

KERALA SOCIETY: AN APPRAISAL OF THE EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC SPHERE

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Abstract.

The study has been undertaken to decipher how the public sphere of Kerala is undergoing gradual change and becoming more surpassing to reformatory changes. It carries a fundamental portrayal of how colonial vulnerabilities often pose in run back situation of social proceedings.

A society where we can find unity and togetherness in higher level compared to other states in India, Kerala land owes its present historical stage through colossal changes and adaptations. This enquiry is to pin down the evolutionary stages of the public sphere in Kerala. The Habermasian proposition of public sphere theory is put into the time gone by and time in being. Maintaining the role of a prominent spice trading center, Kerala faced colonial encounters.

Portuguese brought new agricultural products such as cashew nut, tobacco, custard apple, guava pineapple and papaya to Kerala. These improved the general food diet of people. Along with these, Portuguese promoted scientific cultivation of crops in a large scale as a part of the market oriented capitalist trade of Kerala spices like pepper and ginger in European markets. With that crop dependent evolution, Kerala was on the journey to a more organized crop settlement system. The precedents of crop expansion in the society existed as land settlements. The mixed environmental system enables the readings of cultural and social life system across the mainland.

Family acts as the primary socialization tool of an individual. The family system is more attached to Kerala history and we can see the colonial impact in the economic progress of the family system as a whole. The common man used the daily wages to maintain the life of his family together. The political and social condition of Kerala has adaptations as per the internal machinery of families. The denial of assets of father to his son and progressing it through women lineage with the help of maruamakkathayam system created conflicts in Nair and Ezhava communities.¹ The colonial patriarchal system thoroughly clutched the senior most male member as the responsible agent to act upon financial affairs.

The shift from a global citizen to an inclusive tendency is visible in the society. A simple example is that it was common to have 6 or 8 children for Kerala families before and nowadays especially the middle class adopted this to one or two thus tending to nuclear family. The volume of families is directly proportional to fertility choices. The high level modern capital expense and other hectic professionalism have made the family volume light. The bonding theory got shifted to a more opportunistic apparatus seeking the welfare of one's own family only. Approach towards family system has switched to liberal terms going through ramification of traditional values. A semi western reverence among the present generation in their life can be visible thoroughly.

The religious harmony in the Kerala society endows its highest rate of political socialization process. In Kerala, we can see sharing of mutual love between Christians, Hindu, and Muslims as a part of their co-existence. The political arena of multi ethno existence is the order of time and in the latest disastrous time of flood, it was more evident that people forgot all the divisions among them and all that left was humanity. The temples and Christian churches organized Iftar party for Muslim people as a symbol of communal harmony.² A place which lives in religious harmony, conceives humanity more not separatism. Each and everyone's identity in a multi-cultural and multi-religious society does not point that they should not be affectionate to other people.

The cognitive modifications in political sphere then enters into the enquiry of combined Brahmin settlements which records attribute to be the result of minor stage migration in due process of time far extent from the regions of south India especially from Karnataka. The paddy capital structure gains momentum in the socio political and cultural conditions with its beginning at a period anterior to the close of 8th Century. The paddy fields generated a socio economic integrative tendency of human settlements.

We can see a paradigm shift in agrarian expansion across north and south territory in Kerala history. The south land was more under cultivation with respect to the north land and the Kerala soil was mixed with constructs of dry, wet and proliferation of mineral soil. By the half of 19th Century, cultivation level increased in south Malabar area and North Malabar was still mostly of free land. This led to agrarian expansion over north. Later, these land based settlement system caused severe tensions among peasants since the janmi system at its worst form. It was at this time, the abolition of slavery proclaimed by English East India Company.³

The tarawad system which stood as an indivisible landowning mechanism affected by the abolition of slavery. The slaves were conceived as to be the asset of respective tarawad. Even though slavery was abolished, the slaves had to do the same work as they were doing before.

The coefficient of democracy that we see today across the world is visible enough that we can cross check an array of questioning and protest. Previously, all the income of the tharawad should be finally landed in the hands of elder male member or tharawad karanavar, then it changed. The educated younger ones spread it to their children and family. This was a shift in the fundamental consciousness of people to orient towards the demand of basic rights. The communist party organized people to stand against the evils and injustice.

The analysis gives an array of categories of public and private sphere, which are merged with the social structure of tendencies based on gender. The position sphere was conceived as a platform of positioning, i.e. as a special kind of interaction, living, and legitimacy of combined or individual identity. It is necessary for the focusing to point that a particular dialogue, within experimenting research and in community, concretizing the interpretation of bio life and specific practices. Consolidated in this way dialogue is portrayed with the exclusion of women from public domain, and, for the being, also reverse process, that employs upliftment. In the body, elements that could influence the expression of life were presented as demographic depiction of the mob, religious embargo and social procedures within specific areas of actions. Population vital statistics which can be found in the various platforms such as habitat structuralism, socio-ambience and bio-politics, affects fathomable interpretations. Conditional elements were produced to the decipherment of human reproductive functions, and the woman in the dissolution had a categorical role in society. An analysis of eviction in the chamber of religion may be contemplated on binaries— centralized and social. The concept public space is endowed with gender being understood as a mode of capital decipherment. It is a useful tool for empathizing newfangled gender relations in Kerala. Studying Foucault, we can draw attention into the exercising of balancing gender power.

Foucault's study of power prioritizes micro level power relativity. Foucault claims that, since modern potential works in a nerve fashion throughout the ambience surrounded, it is best cinched in its solid and local accouterments and in the daily practices which prolong and recreate efficacy relations. This accentuates on the daily methods through which power relations are re-enhanced has focalized with the feminist estimate of figure outing the politics of personal consanguinity and transmuting gendered power relations at the confidential lion's share rolls of experience in the setting up of marriage and motherhood in the private relations in cross the sexes and in the daily observance and procedures that supervise female conditioning to themselves and their bodies. Power relation in a society is an internal deciphering treaty that discovers its canons with formulating societal communes in an array of democratic exercise. Thus, exercising power relations in egalitarian methodology bring in gender equality structured over state functioning.

Body and sexuality is identifies as a societies fundamental focal point to exert power and gain control. Sometimes patriarchy uses these binary standards to exert over feminine existence. Every society has its historical prudence and body relations as per exploitative and traditional practices to culminate in the future or ongoing administrative machinery. The evolution of Kerala's Public domain emphasizes on the body as perfectly structured and formed by historically variable regimes of gender power that has made Foucault's perception of post conditional theory the most attractive to feminist social and political theorists in its progression. The notion of how to adapt of the body without shortening its corporeal to a fixed earthly substance has been one of the key issues for feminist concern. At a paramount level, a conceit of the body is central to the social outlook of the despotism of women because biological aberrations at intervals the sexes are the bottom line that has served to solarize and constitute gender disparity.

The voice of repression is absent in a patriarchal society. The colonial hegemony was ensured with the ongoing aristocracy prevailed in the land. The traditional Nair tarawad underwent changes due to the spread of education. The younger generation among them received scholarship on rights and its scatteration.

The steadiness between the proletariat and the middle class is still with larger difference. As the agrarian sector is facing serious threat, the proletariat that we point in our general mandate has been constantly diminishing for the time being. As its volume decreases, that of the middle class grows. Sub-altern notations cannot be separated from Kerala renaissance and reform movements emerged from the lower strata.

The fundamental need for a public sphere is uninterrupted communication which generates critical public domain to stand upright. The library movement was the stage which revamped the accumulation of different dimensions of thought and prevailing discussion forums. P. N. Panicker was the motivator behind the library connection in Kerala. Through the setup of Kerala Grandhasala Sangham by him in 1945 with remote libraries in rural areas. He initiated the knowledge revolution in Kerala. Along with the libraries, there were 'clubs' for citizen to engage in community activities. The agrarian people after their work came together and discussed about their society, the variations in crop outcome, their anxieties and hopes. The knowledge through letters will be transformed to the citizen whenever there forms a platform for healthy interpretations.

The relative marketization or western level modernization is somewhat colonial refreshers for us. The level to level simple crop exchange system in local settlements had been provided itself the way to competitive market analogy. The arrival of modernity was championed with concentrated check on rights and individual autonomy. The colonial actors in a way pretended to be the savior of depressed people who had been under the boots of caste system. Through western education, "backward communities" which have been considered by the system at that time were able to conquer modern ideas. The establishment of a political entity requires concrete exchange of ideas relating to the people inhabiting there.

The empirical changes in the final levels of 19th century and the beginning decades of 20th century can be traced from the literature at that time. When the society progressed on, national movements triggered and cultural organizations among the society added a democratic sense of togetherness and integrity to fight back a common invader. The reformers aimed at the emancipation of society along with the freedom struggle. The brutal janmi system forced even the pregnant ladies to work in the paddy field. The life was slave like. Under the dry climate peasants were forced to work for long hours. The idea of leisure was completely denied to them. Efficiency is needed in a production system and active leisure involvement will improve productivity by maintaining the health of the workers.

Malayalam poets undertook a historic venture to root back the evils by making their pen as sword. Poems filled with pride and rights were in a rush to society with ambient fire to thrash of injustice. Thus the ideology of democracy coincides with literature by cognicising justice which is enrolled in texts so as to apply practically. The exclusion of separatist thoughts as a part of political correctness indulged by freedom movement helped in bring the sense of co-existence among people. In merging up with Chanakya's philosophy

of governance as like the happiness of the people is of utmost importance, not the happiness of the ruler was visible in the minds of the people, proving they used public space as its success of demanding their rights.

The social banners of etiquette began to appear by 19th century placing individual in a position where he can identify the behavior which society is expecting from him. The thought of political conduct was once confined to the elite class and it changed by giving space to the common sector.

Sree Narayana Guru gave strong points against the collaboration of colonial market duality and caste exploitation. He substituted domestic infringements of exclusion with new humanity. The journey from an exile to an identity land serves its dimensions from reforms and renaissance. Identity politics becomes crucial in nowadays because the Dalit rights in question. On 28th May, the 23 year old Kevin Joseph's dead body was found from a canal in kottayam and post-mortem conducted revealed that he was the victim of honor killing. The incident slaps in the face of literate society of Kerala. Caste discriminations, the great reformists like Sree Narayana Guru, Ayyankali, Pandit Karupan etc. which tried to alleviate from the society is gaining back its momentum. The question of a politically justiciable system places at the forefinger. Mindset of exclusion can't work according to the democratic ideals. The denial of displaying artist Asanthan's dead body in Durbar Hall in Kochi also reveals the roots of the dirty caste system are still there in the minds of people. In a land where discrimination on the basis of by law prohibits any discrimination on the grounds of caste, colour, race, sex etc. The fundamentalist separatism leads to arrogance which in turn alter the egalitarian existence of the land.

The women participation in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme owes its high rate in Kerala. The women had taken up the role of maintaining block of a family in Kerala common level families apart from the marginalized participation. A mindset of family stability is vested with Kerala women.

The progress of Kerala society only up to 2001 can be seen from the report provided by NIRP, Hyderabad is given below.¹

1

Sl.No.	Indicator	Kerala	All India
1	Population (Millions) - Rural – 2001	23.57	741.0
2	Urbanization (%) – 2001	26.0	27.8
3	Population Decadal Growth Rate (%) 1991-2001	9.42	21.34
4	Per Capita NDP (Rs.) - 2004-05	13321	22650
5	Share of GDP in Agriculture (%) - 2004-05	30.2	16.5

¹Prepared by National Institute Rural Development (NIRP), Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. Of India, 2009-10

6	Growth Rate of GDP from Agriculture (%) (1993-94 to 2003-04)	-1.05	9.92
7	Literacy (%) Rural – 2001	90.05	59.21
8	Female literacy Rate (%)– Rural -2001	86.79	46.58
9	Sex Ratio – 2001 (Females per 1000 Males)	1058	933
10	Infant Mortality Rate – Rural – 2003 (per 1000 births)	12	66
11	Infant Mortality Rate –total (Rural &Urban)(per thousand births)	14	58
12	Expectation of Life at birth (Years) - 2001-06 - Male	71.67	63.87
13	Expectation of Life at birth (Years) - 2001-06 - Female	75	66.91
14	Human Development Index – Rural- 1991	0.576	0.340

Inferences

- a) Decadal population growth is much lower in the State than all India average.
- b) Rural literacy rate both for male and female is much higher than all India level.
- c) Sex ratio is in favor of female, a unique feature.
- d) Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) both for female and male is abysmally low in the State than all India average.
- e) Human development Index in rural Kerala is quite high.

The gender balance is significant in Kerala as the women outnumber men compared to the high number of men in other states. The literacy rate especially of women is high in Kerala compared to other states. The Constitution gives importance to rights and opportunities in 3 dimensions: (i) equal rights and opportunities for both men and women in the social sphere; (ii) equal rights and opportunities for both men and women in the economic sphere; and (iii) equal rights and opportunities for both men and women in the political spheres. The first dimension, the social sphere, covers equal access to health, education, training and skills development. The economic sphere focuses on women's rights to economic assets, resources, and opportunities and discussion in the political sphere will focus on the participation and voice of women in political and community matters.

Finally, the hope is on the new humanism shown during flood times. The new epic through common people as we have seen in fisherman of Kerala can illuminate the actions of our great reformists. Along with this, the public sphere will be more democratized by ensuring scientific temper and integrity. The walk of history continues. The democratic ideals and principles need to be sustained through the art of exchange and social this study let in the sequences of evolutionary stages of Kerala political historical discourse and hope for a principled ambience of existence based on humanity.

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