuals to claim their share of the *taravad* property by allowing for partitioning of *taravads*. The *Madras Nambudiri Act* of 1933 ensured the freedom of the individual in the Nambudiri community. *Mathrubumi*, 15 September 1934.

The availability of printed literature contributed to a change in the attitude towards leisure itself. Leisure in the past was defined mainly in terms of participation in group activities, gossip within the family or with friends, or sports and games in the locality. The educated middle class found in

reading an entirely different way of spending leisure time. Libraries began to appear in town and rural areas. The Queen Victoria Library found in 1901 was the first one in the Thalassery area⁵². It was followed by the *Bhasha Vayana sala* opened in 1914. Its first secretary was K. Gopalan. With the effort of some educated Muslim youth, *Muslim Yuvajana Vayana sala* was started at Chovva near Kannur. Even before founding of this libraries there was a number of small libraries in the villages but they did not live long due to various reasons. Reading rooms ranged from buildings made of brick to sheds made of mud with straw roofs. Sometimes libraries were also built in a similar fashion. The names of the reading rooms reflected the successive historical currents. In Malabar, there were 28 registered reading rooms with 2802 members in 1924, the number had raised by 1932 to fifty with 6635 members⁵³. Elite classes were entertained by the club life, another offshoot of colonial modernity. Cosmopolitan Club of Tellicherry had its origin as European Club. The club was renamed as new Cosmopolitan Club in 1932 by the urbanized local people. New organizations like Chamber of Commerce, Planter's Association etc emerged. In 1864 there formed the Malabar Club. The Tellicherry Club formed in 1865 was open to Europeans and Indians who had been to the universities in England⁵⁴. In 1884 there formed Thalassery Catholic Reading Association. The Tellicherry Town Cricket Club was formed by the cricketers of the town for the promotion of cricket. The Union Club of Tellicherry came into being in July 1900 with a membership of 33 and self improvement as their aim⁵⁵.

Conclusion

Emergence of self is the most important result of western education. It helped the low caste people to cut across the visual boundaries of religious spaces and they came into contact with modern capitalist ideas. Traditional concepts of occupation, schooling and social intercourse were challenged by the influx of new ideas of science, technology and medicine. Technological innovation like printing press played an important role in the democratization of knowledge and in the easy availability of printed books in any language familiar to the common people. Introduction of western education and occupational mobility followed by it has created changes in the caste and communal equations in the region. Now the identity of an individual is determined not by his *jati* but his education credentials and occupation. Growing demand for institutional change by educated class and enactment of laws by the government led to the disintegration of matrilineal *taravads* in Malabar. Marriage practices, food habits, dressing pattern, mode of interaction, social obligations and way of spending leisure time, all were subjected to crucial changes under colonial modernity and education.

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