

MOVEMENTS IN MEDIEVAL KERALA FOR THE SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS OF LOWER CASTE PEOPLE: A DISCUSSION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AYYANKALI

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Abstract

Kerala witnessed all kinds of scores of inhumane social practices such as un-touch ability and un-approach ability in late 19th and early 20th centuries, and like. The practice of caste system in Kerala during the stint was deep rooted, and hung up on to the agrarian landlords. This article proposes to trace an outline of some important movements and revolutions happened in Kerala for human rights to those deprived who were denied public space, educational opportunities, and representation in government jobs. The paper also discusses the contributions of a Daliticon Ayyankali. (A Dalit is a member of the lowest caste in the Hindu caste hierarchy) The emergence of Ayyankali is closely connected with the strikes and strives of the deprived people for the essential human rights such as deliberately use public space, avail fair wages and public education. The social reformation movements in the Medieval Kerala were actually agitations against the hegemonic practices of caste hierarchy. Here, it is tried to sketch out the educational aspect of the strikes led by Ayyankali and how he used education as a social tool for the liberation of the depressed.

Key words

Lower castes, Dalits, Socio –educational movements, Medieval Kerala

Introduction

The last eve of 19th century and early decades of the 20th century witnessed the beginning of powerful social reform Movements in Kerala. Kerala is a recent nomenclature and the area of present Kerala are the three major provinces named Travancore, Kochi and Malabar, where people speak Malayalam and follow same cultural pattern. The over rule of caste hierarchy was the peculiar feature of Medieval Kerala. All the privileges such as power, ownership of land, wealth, access to public space, roads and temples wearing of cloth and ornaments, and access to public education were enjoyed by those elite class people on that time. The lower -class people were compelled to follow some symbols and symbolic practices of caste system on that time. They were treated as unapproachable, unseeable and untouchables. The famous historian Sreedhara Menon mentioned that abolition of feudal system in the three provinces (Travancore, Cochin and Malabar, the present Kerala) gave birth to a new social structure (Menon,1967). In his opinion the eradication of un-touch ability gave birth to the rejuvenation of the society and historians called this new upspring as Kerala Renaissance and education became the triggering force behind Kerala Renaissance. Pambirikkunnu (2017) observed that education is the fundamental driving force of Kerala Renaissance and major strikes were for the educational rights of the deprived. The quest for education became a banner of many agitations carried out in the 19th and 20th century Kerala.

The most interesting fact behind those revolts was that it was a fire against the eradication of un-touch ability. Some of the important movements happened in the Medieval Kerala against un-touch ability are Villuvanti Agitation, Mishrabhojanam, Vaikom Satyagraha, Guruvayur Satyagraha and Temple Entry Proclamation and they are briefly explained in the present paper.

There are countless personalities who dedicated their life for reviving the society and the history of Kerala Renaissance reveals that the reformation process started as movements for community refinement like Sreenarayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP) by Sreenarayana Guru, Sadhu Jana Paripalana Samgham (SJPS) by Ayyankali, Nair Service Society (NSS) by Mannathu Padmanabhan, Yogakshema Sabha by V T Bhattathirippad and like. The most important fact here is that Ayyankali through his movement tried to uplift not only the people of his Pulaya community but also all those who became sidelined by any cause. Therefore, he tried to edify the poorest of the poor of his time. According to Neravath (2017) Ayyankali represents the Dalit perspective of Kerala Renaissance. In her opinion the strikes led by Ayyankali were flavored with the spirit against casteism and succeeded in focusing the public space and public education in a democratic view point. In other words, Ayyankali realized the importance of public education and tried to fulfill his vision through his educational interventions. In the opinion of Kapikkad (2017) the revolutionary initiatives of Ayyankali were not only have a Dalit perspective but also have a determinant role in the reformation of the state as a whole. Ayyankali uphold the issues of the deprived people and fought for emancipating them from the chains of all sorts of discrimination. Moreover, he identified the importance of education and practiced it as a social weapon for the liberation of the deprived people and is the justification of the third objective of the present paper.

Need and Significance of the Study

The caste based feudalistic society of medieval Kerala metamorphosed to the present status through the unceasing efforts of many reformers and reform movements. Therefore, it is relevant to give credit to those people who fought against all types of destructive practices prevailed in the society. Compartmentalization and hierarchy are in many forms and at many levels in the present societies also.. Moreover, the proper knowledge about the history of our own land is very significant in the era of misinterpretations and twisting the history of a land. Therefore, it's the need of the hour to identify the sociological context of the liberation of the deprived and marginalized and how Kerala became modernized. The emergence and efforts of social revolutionaries in this sense are also very relevant. The present paper is an attempt to disclose the sociological aspects of the eradication of un-touch ability and the attempts of Ayyankali for making a sense of identity among the deprived through his educational interventions.

Objectives of the Study

This paper focuses on the following objectives

- To trace out some significant strikes took place in the caste hierarchical Kerala against un-touch ability and caste hierarchy
- To sketch an outline about the sociological context of the liberation of the lower-class people in the Medieval Kerala

- To trace an outline of the educational interventions of Ayyankali for the social upliftment of the deprived people in Kerala

Methodology

The method adopted for the study was analyzing the nationally published documents such as Sree Moolam Prajasabha speeches of Ayyankali, available journal articles and research studies, the books and periodicals written and published by popular historians, writers and publishing houses. The two objectives are brought out by careful reading of the relevant documents and draw conclusions in accordance with the objectives.

Movements against Un-touch ability and Caste Feudalism in Medieval Kerala

The medieval Kerala society was far away from the principles of social freedom and equality. Its chief characteristic was the deep chasm which separated the high castes from low castes (Menon,1967). The awakening of the Kerala society was remarked as the rejuvenation of the oppressed people from the boundaries of caste system through the access of education. Therefore, the important strikes during medieval time gave torch light into the socio-educational rights of the under privileged people such as entry in public space, fair wages, education and like. Some of the significant movements that bought about the spirit against cast chasm took place in the medieval Kerala are listed below:

Villuvanti Agitation,

Misrabhojanam,

VaikkomSatyagraha,

Guruvayur Satyagraha and

Temple Entry Proclamation and

Villuvanti Agitation by Ayyankali in 1893

The deprived people were denied to pass on public roads due to un-touch ability prevalent on that time. All the luxuries of life were enjoyed by the elite class people as a part of hegemonic practices of caste system. Ayyankali, a disciple of Sreenarayana Guru bought a Villuvanti as a symbol of his protest against the discrimination of caste system. He went around the land on the Villuvanti by wearing a White half sleeve T-shirt and upper cloth with White turban (Chentharasseri,1979). His act and style of dressing provoked upper caste Hindus since the lower-class people were forcefully obey some caste symbols on that period. His Villuvanti rushed on all the forbidden roads and the caste Hindus tried to restrict and attack him. But Ayyankali was not hesitated and he and his act were noticed by everyone since then. Gradually he got involved in the problems of the deprived and became the social icon of those voiceless people. The villuai agitation by ayyankali made a self-conscience among the lit people who were denied entry into the public spaces (neravathu smitha, 2017). Vargese (2016) has the claim that villuvanti agitation was a jointly arranged attempt of the deprived to make road a public space. The similar attempts were made under the leadership of Ayyankali in Chaliar and Nedumanagad. In the opinion of elkumar (2018) he thus continued his historical journey through all the forbidden roads.

Misrabhojanam (Inner dining) by Sahodaran Ayyappan in 1917

Misrabhojanam was one of the important upspring against castism in the Cochin province of medieval Kerala and it was led by Sahodaran Ayyappan. Sahodaran Ayyappan was a disciple of Sreenarayana Guru and an active leader of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana (S N D P) Movement. He established Sahodarasangham in 1917 and propagated the idea of universal brotherhood through the newspaper Sahodaran (Jincy, 2018).

The concept Misrabhojanam put forward by Ayyappan was that the people who were against caste difference assembled and eat food together at the same table with Pulaya people (Sanu,1989). Sahodaran Ayyappan held a meeting at Cherayi in 29 May, 1917 and delivered a notice. The theme of the notice was that the aim of the meeting was propagating the message of Sreenarayana Guru. The organizers of the meeting found two Pulaya students for the inner dining. The observance started after the speech of Ayyappan and an oath taking then. The cream of oath was about the full minded willingness of a person to fight against caste difference.

Suresh (2017) has the opinion that Misrabhojanam was sensitized with a new democratic consciousness towards companionship and equality among Keralites. He worked against inequalities belong to caste hierarchy and tried to make aware of a sense of self- conscious among the deprived people.

Vaikkom Satyagraha in 1924-1925

The most of the social reformation practices in Kerala was the movement of un-touch ability annihilation (Menon, 1967). It gets motivated through the speeches and messages of Sreenarayana Guru, Chattambi Swamikal, Kumaranashan and the works of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (S N D P), Nair Service Society (N S S) and other socio- religious movements. Famous historian Sreedhara Menon in 1967 has the opinion that Indian National Congress also encouraged the strikes against untouchability (Menon,1967).

The lower-class Hindus were prohibited to walk along the roads close to Vaikkom Temple. The revolutionaries raised a claim to get freedom for walk through the roads near the temple. T K Madhavan, K P Keshava Menon, Mannathu Padmanabhan, Changanasheri Parameswaran Pillai, C V Kunjuraman, and K Kelappan are in the leadership of the movement.

Savarna Jatha under the leadership of Mannathu Padmanabhan was an important event related to the movement. The members of Jatha met Travancore Princess Sethu Lakshmi Bai and submitted their demand. Satyagraha lasts for twenty days and the members of Satyagraha got arrested and brutally beaten. Lastly the Satyagraha ended in 1925 with a great success by the interference of Mahathma Gandhi. Then a continuity of agitations took place in the public spaces of many other temples in Travancore like Ambalappuzha, Thiruvappu, Shucheendram and like. As a result, about 1928 all the public roads in the close proximity in Travancore got opened for all Hindus, irrespective of caste (Menon,1967). The crux here is to be mentioned is that the agitation made the people aware of the need for annihilation of un-touch ability. The national leaders took this as a serious issue and Java harlal Nehru declared that National Freedom is meant as the liberation from all social faults and exploitation (Varier, 2003).

The representation of women was the most highlighted specialty of Vaikom Satyagraha. Eswar Ammal, Nagamma, Kannammal, Soosanna, Kayyalkk Narayani Amma Saradamma, was some among them (Gopalakrishnan, 2008).

Guruvayur Satyagraha in 1931-1932

Guruvayur Satyagraha was a decisive strike against the untouchability practices prevalent in Malabar. The aim of the agitation was to get entry inside the temple for all Hindus and Satyagraha started on November 1 1936 under the banner of Kerala Pradesh Congress. The on-foot procession by A K Gopalan from Payyannoor to Guruvayur played a critical role and got positive feeling from common people (Varier, 2003). K. Kelappan and Mannathu Padmanabhan were acted as the secretary and president of the Satyagraha Committee respectively. It got public attention against untouchability and succeeded in getting more attention for National Movement among more common people in Malabar (Varier, 2003). But Samoothiri the Trusty of Guruvayur Kshetra was against the entry of all Hindus inside Kshetra and the temple was closed and stopped all the rituals about one month. K Kelappan started timeless Nirahara on September 22, 1932 and stopped on October 2, 1932. Then Kerala Pradesh took an Exit Poll for the pulse of people towards the temple entry and about 70 percent people had positively responded. Though Satyagraha had not an immediate success it brought a positive attitude among common people in Malabar.

Temple Entry Proclamation on 12 November 1936

The success of the agitation for the entry of Avarna people in the temples of Travancore was known as Temple Entry Proclamation. According to Menon (1967) Temple Entry Proclamation was a candle light in the awakening of the deprived and lower-class people. Temple Entry Proclamation was celebrated by Gandhijis the wonder of Modern Era. Temple entry Proclamation was declared by Chithira Thirunal, the ruler of Travancore in November 12, 1936. Madirasi Temple Entry Law was commenced on 1947 and in Cochin it happened in April 1948. Cochin and Malabar provinces lag behind many decades than Travancore with reference to this movement (Menon, 1967).

The untouchability agitation had close connection with the reformation of Kerala society. The reformation of a society can never be happened with in one or two days. Moreover, reformation is the process of rejuvenating a society by making progressive changes in every aspect of a society. The offerings of various social, political and religious movements and acknowledging the contributions of innumerable persons is a mandate in the discussion of the History of the modernization of a society. Among the countless personalities, the researcher chooses the offerings of Ayyankali for rejuvenating the deprived through his educational interventions.

Ayyankali(Persona)

Ayyankali was born on 28 August, 1863 as the son of Ayyan and Mala at Plavathara house at Venganoor in the Travancore province of Medieval Kerala. He was the elder son of his father and had five brothers and three sisters. His two siblings died at an early age. His father was a slave (adiyal in Malayalam) of a landlord and the landlord was pleased with the services of Ayyan and donated a part of land to him.

Ayyankali helped his father in agriculture in his early ages itself. He did not get formal education but equipped with Kalari and physical exercise practices. In his boyhood days itself Ayyankali had an attitude against caste hierarchy (Chemtharasseri,1979). Later stage of his life, he ridiculously fought against the discriminations of caste observance and became a social revolutionary who donated his life for rejuvenating the deprived or 'Sadhujana' of his age.

Emergence of Ayyankali as a Social Reformer

Ayyankali (1863-1941) emerged as a leader of the deprived castes in Travancore through his fight for all the socio-educational rights of the lower caste people. Kunnukuzhi (2014) has claimed that his ideas and ideology on social reformation was a result of the soul and spirit he captured from the bad practices and experiences experienced by his people for ages. He established Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangham in 1907 to disseminate his ideas and to resist against castism. Vargese (2016) argued that Ayyankali took significant initiative to struggle against symbolic order of caste, like the caste markers of body.

The deprived people were denied all kinds of their rights on that period and their educational right too. The elite class people thought that education will make the deprived people realize about their rights and how they are exploited. In another sense the upper-class people used education as tool for oppression and marginalization (Das,2011). But, Ayyankali realized the value of education and took efforts for emancipating the oppressed through education.

Educational Interventions of Ayyankali for the Liberation of the Deprived People

The emergence of Ayyankali was characterized by the powerful strikes carried out by him for the act of walking in public roads. He was influenced by Sadananda Swamikal, Taikkatayyavu and Sreenarayanaguru (Pillai. 2003). The efforts of Ayyankali for the upliftment of Dalits such as getting own lands, and many other rights were written by golden letters in the history of Kerala Renaissance. Ajayshekhara (2016) observed that Ayyankali cascaded a new life and extraordinary dynamics for the human rights and the educational strikes of the deprived class.

The first labour strike for the educational right of the deprived class, was pinned in the educational history of the state. Kunnukuzhi reports that the Agrarian Labour strike led by Ayyankali for the educational right of the lower castes in the southern Kerala was started in 1904 and ended in 1907. Pulaya farmers under the leadership of Ayyankali, declared "if our kids are not allowed to enter your schools, your paddies will grow mere feeds" (Neravathu, 2017). The government appointed Kantla Nagan Pillai as mediator to put an end to the strike. As a result, the first government order for the educational access of Avarna (deprived) pupil was declared. The agricultural labour strike was started in June 1913 and May 1914 (Philip, 2005). Abhimanyu reported the period of strike was before 1910 (James, 2015). The closure is that there are many controversies related to the year of the strike but not such issues related to the intention behind those strikes which was the educational emancipation of the deprived people. (Kapikkad, 2017) states that Ayyankali realized the value of education and advocated for education for all children in public schools. Through his interventions and efforts Ayyankali deconstructed and completely rejuvenated the entire civil society of Kerala.

But the agitations for the educational right of Dalits particularly the labour strikes were misinterpreted as clash in between the upper class and lower class. But actually, the clash happened in between the neo democratic concept of equality in educational opportunities and the hectic apartheid enacted by Manusmruthi upon the education of the downtrodden.

(Das, 2011) argued that education is the tool for the domination of ruling class and it exhibits the institutional autonomy of them. He acknowledges the first agrarian labour strike under the leadership of Ayyankali to get education for the children of Dalit people as the strong basement for the liberation of the oppressed. Chentharasseri (1979) has the opinion that Ayyankali has a determinant role for getting entry for Dalits in public place and public institutions. In other words, with his extra ordinary will power Ayyankali lead the downtrodden people to a new civic space. He further reports that the revolts by the deprived for the educational opportunities lead to community riots. Balaramapuram, Venganur, Kaniyapuram, Kazhakkootam, Kavalam and many other places of Travancore provinces got the fire of those revolts. Some of the important interventions and riots leaded by Ayyankali for the educational opportunities of the deprived people are pinpointed in the Table 1.

Table 1. Trajectory of the educational efforts of Ayyankali

| Year | Effort/Strike | Effect / Government Intervension |
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| 1904 | Establishment of a school (Kudippallikkodam/Nilathezhuthupalli) at Venganoor, Travancore | School for Dalit at Venganur (Kudippallikkoodam). It is the first school in Kerala by the untouchable people for their education (Chentharasseri,1979) |
| 1904-1907 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Agrarian Labor Strike for the Educational Rights of Deprived ➤ Sadhu Jana Paripalana Samgham (1907) | Government declared Education Code of 1907 regarding the educational access for deprived people. It was the first education code concerning the same matter |
| 1909 | Government order (1907) for educational access of Dalit people had no fruitful effect. Therefore Ayyankali gave a petition before Divan C Rajagopalachari and director of education Dr.Michal. | Government order for the modification of Education code of 1907in 1909. Education code 1909 states that no child should deny education on behalf of caste (Kunnukuzhi, 2014) |

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| 1910 | | Modification of education code 1909. The education code 1910 declared the educational right of deprived class people |
| 1910 | Ayyankali and his people reached Chavadi Nada school at Venganoor with a copy of Education Code 1910 for the admission of some lower-class people. Clash happened between Upper class and Lower-class people and again Ayyankali met Diwan C Rajagopalachari and submitted petition. | As per the suggestion of Diwan Director of Education Dr MC Michal get involved in the issue related to the admission of Avarna (deprived) people and they got admission with the help of police |
| 1911 | | Ayyankali was nominated into Sreemoolam Prajasabha as a representative from Pulaya community. |
| 1912 March 4 | Prajasabha speech of Ayyankali focused the following matters on education of the deprived <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all the educational institutions should admit Pulaya pupils • Fee concession for Pulaya students as given to Muhammadeeya students • Employment opportunities for the educated Pulaya people in the department of Education, Engineering and Medical | Diwan concluded that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the schools open to entry for Ezhava people should be open to Pulaya people also • Agreed the request for Fee concession as given to Muhammadeyya students • Suggested to submit the list of qualified Pulaya people for the Director of Education |
| 1914 | Ayyankali met Dr Michal, the director of education and gave a petition for getting the consent of government to start a school for the deprived people | Education Code of 1914- the modification of education code 1910 with punishment procedure for the education denial of deprived people Government order to start a Malayalam School at |

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| | | Puthuvalvilakam (Renukumar, 2017) |
| 1914 | <p>Ayyankali got special order from the director of education regarding the admission of Pulaya pupils (Education Code of 1914) and reached Uroottambalam girls' school with a girl named Panchami and the headmaster denied admission to her. But Ayyankali moved forward and he forcefully seated Panchami into the class and clash happened between upper-class and Ayyankali Pada (Ayyankali and his people). Caste Hindus burned Uroottamblamschool in the night of the same day. The revolt is named as UroottambalamLahala (ThonnooramandLahala since the revolt happened in the Malayalam year 1090 AD).</p> <p>In certain scripts the year of UroottambalamLahalawas recorded as 1910.</p> | |
| 26 February 1914- Prajasabha Speech of Ayyankali | <p>Ayyankalireported about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the grievances of little children due to lack of nearby school at Venganoor • only seven schools in Travancore gave admission to Pulaya students and advocated for the admission of Pulaya students in the all-government schools • Government should give strict instruction to school Inspectors and Director of Education regarding the execution of government order on the school admission of Pulaya people • Fee concession for Pulaya students | <p>Diwan replied that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grievances should be reported to the Inspector concerned • the schools allowed admission to Ezhavas should give admission to Pulaya people • recorded all things |
| 22 February 1915- Prajasabha Speech | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The government should take proper measures for resolution of the issues related to school admission matters of Pulaya pupils. • Appointment of an officer from the department of Education for the resolution of issues of educational matters of Pulaya people | <p>Diwan replied that all things are recorded</p> |
| 29 February 1916 on | <p>Ayyankali advocated that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • government should be more compassionate with Pulaya people on | <p>Diwan replied that everything is specially recorded</p> |

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| <p>Prajasabha</p> | <p>their educational matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • twenty-five schools did not admit Pulaya students yet, even though there was government order for their admission • Pulaya students should be given some vocational training and craft works along with public education | |
| <p>26 February 1918 Prajasabha Speech</p> | <p>Ayyankali advocated that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • government should address the deficiencies regarding the educational matters of Pulaya people • all schools should give admission to Pulaya students up to seventh standard and government should pay their school fee. Moreover, ten percent students among them should be provided with scholarships • an institute should be started in the more Pulaya concentrated area to train them Agriculture and Industry • The government order regarding the school admission of Pulaya students should be strictly implemented • A school should be started in the Pulaya concentrated area like Venganoor for providing them basic education. Provision for non-meal and work education should be a matter of concern along with the fundamental education • A certain amount of budget should be set aside for the education of Pulaya people • Form a Co-operative society for the Pulaya people | <p>Diwan replied that everything is recorded</p> |
| <p>24 February 1919 Prajasabha Speech</p> | <p>Ayyankali argued that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pulaya pupils should be completely excluded from the payment of fees • Pulaya students should be trained Agriculture and hand crafts • A certain fund of budget should be set aside for the education of Pulayas and government should monitor the funding • Noon meal scheme for Pulaya students • Institutes for giving them craft education and free courters should be provided for accommodation | <p>Everything is recorded, replied Diwan</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment in all schools for Pulayas • Gradual increasing of number of scholarships for Pulaya students in every year | |
| Prajasabha speech of 2 March 1920 | <p>Advocated for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compulsory elementary education for Pulayas up to fourth standard | |
| Prajasabha speech of 9 March 1921 | <p>Advocated for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the improved facilities for the educational opportunities of Pulayas • free of fees in the complete school education period • noon meal should be provided by the government | <p>Diwan reported that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • government should analyze the petition of Ayyankali and obviously consider the provision of more educational facilities for the deprived • a very practical and immediate action should be taken by the government on the matter concerned |
| Prajasabha speech of 27 February 1922 | <p>Advocated for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free from payment of fees and noon meal scheme for Pulayas | |
| Prajasabha speech of 10 March 1924 | <p>Advocated for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the educational benefits of Pulayas yet to be received • Noon meal scheme for Pulaya pupils and Paraya pupils (Renukumar,2017) | <p>Advocated for the educational benefits of Pulayas yet to be received</p> <p>Noon meal scheme for Pulaya pupils and Paraya pupils (Renukumar,2017)</p> |
| Prajasabha speech of 26 February 1927 | <p>Advocated for the Appointment of 15 Pulaya Pupils who got success in vernacular language learning</p> | |
| Prajasabha speech of 7 March 1928 | <p>Ayyankali argued that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pulaya pupils should be provided with mid-day meals in schools and complete fee concession for their higher education • The matter related to not getting the permanent job in the department of Education for six Pulaya girls who were passed school final examination • Appointment of educated Pulaya youth as peon in all departments and in the Police and Excise department should appoint other people after the | <p>Diwan replied that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A circular should be issued related to the appointment of Pulaya people • The requirement of noon meal for Pulaya students should be analyzed and will take further procedures • The matter related to denial of |

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| | <p>appointment of Pulayas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least a few Pulaya students should be send to foreign countries for getting higher education in Agriculture, Industry and like | <p>appointment of six educated Pulaya girls should be enquired</p> |
| <p>Prajasabha speech of 11 March 1931</p> | <p>Ayyankali advocated for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extention of fee concession in case of school education and examination to ten more years • The request of the qualified Pulaya candidates for teaching posts not treated positively • Compulsory Elementary education for Pulaya children | <p>Diwan replied that all the things reported by Ayyankali will take into consideration</p> |
| <p>Prajasabha speech of 18 March 1932</p> | <p>Advocated for more concession and exemption in the education and employment sector for Pulaya people (Kunnukuzhi,2014)</p> | |

Conclusion

The liberation of the depressed in the history of Kerala Renaissance is tagged by the eradication of un-touch ability. Therefore, any social reform movement in the caste feudalist Kerala is knitted by the string of educational urges of the under privileged class. Many reform movements took place for the educational opportunities and the social identity of the deprived people. The present paper confined to describe some significant agitations took place in the three provinces against un-touch ability.

There are many social reform personalities such as Vaikunda Swamikal, ThaikkadAyyvu, SadanandaSwamikal, Sreenarayana Guru, ChattambiSwamikal and like who dedicated their life for wiping out all the evil social practices prevalent in the society on that time. But the present paper discusses the educational interventions of Ayyankali as a pioneer among them. Ayyankali dedicated his life for the emancipation of ‘sadhujana’ such as Pulayas, Kaniyars and other under privileged people of his ages.

According to the famous contemporary historian V Karthikeyan Nair Ayyankali used education as an agency for progressive social change (Nair, 2024). Moreover, being SreemoolamPrajasabha member he utilized the government missionary for the enlightenment of the Sadhujanas and succeeded his goal in a certain extend.

To conclude Ayyankali advocated and fought for the fee concession, free and compulsory primary education for Dalits (Renukumar, 2017), vernacular language learning, compulsory mid-day meals in schools, government employment for the deprived people, vocational and craft education, scholarship scheme for the deprived students in the school and higher education sectors and all sorts of concessions and considerations for the needy people. He was the mastermind and key role for the construction of a school for Dalits at Venganoor which was the first of that type all over Kerala (Chentharasseri,1979).

The crux of the dedications of any reform movement or social reformists is the enlightenment of a society and the development of an educated middle-class majority of whom were devastated and the same happened in the history of Kerala Renaissance too.

Kerala Renaissance is the outcome of the efforts of unconditioned dedications of many social revolutionaries and vigorous urges of many social reform movements. But the particular study focused on a page from Kerala Renaissance in two dimensions such as the sociological background of the Renaissance movement in general and the educational interventions of Ayyankali for the upliftment of the deprived people in particular.

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