

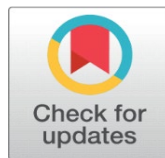
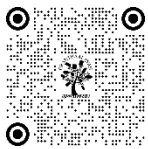
AYYAKALI'S STRUGGLE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, SELF RESPECT AND UPWORD MOBILITY

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ABSTRACT

Ayyankali (1863 – 1941) was the most influential anti – social leader in Trivancore. He had the courage to physically challenge the upper caste in order to achieve the rights of his pulaya people. He established sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangham (Association for the protection of the Poor – SJPS) in 1904.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. FIRST BIOGRAPHER

T.H.P. Chentharassery was the first biographer of Ayyankali. He had to go to the village of Ayyankali and interviewed the people to collect information. Chentharassery's account was collected from the sources presented as self – evident truth. The biographical studies were instrumental in bringing Ayyankali back into the public sphere of Kerala, Keeping Ayyankali's memory alive in Kerala's imagination. Without the efforts of the Dalit biographers, Ayyankali would have remained a forgotten figure.

2. SLAVE CASTE

Ayyankali was the first leader to emerge from the slave castes or untouchable castes such as Pulayas, Parayas and Kuravas. The Abolition of slavery was in 1855. After the abolition of slavery, the situation of the slaves did not change. According to the custom, slaves were not allowed to ride a bullock cart. This led to a clash with the Nairs who tried to stop him.

3. EDUCATION FOR THE PULAYAS.

Ayyankali's struggles for education began with the establishment of a school in 1904 at Venganoor. The Nairs burnt the school in the night itself. The Nairs did not let the school to function. Ayyankali and his men constructed the building again and it was destroyed again. The Nairs did not let the school to function. The Travancore Education Code of 1910 permitted entry of everyone into school irrespective of caste. But the schools were not opened to all. Ayyankali reached the Ooruttambalam Elementary Girls School in Balaramapuram to prevent the admission. This turned out to be a riot which continued for weeks. SJPS passed resolutions to work only six days in a week. Sunday was decided to be a holiday.

4. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The primary sources like neettu records collected from central Archives, Trivandrum and other Government records like cover Files, Confidential, Judicial, Land Revenue, Education Political and legislative Department files from Directorate of Archives, Ernakulum and Kozhikode were rightly used to augment the originality of the study. Educational Department Files in 1895, which mode Grant in Aid Code' and the Travancore Educational code in 1909 were also used for this study. Instructions regarding the admission of lower caste people in cirkar and vernacular schools of the state also referred to for the proper understanding of this study.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The personal study is based on primary sources like archival records which have been carefully analysed and interpreted. Public primary sources like the Sree Mulam popular Assembly speeches and paper reports have been utilized in an analytical manner. Secondary sources like books, Journals, articles, etc are carefully used in this study after external and internal criticism. The researcher has used all available documents and formulated feasible findings based on the existing epistemological frame work.

6. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Social mobility of Dalit by Prabhaskar J is the study of the efforts of reservation on scheduled castes in Kerala. Dalit movement describes the connections with global histories of racism and social exclusion. The global justice movement has a network of heterogeneous organizations and movement across the world. N.K. Jose popularly known as Dalit Bandit, is a leading Dalit writer who published six books about Ayyankali. They were published in the span of twenty years. The practices of untouchability, inapproachability and unsuitability militated against human dignity.

7. IDEOLOGY

'Ideology' means a set of opinions or beliefs of a group or an individual. The role of ideology to crystallize and intensify discontent which leads to protest action which may be classified into traditional or revolutionary, intransigent or progressive, reformist, radical, etc. Liberty, Equality, Humanism Universalism, etc are some of ideologies of Ayyankali which have significant role in the dynamics of social movements.

8. SOCIAL PROTEST

It happens only when the people become conscious about their situations due to the influence of knowledge, attitudes, policies and practices of the behaviours of the public According to Howard, protest beyond the law is not a departure from democracy. It is absolutely essential to it.

9. SOCIAL MOBILITY

Social mobility is the movement of people with in or between the social strata. It assesses the social change of an individual or a group of individuals from one position to another. They could change their position from a state of slavery to the realm of humans.

10. DEMOCRATIC CULTURE

It is an individual liberty as well as collective self – governance. Several persons led democratic movements which stood for democratization or

participation and acceptance in government, power, education, law, institution, citizenship, society, community, control, etc.

11. DISCIPLINARY POWER

According to Michael Foucault, ‘disciplinary power’ is less visible than sovereign power and it is coming from every where and acting on everywhere. It is visible and all pervasive, difficult to locate and difficult to resist. It affects all aspects of living, make the possibility of surveillance at all times. The customs and practices were imposed by the savarna over avarna was the clear reflection of disciplinary power as Foucault said.

12. THEORY OF HEGEMONY

The theory of Hegemony was put forward by Antonio Gramsci. It explains how the every day practices and institutions like the family the police, etc. are used in order to influence and to maintain different social classes to keep the status quo in place. The people who became the real victims of social category, forcefully dethroned from the hierarchical order of the day were known as ‘outcastes’ or ‘untouchables’.

13. EDUCATION

Kerala had the privilege of being the most literate province in the country and experienced a continuous process of educational expansion. The governments of Travancore and Kochi started vernacular schools in their respective states in 1817 and 1818. The grand in aid scheme was introduced by the Travancore Government in 1868 – 1869 for encouraging private school Sree Narayana Guru and Vakkom Abdul Khaddaar Moulavi held the view that education is a must to enlighten and awaken the masses against oppression and exploitation.

Castes	Women education ratio
Eizhavas	1.5%
Pulayas	0.9%
Brahmins	27.13%
Ambala Varasis	16.35%
Nairs	11.12.%

14. P.K. CHATHAN MASTER (1920 – 1988) AND STRUGGLES FOR UPWARD MOBILITY

P.K. Chathan Master was born in 1920. He was a primary School teacher. He was active in political movements as a Harijan leader. In 1957 he became to Harijan welfare Minister in the EMS. Namboothiri paid Ministry.

15. CONCLUSION

Ayyankali was a modern leader. He made use of the modern resources available for the advancement of his community. The roads laid by the colonial administration, the schools established by them active made state, the print culture available as a result of the emergent public sphere among many other resources had been used effectively by Ayyankali to lay a claim on Travancore society's day to day life. The present study showed that the central thread that connected all the activities of Ayyankali in democracy.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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