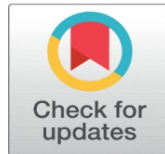
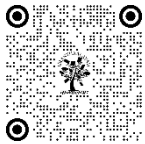


FROM SUBJUGATION TO LIBERATION: THE PLIGHT OF NAMBUDIRI WOMEN AND THE REFORM MOVEMENTS IN KERALA

Sunitha Santhan¹

¹Assistant Professor of History, Alphonsa College, Pala, Kottayam, Kerala, India



DOI

10.29121/shodhkosh.v3.i2.2022.4194

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Copyright: © 2024 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#).

With the license CC-BY, authors retain the copyright, allowing anyone to download, reuse, re-print, modify, distribute, and/or copy their contribution. The work must be properly attributed to its author.

ABSTRACT

The Namboothiri community, once the dominant Brahmin caste of Kerala, upheld a rigid patriarchal structure that severely restricted the rights and freedoms of its women. Namboothiri women, particularly the Antharjanams (women confined within the household), endured extreme social limitations, including seclusion, lack of education, and rigid marital norms. Their lives were dictated by oppressive customs, such as ill-fated marriages, widowhood asceticism, and social taboos that denied them personal agency. However, by the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Kerala witnessed significant reform movements aimed at dismantling these oppressive structures. Organizations like the Yogakshema Sabha, along with the efforts of progressive leaders and writers, played a crucial role in advocating for women's education, social mobility, and legal rights. This article explores the transformation of Namboothiri women from a state of subjugation to active participation in societal change. It highlights key reform initiatives, the resistance faced, and the eventual impact on gender dynamics within the community.

Keywords: Edward Soja, Third Space Theory, William Shakespeare, as You Like it, Forest of Arden, Spatial Dynamics, Identity Transformation, Social Relations, Liminality, Hybridity



1. INTRODUCTION

The Namboodiri community constitutes the traditional Brahmin caste of Kerala, renowned for its profound association with Vedic rituals, temple worship, and Sanskrit scholarship. Historically, they occupied the highest position in Kerala's social hierarchy, exerting significant influence over religious, cultural, and land administration affairs. The Namboodiris were migrants to Kerala, with varying scholarly perspectives regarding the origins of their migration. Their dominance in the region was facilitated by their expertise in the Vedas and the principles of *Varṇāśrama Dharma*, which enabled them to consolidate their authority.ⁱ This supremacy was further legitimized through texts such as *Keralolpatti* and *Kerala Mahatmyam*, which attribute the donation of Kerala's land to Brahmins by sage Parashurama.

The Namboodiris maintained their distinct identity through rigid adherence to the notions of purity and pollution, which governed their social practices. Their unique customs differentiated them from other Brahmin communities in India, particularly in terms of their law of inheritance, dietary habits, attire, and hairstyle.ⁱⁱ The Namboodiris followed a patrilineal system of inheritance, known as *Makkattayam*, in contrast to the matrilineal system *Marumakkattayam* followed by the *Kshatriyas*, *Ambalavasis*, and *Nairs*. The *Marumakkattayam* system, based on inheritance through the maternal line, signified succession through a woman's nephew (sister's son). These two distinct systems of inheritance shaped the social and familial structures of pre-modern Kerala.

Namboodiri women, referred to as Antharjanams (meaning "those who live inside"), traditionally led lives of extreme seclusion, governed by rigid social customs. They were confined to the interiors of their illams (ancestral homes) and had minimal interaction with the outside world. Their education was largely limited to religious scriptures and domestic skills, and their daily activities were regulated by strict rituals and patriarchal norms. Although Brahmin women in Kerala were regarded as socially superior to women of other castes, they were not exempt from oppressive customs and societal taboos. Their thoughts, actions, and expressions were heavily regulated, leaving them without any individual opinions, beliefs, or autonomy beyond what was dictated by male authority figures. Consequently, the life of a Namboodiri woman in traditional Kerala was marked by oppression and subjugation, rendering her existence comparable to that of an enslaved individual within the patriarchal social order.

The rigid patriarchal system that governed Namboodiri society deprived women of freedom both within the household and in the public sphere. Namboodiri women were regarded as inferior to men, with no inheritance rights within their families, except among the Nayar community, which followed a matrilineal system. Early marriage was a common practice, and dowry, once given, became the property of the husband. Within their *illams* (ancestral homes), women lived under severe restrictions imposed by male family members, who exercised absolute control over their lives. As a result, Namboodiri women experienced a status comparable to that of enslaved individuals, with their existence defined solely by their roles as wives and mothers.

Female education was largely considered a taboo, and women were rarely allowed to pursue formal learning or employment. The economic disempowerment of Namboodiri women was further reinforced by their lack of property rights, which were exclusively reserved for male heirs. Within the Brahmin social system, women were not regarded as individuals with agency but were instead seen as insignificant and subordinate beings. This gender discrimination was evident in various life-cycle ceremonies, where male children were accorded greater privileges than female children. The preference for male offspring was deeply entrenched in Brahminical society, leading to the practice of rituals such as *Pumsavana*, which aimed to ensure the birth of a son.

The birth of a girl child was often met with disappointment, as she was raised under the prevailing ideology of female inferiority. Educational opportunities for girls were minimal, typically restricted to basic reading, writing, and arithmetic, whereas boys underwent extensive learning and scholarly training. Through these practices, girls were socialized into accepting their subordinate position, a condition reinforced by religious and cultural rituals designed to uphold patriarchal norms. The combined effects of social isolation, economic dependency, and gender-based discrimination perpetuated the marginalization of Namboodiri women, limiting their opportunities for education, personal growth, and social participation.

2. NAMBOOTHIRI WOMAN AND SOCIAL TABOOS

The status of Namboodiri women in pre-colonial and colonial Kerala was marked by severe social restrictions and patriarchal oppression. According to traditional beliefs, the sage Parasurama is said to have mandated that Namboodiri women carry umbrellas when venturing outside to prevent men from seeing them. These women were required to cover themselves entirely with a white cloth known as *mundu*, extending from the neck to the feet. Additionally, they were prohibited from wearing gold ornaments. During their rare public appearances, they were always accompanied by a Nayar woman and shielded their faces with an acadjan umbrella to avoid public gaze. Chastity was a fundamental expectation for Namboodiri women, even within a polygamous household structure, while their male counterparts were permitted to have multiple wives. Namboodiri men, along with those from the Kshatriya and other upper castes, frequently practiced polygamy by cohabiting with Nayar women, thereby creating a hierarchy where only the chief wife held a legitimate status, while others were considered concubines. The children of concubines were denied legitimacy, further reinforcing gender and caste-based inequalities.

Child marriage was a deeply entrenched social practice, with girls being married off as early as five or seven years of age, while boys married at ten years or older. Often, young girls, still in early childhood, were compelled to conceive at a tender age, without fully understanding the concept of marriage. Due to significant age gaps between spouses, young brides frequently became widows at an early age. As widow remarriage was strictly prohibited, these women were forced to live in perpetual mourning, deprived of social participation and personal autonomy. Widows were subjected to extreme austerity, including a shaved head, plain white clothing, cold water baths, and the prohibition of betel leaf consumption, jewelry, and festive gatherings. They were regarded as inauspicious figures and were often ostracized from the community.

One of the most notorious institutions affecting Namboodiri women was *Smarthavicharam*, a trial for adultery that subjected accused women to extreme forms of social and legal persecution. Women accused of adultery were first tried before a caste tribunal composed of Brahmin elders, known as *Smarthans*, with the approval of the Maharaja. Historical records indicate that one such trial took place in 1627 A.D., with another well-documented case occurring in 1905 at Peringara Namboothiri Illam in Kottayam. The entire cost of the trial was borne by the family of the accused woman, further exacerbating their economic burden. The primary punishment for a convicted woman was excommunication, rendering her a social outcast. She was no longer considered a person but an object of disgrace. Excommunicated women were often left with no choice but to seek refuge among lower-caste communities, with some being forcibly married to Mappilas or Ezhava community. In certain cases, if no one agreed to marry them, these women were enslaved under the patronage of local rulers.

The dowry system was another oppressive social custom that further diminished the agency of Namboodiri women. Dowry amounts were exceptionally high, making marriage accessible only to the wealthiest *illams*. William Logan, in his historical accounts, noted that Namboodiris had to be wealthy to afford their daughters' marriages, as each marriage required an exorbitant dowry. The prevalence of polygamy meant that young girls were often married to elderly Brahmins, compounding their vulnerability. Ms. Lindberg, Director of the Swedish South Asian Studies Network at Lund University, documented 187 marriages between 1935 and 1939, analyzing the dowry system in Travancore. The combined impact of child marriage, widowhood, social ostracization, dowry practices, and *Smarthavicharam* trials rendered Namboodiri women among the most oppressed and marginalized groups in pre-modern Kerala society.

3. SOCIAL LIMITATIONS ON NAMBOOTHIRI WOMEN AT PUBERTY

In traditional Nambudiri society, the attainment of puberty (referred to as *ritumati*) marked a significant transition in a girl's life, often leading to increased restrictions. Upon reaching this stage, a Nambudiri girl was subjected to rigorous social limitations, which curtailed even the limited freedoms she previously enjoyed. She was prohibited from participating in festivals, attending weddings, visiting temples, or even accessing the household pond. Additionally, she was forbidden from interacting with male members of the family.

The onset of menstruation also brought about significant changes in the daily rituals of Nambudiri girls. From this stage onward, they were required to perform *Nedikkal*, make offerings, and undertake *vratas* (vows) to ensure a prolonged and prosperous married life. Devaki Nilayangode observes that the primary aspirations of Nambudiri women centered around securing sufficient food, clothing, and marital bliss. Unlike boys, whose transition into adulthood was ceremoniously marked through the Upanayana (sacred thread ceremony), the coming of age of Nambudiri girls was not formally celebrated. Texts such as the *Grhyasutras* and *Smritis* remain silent on rituals associated with a Brahmin girl's first menstruation.ⁱⁱⁱ However, within Nambudiri households, puberty was observed through elaborate ceremonies, albeit without the recitation of Vedic mantras—consistent with earlier rites performed for female children, such as *Jatakarma*.

While the Upanayana and subsequent Vedic education were intended to prepare boys for their future roles as patrilineal heads, puberty rituals for girls functioned primarily as a preparatory stage for marriage. Furthermore, they were conditioned to perceive themselves as symbols of household prosperity, thus reaffirming the deeply entrenched gender hierarchies within Nambudiri society.

4. MARITAL BONDS AND SOCIAL LIMITATIONS OF NAMBOOTHIRI WOMEN

The experiences of a young girl within her natal home reinforced the notion that her primary path to social recognition lay in attaining the status of a wife. Consequently, she undertook various *vratas* (penances) aimed at ensuring a prolonged and harmonious marital life. Rituals such as *vratas* provided women with a space to express their agency within the constraints of the existing social order. According to Brahmanical texts, *vratas* are categorized into three types: *nitya* (obligatory rites), *naimittika* (occasional rites), and *kāmya* (optional votive rites). While *nitya* and *naimittika* rites are considered obligatory and performed without personal desire, *kāmya vratas* are undertaken voluntarily. Women, who are the primary practitioners of these votive rites, did not view them as a means to attain *moksha* (liberation) but rather as an integral part of *Stridharma* (the prescribed duties of women).^{iv}

Within Brahmanical patriarchy, a woman was recognized as an individual only when incorporated into her husband's identity. As a wife, she was deemed auspicious; however, in the absence of a husband, she held no independent existence. The primary function of a wife was procreation, as she served as the medium through which a man could fulfill his religious and social obligations, particularly the discharge of ancestral debts through the birth of a son.^v In this

framework, a Nambudiri woman was valued primarily for her role in reproduction, the perpetuation of the family lineage, participation in *yāgas* (sacrificial rituals), and the performance of domestic duties.

The lived realities of Nambudiri women have been poignantly articulated by Devaki Antarjanam in her speech at the Sreemoolam Assembly on July 26, 1937. She remarked that “most Antarjanams remain behind the purdah. Though they have eyes, they are denied the sight of beauty. Though they have legs, their mobility is restricted. Their lives are akin to those of prisoners.” She further emphasized the lifelong suffering of these women, stating, “Antarjanams are born crying. They live in tears, and they die crying.” Such accounts underscore the severe constraints imposed upon Nambudiri women, rendering their lives confined and regulated by patriarchal norms.

5. WIDOWHOOD AND ASCETICISM: THE FATE OF NAMBOOTHIRI WOMEN

The plight of Nambudiri women, particularly widows, has been aptly described as that of a “widow ascetic.” Widowhood among the Nambudiris was characterized by extreme social and personal deprivation. Widows were perceived as inauspicious and even dangerous, reinforcing their marginalization within the community. Uma Chakravarti argues that widowhood among upper-caste women represented a “state of social death,” as they were excluded from reproductive and sexual roles. Once a woman ceased to be a wife, she lost all recognition as an individual and held no status either as a daughter or a daughter-in-law. She occupied a liminal space—physically alive yet socially non-existent. A widow was often viewed as an outsider within her marital home while also being denied full reintegration into her natal family, leaving her in a precarious social position.^{vi} Among Nambudiri women, widowhood was synonymous with enforced celibacy, further compounding their oppression.

The secondary status of Nambudiri women in society was reinforced through the misinterpretation of Hindu religious principles. Their primary roles were restricted to those of daughter, wife, and mother, with their existence being defined entirely in relation to men. Upon the death of their husbands, Nambudiri women lost their social standing and faced numerous disabilities. Many Nambudiri women viewed their condition as one of extreme suffering, often lamenting that being born a Nambudiri woman was the worst fate imaginable. Some even prayed that no one should ever have to endure such an existence. The intensification of their oppression, coupled with the declining Nambudiri population, eventually posed a significant challenge to the survival of the community.

6. PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENTS WITHIN THE NAMBOOTHIRI COMMUNITY

The transformation of women has been subject to varied interpretations by scholars. It has been argued that discussions and practices concerning women's freedom were an integral yet subordinate part of the male-dominated reform movement. Partha Chatterjee posits that the modernization of women commenced in the first half of the 19th century through the penetration of Western ideas.^{vii} However, with the rise of nationalism, there was a noticeable regression in the women's emancipation movement. The nationalist discourse sought to glorify India's past, thereby reinforcing traditional values, which partially explains the initial reluctance of Namboodiri reformers to address women's issues in the early 20th century.

The reformist perception of women's emancipation among the Namboodiris suggests that male reformers viewed the transformation of women as their responsibility rather than recognizing women as active agents of change. Women were perceived as the objects of reform rather than its participants. This objectification of Namboodiri women is evident in the literary and social narratives of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The awakening within the Namboodiri community led to conscious efforts to improve the conditions of Namboodiri women. This concern is reflected in reformist policies, speeches, and writings of the time. One of the defining characteristics of the reform movement was the enthusiasm exhibited by male reformers in their attempts to rescue women from their subjugated conditions. In reformist discourse, the emancipation of the Namboodiri community was closely tied to the emancipation of its women.^{viii}

Awareness of women's grievances and efforts to redefine the identity of Namboodiri women in the early 20th century led to dynamic and impassioned discussions. The Namboodiri Female Education Commission Report of 1927 serves as a significant example of the internal discourse on the ‘women question’ within the community. Although reform efforts varied in intensity, they contributed to the continuity of the movement. The reformist debates concerning Namboodiri women encompassed diverse themes, including the transformation of Antharjanams into autonomous individuals, the necessity of women's associations (Samajams), and the broader concept of modernity.

7. YOGAKSHEMA SABHA AND THE UPLIFTMENT OF NAMBOOTHIRI WOMEN

In February-March 1908, on the occasion of Maha Shivaratri, a revolutionary group of Namboothiris convened at Cherumukku Vaidikan's Illam, situated on the banks of the Periyar River. This gathering, presided over by Desamangalam Valiya Sankaran Nambudiripad, marked the inception of the Namboothiri Yogakshema Mahaasabha, later known as the Yogakshema Sabha.^{ix} The movement was led by prominent figures such as Kurur Unni Nambudiripad, Chittoor Narayanan Namboothirippad, and V.T. Bhattathiripad. The primary objective of this reformist group was to eliminate superstitions and obsolete customs that they deemed incompatible with the evolving socio-cultural landscape shaped by Western education and upward mobility.

V.T. Bhattathiripad the pioneer of Yogakshema Sabha, was a distinguished social critic, playwright, and one of the foremost advocates of social reform in Kerala, particularly within the Namboothiri community. His radical approach sought not only the transformation of his own community but also broader societal change. He actively promoted widow remarriage among Brahmins and sought to reform conservative Namboothiri practices.^x He was instrumental in conducting the first inter-caste marriage within the Brahmin society, even arranging for his own sister's marriage to a Nair. Furthermore, he played a pivotal role in the progressive theatre movement in Kerala, at a time when stage performances were utilized as a medium for social reform and political activism.

The Malayalam play "Adukkalayil Ninnun Arangathekku" (From Kitchen to the Stage), authored by V.T. Bhattathiripad, was staged during the annual conferences of the Yogakshema Sabha.^{xi} This theatrical production strongly advocated for the liberation of Namboothiri women, who had been subjugated by superstitions and orthodoxy for centuries. The impact of the play was profound, inspiring many Namboothiri women to break free from domestic confinement and actively participate in the nationalist movement. The staging of "Adukkalayil Ninnun Arangathekku" at Edakkunni in December 1929 was a turning point in the success of the reform movement and solidified Bhattathiripad's prominence as a reformist leader.

Bhattathiripad vehemently criticized the mistreatment of young Namboothiri women, advocating for their rights and opportunities. He encouraged widow remarriage and inter-caste unions while urging Namboothiri youth to marry within their own caste to prevent spinsterhood within the community. His calls for women to step out of the kitchen and reject restrictive customs, symbolized by discarding their customary umbrellas, were emblematic of the broader reformist agenda. His focus on the plight of 'Antharjanams' reflected the deep concerns of the reform movement regarding gender equality and social justice within the Namboothiri community.

The Namboothiri youth of Yogakshema Sabha advocated for the implementation of the Malayala Brahman Regulation.^{xii} Their persistent efforts resulted in the passage of the Travancore Malayala Brahman Regulation in 1930 and the Madras Namboothiri Act in 1933, effectively bringing an end to polygamy and extramarital relationships with Nair women. The reform movement also addressed issues such as individual property rights, polygamy, the opposition to marriages between elderly men and young girls, and the advocacy for marital choice. A significant milestone in the history of the Namboothiri community occurred on 13th September 1934, with the remarriage of a widow, Uma Antarjanam, to M.R. Bhattathiripad at Rasikasadanam, V.T. Bhattathiripad's residence in Tritala.

8. NAMBOOTHIRI WOMEN AS CATALYSTS OF COMMUNITY REFORM

The participation of Namboothiri women in the reformist activities of the Yogakshema Sabha marked a significant shift in their traditional roles, as they actively engaged in the process of social transformation. Under the leadership of Parvathy Nenminimangalam, Parvathy Nilayangod, Parvathy Manazhi, Arya Pallam, Neeli Mangalass, and Lalithambika Antharjanam, issues such as female education, dress reform, monogamy, widow remarriage, intracaste marriage, and freedom of movement became central topics of discourse within Namboothiri reformist circles.^{xiii} Women began to organize their own associations (Samajams) to address their grievances and advocate for their rights.

A significant milestone in this movement was the decision to admit Namboothiri girls to the Namboothiri Vidyalaya at Edakkunni in 1929. Parvathy Manazhi played a pioneering role in this initiative by attending the Edakkunni session without the traditional ghosha (veil), thereby inaugurating the movement to abandon restrictive customs and rituals. She further demonstrated her commitment by participating in an inter-dining event alongside women reformers from other communities, such as Parvathy Ayyappan. Throughout the 1930s, Namboothiri women convened meetings and organized processions to critically examine their conditions and propose solutions.^{xiv}

One of the key moments in this reformist movement was the meeting held at the residence of Parvathy Nenminimangalam in 1930, which resulted in a resolution signed by twelve women. This resolution was later presented at the youth wing meeting of the Yogakshema Sabha in Guruvayur in 1931. It called for reforms in dress, changes in traditional earrings, the wearing of blouses, and the withdrawal of the marakkuda (cadyan umbrella), all of which were perceived as necessary steps toward recognizing Namboodiri women as autonomous individuals.

By the 1930s, the adoption of new attire, such as the sari, became increasingly prevalent among Namboodiri women, aligning their dress with that of women from other caste communities. Parvathy Nenminimangalam emerged as a prominent leader, becoming the first female president of the Youth Wing during the Taliparamba session.^{xv} The growing influence of women in the reform movement was further underscored by their active participation in the Sabha's jubilee celebrations at Karalmanna, where over one hundred women were in attendance. Recognition of their efforts extended to appointments in governmental roles; Parvathy Nenminimangalam was nominated as a select committee member for the Cochin Namboodiri Bill, while Arya Pallam was elected to the Malabar District Board. Similarly, Kainikkara Devaki was elected as a member of the Srimulam Assembly, signifying the increasing political engagement of Namboodiri women.

During the 1930s, Antharjana Samajams were established in various locations, including Kidangur, Guruvayur, and Changanassery.^{xvi} Although these associations lacked an all-Kerala perspective, their core concerns were shared across different regions. The Kidangur Antharjana Samajam passed a radical resolution demanding that Namboodiri women be granted equal opportunities in government employment and higher education, thereby voicing dissent against existing social norms. The intensification of radical reformism within the broader Namboodiri reformist movement in the 1930s brought greater attention to the question of women's rights. While some scholars argue that Namboodiri women were treated primarily as objects of reform rather than as active agents, a closer examination of this period suggests that militant nationalists exhibited a strong commitment to advancing women's rights within the community.

The reformers implemented various initiatives, such as the boycott of the ghosha, the abandonment of traditional symbols and rituals, and the promotion of widow remarriage, all of which facilitated the transition of Namboodiri women into the public sphere. By the 1940s, women, equipped with a newfound sense of agency and awareness, began to actively participate in labor markets and pursue financial independence. The Antharjana Samajams encouraged women to engage in employment as a means of securing personal freedom. This evolving perspective also manifested in their increasing involvement in politics and social struggles, including the Paliyam Satyagraha.

A significant factor contributing to this transformation was the rising dowry system within the community, which placed economic pressure on families and led to increased marriages with Embranthiri Brahmins from North Canara. In response, Namboodiri women organized resistance against such exploitative practices through their associations. V.T. Bhattathiripad, addressing the Pazhoor session, emphasized that the primary responsibility of Namboodiri men was to improve the lives of Antharjanams and utilize employee training centers to support their empowerment.^{xvii} A landmark moment in this discourse was the resolution introduced by Arya Pallam, known as Anthapura Mardananeshanam (the eradication of domestic oppression), which symbolized the declaration of independence by Namboodiri women. The Pazhoor meeting also explored the potential for strikes and other forms of activism to advance the status of Antharjanams.

By the 1940s, Namboodiri women had developed a strong consciousness of their rights and aspirations. The activities of the Antharjana Samajams reflected this transformation, as women increasingly asserted their need for autonomy and an independent livelihood. This period marked a turning point in the Namboodiri reform movement, as women transitioned from being mere subjects of reform to becoming its principal agents.

9. CONCLUSION

The journey of Nambudiri women from subjugation to liberation reflects a broader struggle against deeply entrenched patriarchal structures and rigid societal norms. For centuries, Nambudiri women endured severe restrictions, with their identities confined to domestic roles dictated by Brahmanical patriarchy. The emergence of reform movements, spearheaded by organizations like the Yogakshema Sabha and visionary leaders such as V.T. Bhattathiripad, challenged these oppressive traditions. Through legislative measures, widow remarriage, inter-caste marriages, and increased access to education, these reformers sought to redefine the status of Nambudiri women within both their community and Kerala society at large. Despite resistance from conservative factions, the reformist discourse led to significant socio-cultural transformations. Plays like *Adukkalayil Ninnun Arangathekku* became catalysts for change, inspiring women to step beyond the confines of their homes and actively engage in the nationalist and social reform movements. The gradual

shift in perceptions regarding marriage, property rights, and education paved the way for the empowerment of Nambudiri women.

However, the struggle for gender equality within the community did not end with these reforms. While considerable progress has been made, the historical subjugation of Nambudiri women serves as a reminder of the resilience required to dismantle systemic inequalities. The legacy of these reform movements continues to influence contemporary discussions on gender justice and social transformation, underscoring the importance of sustained efforts toward an inclusive and equitable society.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

END NOTES

- Sahadevan. M., *From Brahmanism to Liberalism: Ideologies Attitudinal Change Modernity in Kerala*, Anoja Saha, Palakkad, 2008, p. 24.
- V. Rajeev, *āryādhinivēśavum nampūtirisamskāravum*, Sahitya pravarthaka Cooperative society, Kottayam, 2015, p. 39-40.
- Jaya Tyagi, *Engendering the Early Household: Brahmanical Precepts in the Early Grhyasutras Middle of the First Millennium B.C.E*, p. 196.
- Mary McGee, *Desired Fruits: Motive and Intention in the Votive Rites of Hindu Women*, in, Julia Leslie, ed., *Roles and Rituals for Hindu Women*, Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi, 1992, p. 88
- Uma Chakravarti, *Everyday Lives, Everyday Histories: Beyond the Kings and Braahmanas of Ancient India*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2012, p. 159.
- Uma Chakravarti, *'Gender, Caste and Labour: Ideological and Material Structure of Widowhood'*, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 30, No. 36, 1995, p. 2248.
- Partha Chatterjee, *'Nationalist Resolution on Women Question'*, In *Recasting Women- Essays in Indian Colonial History*, (ed) by Kumkum Sangari and Sudheesh Vaid, Lali for Women, 1990,p.234
- Muthirangodu Bhavathrathan Namboodiri, ; „Abhivridhikkulla Eka Margam“ (Only One Way to Progress), Unninamboodiri, 1927 (ME.1102Meenam), Vol.8(8),p.3
- MGS Narayanan. *Aspects of Aryanisation in Kerala*, Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Historical Society, 1973. P 120
- Rose Suma. *Polity, Society and Women: With Special Reference to Travancore X, Trivandrum*: Carmel International Publishing House, 2004, 1836-1921.p.189
- KM Sheeba, *"From the Kitchen to the Stage and Back, Continuing forms of Women Exclusion in Keralam*, *Journal of south Indian History*, Vol-2, No-2, March 2006.P.Bhaskaranunni, Keralam Irupatham Noottantinte Aarambathil, (Mal.), Thrissur, 2005, p. 420.
- KN Panicker. *Against lord and the State: Religion and peasant uprising in Malabar*- New Delhi: Oxford University press, 1989, 1836-1921.p.78
- Kesavan Veluthat. *Brahmin Settlements in Kerala*, Thrissur: Cosmo Books, 2013.p.123
- T.K. Narayanan Namboodiri, *VT Krithikal Oru Padanam (mal)*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Calicut University, 2002
- Vallathol, *Bahishkrithamaya Antharjanam*“ (outcaste Namboodiri women),p.123.
- J. Devika, *Engendering of Individuals-The language of Re-forming in the 20th century Keralam*, Orient Longman,2007, pp.159-166
- Chandrika C.S, *Keralathile sthree munnettangalude Charitram (Mal)*, Kerala Sahitya Academy, Trissur, 1998,p.63