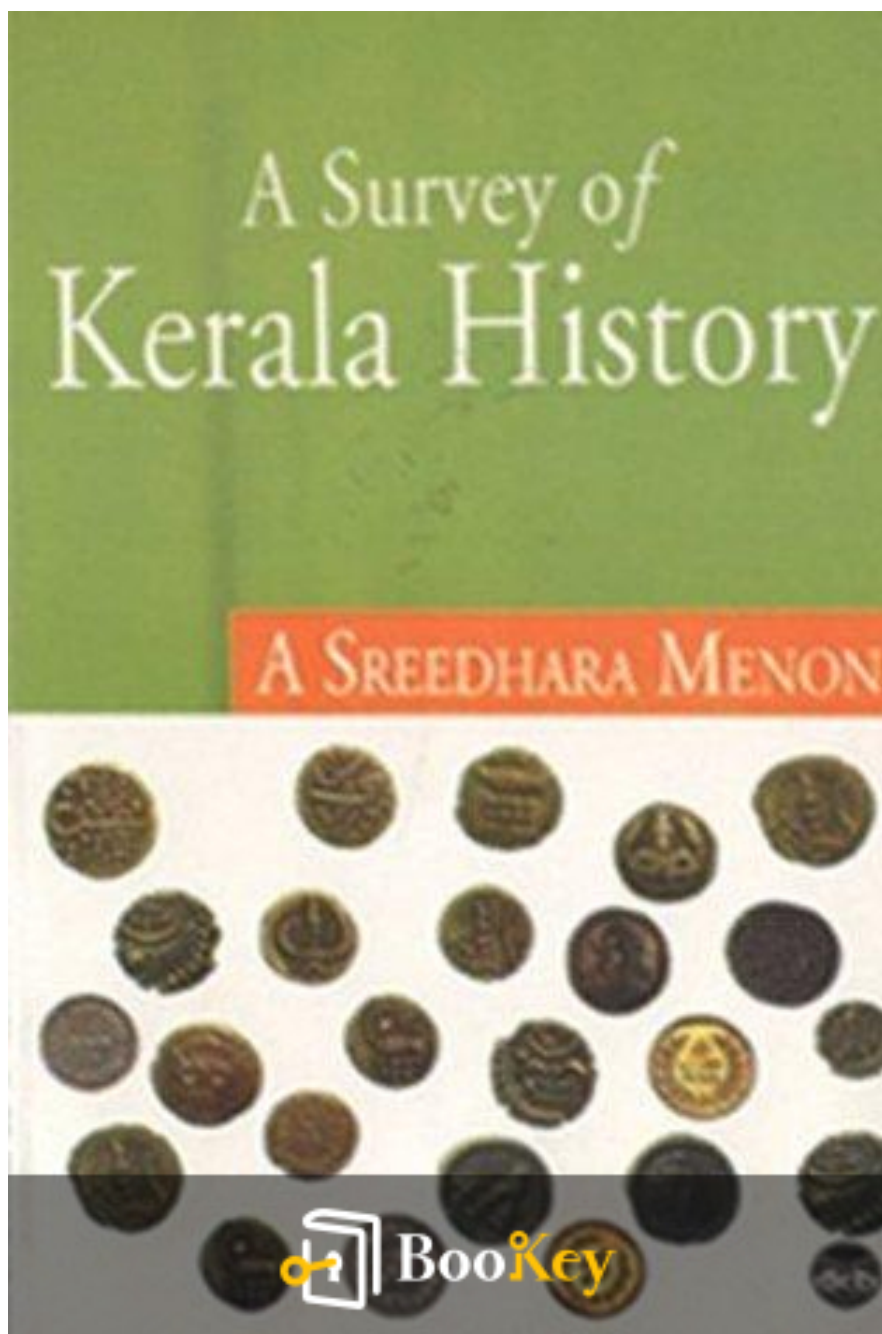


# A Survey Of Kerala History PDF (Limited Copy)

A. Sreedhara Menon



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# **A Survey Of Kerala History Summary**

Exploring the Cultural and Political Evolution of Kerala.

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## About the book

"A Survey of Kerala History" by A. Sreedhara Menon is an enlightening exploration into the rich tapestry of Kerala's past, weaving together the threads of its diverse cultures, traditions, and socio-political developments. From ancient times to contemporary issues, Menon delves into the intricacies of Kerala's history, highlighting how its geographical features, economic activities, and intricate social structures have shaped its unique identity. Engagingly written and meticulously researched, this work not only illuminates the events that have shaped this vibrant coastal state but also invites readers to reflect on the broader themes of resilience and transformation that resonate through the ages. Join Menon on a captivating journey through time, as he paints a vivid portrait of Kerala's enduring legacy and its enduring spirit.

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## About the author

A. Sreedhara Menon was a distinguished historian and author renowned for his extensive contributions to the historiography of Kerala, India. Born in 1911, Menon played a pivotal role in documenting the rich cultural and political history of the region through his meticulous research and engaging writing style. He held significant academic positions, including serving as the head of the Department of History at the University of Kerala, where he inspired countless students with his passion for history. His seminal work, "A Survey of Kerala History," is widely regarded as a foundational text that provides comprehensive insights into the social, political, and economic developments of Kerala from ancient times to the modern era, making him an authoritative figure in the field of Indian history. Menon's scholarship not only illuminated the past of Kerala but also fostered a deeper understanding and appreciation of the state's unique identity.

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# Summary Content List

Chapter 1: THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Chapter 2: A PEEP INTO THE SOURCES

Chapter 3: PREHISTORY

Chapter 4: EARLY FOREIGN CONTACTS

Chapter 5: KERALA IN THE SANGAM AGE

Chapter 6: THE CONFLUENCE OF RELIGIONS

Chapter 7: THE AY KINGDOM

Chapter 8: KULASEKHARAS OF MAHODAYAPURAM (800-1102 A.D.)

Chapter 9: GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY IN THE KULASEKHARA AGE

Chapter 10: VENAD TILL 1314

Chapter 11: RISE OF KOLATHUNAD AND COCHIN

Chapter 12: MINOR PRINCIPALITIES

Chapter 13: THE PORTUGUESE PERIOD

Chapter 14: VENAD (1314 -1720)

Chapter 15: THE RISE AND FALL OF THE DUTCH

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Chapter 16: KERALA POLITY AND LIFE IN THE 16th AND 17th CENTURIES

Chapter 17: MARTHANDA VARMA AND DHARMA RAJA

Chapter 18: HISTORY OF COCHIN (1500-1805)

Chapter 19: THE GROWTH OF BRITISH POWER

Chapter 20: ENLIGHTENED ADMINISTRATION IN TRAVANCORE

Chapter 21: BRITISH MALABAR

Chapter 22: POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN TRAVANCORE AND COCHIN

Chapter 23: TRAVANCORE - COCHIN AND KERALA

Chapter 24: TOWARDS A NEW SOCIETY

Chapter 25: LITERATURE AND ARTS

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# Chapter 1 Summary: THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Kerala, a unique state on the southern tip of the Indian subcontinent, has a rich history shaped significantly by its distinctive geographical features. Its historical narrative flows as an integral part of the larger Indian tapestry, while also preserving a degree of political and cultural autonomy due to its unique location. Nestled between the Western Ghats to the east and the Arabian Sea to the west, Kerala comprises a narrow coastal strip with diverse landscapes, which have contributed to its distinct identity and cultivated traditions over centuries.

**1. Natural Divisions:** Kerala spans approximately 15,002 square miles and is characterized by three distinct natural divisions: the highland, midland, and lowland. The Western Ghats form the highland, lush with forests and plantations, while the lowland, rich in sandy soil, is famous for its coconut trees and paddy fields. The midland, a transitional zone, showcases varied agricultural outputs, including spices and rubber.

**2. Geographical Influence:** The exceptional geographical placement of Kerala has facilitated both isolation and engagement. Its insularity has historically shielded it from political upheavals that affected northern India, allowing a unique evolution of social structures such as the matrilineal inheritance system. The people of Kerala developed distinct artistic styles





and cultural practices, including traditional dance forms like Kathakali and Mohini Attam, all nurtured in this isolated environment.

**3. Historical Intrusions and Influences:** Despite its geographical barriers, Kerala has not remained completely insulated. Influences from surrounding regions such as Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are evident in both the dialects of Malayalam and the customs prevalent in the state. Notable historical incursions by dynasties such as the Cholas and Vijayanagara highlight the region's significance in broader Indian historical narratives.

**4. Mountains and Pilgrimage:** The Western Ghats serve as both a physical and symbolic barrier, influencing accessibility and promoting localized governance while creating space for religious fervor. Important pilgrimage sites are often located on or near these mountain ranges, which not only provide refuge but also contribute to the cultural fabric of Kerala through the legends associated with them.

**5. Role of the Sea:** The extensive coastline facilitated maritime trade, establishing Kerala as a vital player in international commerce from ancient times. Prominent ports like Muziris and Calicut became gateways for cultural exchanges with the European and Asian worlds, although this exposure also invited foreign conquests that would ultimately reshape its socio-economic landscape.



**6. Waterways and Development:** Kerala is endowed with 41 rivers that have historically been central to its agricultural practices and political dynamics. Significant events, such as the floods in the 14th century that shifted trade routes, demonstrate the rivers' integral role in shaping both culture and economy. Modern infrastructure projects have further harnessed these waterways to support industrialization and hydroelectric power generation.

**7. Climate and Agriculture:** The diverse climatic conditions across Kerala, influenced by the Western Ghats and two monsoon seasons, support rich agricultural practices. The temperate highlands favor tea and spices, while the coastal plains are ideal for paddy cultivation. This climatic diversity has not only shaped the geography but also the economic foundations of the region.

**8. Flora, Fauna, and Historical Trade:** Kerala's lush landscapes are rich in biodiversity, contributing to its historical trade of spices and aromatic herbs, which attracted foreign traders. The economic dynamics shaped by these resources underscore Kerala's importance in global trade networks and underline its historical ties to international markets.

**9. Mythology and Identity:** The Parasurama legend, although mythological, provides insight into the geographical understanding of ancient Kerala. This narrative, held in reverence, signifies the region's



perceived genesis from the sea, highlighting the relationship between myth and geography in societal identity formulation.

**10. Nomenclature of Kerala:** The name 'Kerala' likely derives from the term 'Cheralam,' which connects either to the fertile lowlands or the region's geographical contours. Similarly, the name 'Malabar' hints at its hilly terrain. These names encapsulate the land's geography and cultural essence, reflecting its historical narrative through the ages.

In summary, the interplay of Kerala's geography, climate, and natural resources has intricately woven its historical and cultural narrative. As Kerala evolved through varied influences and interactions, its distinct identity became a synthesis of internal evolution and external connectivity. This nuanced interaction of factors continues to shape Kerala's history and its cultural landscape, making it a remarkable case study in Indian history.



## Chapter 2 Summary: A PEEP INTO THE SOURCES

A peek into the sources of Kerala history reveals an extensive and diverse historiographical tradition that has evolved significantly over time. The development of historiography in Kerala, although lacking the classical figures of ancient historiography like Herodotus or Thucydides, shows remarkable progress from early records to modern scholarly interpretations.

**1. Early Contributions:** One of the earliest signs of Kerala's historiographic tradition can be seen in the *Mushakavamsa*, composed around 1100 AD by Atula. This Sanskrit work stands out as one of the first independent dynastic histories within Sanskrit literature, chronicling the Mushaka kingdom's past. Despite this early beginning, a sustained historiographic activity was largely dormant until the sixteenth century when Shaik Zainuddin wrote the *Tuhafat-ul-Mujahiddin*, enriching our understanding of social customs during the Portuguese era.

**2. Western Influence:** The arrival of European powers brought new literary accounts from travelers such as Duarte Barbosa, Canter Visscher, and others. They documented Kerala's political and social landscape, laying groundwork for future research. The *Malabar Manual* of 1887 by Logan became a pivotal reference, inspiring later native scholars to compile detailed historical studies.



**3. Focus on Political History:** Early native historians predominantly focused on political events while neglecting social and cultural dimensions. Works like the Tiruvitamkoor Charitram by Pachu Muthatu and the History of Travancore by P. Shungoonny Menon exemplify this trend, demonstrating an incomplete historical narrative lacking social context.

**4. Social Aspects in Historiography:** K.P. Padmanabha Menon marked a significant shift in the early 20th century by emphasizing social history in his works, including the Kochi Rajya Charitram and History of Kerala. His contributions paved the way for deeper inquiries into social structures, yet his studies were limited by the contemporaneous understanding of Tamil Sangam literature and archaeological evidence.

**5. Emergence of a Systematic Approach:** The historiographical landscape was significantly transformed by scholars like Prof. Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai, who critically reassessed early historical narratives dominated by myths and superstitions. His meticulous research into inscriptions and literature offered a coherent timeline of political history extending from the Sangam age to the Portuguese period, addressing critical social issues like caste dynamics and land tenure.

**6. Multifaceted Studies:** Alongside political histories, scholars like Prof. M.G.S. Narayanan explored various dimensions of Kerala's history, including socio-cultural aspects. Their methodologies incorporated



archaeological evidence and inscriptions to provide a comprehensive picture of the region, while Western scholars contributed to the understanding of Kerala's cultural development through studies in art and literature.

**7. Traditional Sources:** Traditional works like Keralolpathi and Keralamahatmyam were long relied upon despite their inaccuracies. These texts, linked to the 18th and 19th centuries, highlighted the need for diverse materials to reconstruct Kerala's authentic history, encompassing literature from Sanskrit, Tamil, and Malayalam.

**8. Literary Sources by Language:** The examination of literary sources offers insight into Kerala's history. Historical references in Sanskrit epics and Puranas discuss early kingdoms like the Cheras. Tamil Sangam literature provides crucial information about socio-political dynamics in ancient Kerala, notably through works like the Patittupattu and Silappadikaram. Malayalam texts, emerging post-9th century, mainly contribute indirect insights about governance and society.

**9. Archaeology as a Historical Tool:** Archaeological findings, including megalithic structures, inscriptional records, and ancient temples, serve as material evidence of Kerala's historical narrative. The wealth of archaeological relics can illuminate the socio-cultural landscape and influence historical interpretations of the region.





**10. Inscriptions and Coins:** Inscriptions, often dated in indigenous eras, provide direct information on political affairs, religious practices, and societal structures. Coinage further supports the understanding of trade and economic relations in ancient Kerala, revealing interactions with foreign and indigenous economies.

**11. Classical and Foreign Accounts:** The records of classical writers, travelers, and archeologists enrich the narrative of Kerala's history by providing external perspectives on trade, culture, and governance during ancient and medieval periods.

In conclusion, the historiography of Kerala is marked by a gradual evolution from early, myth-laden narratives to more nuanced and methodologically rigorous approaches that incorporate diverse sources. The synthesis of traditional literature, archaeological findings, and modern scholarly work fosters a richer understanding of Kerala's multifaceted history.



# Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** Embrace a Multifaceted Perspective

**Critical Interpretation:** The rich historiographical tradition of Kerala, with its journey from myth to rigorous scholarship, invites you to embrace a multifaceted perspective in your own life. Just as scholars like Prof. M.G.S. Narayanan sought to integrate various dimensions of Kerala's history, you can enhance your understanding of the world by recognizing the layers of complexity in every situation you encounter. Whether in personal relationships or professional challenges, diving deeper into diverse viewpoints will not only foster empathy and appreciation for others' experiences but also enrich your own decision-making, leading to more informed and thoughtful choices.

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## Chapter 3: PREHISTORY

Prehistory refers to the era when humans were primarily nomadic hunters, and the early history of Kerala is obscured due to the lack of significant archaeological evidence, specifically from the Palaeolithic era. Notably, archaeologist H.D. Sankalia posits that Kerala lacks Palaeolithic artifacts because the region's quartzite, vital for making such tools, is scarce. He suggests that the area's dense forests would have posed challenges for early humans to explore. Although no Palaeolithic remains have been found, evidence of settlement exists, indicating that Neolithic communities likely thrived in the region.

1. The presence of megalithic structures throughout Kerala illustrates an essential aspect of its prehistoric culture. Megaliths, constructed from large stone blocks, were primarily used as burial monuments, reflecting a funerary tradition linked to the veneration of the dead. The burial practices included "fractional burial," where only certain bones were preserved, and "primary burial," involving complete skeletons interred in various locations, including under dwellings and in specially designated graves. Neolithic tools,

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## Chapter 4 Summary: EARLY FOREIGN CONTACTS

Kerala's history of foreign contacts dates back to ancient times, encompassing a wide array of civilizations, including the Arabs, Assyrians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, Israelites, Greeks, Romans, and Chinese. These early interactions primarily focused on trade, especially in spices, which not only facilitated commerce but also the introduction of major religions like Christianity, Judaism, and Islam into the region. The cultural impact of these exchanges was profound, resulting in Kerala's rich and diverse cultural tapestry, influenced considerably by the infusion of foreign ideas and practices.

1. The Spice Trade: From as early as the 3rd millennium B.C., Kerala's reputation for spices attracted traders from various ancient civilizations, including the Assyrians and Babylonians. Egyptian expeditions to procure spices, like Queen Hatshepsut's venturing down the Red Sea, demonstrate the allure of Kerala's spices nationally and internationally. References to spices such as cinnamon and cardamom in the Old Testament highlight the ancient trade's significance, showcased by Queen Sheba's historic journey to meet King Solomon.

2. Roles of Early Traders: The Arabs and Phoenicians were instrumental in the spice trade. The Arabs, likely the pioneers in voyages to the Kerala coast, established early connections that allowed cinnamon and other spices to



reach the Middle East. Moreover, the Phoenician traders facilitated a thriving exchange of goods by establishing maritime trading routes, with King Solomon sending ships to regions believed to be in or near Kerala for exotic goods, including spices.

3. Greek and Roman Engagement: By the closing centuries B.C., trade blossomed between Kerala and the Greeks and Romans. Notable figures like Dioscorides documented the therapeutic uses of Kerala's spices. The Romans became heavily involved in the spice trade, spurred by tools such as the discovery of monsoon winds which made direct voyages feasible. Reports of Roman coins found in Kerala attest to a vibrant exchange, where luxurious goods like pepper were traded for Roman gold.

4. The Influence of Chinese Trade: Chinese engagement in the spice market extended far beyond the Romans. Accounts indicate that trade between China and Kerala commenced before Greek interactions, with scholars referencing a Chinese colony in the region. Marco Polo's writings in the 13th century depict a flourishing pepper trade, highlighting the extensive volume of spice shipments that reached both the Chinese market and, subsequently, the West.

5. Indigenous Maritime Tradition: While foreign traders played a prominent role in maritime commerce, Kerala's local presence in international trade cannot be overlooked. Early Sangam literature recounts voyages undertaken





by the Chera kings, with their ships traveling abroad in search of wealth. The historical accounts affirm that local traders were equally active in the bustling maritime economy.

6. Ancient Sea-Ports: Classical writers such as Pliny provide detailed descriptions of significant ports in ancient Kerala, with Muziris emerging as the most prominent one, known for its bustling trade activities. This port served as a critical hub for interaction among various cultures and religions and was often characterized by the sight of foreign ships anchoring nearby to partake in the local market.

7. Major Ports: In time, other ports like Tyndis and Barace grew in importance. Tyndis, noted for its picturesque landscape, played a vital part in the regional trade, while Barace offered more favorable conditions for vessels than Muziris. These ports experienced various shifts in prominence over the centuries depending on geographic and economic factors.

8. Later Ports: The emergence of Quilon, Calicut, and Cochin marked the next phase of Kerala's port history. Quilon evolved as a major trading center, connecting with Chinese merchants. Calicut rose in significance after the decline of Muziris, becoming a key port for foreign traders thanks to the accommodating policies of the Zamorin rulers, while Cochin emerged in response to changes in the waterways, ultimately becoming a focal point for European powers in the spice trade.



In summary, Kerala's early foreign contact era, marked by substantial trade in spices and cultural exchanges, laid the groundwork for its rich historical narrative. The intricate web of maritime trade established by local and foreign traders significantly influenced the social, economic, and religious landscape of the region, shaping Kerala into the vibrant and cosmopolitan society it is known for today.

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## Chapter 5 Summary: KERALA IN THE SANGAM AGE

The Sangam Age, spanning the first five centuries of the Christian Era, represents a pivotal chapter in Kerala's history, positioning it within the broader cultural framework of Tamilakam. During this era, Kerala was geographically segmented into five notable divisions: Venad, Kuttanad, Kudanad, Puzhinad, and Karkanad, each characterized by distinct topographical features. The ancient literary works provide clues about the regions, though their precise boundaries remain vague. Venad encompassed parts of modern-day Trivandrum and Quilon districts, while Kuttanad, renowned for its lakes, included Ernakulam and parts of Kottayam and Idukki districts. Kudanad extended northward, while Puzhinad was marked by marshes along the northern coast, and Karkanad consisted of mountainous terrain.

The political landscape of early Kerala during the Sangam period was dominated by three main powers: the Ays in the south, the rulers of the Ezhimala kingdom in the north, and the Cheras situated between these two regions.

1. The Ays wielded considerable influence over a vast territory from Nagercoil to Tiruvalla, establishing their capital at Aykudi and serving as a crucial buffer between the powerful Pandya and Chera kingdoms. Prominent figures include kings like Ay Antiran and Titiyan, who are mentioned in



various Sangam texts.

2. The Ezhimala kingdom thrived under the reign of the formidable king Nannan, renowned for his military exploits against the Chera forces, particularly in battles like Pazhi. Nannan's achievements are immortalized in several Tamil poems, highlighting both his victories and subsequent downfall against the Chera leader Narmudi Cheral. Despite Nannan's prowess, Ezhimala's prominence waned after his death.

3. The Cheras emerged as a significant dominant force during the early centuries AD, with royal lineage traced in the Patittupattu. Notable Chera kings such as Utiyan Cheralatan, Nedum Cheralatan, and their descendants exhibited military valor and patronage towards the arts. Utiyan Cheral began the Chera expansion, while his son Nedum Cheralatan is celebrated for triumphs over rival kingdoms, including the Kadambas and the Yavanas.

The detailed accounts of several Chera princes illuminate the complex genealogy of the Chera dynasty, revealing a lineage characterized by achievements, struggles, and patronage of arts. The narrative progresses through victories in battle, the establishment of royal capitals, and extensive trade networks that facilitated commerce and culture.

Furthermore, the Sangam Age was marked by a vibrant social fabric where poets, scholars, and artisans thrived under royal patronage. While the



political structure leaned toward a patrilineal monarchy, matrilineal influences also surfaced, reflecting a rich cultural intermingling. The king held a quasi-divine status, frequently enveloped in grandeur and adoration of his subjects, with women enjoying significant freedom, rights to education, and roles in socio-cultural activities.

Religious beliefs in this age were varied, incorporating ancestral worship alongside early forms of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Economic activity thrived through agriculture, trade, and crafts, evidencing a prosperous society with a complex social hierarchy slowly emerging, characterized by community and caste dynamics.

As the Sangam Age transitioned into a period of obscurity in the subsequent centuries, historical records became sparse. This "historical night" saw the rise of external powers like the Chalukyas and Pandyas, marking a significant decline in the autonomous strength of local rulers, including the Cheras. While the Sangam period laid the foundations of Kerala's multifaceted culture and intricate history, the successive centuries witnessed a transformation spurred by invasions and political upheaval.

In essence, the Sangam Age not only stands as the formative era for Kerala but also a beacon illuminating the intricate interplay of power, culture, and society that shaped its historical trajectory.



## Chapter 6: THE CONFLUENCE OF RELIGIONS

The confluence of religions in Kerala is a vibrant narrative that highlights the region's role as a cultural melting pot throughout history. In ancient times, Kerala served as a confluence of various Indian religious practices, blending them with foreign religions from the world, thereby creating a rich tapestry of spiritual beliefs.

**1. Dravidian Religion:** Initially, the people of Kerala practiced Dravidian faiths characterized by nature worship and local deities. Their religious life was marked by rituals, including the worship of totem gods, local spirits, and ancestors. The Chera kings and their subjects offered sacrifices to the War Goddess Kottavai, showing the integration of local customs with emerging religious practices.

**2. Jainism:** Jainism likely arrived in Kerala during the 3rd century B.C. through figures like Chandragupta Maurya. It thrived, particularly between the Jain temples at Matilakam and Kallil, where worship practices transformed local deities into Hindu figures following the decline of Jainism

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## Chapter 7 Summary: THE AY KINGDOM

Chapter 7 of "A Survey of Kerala History" by A. Sreedhara Menon delves into the history and decline of the Ay kingdom, a significant dynasty in South Kerala affecting the region's political, social, and cultural landscape from the Sangam age until the 10th century A.D.

1. The Ay kingdom, established in South Kerala, predated the emergence of the Venad kings and was at its height from the early Sangam period up until the beginning of the 10th century A.D. Its territory spanned from Tiruvalla to Nagercoil, encompassing vital regions including the Western Ghats. Notably, the ancient geographer Ptolemy recognized the stronghold of the Ays in the area known as Aioi, indicative of their significance in early history.

2. The origins of the Ays remain ambiguous, with some sources tracing them back to the Yadavas or suggesting a connection to sage Agastya. Nevertheless, these narratives are likely exaggerated, as historical accounts suggest that the Ays, like other prominent rule families (Cholas, Cheras, and Pandyas), were native Dravidians. Noteworthy Ays of the Sangam era include figures like Ay Antiran, whose rule was marked by patronage of arts, a strong military presence, and adherence to Saivism—elements that showcased the cultural richness of the Ay dynasty.



3. Despite a noble beginning, the Ay kingdom faced disintegration under subsequent rulers. Atiyan, the last significant ruler, struggled against the rising power of the Pandyas, leading to territorial conflicts and losses. Although the Ays engaged in battles to reclaim their lost territories, they could not regain their former stature, leading to a long period of turmoil and decline.
4. The post-Sangam period is characterized by the rise of the Pandyas, which became increasingly aggressive in territorial expansion, marking a distinct shift in power dynamics. Despite several setbacks, the Ay rulers, like Sadayan and his son Karunandan, continued to assert their independence through military engagements, albeit with diminishing returns against the encroaching Pandyas.
5. The prominence of the Ay dynasty further diminished with the ascendance of the Cholas and Cheras in the subsequent centuries. Key figures like Vikramaditya Varaguna navigated the complex inter-dynastic politics during their reign, yet even support for the Pandyas could not avert the eventual decline of the Ay kingdom.
6. The aftermath of the Ay dynasty saw its integration into the Venad region, culminating in the end of its status as a separate political entity. The influence of the Ays, however, remained through their continued relationship with the local populace in regions like Trivandrum, particularly in managing



the temple of Sri Padmanabha.

7. The Kohômage culture of the Ay kingdom exemplified the rich socio-cultural dynamics of the period. The hereditary monarchy functioned within a court system rooted in the Makkathayam system of succession. Administrative divisions known as Nadus managed governance, while military advancements were underscored by the establishment of strongholds like Vizhinjam.

8. Educational pursuits also flourished, with Salais forming critical centers for learning, particularly for Brahmins. These institutions exemplified focused efforts on morality, discipline, and the propagation of religious values, contributing greatly to Kerala's specialized knowledge transmission.

The Ay kingdom's legacy is etched in the myriad cultural practices, religious tolerance, and educational advancements that characterized its rule, despite its eventual decline in the face of evolving political landscapes in South Kerala. The chapter closes with a reference to the Kollam era — a significant chronological marker in Kerala's history — encouraging further exploration into the sociopolitical ramifications associated with the emerging kingdoms of the region.

Section	Summary
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Section	Summary
Introduction	Chapter 7 examines the Ay kingdom's rise and decline, pivotal in South Kerala's history from the Sangam age to the 10th century A.D.
Territory and Recognition	The Ay kingdom, predating Venad, thrived from the Sangam period to the 10th century, covering regions from Tiruvalla to Nagercoil. Ptolemy noted their stronghold in Aioi.
Origins	The origins of the Ays are unclear, with speculations linking them to Yadavas or sage Agastya, but are likely Dravidian. Significant rulers included Ay Antiran, known for cultural patronage and Saivism.
Decline	After a glorious start, the kingdom weakened under Atiyan against the Pandyas, resulting in territorial losses and decline despite their attempts to revive power.
Rise of Pandyas	A shift in power occurred post-Sangam, with Pandyas expanding aggressively while Ay rulers like Sadayan resisted but with diminishing success.
Cholas and Cheras Ascendancy	With the rise of Cholas and Cheras, the Ays lost prominence despite notable political maneuvers until their eventual decline.
Integration into Venad	The Ay dynasty merged into Venad, losing its political entity but retaining influence through local relationships, especially in temple management.
Kohômage Culture	The Ay kingdom flourished culturally with hereditary monarchy and administrative Nadus, while military strength was marked by forts like Vizhinjam.
Education	Salais emerged as centers for education, promoting moral and religious values, contributing to Kerala's knowledge transmission.
Legacy	The Ays left a rich legacy in cultural practices, religious tolerance, and education despite their decline. The chapter ends with a reference to the Kollam era.



## Chapter 8 Summary: KULASEKHARAS OF MAHODAYAPURAM (800-1102 A.D.)

The period known as the age of the Kulasekharas of Mahodayapuram spanned from 800 to 1102 A.D. and marked the revival of Chera power in Kerala following a long historical downturn post the Sangam age. This era was brought to light through meticulous research by scholars like Prof. Elamkulam, which corrected prior misconceptions about Kerala's political landscape during that time.

### 1. Establishment of the Second Chera Empire

The revival began with Kulasekhara Varman, who established the Second Chera Empire, with Mahodayapuram as its capital. This era dismantled the notion that Kerala was merely a fragmented region of petty principalities and instead presented it as a cohesive political entity.

### 2. Significant Rulers and Contributions

- **Kulasekhara Alwar (800-820 A.D.):** A pivotal figure, he was a saint associated with the Vaishnavite movement and renowned for literary contributions such as the "Perumal Tirumozhi." His association with religious and political life marked an era of cultural flourish.

- **Rajasekhara Varman (820-844 A.D.):** Noted for his devout Saivism,





he established the Kollam era and was recognized through the Vazhapalli inscription, the first recorded mention of a Chera king.

- **Sthanu Ravi Varman (844-885 A.D.):** One of the notable rulers who fostered friendly relations with the Cholas, his reign witnessed economic prosperity and significant advancements in astronomy and sciences.

- **Rama Varma Kulasekhara (885-917 A.D.):** Engaged in diplomatic relationships through marriage alliances and cultural exchanges, he enhanced the Chera's standing with other kingdoms.

### 3. Military Engagements and Power Dynamics

The Kulasekhara dynasty faced increasing tension and conflict with the Chola Empire. Significant battles led to periods of both territorial loss and recuperation for the Cheras.

- **Bhaskara Ravi Varman I and II (962-1021 A.D.):** Their reigns bore witness to the onset of the 'Hundred Years War' against Raja Raja Chola, with marked victories and defeats, ultimately leading to the Cheras' enduring resistance.

- **Vira Kerala (1021-1028 A.D.):** His reign continued the struggle against Chola dominance, illustrating the military and political challenges faced by the Cheras.

### 4. Cultural and Religious Tolerance



The era is characterized by its religious and cultural tolerances, seen through Bhaskara Ravi Varman's charter to the Jewish community, symbolizing the inclusive governance of the time. This aspect highlights the empire's approach towards diverse communities within its realm.

## **5. Decline and Legacy of the Kulasekharas**

The reign of Rama Varma Kulasekhara (1090-1102 A.D.) marked the decline of the Kulasekhara rule as external pressures intensified. However, his leadership during the latter days exemplified a fierce commitment to defend Kerala from Chola incursions, eventually transitioning power to the emerging kingdom of Venad.

## **6. Critique of the ‘Foreign Perumals’ Narrative**

The traditional narrative surrounding the "foreign Perumals" who supposedly governed Kerala has been debunked. Evidence increasingly supports that the Kulasekharas of Mahodayapuram were inherently linked to the Chera lineage, countering earlier misconceptions about foreign rule during the formation of Kerala's political structure.

## **7. Final Thoughts on Historical Identity**

Ultimately, the history of the Kulasekharas serves as a foundational



narrative for Kerala identity, merging local governance with significant cultural development. The intricate relationships formed, both with neighboring kingdoms and within diverse communities, illustrate a rich tapestry of heritage that influenced subsequent historical trajectories in the region.

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## Chapter 9: GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY IN THE KULASEKHARA AGE

Chapter IX discusses the governmental structure and societal dynamics during the Kulasekhara Age, which is celebrated as a "Golden Age" in Kerala's history. This period, encompassing the 9th and 10th centuries, was marked by remarkable administrative efficiency, cultural flourishing, and economic vitality. However, the subsequent 11th century, corresponding to the later Kulasekharas, was overshadowed by the decline of central authority, cultural stagnation, and economic strife triggered by the Chola-Chera wars. Below is a detailed summary of the key aspects discussed in the chapter:

**1. Political Divisions:** The Kulasekhara Empire, at its peak, included most of modern Kerala and portions of neighboring regions. It was divided into provinces called "nadas" for administrative purposes. Notable provinces included Venad with its capital at Quilon, Odanad with its capitals at Kandiur and Eruva, and several others like Nanthuzhinad, Munjunad, and Kizhumalainad. Each nadu contained smaller units called desams

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## Chapter 10 Summary: VENAD TILL 1314

In the twelfth century A.D., the principality of Venad emerged as a significant political entity following the decline of the Kulasekhara dynasty in Kerala. Although references to Venad exist in Pandyan records as early as the eighth century, it was during the twelfth century that Venad transformed from a small subordinate territory within the Kulasekhara Empire into an independent kingdom. Initially governed by the Kizhperur family, the royal structure of Venad evolved through the incorporation of other local family lines from Trippappur and Chiravai. This new consolidation of power positioned the rulers of Venad, particularly Ayyan Atikal Tiruvatikal and Sri Vallabhan Kotha, as key figures in the region, marked by their inscriptions and grants to religious establishments.

Amidst intermittent conflict such as the Chola-Chera wars, the Venad kingdom experienced pivotal growth and consolidated territorial claims, particularly under rulers like Rama Varma Kulasekhara, who established the lineage of Venad kings. His successors, Kotha Varma and Vira Kerala Varma, further expanded Venad's influence by capturing territories from nearby kingdoms, enhancing both the military and economic standing of Venad. The administration grew more robust during the reigns of Vira Ravi Varma, Aditya Varma, and Udaya Marthanda Varma, establishing rich cultural and religious institutions, particularly around the important temples such as Sri Padmanabha.



By the time of Ravi Varma Kulasekhara's ascension to the throne in 1299, Venad had solidified its autonomy but remained initially a vassal to the Pandyan kingdom. Following a turbulent period due to the internal strife within the Pandyan realm and external invasions, Ravi Varma capitalized on the disarray to expand Venad's claims and established himself as a ruler of imperial stature by conquering Pandyan territories and declaring himself the Emperor of South India. His reign is characterized by military conquests, the enhancement of religious institutions, and a flourishing economy driven by trade through the vital port of Quilon.

Venad under Ravi Varma saw advancements in social and economic realms, facilitated by a system of local governance involving popular assemblies, and maintained a vibrant religious life where Hinduism, Christianity, and other faiths coexisted. The capital, Quilon, thrived as a trade hub renowned for its commodities and the vigilant protection of foreign merchants' interests, as chronicled by foreign travelers like Marco Polo. The infrastructure, urban development, and patronage of the arts under Ravi Varma further enriched Venad's cultural legacy. His contributions afforded him a prominent place in the annals of Kerala's history, marking an era of prosperity and enlightened rule amidst a backdrop of strife and transformation within the region.



# Chapter 11 Summary: RISE OF KOLATHUNAD AND COCHIN

In the aftermath of the disintegration of the Kulasekhara Empire around 1102 A.D., Kerala underwent significant political fragmentation, with several independent states emerging. Among these, Kolathunad, Cochin, and Calicut were the most prominent. To fully appreciate the subsequent rise of the Calicut kingdom under the Zamorins, it is essential first to explore the origins and early history of Kolathunad and Cochin.

1. The Mushaka Dynasty laid the foundation for Kolathunad, with its roots tracing back to ancient kings during the Sangam period, suggesting a legacy that links today's rulers to the ancient capital near Mount Eli. This kingdom, particularly significant in the Wynad-Tellicherry region, saw the Mushaka kings emerge as a formidable dynasty during the Second Chera Empire. This transition from a patrilineal to a matrilineal system highlights the evolving lineage and social structures during the Mushaka era. Remarkable figures such as Vikrama Rama, who safeguarded important temples, and Valabha II, who advanced trade and annexed islands, exemplify the kingdom's cultural and economic contributions.

2. By the 14th century, Kolathunad had transformed into a kingdom ruled by the Kolathiris, who were descendants of the Mushaka kings. Their recognition in historical texts, including those of Marco Polo, demonstrated





their political independence and the kingdom's economic vitality, characterized by its rich exports of spices. The Kolathiri administration involved a structured hierarchy among family members, reflecting the intricacies of their governance.

3. Cochin, or the Perumpadappu Swarupam, gained prominence post-Kulasekhara Empire and pivoted its political power from Vanneri to Cochin as a result of geopolitical pressures, including threats from the Zamorin of Calicut. While its rulers claimed descent from the Kulasekharas, they navigated a complex political landscape defined by various local factions and familial divisions. The legacy of the Perumpadappu rulers, who emphasized religious and moral authority despite limited political power, illustrates the strong ties between these rulers and their subjects.

4. The Zamorin's rise in Calicut, considered the central power of medieval northern Kerala, is marked by its interactions with local rulers and external powers alike. The Zamorins initiated a series of military campaigns against neighboring territories, notably Valluvanad, to assert dominance. The conquest of Tirunavai was particularly significant, as it allowed the Zamorin to preside over the prestigious Mamamkam assembly, further solidifying his status.

5. As the Zamorin's authority grew, Calicut emerged as a major trading port. The kingdom's pursuit of trade attracted foreign merchants by declaring the



port a free trade zone, enabling the influx of riches and enhancing political ambition. This dynamic relationship between commerce and territorial expansion was key to the Zamorin's governance, which combined autocratic rule with consultation from chief ministers.

6. The administration under the Zamorins was notable for its structural complexity, with a blend of autocracy and bureaucratic governance. The various Naduvazhis played critical roles in maintaining local control while contributing to the region's military strength. Judicial practices were also developed, though primitive in their understanding of justice, shaping societal norms.

7. Culturally, the Zamorins were great patrons of learning and literature, giving rise to a rich intellectual heritage in Calicut. The annual Revathi Pattathanam literary assembly exemplified the cultural flowering of the period, fostering scholarly discussions and celebrating erudition. The Zamorin's court became a hub for poets and scholars, ensuring his lasting legacy in the realms of culture and literature.

8. The accounts of foreign visitors reveal a vibrant trade landscape, highlighting Calicut as a central hub for global commerce, particularly in spices. The affectionately chronicled interactions between the Zamorin's court and various merchant groups add depth to our understanding of the era, showcasing how external influences shaped local politics and economics.



As the Portuguese arrived in Kerala, they encountered a region defined by its rich history and robust political structures, largely shaped by the interplay of local kingdoms and external maritime trade dynamics. The subsequent chapters promise to delve into the impact of these developments on Kerala's evolving historical landscape.

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## Chapter 12: MINOR PRINCIPALITIES

In this chapter, A. Sreedhara Menon presents a detailed overview of the minor principalities of Kerala that emerged following the decline of the Kulasekhara Empire, providing insight into their political structure, historical significance, and interactions with European powers.

**1. Kerala's Political Landscape Pre-Portuguese Arrival:** Before the arrival of the Portuguese in 1498, Kerala's political scene was marked by a fragmented feudal system with small kingdoms often in conflict with one another. Major powers such as Calicut and Venad held sovereign rights, while smaller rulers and chieftains acknowledged their supremacy. The political scene was rife with disputes and lawlessness exacerbated by the feudal allegiances and rivalries.

**2. Religious Influence on Politics:** The religious dynamics within Kerala also deepened political entanglement. Temples wielded considerable power, with their own territories known as Sanketam, often outside state control. Rulers sought Melkoyma rights over temples, which played crucial roles in

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## Chapter 13 Summary: THE PORTUGUESE PERIOD

The Portuguese period in Kerala marked a significant transition in the region's history, beginning with Vasco da Gama's landing in Calicut in May 1498. Commissioned by King Manuel of Portugal, Da Gama's expedition aimed to establish a new trading route to India and expand Portuguese influence. Initially focused on trade, the Portuguese soon envisioned establishing a territorial empire in India, facilitated by the rivalries among local rulers—primarily the Zamorin of Calicut and the Raja of Cochin.

**1. Vasco da Gama's Initial Voyage** Upon his arrival, da Gama faced immediate challenges, including a cold reception from the Zamorin, who rejected da Gama's request to establish a trading post. After unsuccessful negotiations and witnessing resistance from the Zamorin, da Gama allied with local powers such as the Kolathiri Raja of Cannanore, who offered support for trading activities. Gama's return to Portugal was celebrated due to the high value of the cargo he brought back, marking an initial success for Portuguese trade in the East.

**2. Pedro Alvarez Cabral:** The subsequent expedition under Cabral resulted in a mixed outcome. Although he was able to secure a settlement with the Zamorin allowing a factory in Calicut, tensions escalated as the Portuguese engaged in violent confrontations with Muslim traders and faced repercussions from the local populace. Cabral's arrival in Cochin was more





fruitful, allowing Portuguese trade to flourish with the Raja of Cochin.

**3. Vasco da Gama's Second Voyage and Military Actions** Da Gama's return in 1502 escalated hostilities with the Zamorin, leading to violent assaults on Calicut. Having bombarded the city and forced a trade agreement upon the Cochin Raja, da Gama contributed further to tensions that ultimately led to war between the Zamorin and Portuguese-backed Cochin.

**4. Conflict and Consolidation:** The competition between the Zamorin and the Portuguese culminated in a confrontation at Cochin, where a Portuguese naval squadron helped secure a victory for the Cochin Raja. Following this, the Portuguese solidified their position by constructing Fort Manuel, signifying their growing influence on the Kerala coast.

**5. Rise of Portuguese Military Presence:** Appointed as Viceroy in 1505, Francisco d'Almeida intensified efforts to establish Portuguese dominance, resulting in fierce battles with the Zamorin's forces. While the Portuguese victories bolstered their presence, they faced increased resistance, especially from local naval leaders like the Kunjali Marakkars, who utilized guerrilla tactics against Portuguese maritime interests.

**6. Albuquerque's Leadership:** Albuquerque's strategy diverged from d'Almeida's militaristic approach towards creating alliances. His treaties with the Zamorin allowed for some level of peace, yet continued hostilities



persisted, especially as the Kunjali Marakkars posed a significant challenge to Portuguese naval supremacy.

**7. Decline of Power:** Despite initial successes, the decline of Portuguese power emerged through internal corruption and ineffective governance. The emergence of rival European powers, especially the Dutch, further diminished their hold in Kerala, culminating in the loss of strategically important coastal strongholds.

**8. Cultural and Social Changes:** The Portuguese presence altered Kerala's socio-economic landscape, diminishing traditional trade links and introducing new agricultural practices, notably the cultivation of spices. However, their attempt to impose Catholicism resulted in religious strife and a significant backlash among local communities, leading to revolts like the Coonan Cross in 1653.

**9. Religious Tensions and the Bhakti Movement** The period also saw the strengthening of the Bhakti movement as a response to social and religious oppression, fostering a spiritual resurgence among Hindus. Key figures emerged, like Tunchat Ezhuthachan, who accentuated devotion through literature, thus enriching Malayalam cultural heritage.

**10. Legacy:** Ultimately, while the Portuguese set the stage for a complex interaction of trade and cultural exchange in Kerala, their legacy is marked





by exploitation, conflict, and a profound influence that reshaped the region's political and social dynamics. The decline of Portuguese dominance set the stage for later European colonial interests in India, particularly those of the Dutch and the British.

Key Topic	Summary
Portuguese Arrival	Vasco da Gama's landing in Calicut in 1498 marked the start of Portuguese influence in Kerala, aimed at expanding trade and territorial control.
Vasco da Gama's Initial Voyage	Faced with rejection from the Zamorin, he secured alliances with local rulers and returned to Portugal with valuable cargo.
Pedro Alvarez Cabral	His expedition achieved mixed results, securing a factory in Calicut but inciting tensions with local Muslim traders.
Da Gama's Second Voyage	Led to increased violence with the Zamorin and forced trade agreements with the Cochin Raja.
Conflict and Consolidation	Portuguese victory at Cochin cemented their influence, symbolized by the construction of Fort Manuel.
Portuguese Military Presence	Francisco d'Almeida's leadership resulted in military engagement against the Zamorin, facing resistance from local leaders.
Albuquerque's Leadership	Shifted focus to alliances with local rulers, achieving temporary peace despite ongoing conflicts.
Decline of Power	Internal corruption, ineffective governance, and competition from the Dutch led to the decline of Portuguese control.
Cultural and Social	Portuguese altered socio-economic conditions but faced backlash due to religious imposition and revolts.

Key Topic	Summary
Changes	
Religious Tensions	The Bhakti movement gained strength, promoting devotion and cultural expression amid social oppression.
Legacy	The Portuguese influence in trade and culture was marked by conflict and exploitation, paving the way for future colonial interests.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** The Importance of Alliances

**Critical Interpretation:** In Vasco da Gama's journey, we see how vital it was for him to forge alliances with local powers to achieve his goals. This key point can inspire you to recognize the power of collaboration in your own life; whether in your personal relationships or professional endeavors, seeking to build connections and alliances can be a game-changer. Just as Da Gama navigated complex dynamics to establish his trading routes, you too can seek out partnerships that strengthen your position and expand your horizons. Remember, in a world of competition, it's often the alliances you cultivate that will enable you to overcome obstacles and realize your ambitions.

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## Chapter 14 Summary: VENAD (1314 -1720)

The chapter details the history of the Venad kingdom from the end of Ravi Varma Kulasekhara's reign in 1314 to the rise of Marthanda Varma in 1729.

**1. Early Leaders:** Following Ravi Varma's succession, Vira Udaya Marthanda Varma ascended the throne in 1314, marking the beginning of matrilineal succession in Venad. He faced defeat alongside Vira Pandya against the Kakatiya ruler but managed to retain authority in parts of the Tirunelveli district. It was during his reign that two Kolathunad princesses were adopted, highlighting diplomatic alliances through marriage.

**2. Cultural Flourishment:** The period between 1350 and 1383, characterized by rulers like Iravi Iravi Varman and his brother Iravi Aditya Varman, saw significant cultural and military achievements. The brothers confronted Muslim raiders and fortified borders while fostering a vibrant cultural milieu, evidenced by the notable poem, "Unnunilisandesam," produced under their patronage.

**3. Scholarly Leaders:** Aditya Varma Sarvanganatha succeeded in 1376, distinguished as a multifaceted scholar and warrior, showcasing military prowess against southern Muslim raiders. He actively promoted the arts and constructed vital structures in Trivandrum.



**4. Long Reigns and Stability:** Chera Udaya Marthanda Varma, ruling from 1383 to 1444, significantly expanded Venad's territories and is remembered for his patronage of temples, including the noteworthy Suchindram temple. Subsequent rulers maintained stability with varying degrees of internal and external conflict, notably against the Vijayanagar Empire.

**5. Military Confrontation:** Bhutalavira Sri Vira Udaya Marthanda Varma (1516-1535) faced military challenges, most notably from Vijayanagar due to granting asylum to a rival, resulting in a significant defeat that necessitated relinquishing territory conquered from the Pandyas.

**6. Religious Dynamics and Conflicts:** The 16th century marked increasing tensions with Vijayanagar and internal struggles regarding temple governance, highlighting conflicts between royal authority and temple trustees, particularly concerning the Sri Padmanabhaswami temple.

**7. Regency and Political Turmoil:** After the death of Aditya Varma in 1677, Umayamma Rani ruled as regent, adeptly managing temple affairs and political tensions until her eventual alliance with the Kottayam royal family member, Kerala Varma, who was tragically assassinated due to court intrigues.

**8. External Threats and Local Rebellions:** The late 17th century faced



invasions from Tirumala Nayak and the establishment of the English factory at Anjengo, illustrating the dual pressures of external invasion and internal discontent among the populace regarding taxations by nobles.

**9. Decline of Power:** By the early 18th century, the reign of Ravi Varma witnessed heightened struggles against the Madurai Nayaks and internal rebellion due to oppressive governance, culminating in a breakdown of royal authority and culminating events like the massacre of Englishmen from Anjengo.

**10. Treaties and Political Maneuvering** The final king before Marthanda Varma, Rama Varma, signed critical treaties with both the English and the Nayaks of Madurai, aiming to consolidate power amidst growing dissent from local nobles and reaffirming fragile royal authority in the face of greater challenges.

By the end of this period, the stage was set for Marthanda Varma to take the throne, embarking on reforms and consolidation efforts that would significantly shape the future of the Venad kingdom.



## Chapter 15: THE RISE AND FALL OF THE DUTCH

The Dutch in Kerala marked a significant chapter in the history of the region through their trading endeavors and political maneuvers, standing against the Portuguese. Their involvement began in earnest in 1663 with the capture of Cochin, yet Dutch interest in Kerala can be traced back to individual Dutch expeditions prior to this period, notably through their extensive trade networks, particularly as organized by the Dutch East India Company, established in 1592.

1. The initial diplomatic engagements began in 1604 when Admiral Steven Van Der Hagen secured a treaty with the Zamorin of Calicut, solidifying a mutual alliance aimed at expelling the Portuguese. This was significant as it laid the groundwork for future treaties emphasizing joint action against the Portuguese presence in Indian waters, such as the combined efforts with the English in 1619.

2. The Dutch strategically shifted focus from North Kerala towards Central Kerala and established treaties with regional powers like the Rajas of

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## Chapter 16 Summary: KERALA POLITY AND LIFE IN THE 16th AND 17th CENTURIES

In Chapter 17 of "A Survey Of Kerala History," A. Sreedhara Menon presents a comprehensive overview of the political and social structure of Kerala during the 16th and 17th centuries. The period is characterized by a feudal system with various principalities governed by localized chieftains known as Naduvazhis, who exercised significant authority within their territories, constrained by the societal organization of the Nairs.

**1. Political Structure:** The political landscape of Kerala was fragmented into numerous Nadus, each ruled by a Naduvazhi. Despite enjoying considerable power, these chieftains were often limited by local assemblies representing the Nair community, known as tara kuttams. Economically, the Naduvazhis derived income from customs duties, fines, and taxes from commercial activities. They had the ability to acquire lands from diminished neighboring chiefs and imposed various fees for protection and other services.

**2. Military Institutions:** Military power was primarily held by the Nair Madampimar, who maintained personal armies. Central to military training was the Kalari, a gymnasium for skill development in martial arts, where both boys and girls were educated in combat. Significant martial traditions also arose among the Tiyyas or Ezhavas, further illustrated through regional



heroic ballads.

**3. Combat and Dispute Resolution:** To resolve disputes, the tradition of Ankam involved martial combats sanctioned by local assemblies. This system focused on fair combat, with nobles expected to respect ethical conduct. In contrast, the Poithu was a private combat between individuals or factions, highlighting both the personal and societal emphasis on honor.

**4. Trial by Ordeal:** The judiciary system relied on customs rather than written laws, with rulers consulting local authorities for verdicts. Notably, various forms of trial by ordeal, often influenced by caste hierarchy, were employed to determine guilt in legal disputes. For instance, Brahmins faced trials of balance, while other castes encountered varying methods depending on their social status.

**5. Inheritance and Social Customs:** The Marumakkathayam system of matrilineal inheritance was prevalent among the Nairs and some Muslims, contrasting with the patrilineal system of other Hindu communities. This allowed women to hold significant familial positions, particularly in terms of property management. Polyandry was practiced among Nair women without social stigma.

**6. Role of Women:** Women, especially among the Nairs, enjoyed a relatively free social status. Nair women were known for their independence



and active participation in public life. Polyandry, particularly fraternal polyandry, was common, revealing a unique aspect of familial relationships designed to prevent property fragmentation.

**7. Caste System and Social Hierarchy:** Kerala's social hierarchy was strictly caste-based, with Brahmins at the summit, followed by Nairs and Tiyyas. Caste norms dictated social interactions, workplaces, and marriage practices, often leading to extreme discrimination against lower castes in practice and social standing.

**8. Cultural Decline and Social Evils:** The chapter discusses the moral decline during this era, which stemmed from the caste system and exploitation of socio-economic divisions. Customs such as Pulappedi allowed lower castes to harass women of higher castes, resulting in profound social injustices and widespread societal issues, including slavery.

**9. Mappilas and Non-Hindus:** The Mappilas, an Islamic community in North Kerala, played a prominent role in commerce, benefiting from religious toleration enacted by Hindu rulers. They thrived economically due to their involvement in trade, forming a crucial link in the local economy alongside the native trading classes.

**10. Christian Community:** While non-Hindus such as Syrian Christians were more prominent in Central and South Kerala, they mirrored many



societal aspects of the Nairs. Christian communities participated actively in military endeavors and maintained strict moral standards in business practices.

**11. Economic Trade and Challenges** The trade conducted through Kerala's ports remained vibrant during the 16th and 17th centuries, with significant exports such as spices. Foreign accounts from traders depict bustling commerce; however, economic decline was apparent as the price of essential commodities like pepper fell, leading to increasing poverty among the populace.

In summary, this chapter provides an intricate view of Kerala's socio-political landscape during the 16th and 17th centuries, highlighting the feudal system's complexity, the importance of military and martial traditions, notable practices around inheritance and women's roles, as well as the challenges faced by various communities in the context of trade and social customs.



## Chapter 17 Summary: MARTHANDA VARMA AND DHARMA RAJA

In the 18th century, the kingdom of Travancore in Venad witnessed the reign of two remarkable rulers: Marthanda Varma and his successor, Kartika Tirunal Rama Varma, known as Dharma Raja. Under their leadership, Travancore transformed into a formidable military power in the region, marked by both territorial expansion and administrative consolidation.

1. Marthanda Varma came to the throne amid chaos; the administrative machinery was ineffective, finances were in disarray, and feudal powers had gained significant influence. Upon ascending as king, he adopted a policy of "blood and iron," aiming to eradicate feudal resistance and restore royal authority. He sought alliances with foreign powers, notably the English East India Company, to aid in his quest to centralize control over the kingdom.

2. A key achievement during his reign was the elimination of the Pillamar, a group of feudal lords who challenged his rule. In a decisive move, Marthanda Varma executed rival claimants to the throne and executed punitive actions against other feudal leaders, thus dismantling the feudal system in Travancore and paving the way for a strong centralized administration.

3. Subsequently, he turned his focus to expanding Travancore's territory



through military campaigns. Marthanda Varma absorbed the Attingal estate and defeated neighboring rulers, including the Raja of Quilon, and procured victory over the Kayamkulam kingdom through strategic military engagements, establishing a clear path for Travancore's expansion.

4. The military might of Travancore was notably demonstrated in the Battle of Colachel in 1741, where Marthanda Varma's forces triumphed over the Dutch, significantly diminishing their influence in Kerala and marking a turning point in local power dynamics. His aggressive military campaigns allowed for the annexation of various principalities, cementing his authority across southern Kerala.

5. Despite his military conquests, Marthanda Varma prioritized administrative reforms and improvements in public welfare. He implemented significant measures for financial stability, military reorganization, and infrastructure development, including irrigation projects and the enhancement of communication systems within the kingdom.

6. A pivotal act was the dedication of Travancore to the deity Sri Padmanabha in 1750, which solidified his authority and fostered a sense of loyalty among his subjects by framing his rule as a divine mandate. This act of devotion provided political stability and reduced the likelihood of rebellion.



7. The realm was not only militarily fortified but also culturally enriched. Marthanda Varma was a patron of the arts, leading to a flourishing of literature, and temple arts, as exemplified by the mural paintings in the Padmanabhapuram palace and the blossoming of Kathakali.

8. Following Marthanda Varma's death, Dharma Raja continued to build upon his uncle's legacy. Known for his administrative acumen and cultural patronage, he sought to consolidate the new territorial gains and ensure a stable governance structure. The alliance established with Cochin against the Zamorin of Calicut marked a significant diplomatic success early in his reign.

9. Dharma Raja championed administrative continuity and financial reform, further modernizing the governance through reorganization of revenue departments and infrastructure enhancements, notably establishing the port of Alleppey and contributing to the development of Trivandrum city.

10. His reign also coincided with external threats, particularly from the Mysore rulers, Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan. Dharma Raja's response included fortifying borders and offering refuge to displaced rulers and their followers, thereby earning the moniker "Dharma Rajyam," or Land of Charity.

11. The administrative and cultural landscape of Travancore blossomed under his patronage, with significant achievements in literature and the arts.



He promoted Kathakali and other local traditions, facilitating a rich cultural tapestry that characterized the era.

12. The administration under Dharma Raja focused on social welfare, economic revival, and diplomatic relations with neighboring powers, laying a robust foundation for Travancore's political and cultural identity.

In conclusion, both Marthanda Varma and Dharma Raja are celebrated for their visionary leadership, military prowess, and profound contributions to the cultural and administrative development of Travancore, ensuring its place as a notable power in South India during the 18th century. Their legacies remain integral to Kerala's historical narrative.

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## Chapter 18: HISTORY OF COCHIN (1500-1805)

The history of Cochin from 1500 to 1805 unfolds a remarkable tale of political evolution, marked by the influence of various rulers, external powers, and internal dynamics. The arrival of the Portuguese set the stage, with Unni Rama Koil I initiating trade relations that benefitted Cochin. His successors, notably Unni Rama Koil II and Vira Kerala Varma, further deepened ties with Portuguese traders, although tensions surfaced due to Portuguese misdeeds, such as the plundering of temples. The reign of Kesava Rama Varma (1565-1601) emerged as a high point, fostering cultural advancements and triggering significant developments including the arrival of Jewish communities and the Synod of Diamper, which affected the Christian population.

Following the significant leadership of Kesava, Cochin saw a series of mostly uneventful rulers until the emergence of female monarchy with Rani Gangadhara Lakshmi serving as regent. The rise of Dutch influence during the latter part of the 17th century saw Cochin's rulers increasingly reliant on Dutch protection, starting with Vira Kerala Varma (1663-1687), who

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## Chapter 19 Summary: THE GROWTH OF BRITISH POWER

The emergence of British power in Kerala unfolded through a series of key developments, beginning with initial trade interactions and escalating into political dominance and local resistance.

1. The British arrived in Kerala with commercial ambitions, finding their foothold through early navigators like Ralph Fitch, who explored the region in the late 16th century. Subsequent English efforts, such as Captain Keeling's diplomatic relations with local rulers in 1615, facilitated the establishment of trade agreements. Over time, the English began to consolidate their presence through factories, notably at Calicut, Anjengo, and Tellicherry, driven partly by the waning Portuguese influence and competing interests from the Dutch.

2. A pivotal moment occurred in 1721 when the Anjengo factory experienced a violent uprising due to British manipulation of local pepper prices. This led to the first organized revolt against British authority in Kerala, culminating in an agreement that granted the English a monopoly on pepper trade while compensating local rulers.

3. The establishment of treaties with local rulers marked a formal integration of British interests in Kerala. The treaty with Travancore in 1723 was



notably the first of its kind between the English East India Company and an Indian princely state. Through further alliances and negotiations, such as the establishment of factories in south Kerala and gaining trading rights in Dharmapattanam, the British expanded their influence significantly.

4. Nevertheless, resistance emerged. The first major challenge to British supremacy was led by Pazhassi Raja from 1793 to 1797, who reacted against British revenue policies perceived as unfair and harsh. His popular revolt drew support from a diverse array of local factions and showcased the discontent against foreign rule. Although initially successful, British military strategy eventually suppressed the uprising after intense guerrilla warfare.

5. The subsequent Pazhassi Revolt II (1800-1805) reignited insurgency against further British encroachment, particularly over the territory of Wynad. Pazhassi Raja united local resistance, employing guerrilla tactics against British troops until his eventual capture and death in 1805. His enduring popularity and martyrdom turned him into a symbol of resistance against British rule.

6. In the following years, significant challenges arose in Travancore, spearheaded by Velu Tampi Dalawa and Paliath Achan. Their revolt in 1809 represented a union of dissenting forces against British interference in local governance. Despite initial successes, the rebellion faced severe military backlash and ultimately led to violent crackdowns, the death of Velu Tampi,



and the establishment of Cochin and Travancore as subsidiary allies of the British.

7. Minor revolts, such as the Kurichiya Revolt in 1812, continued to reflect resistance to British authority, though these uprisings gradually tapered off following intense military repression. With the consolidation of British power, the region underwent significant administrative restructuring under the English East India Company, leading to some degree of internal development despite ongoing challenges to their rule.

The narrative of British expansion and local resistance in Kerala exemplifies a critical period marked by the interplay of commerce, diplomacy, armed conflict, and the quest for sovereignty that would define the region's history leading into the colonial era.

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## Chapter 20 Summary: ENLIGHTENED ADMINISTRATION IN TRAVANCORE

In the chronicles of Travancore, the journey towards enlightened administration commenced with the reign of Marthanda Varma (1729-1758) and continued under Dharma Raja (1758-1798), both of whom instituted pivotal reforms that laid the groundwork for a modern administrative framework enriched with progressive governance principles. However, the period following the Dharma Raja's death and during Balarama Varma's reign (1798-1810) marked a regression into inefficacy and corruption, largely facilitated by a corrupt triumvirate that exploited the state's resources, leading to significant public unrest. Among the dissenters was Velu Tampi, a notable figure whose leadership rallied the populace against maladministration, resulting in the dismissal and punishment of corrupt officials in 1799. Velu Tampi's rise to power marked the onset of significant reforms aiming at cleansing the administration, enhancing revenue collection, and fostering local education and public infrastructure.

Following Velu Tampi, Ummini Tampi introduced reforms that included a vigilant revenue system and judicial improvements, yet this era did not remain devoid of challenges. The ascendance of Rani Gouri Lakshmi Bai (1810-1815) heralded further modernization initiatives, particularly through the guidance of Colonel Munro, the Resident-Diwan, whose strategies closely mirrored those in British India, leading to improved revenue



practices and the abolition of oppressive taxes and slavery.

Subsequent regencies, such as that of Gouri Parvati Bai (1815-1829), embraced extensive agricultural and trade reforms, paving the path for social equity and liberal ideologies by repealing certain restrictive practices against various communities. Swati Tirunal (1829-1847) epitomized a "Golden Age," enhancing not only education and administration, but also fostering an environment rich in the arts. His reforms included the establishment of judicial courts and the promotion of English education, culminating in the initiation of population censuses and agricultural surveys.

Utram Tirunal Marthanda Varma (1847-1860) sustained this trajectory of progress, focusing on educational initiatives and socio-economic reforms. Ayilyam Tirunal (1860-1880) saw the establishment of agricultural laws that assured tenant security and outlined civil procedures parallel to British standards, while his successors further developed educational institutions and infrastructure.

Visakham Tirunal (1880-1885) and Sri Mulam Tirunal (1885-1924) expanded on previous administrative frameworks, introducing systematic land revenue reforms and fostering educational advancements through the establishment of various colleges and departments aimed at benefiting the general populace, particularly marginalized groups.

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The Regency of Setu Lakshmi Bai (1924-1931) introduced grassroots governance through the establishment of Village Panchayats, enhancing self-governance. Sri Chitra Tirunal Balarama Varma (1931-1949) further reconstituted the legislature, advocating for wider franchise and social reforms, including the significant Temple Entry Proclamation, thus continuing the legacy of enlightened administration in Travancore until its eventual integration with Cochin in 1949.

In parallel, the history of Cochin as a progressive state began with Saktan Tampuran (1790-1805), whose centralization efforts marked the foundations of modern administrative governance. The tumult that followed rendered Cochin susceptible to mismanagement until Colonel Munro's reforms reinvigorated its administration, bringing in measures that closely resembled those prevalent in Travancore.

Subsequent Diwans played crucial roles in progressing judicial and educational frameworks while ensuring agricultural development and public health initiatives were prioritized. The leadership of figures like Sankara Warriar and Sankunni Menon deepened the administrative fabric, systematically abolishing outdated norms and instilling progressive policies that emphasized self-governance, social justice, and the wellbeing of citizens. The establishment of a Legislative Council in 1925 under P. Narayana Menon marked a significant step towards democratic governance in Cochin, culminating in further advances that prepared the state for



post-colonial concerns surrounding equity and development.

The intertwining stories of Travancore and Cochin agreeably reflect a historical arc of governance characterized by aspiring reforms and societal progress, marking both regions as noteworthy in the broader narrative of modern Indian administrative histories.

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## Chapter 21: BRITISH MALABAR

The history of British Malabar, as narrated, reflects a complex interplay of administrative developments, socio-economic changes, and burgeoning political movements, particularly focusing on the period from 1800 to the advent of independent India in 1947.

**1. Formation and Administration:** Established as part of the Madras Presidency on May 21, 1800, Malabar's administration was led by a Principal Collector and nine Subordinate Collectors, with Major Macleod being the first to oversee operations. Despite its separation from the princely states of Travancore and Cochin, Malabar did not experience as remarkable a growth trajectory.

**2. Judicial Developments:** The British made substantial efforts to formalize a judicial framework, beginning in 1793 with the Joint Commissioners' civil and criminal justice code. By 1802, the Cornwallis Code separated judicial and executive powers, leading to the establishment of the Provincial Court at Tellicherry and Zilla Courts in key locations.

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## Chapter 22 Summary: POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN TRAVANCORE AND COCHIN

The political landscape of Travancore and Cochin during the British era reflected a complex journey characterized by a series of movements aimed at securing political rights and responsible governance. This chapter outlines the significant political struggles in these princely states, culminating in the establishment of responsible government in 1947.

1. The early political struggles in Travancore started with the revolt led by Velu Tampi in 1799, which aimed to address the misgovernance by a triumvirate that dissatisfied the populace. This protest illustrated the collective strength of the people in demanding governmental accountability. However, following this initial uprising, the 19th century saw minimal political upheaval, with governance largely handled by external advisers.
2. By the late 19th century, a more educated middle class began voicing its discontent, particularly regarding the influx of non-Travancoreans, mainly Tamil Brahmins, into key governmental positions. The expulsion of students from Maharaja's College for protesting against this policy highlighted growing political awareness. The 'Malayali Memorial' of 1891, signed by over ten thousand citizens, and later the 'Ezhava Memorial' of 1896 sought equal representation for local educated natives in government services.



3. In subsequent decades, the agitation for civic rights intensified, resulting in the formation of the Civic Rights League in 1919 to fight against employment discrimination faced by Avarnas, Muslims, and Christians. The movement achieved some degree of success with the establishment of new governmental departments allowing appointments for these communities.

4. The emergence of the Indian National Congress in Travancore during Sri Mulam Tirunal's rule marked a significant shift. The Congress actively campaigned for political rights and organized protests, including student agitations against tuition hikes and calls for responsible governance. These efforts increased public political consciousness significantly.

5. The Nivarthana movement in the 1930s represented a pivotal point in the fight for political rights, as various communities protested against constitutional reforms perceived as skewed in favor of the Nairs. Leaders from these communities united, demanding representation according to population ratios, which led to significant unrest and eventual governmental concessions.

6. The establishment of the Travancore State Congress in 1938 aimed at achieving responsible governance, but it faced state repression. Notably, the Congress initiated a Civil Disobedience movement, leading to numerous arrests and violent clashes, symbolizing the growing discontent against autocratic rule.



7. Following World War II, political agitation escalated, particularly among those opposing the Governor's proposals for constitutional reforms. The Punnapra-Vayalar upheaval of 1946 resulted in severe violence and loss of life, further galvanizing public sentiments against the ruling powers.
8. The culmination of these efforts led to significant changes post-World War II, including Diwan Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Ayyar's controversial declaration of Travancore's independence. This sparked widespread protests, culminating in his resignation and an agreement to join the Indian Union.
9. In Cochin, the political struggles mirrored those of Travancore, with early instances of public discontent in the 19th century leading to significant governmental reforms. Notably, the formation of the Cochin State Praja Mandal in 1941 marked a concerted effort to obtain responsible governance.
10. The transition into a more democratic setup occurred through reforms initiated in 1938, instituting a Dyarchic system. This enabled some representation in governance, though dissatisfaction persisted as the desire for more democratic reforms grew stronger among the populace.
11. The 'Quit India' Movement further energized political activity in Cochin, eventually leading to meaningful action by the Praja Mandal and the establishment of a popular ministry by 1946. The integration of the states of





Travancore and Cochin in 1949 marked a significant milestone in their political evolution.

This detailed political saga of Travancore and Cochin underscores a profound struggle for self-governance and socio-political rights, culminating in the establishment of responsible governance in a newly independent India. The movements in both states were not merely about local grievances; they reflected broader national aspirations for freedom and democracy.

Key Events	Details
Early Uprisings	1799 revolt led by Velu Tampi against misgovernance; illustrated demand for accountability.
19th Century Discontent	Rise of educated middle class; protests against Tamil Brahmins in government; Malayali and Ezhava Memorials for equal representation.
Civic Rights Movement	Formation of Civic Rights League in 1919; sought employment rights for Avarnas, Muslims, and Christians.
Indian National Congress Emergence	Active campaigning for political rights during Sri Mulam Tirunal's rule; student protests against tuition hikes.
Nivarthana Movement	1930s protests against biased constitutional reforms; demand for population-based representation.
Founding of Travancore State Congress	1938 establishment aimed at responsible governance; faced repression and initiated Civil Disobedience movement.
Punnapra-Vayalar Upheaval	1946 violent protests against constitutional reforms; significant public discontent.



Key Events	Details
Post-War Developments	C.P. Ramaswamy Ayyar's independence declaration led to protests; agreement to join Indian Union.
Cochin's Political Struggles	Similar discontent in Cochin; formation of Cochin State Praja Mandal in 1941 for responsible governance.
Reforms in Cochin	1938 Dyarchic system established representation; dissatisfaction remained for further reforms.
'Quit India' Movement	Energized political action in Cochin; 1946 establishment of a popular ministry.
Integration of States	1949 integration of Travancore and Cochin marked a political milestone.



# Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** The Power of Collective Action

**Critical Interpretation:** Reflecting on the struggles for political rights in Travancore and Cochin, let the stories of perseverance inspire you to harness the power of collective action in your own life. Just as the citizens united to challenge misgovernance and demand accountability, you too can rally those around you seeking positive change. In your community or workplace, harness the shared ambitions and voices of others; together, you can address injustices or push for necessary reforms. When you join forces with others, your impact amplifies, paving the way towards not only achieving your goals but also creating a culture of collaboration and mutual support. Remember, every significant change you hope to achieve starts with the courage to act together.

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## Chapter 23 Summary: TRAVANCORE - COCHIN AND KERALA

The formation of the State of Kerala on November 1, 1956, fulfilled the aspirations of the Malayalam-speaking populace who had sought a unified state for their people. This desire, however, faced historical challenges due to the British colonial administration, which had divided the region into three separate units: Malabar, Travancore, and Cochin, along with certain Malayalam-speaking areas in South Canara.

The Aikya Kerala Movement emerged as a significant initiative advocating for a united Kerala. Early efforts included a resolution passed at the State Peoples' Conference in Ernakulam in 1928, followed by a similar resolution at the Payyannur Political Conference that same year, which urged the Central Congress to form a separate province. Throughout the 1940s, as the independence movement gained energy, support for a united Kerala broadened, especially with pivotal figures like Sri Kerala Varma, the Maharaja of Cochin, voicing favor for unification.

A landmark moment occurred in 1949 when the States Ministry, under Sardar Vallabhai Patel, led to the creation of the State of Travancore-Cochin. This amalgamation started a new chapter in Kerala's political history, attracting various political actors to support the idea of a unified state. The Aikya Kerala Conference in 1947 was notably representative and included



the Maharaja of Cochin, who expressed strong support for the cause.

Following the establishment of Travancore-Cochin, a series of ministries emerged. The first popular ministry under T. K. Narayana Pillai was succeeded by several governments amidst internal conflicts within the Congress Party. The political landscape became tumultuous, particularly with the emergence of the Praja Socialist Party, catalyzed by campaigns for the merger of Tamil-speaking areas into Madras State.

The reorganization of states on a linguistic basis concluded with the formation of Kerala on November 1, 1956, which combined parts of Travancore-Cochin and Malabar, marking the decline of princely rule. With the appointment of a Governor as head of state, political developments ensued, leading to the election of the first Kerala State Legislature in 1957. The Communist Party of India gained significant seats and subsequently formed a ministry under E. M. S. Namboothiripad. However, government opposition rose, culminating in the 'Vimochana Samaram' or 'Liberation Struggle' against the Communist administration, resulting in legislative instability by 1959.

Elections in 1960 saw a coalition emerge opposing the Communists, followed by a series of governments marked by instability and realignment. With frequent transitions between President's Rule and new government formations, Kerala politics became a complex landscape. The general



elections of 1967 saw another Communist-led government, though shifts led to further coalition experiments over the years.

As the political theatre evolved, various political parties reshaped alliances in response to changing public sentiments, contributing to a rich and tumultuous political history. Election outcomes continued to shift between the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Left Democratic Front (LDF), alternating governance and showcasing the vibrant democratic fabric of Kerala. Significant electoral events occurred in the 1980s and beyond, culminating in the rise of leaders like Karunakaran, Antony, and Nayanar, each leaving an indelible mark on Kerala's political landscape.

Ultimately, the political journey of Kerala reflects the unending ebb and flow of ideals, alliances, and governance, all rooted in a historical push towards linguistic unity and cultural identity that remains central to its identity today.

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## Chapter 24: TOWARDS A NEW SOCIETY

The late 19th and early 20th centuries marked transformative changes in Kerala, leading to the gradual dismantling of the traditional social order that had long been characterized by rigid caste hierarchy and feudalism. The centralization of power by rulers such as Marthanda Varma and the influence of British colonialism further precipitated these changes, challenging the stature of upper castes and providing a platform for lower castes and marginalized communities to demand equality and rights.

**1. State of Society in the 18th and 19th Centuries:** The social fabric of Kerala was starkly divided along caste lines, with significant privileges reserved for high castes like Brahmins and Kshatriyas. The lower castes faced systemic oppression, facing discriminatory laws that enhanced the power of upper castes while inflicting severe punishments on lower caste individuals. Caste tensions were exacerbated by an oppressive judiciary that reflected feudal biases. Slavery was prevalent, and societal norms restricted the rights of various communities, including dress codes and social amenities.

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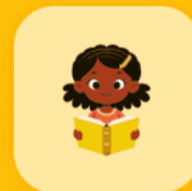
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## Chapter 25 Summary: LITERATURE AND ARTS

The literary and artistic heritage of Kerala is profound and integral to India's cultural tapestry. The evolution of Malayalam, which emerged distinctively around the 9th century AD from Tamil, showcases its journey influenced by Sanskrit, Prakrit, and local circumstances. As it transitioned, the language shed the Vattezhuthu script for a Grantha-based counterpart, marking its burgeoning identity.

1. One notable phase was the rise of **Manipravalam** from the 9th to 12th centuries, blending Tamil and Sanskrit. Tolan, one of its earliest poets, contributed foundational works, illustrating the sophistication and adaptability of Malayalam even 800 years ago, with pieces like Vaisikatantram and Ramacharitam.
2. The succeeding centuries witnessed the advent of **Champu** and **Sandesa Kavyas**, which emerged in the 13th and 14th centuries. These narrative poetic forms focused on various themes, including the lives of celebrated Devadasis. Works such as Unnulisandesam stand out for their lyrical beauty and cultural insights.
3. The **Niranam poets** of the 15th century heralded a revival in religious poetry, with Rama Panikkar (Kannassan) and Cherusseri leading the charge. Their works were characterized by original interpretations of Sanskrit texts,



reinforcing Malayalam's potential for profound expression in religious themes.

4. The 15th and 16th centuries further matured Malayalam literature, moving away from Tamil influences towards a deeper engagement with Sanskrit.

This period was noteworthy for royal patronage, producing luminaries like Punam Namboothiri and Narayana, whose works were marked by poetic depth and cultural commentary.

5. The **Bhakti movement** found its voice through poets like Tunchat Ezhuthachan and Puntanam Namboothiri, who elevated devotional literature. Ezhuthachan's accomplishments in Killpattu redefined the literary landscape, while Puntanam's Krishna Karnamritam demonstrated lyrical elegance.

6. The emergence of **Attakatha** in the 17th century showcased the confluence of prose and performance, particularly in Kathakali dramas. Key figures like Vidwan Tampuran and Unnayi Warriar shaped this genre, producing works that resonated with theatricality and popular acclaim.

7. The 18th century brought forth **Kunjan Nambiar**, known for Tullal songs, which combined humor with social critique. Alongside him, Ramapurath Warriar contributed significant devotional poetry, enriching the Malayalam literary canon.



8. **Christian missionaries** played a vital role in shaping modern Malayalam literature by introducing printing and translating works, resulting in the development of grammars and dictionaries that greatly supported the language's growth.
9. The 19th century witnessed a literary renaissance with figures like Kerala Varma Valia Koil Tampuran paving the way for modern poetry and addressing social realities through their works. New literary movements began emerging, with a noticeable shift towards the lives of common folk.
10. Prominent poets of the early 20th century, including Kumaran Asan and Vallathol Narayana Menon, contributed substantially, with Asan focusing on social reform and emotional expression, while Vallathol harnessed romantic ideals and nationalistic sentiments.
11. The **novel** form found early expression with T. M. Appu Nedungadi's Kundalata and O. Chandu Menon's Indulekha, which explored societal changes and female empowerment against the backdrop of colonial influences.
12. The **short story** genre grew alongside the novel, marked by writers such as Takazhi and Kesavadev, who tackled social issues and portrayed the lives of ordinary people with depth and poignancy.



13. The **theater** evolved through various stages, mirroring social challenges and adopting Western influences. Notable playwrights like N. Krishna Pillai and E.V. Krishna Pillai contributed significantly to this increasing cultural engagement.

14. **Literary criticism**, gaining momentum with figures like A.R. Raja Raja Varma, began to assess literary works through modern lenses, integrating Eastern and Western themes into discussions on Malayalam literature.

15. Progress in **essay and scientific literature** has been slower, yet figures like Kesari and Dr. Gundert played pivotal roles in laying foundations in these areas.

16. The richness of Kerala's **historical and biographical works** alongside scientific literature contributed to a broader understanding of its cultural and intellectual legacy, revealing crucial narratives that shaped regional identity.

17. Kerala's contributions to **Sanskrit literature**, particularly through renowned scholars and poets, have significantly influenced the cherished traditions in Indian literature.

18. The state's roots in **Ayurveda**, evidenced through numerous original





works in medicine, reflect a deep understanding of wellness and holistic living.

19. In the realms of **music and dance**, Kerala's artistic expressions are vibrant and diverse, encompassing traditional forms like Kathakali, Mohiniyattam, and innovative practices across various genres.

20. **Painting and sculpture** in Kerala captured intricate cultural nuances, with artists like Raja Ravi Varma bringing Indian mythology to life, while architecture reflects rich interactions between local and foreign influences.

21. The cult of **martial arts**, evident in Kalaripayattu and other forms, highlights Kerala's unique cultural heritage, maintaining historical practices alongside contemporary adaptations.

In summary, Kerala's cultural contributions encompass a wide spectrum of literature and arts, firmly positioning the region as a significant player in the broader expanse of Indian heritage. The state continues to foster creativity and innovation across these mediums, ensuring that its rich legacy endures in future narratives.



# Best Quotes from A Survey Of Kerala History by A. Sreedhara Menon with Page Numbers

## Chapter 1 | Quotes from pages 14-24

1. Kerala has had the distinction of being an independent geographical and political entity from very early days.
2. Its unique geographical position and peculiar physical features have invested Kerala with a distinct individuality.
3. The geographical position of Kerala has its own uniqueness and its landscape its own beauty.
4. The State has from the dawn of history enjoyed a kind of insularity which has given it welcome immunity from the political convulsions which shook Northern India.
5. Kerala was also able to evolve its own way of life and social institutions unhampered by excessive interference from outside.
6. Such arts as Kathakali, Chakiar Kuthu, Ottam Tullal and Mohini Attam developed in Kerala in an atmosphere of splendid isolation.
7. The isolation of Kerala from the rest of the country has, however, had its limitations.
8. The mountains and hills of Kerala have played their part in its history.
9. The sea has been a permanent and decisive factor in the history of Kerala.
10. The rivers of Kerala have considerably influenced its historical and cultural development.

## Chapter 2 | Quotes from pages 25-52

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1. "Though historiography in the modern sense of the term is of relatively recent origin in Kerala, it cannot be said that there was the complete absence of the historiographical tradition in early or medieval Kerala."
2. "The work inspired the compilation of the State Manuals of Travancore and Cochin by native scholars in later years."
3. "It was left to Prof. Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai to provide new horizons to Kerala historiography."
4. "What was conceived of and written till then as Kerala history of the ancient and early medieval periods was nothing but a string of legends, superstitions and fictions and had not had much of basis in fact."
5. "The study of social history also got a boost as a result of his labours, for he dealt in detail with such topics of sociological interest as Marumakkathayam, Janmi system, caste, landlord—tenant relationship, Devadasi system etc."
6. "The compilation of historical sources may be classified under two major heads, viz., Literature and Archaeology."
7. "Inscriptions form an authentic source of information for the early history of Kerala."
8. "The accounts of foreign travelers supplement the indigenous sources in the reconstruction of Kerala history."
9. "A study of the location of some of the temples, churches and mosques is of special interest to the historian of Kerala."
10. "Instances like those mentioned above serve to highlight the communal harmony and concord that prevailed among the people in early days and the



policy of enlightened religious toleration followed by the rulers of Kerala."

### **Chapter 3 | Quotes from pages 53-60**

1. "Prehistory comprises the various Stone Ages when man was a nomadic hunter."
2. "The prehistory of Kerala is shrouded in obscurity."
3. "The term 'Megalith' (mega = great and litho = stone) means monuments erected out of large blocks of stones, as funerary edifices, either sepulchral or commemorative."
4. "The megaliths of Kerala belong to the megalithic complex common to South India and are associated with the cult of the dead."
5. "This custom known to archaeologists as 'fractional burial' was generally in vogue in South India and it was widely prevalent in Kerala also."
6. "The antiquity of the megalithic culture of Kerala and its relation with cultures elsewhere are questions which have engaged the attention of archaeologists."
7. "The megalithic monuments of Kerala bear close similarity to the megalithic structures in other parts of the Deccan and Peninsular India."
8. "Kerala is a microcosm of India in the sense that it is 'an ethnological museum'."
9. "There was a conscious effort to achieve a racial, ethnological and cultural synthesis of Aryan and non-Aryan elements."
10. "The story of the success achieved in this regard forms a colourful and fascinating chapter in the social and cultural history of Kerala."





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## Chapter 4 | Quotes from pages 61-69

1. Kerala had contacts with the countries of the outside world even from time immemorial.
2. These early foreign contacts were mainly commercial but they led, at a very early period of history, to the introduction of such religions as Christianity, Judaism and Islam into the land.
3. It is certain that Indian ideas and practices contributed largely to the form which orthodox Christianity in the West finally adopted.
4. Ancient Kerala had been famous for her spices and it was her fame as the land of spices that brought foreign peoples and cultures to her shores.
5. The women of ancient Egypt are said to have burnt ginger, cinnamon and other spices on a small charcoal set in a hole on the floor to produce scented fumes.
6. Another reference in the Holy Testament to the use of spices is in connection with the visit of Queen Sheba to King Solomon of Israel.
7. In the closing centuries of the era before Christ, Kerala's trade in spices like ginger, turmeric and pepper assumed great prominence.
8. The discovery of Roman coins in many parts of Kerala testifies to the wide dispersion of Roman trade contacts.
9. The imports into Muziris are given as a great quantity of coin; topaz, thin clothing, not much; figured linens, antimony, coral, crude glass, copper, tin, lead.
10. Though the foreign nationalities played the predominant role in the commerce of Kerala, the part played by the natives is by no means negligible.

## Chapter 5 | Quotes from pages 70-88



1. "The Sangam age... was the formative epoch of Kerala History."
2. "The whole of the present Ernakulam, Alleppey, Idukki and Kottayam districts... comprised the region of Kuttanad or the 'land of lakes'."
3. "The Ays ruled... from Nagercoil in the south to Tiruvalla in the north including the Sahyadri ranges."
4. "Nannan was a great warrior king who ruled his kingdom with an iron hand."
5. "The Cheras established themselves as an important power in Kerala in the early centuries of the Christian era."
6. "Monarchy was the most important political institution in the land... the king was in a sense a benevolent autocrat who guaranteed equal protection and justice to all his subjects."
7. "The ideal of Dig Vijaya was popular with the rulers of the age... those who successfully accomplished it had a halo around them."
8. "The person of the king was associated with much pomp and pageantry... he wore a crown made of gold and set with precious stones."
9. "A significant feature of life in the Sangam age was the honoured place given to poets and scholars in the courts of kings."
10. "The vast majority of people in the Sangam age had no special religion till about 500 A.D... Dravidian practices...were followed."

## **Chapter 6 | Quotes from pages 89-103**

1. The story of the confluence of religions in Kerala is an exhilarating subject for study.
2. The people were, however, so catholic in their outlook that they had no objection to



worshipping in Jain or Buddhist shrines and performing Vedic sacrifices at the same time.

3. All these three religions made steady progress within the framework of a free and open society and left their indelible impress on Kerala culture.

4. The Aryanisation of Kerala was a slow but steady process which was effected in a subtle manner, not by the force of arms, but by the arts of peace.

5. In the course of centuries Christianity made rapid progress in Kerala and the Christian Church became one of the well established institutions in the country.

6. The history of the rise and growth of Christianity in Kerala thus illustrates how different cultural influences have been at work in moulding the organisation and liturgy of the various churches.

7. The advent of the Aryan immigrants brought about other significant social changes as well.

8. The caste system was foisted on a casteless society by the Aryan immigrants who worked with extraordinary missionary zeal in spreading the Aryan ideology.

9. Though Buddhism disappeared from Kerala, it left its lasting impact on Kerala society.

10. The immense popularity in Kerala of Ashtangahridaya written by Vagbhata, a Buddhist scholar, is also significant in this context.





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## Chapter 7 | Quotes from pages 104-118

1. "Oh ! men, hasten your minds to deeds of merit. The God of Death, terrible with mouth wide open, is roaming near awaiting (his) time; and as if to show him favour, his father, the lord of day, with quick marches, hurriedly leads away the remainder of your lives."
2. "The Ay kings were generous patrons of education and learning."
3. "The Ays were in no mood to acknowledge the Pandyan supremacy but were ready to fight on for their freedom."
4. "Thus king Karunandadakkan constructed the Vishnu temple at Parthivasekharapuram."
5. "The educational institution called Salai played an important part in the cultural life of the people."
6. "The scrupulous enforcement of such rules of discipline made Kandalur, Parthivasekharapuram and other Salais of the Ay kingdom ideal educational institutions."
7. "The common people also seem to have taken interest in making charitable endowments to temple."
8. "The Ay kings espoused the cause of Hindu religion and culture in South Kerala in the same way as their contemporaries, the Kulasekharas of Mahodayapuram, did in the north."
9. "Evidently, the Ays were in no mood to acknowledge the Pandyan supremacy but were ready to fight on for their freedom."
10. "It may be noted that the Paliyam Copper Plates record the gift of land to the





Buddhist temple of Tirumulapadam by Vikramaditya Varaguna, while the Huzur Office Plates record the construction of a Vishnu shrine and establishment of a Salai or boarding school at Parthivasekharapuram by Karunandadakkan."

## Chapter 8 | Quotes from pages 119-131

1. The long 'historical night' which followed the Sangam age came to an end about 800 A.D. with the revival of Chera power under Kulasekhara Varman.
2. The history of the Kulasekhara Empire... was brought to light in recent times as a result of the scientific study of the inscriptions of the age.
3. The history of the Second Chera Empire clearly demonstrates that Kerala was a homogeneous political unit.
4. Kulasekhara Varman... is none other than Kulasekhara Alwar, the famous Hindu saint who figures in the history of the Vaishnavite movement.
5. The royal 'dramatist Kulasekhara styles himself in his works as the 'Lord of Mahodayapuram' and the 'Crest Jewel' of the Kerala dynasty.
6. It was during the reign of Rajasekhara Varman that the Kollam era... came into vogue in Kerala.
7. Sthanu Ravi extended his liberal patronage to science. There was a well-equipped observatory at Mahodayapuram under the charge of Sankaranarayana.
8. The Arab merchant, Sulaiman, visited Kerala during his reign and has testified to the prevalence of brisk trade between Kerala and China.
9. Kulasekhara Koyiladhikarikal... shows one Yamaka Koyiladhikari as staying at Nediatali in Cranganore.
10. Rama Varma Kulasekhara... rallied all patriotic forces under his banner in a war of



liberation against Chola imperialism.

## **Chapter 9 | Quotes from pages 132-149**

1. The 9th and 10th centuries of early Kulasekhara rule constitute a 'Golden Age' in Kerala history.
2. Under the benevolent and enlightened rule of the Kulasekharas, Kerala enjoyed the benefits of settled administration and all-round progress.
3. The age witnessed a cultural efflorescence of impressive dimensions.
4. The emperor was the fountain of honour and justice in the Kulasekhara age.
5. The administration of the nadus or provinces was carried on by feudatory chieftains appointed by the emperor.
6. The inscriptions of the age give us detailed data of the arrangements made for the administration of the empire.
7. All the trade corporations or organisations of merchants functioned very actively and contributed to the economic prosperity of Kerala.
8. The age of the Kulasekharas was the formative epoch of Malayalam language and literature.
9. The camaraderie and collaboration of religious traditions in the Kulasekhara age is a testament to the cultural synthesis of the region.
10. Sankara's teachings provided an intellectual basis to Hinduism while the monasteries he founded provided it with an effective organisational framework.





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## Chapter 10 | Quotes from pages 149-157

1. Ravi Varma Kulasekhara was one of the most outstanding figures in the long line of the kings of Venad.
2. The conquests of Ravi Varma Kulasekhara are of immense importance because in effecting these conquests he played the role of the defender of Hinduism against Islam.
3. His court attracted scholars and men of letters from far and near and Ravi Varma extended his munificent patronage to them all.
4. Under Ravi Varma Kulasekhara Venad attained a high degree of economic prosperity and social progress.
5. The achievements of Ravi Varma Kulasekhara in war and peace are tangible and they entitle him to a high rank among the rulers of Kerala.
6. Ravi Varma seems to have performed his first coronation at Madurai in the Pandya country and then continued his triumphant march.
7. His services in the field of religion, arts and trade entitle him to a lasting place among the most illustrious rulers of Kerala history.
8. He assumed the title Sangramadhira (firm in battle), highlighting his distinguished role as a conqueror.
9. As a devout Hindu he took a keen interest in the maintenance and renovation of temples and the progress of the Hindu religion.
10. The king thereupon grants them security for their property which they may even leave in the open fields without any guard.

## Chapter 11 | Quotes from pages 158-172



1. 'The rise of Calicut is at once a cause and a consequence of the Zamorin's ascendancy in Kerala. Its trade filled his coffers and enabled him to extend his authority.'
2. 'The Zamorin was no doubt an autocrat but his powers were not unlimited. He was obliged to obey the customary law of the land and listen to the counsel of his ministers.'
3. 'The capital city of Calicut had a Governor and customs office of its own, showcasing the organized governance that enabled its trade to flourish.'
4. 'The institution of the Pattathanam helped to win for the Zamorin a high place in the field of culture in the same way as the Mamamkam helped to win for him a unique status in the political field.'
5. 'Calicut under the early Zamorins attained fame as the venue of the famous seven day literary assembly known as the Revati Pattathanam.'
6. 'The harvest of knowledge gleaned at the Pattathanam emphasized that learning is as vital to a kingdom's strength as its military prowess.'
7. 'As a testament to its significance, Calicut became a rendezvous of scholars and men of letters, supported by the Zamorins' patronage.'
8. 'Justice was administered free to all, with no fee levied from the suitors, reflecting a commitment to fairness in governance.'
9. 'Under the Zamorins, Calicut developed before long into a major sea port on the Kerala coast, a true hub of cultural and commercial exchange.'
10. 'The Zamorin's sympathy lay with the Arabs, giving them special concessions which helped secure their monopoly of the export and import trade of Calicut.'



## Chapter 12 | Quotes from pages 173-188

1. Kerala presented the tragic picture of a feudal polity with its attendant evils and weaknesses.
2. The peculiar religious polity of Kerala supplied yet another element of discord in a situation already complicated by a weak feudal set-up.
3. Each important temple had within its jurisdiction a well-defined territory almost a 'State within the State'.
4. The Devaswams provided the rulers with a safe place or sanctuary for asylum during times of war and internal disorder.
5. The Namboothiris owed no territorial loyalties and were under the jurisdiction of the Namboothiri chief alone.
6. At the time of the arrival of the Portuguese, Kerala was in a distracted political condition with a number of petty chieftains engaged in endless feuds.
7. The Anchi Kaimals frequently changed their allegiance from the Zamorin to the Cochin Raja and vice versa.
8. The Vettatnad rulers were famous patrons of learning and arts.
9. The Kottayam Rajas worshipped Sri Porkali Bhagavathi as their family deity.
10. The Ali Raja eventually became the Lord of the Cannanore Bazaar and enjoyed the virtual monopoly of power to procure and sell pepper, cardamom, and other spices in North Malabar.





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## Chapter 13 | Quotes from pages 189-209

1. The landing of Vasco da Gama at Calicut in May 1498 marked the beginning of a new epoch in the history of Kerala.
2. Though the immediate object of the Portuguese was the expansion of trade, they entertained in course of time grand visions of building up an empire in India.
3. The cold reception meted out to the Portuguese at Calicut and the frustrating experiences of the Portuguese Captains with the Zamorin helped to bring the Cochin Raja and the Portuguese closer together.
4. The bitter rivalry between the Zamorin and the Cochin Raja created conditions favourable for the partial realization of the Portuguese dream.
5. The Cochin Raja saw in the arrival of the Portuguese on the coast a golden opportunity to get foreign assistance against his traditional enemy.
6. Vasco da Gama was given a hero's welcome on return to his country, for his mission to the East was an unqualified success.
7. The Zamorin played the role of the defender of the freedom of Kerala against Portuguese aggression.
8. The treaty of 1513 was a great triumph for Portuguese diplomacy.
9. The political disunity of Kerala was confirmed by the century and a half of Portuguese contact.
10. The patriotic exploits of the Kunjali Marakkars continue to evoke heroic memories among the people of Malabar even today.

## Chapter 14 | Quotes from pages 210-219





1. "Udaya Marthanda assumed the title 'Vira Pandya' in order to show who his overlord was."
2. "Iravi Iravi Varman was a liberal patron of learning and letters."
3. "Aditya Varma was a staunch Vaishnavite and he composed devotional hymns in praise of the deities of Trivandrum and Tiruvattar."
4. "Chera Marthanda is praised profusely in the work Lilatilakam, a great work on grammar and rhetoric."
5. "This proclamation has been engraved on a stone inscription of the same year set up in the name of Vira Kerala Varma at Tiruvitamkodu in Kanyakumari district."
6. "During her regency, Umayamma Rani kept the Yogakkar under strict control by insisting on the regular submission of the accounts of income and expenditure of the temple."
7. "It was perhaps in these meetings of the early Nanjanadians that the political weapon of non-co-operation was forged for the first time in the annals of our country."
8. "The revolution in Nanjanad reflected the rising tide of dissent against oppression and highlighted the courage of its people in the face of adversity."
9. "Marthanda Varma ascended the throne of Venad with a desire to strengthen his realm and unify his people against external threats."
10. "In securing the help of the British, the Venad ruler was motivated by the desire to strengthen his position in his fight against the Yogakkar, Pillamar and other hostile elements in the kingdom."



## Chapter 15 | Quotes from pages 220-231

1. The Dutch were the first Protestant nation of Europe to establish trade contacts with Kerala by challenging Portuguese trade monopoly.
2. It was also agreed to by both the parties that neither would enter into an agreement with the Portuguese without prior consultation with the other party.
3. The Dutch had already emerged as a serious threat to the Portuguese commercial interests on the coast.
4. The most important event connected with the establishment of the Dutch power in Kerala was the capture of Cochin in 1663.
5. The treaty made the Cochin Raja a puppet in Dutch hands and inaugurated the new era of Dutch supremacy on the Kerala coast.
6. The Dutch followed a deliberate policy of intervention in the affairs of the minor kingdoms with a view to establishing their predominant influence on the Kerala coast.
7. The rise of other European powers like the French and the English also upset the plans of the Dutch.
8. The Dutch administration in Kerala maintained an ecclesiastical establishment for the sake of their reformed Protestant religion; but it made hardly any impact on the local Christian community.
9. The local rulers took to salt manufacture on an extensive scale and won enormous profits following the example of the Dutch.
10. The compilation of the monumental botanical work, Hortus Malabaricus, has been of inestimable value to scholars of the later period to reconstruct the history of Kerala.





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## Chapter 16 | Quotes from pages 232-241

1. The political and social structure of the land was feudal in character.
2. The Naduvazhi was the head of a feudal aristocracy with limited authority and could hardly function as an arbitrary despot.
3. The martial spirit of the people was sustained and nourished by several military institutions.
4. Honour and ethical standards were paramount during military combats.
5. Those who wanted to fight duels paid large sums of money to the chiefs who made arrangements for the fight.
6. The Karanavar was consulted on all important matters and his decision was final.
7. Women of the age enjoyed considerable freedom in society.
8. The relations between the different communities were on the whole cordial.
9. Though the native Muslims had no influential leaders or chieftains they were still accorded a high place in the body politic by the rulers of the land.
10. The rulers of the age continued the policy of religious toleration followed by their predecessors.

## Chapter 17 | Quotes from pages 242-255

1. "The young Marthanda Varma rose to the occasion with a stout heart."
2. "Marthanda Varma's policies ultimately bore rich fruit with the destruction of the power of the feudal barons, the establishment of a strong and centralised monarchy."
3. "These drastic steps taken by Marthanda Varma gave the finishing touches to the tottering edifice of the feudal system in Travancore and ushered in a new era of strong



and centralised administration."

4. "Marthanda Varma decided to seek help from extraneous sources."

5. "The dedication of the kingdom to Sri Padmanabha... helped in the long run to ensure political stability."

6. "The reign of Marthanda Varma saw the introduction of some important administrative reforms."

7. "The greatest of the achievements of Kesava Das was the opening of a new port of Alleppey which was then a mere jungle inhabited by monkeys and jackals."

8. "The Dharma Raja also took steps to defend the northern parts of his kingdom against Mysorean aggression."

9. "Cultural Progress... was marked by the flourishing of literature and arts at the court of the Dharma Raja."

10. "Though an orthodox Hindu, the Raja patronised the followers of other religions too."

## **Chapter 18 | Quotes from pages 256-270**

1. "The economic and social progress during the reign of Saktan Tampuran marked an epoch in the history of Cochin."

2. "Justice was administered without fear or favor in the Cochin kingdom during the reign of Saktan Tampuran."

3. "The reforms implemented during Saktan Tampuran's reign paved the way for a highly centralized administration."

4. "Saktan Tampuran's efforts led to the eradication of corrupt practices and the



establishment of effective governance."

5. "The establishment of trade centers and markets contributed to the commercial prosperity of the State."

6. "The revival and renovation of temples were significant in restoring cultural heritage and spiritual solace to the people."

7. "Unity and cooperation among the rulers of Kerala were crucial to resist external invasions and maintain sovereignty."

8. "The introduction of modern ideas in administration set the foundation for future governance in Kerala post-Mysore."

9. "The Mysorean invasions, while destructive, ultimately led to the emergence of a new social order in Kerala."

10. "The resilience of the people during the turbulent times of the Mysorean invasion reshaped the historical landscape of the region."

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## Chapter 19 | Quotes from pages 271-285

1. The Pazhassi revolt was in a true sense a popular struggle or people's war for national liberation.
2. In all classes, I observed a decided interest in the Pazhassi Raja towards whom the inhabitants entertained a regard and respect bordering on veneration which not even his death can efface.
3. Velu Tampi has every claim to be regarded as one of the pioneers of the freedom struggle in the country.
4. His supreme sacrifice has served to this day as a beacon of inspiration to his fellow countrymen in the struggles for political liberty and clean administration.
5. The establishment of British supremacy over the different regions of Kerala did not go unchallenged by patriotic elements of the population.
6. The leaders of the revolt were Velu Tampi Dalawa and Paliath Achan, the chief ministers of the respective States.
7. The revolt started with an incident at Cochin.
8. A grim battle was fought at Quilon in which the British troops destroyed the Dalawa's house and inflicted heavy casualties on the rebels.
9. The Dalawa issued his famous proclamation indicting British rule and exhorting the people to rally under his banner for a patriotic struggle against the foreigners.
10. His death has invested his life with a unique halo and won for the great prince an abiding place in the hearts of his fellow countrymen.

## Chapter 20 | Quotes from pages 286-299





1. The beginnings of enlightened administration in Travancore may be associated with the reign of Marthanda Varma and the Dharma Raja.
2. The popular revolt led by Velu Tampi was a signal victory for the popular cause and perhaps the first one of its kind in the modern history of Kerala.
3. Velu Tampi introduced a series of beneficial reforms, emphasizing the importance of integrity and efficiency in administration.
4. Every step was taken to facilitate the expeditious disposal of work in government offices.
5. The reign of Rani Gouri Lakshmi Bai saw the introduction of several enlightened reforms, underlining the role of women in shaping administration.
6. Corrupt and dishonest officials were dismissed during the reforms introduced by Rani Gouri Lakshmi Bai.
7. The reign of Swati Tirunal established a golden age in Travancore with significant encouragement to the fine arts and education.
8. An English school was opened at Trivandrum in 1834, marking the beginning of English education in Travancore.
9. The period of Sri Mulam Tirunal was one of many-sided achievements, particularly in education and social reforms.
10. The Temple Entry Proclamation of 1936 was a significant achievement towards social equality in Travancore.

## **Chapter 21 | Quotes from pages 300-309**

1. The steady improvement of communications in the district under the British



administration was an endeavor that opened up the interior areas of Malabar.

2. The Malabar district made progress in the economic and social fields as a result of the labours of the Government as well as of private agencies.
3. The efforts of the Basel Missionaries in the field of education laid a strong foundation for progressive learning in Malabar.
4. The establishment of local self-government was a significant milestone that allowed the people of Malabar to participate in governance.
5. The Malabar Rebellion of 1921 marked a gigantic national upheaval against British authority, signifying the rise of collective resilience and resistance.
6. The Khilafat movement illustrated the power of unity among diverse communities in the pursuit of a common cause.
7. The Salt Satyagraha became a testament to the spirit of civil disobedience and the courage of individuals standing up to oppression.
8. The waves of discontent and calls for agrarian reform were significant in addressing the grievances of the people and seeking justice.
9. Political journalism in Malabar ignited the passion for activism among the masses, empowering them to voice their aspirations.
10. The emergence of the Communist Party represented the evolving political landscape in Malabar, underscoring the need for a transformative struggle for rights and representation.





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## **Chapter 22 | Quotes from pages 310-320**

1. Velu Tampi had mobilised thousands of people under his banner and led them to Trivandrum to place their grievances before the sovereign.
2. The petition which was signed by 10,028 persons belonging to all castes and creeds drew the attention of the Maharaja to the exclusion of the educated natives from the higher grades of the public service.
3. The Ezhava Memorial agitation helped to rouse the social and political consciousness of the Ezhavas and prepare them for future struggles in the cause of social justice.
4. The action of the Government evoked universal opposition.
5. The Nivarthana agitation spread to all parts of the State.
6. The achievement of responsible government in Travancore came as the dramatic climax to a series of sensational developments that took place in the year 1946-47.
7. The people of Travancore rose against injustice with a collective voice that reverberated through history.
8. The principle of equality of opportunity, in respect of appointments to government service, to all classes of subjects, irrespective of caste or faith, was conceded to a limited extent.
9. Political activity in Travancore received a fillip with the formation of the Youth League in 1931.
10. The Praja Mandal members functioned as an active opposition in the Legislature.

## **Chapter 23 | Quotes from pages 321-329**

1. The formation of the State of Kerala on November 1, 1956, marked the realization of



a long cherished desire of the Malayalam-speaking people to have a State of their own.

2. Public opinion had been in favour of the formation of such a State since the early decades of this century.
3. The integration of Travancore and Cochin was the first positive step taken in the direction of the formation of the State of Kerala.
4. The Maharaja of Cochin offered 'to efface himself completely in order that his people might enjoy a larger life'.
5. The movement for the formation of a Kerala state gathered momentum in the forties when the prospects of Indian independence looked bright.
6. The Aikya Kerala Conference held in Trichur in April 1947 was attended by hundreds of delegates from all parts of Kerala.
7. The decision on the re-organization of the States of the Indian Union on linguistic basis was taken by the Government of India.
8. The State of Kerala formally came into existence on November 1, 1956, with a Governor as the head of the State.
9. The long spell of President's Rule came to an end with the formation of a United Front Ministry in Kerala.
10. It is significant to note... that the Left Democratic Front had gone to the polls with the clear stand that it would have no alliance with communal or caste-based parties.

## **Chapter 24 | Quotes from pages 330-348**

1. "The centralising policies and the shock of invasions served to give the coup de grace to the old social order and usher in a new era."

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2. "The introduction of Western education acted as a catalytic agent for social change in Kerala."
3. "One Caste, one Religion, one God for man" - Sri Narayana Guru.
4. "The message of social reform helped to give the Hindu religious reform movement in Kerala a social bias and a practical turn."
5. "The abolition of slavery marked an important step towards the establishment of a new society in Kerala."
6. "The agitation for the removal of untouchability drew inspiration not only from the teachings of social reformers but also from the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi."
7. "The Temple Entry Proclamation of 1936 brought a silent and bloodless revolution in Hindu society."
8. "The social reform movements of Kerala demonstrate a profound struggle for justice, equality, and dignity."
9. "Ayyankali's efforts in the cause of the Harijan community helped them secure the right to walk freely along public roads."
10. "The historical movements for social equality in Kerala illustrate the power of collective action in the face of injustice."





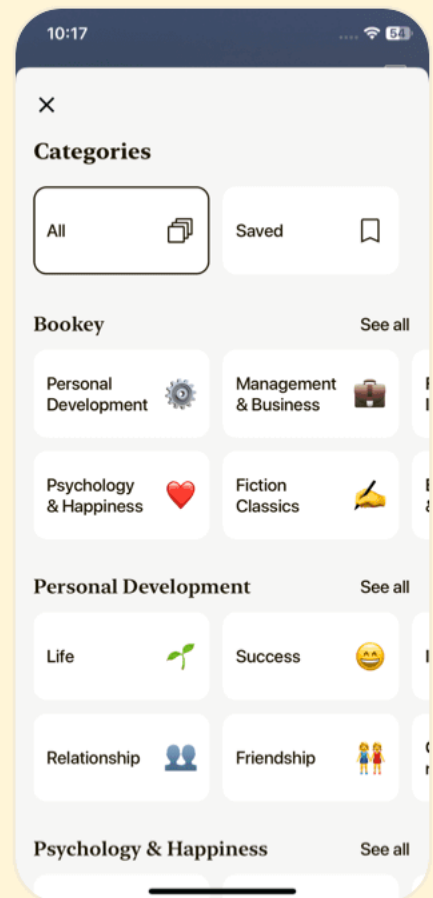
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## **Chapter 25 | Quotes from pages 349-381**

1. The contribution of Kerala to the cultural heritage of India in the fields of literature and arts is substantial in every sense.
2. Having originated as an offshoot of Tamil, it came under the influence of Sanskrit and Prakrit when the Brahmins became an important element in the population of Kerala.
3. The greatest of the Malayalam poets, he has made the most significant contribution to the growth of Malayalam literature.
4. Ezhuthachan worked out a miracle in the field of cultural expansion by disseminating knowledge in quarters which had been traditionally denied all access to its storehouse.
5. In the course of the 9th to the 12th centuries a new literary language known as Manipravalam came into vogue.
6. The Bhakti cult found its supreme literary expression in Malayalam in the works of Tunchat Ezhuthachan and Puntanam Namboothiri.
7. Vallathol is often described as the poet of Indian nationalism and freedom.
8. The artistic beauty and richness of ideas in Malayalam literature reflect the deep cultural roots of the land.
9. Though mainly translations from Sanskrit, all these works are distinguished by their originality of treatment.
10. It can confidently be expected that the genius of Kerala would continue to blossom forth in all its vigour and vitality in the years to come.

# A Survey Of Kerala History Discussion Questions

## Chapter 1 | THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND | Q&A

### 1.Question:

**What is the geographical location of Kerala and how does it influence its history?**

Kerala is located between 8° 18' and 12° 48' North latitude and between 74° 52' and 77° 24' East longitude. The state's geographical position, being a narrow coastal strip bounded by the Arabian Sea on one side and the Western Ghats on the other, has significantly influenced its historical development. This unique location has provided Kerala with a distinct individuality and a certain degree of political and cultural isolation from the rest of India, allowing it to develop its own social institutions and cultural practices without excessive interference from outside influences. However, this isolation was counterbalanced by extensive maritime contacts with foreign countries.

### 2.Question:

**How is Kerala's land divided geographically and what are the characteristics of these divisions?**

Kerala's territory is broadly divided into three natural divisions: highland, midland, and lowland. The highland is represented by the Western Ghats, characterized by thick forests and plantations, particularly in the lower ranges. The midland area features laterite soil, valleys, and isolated hills, rich in agricultural products such as paddy, tapioca, spices, and cashew. The lowland consists of a sandy coastal plain where coconut trees flourish and paddy is extensively cultivated. Each of these divisions has contributed to Kerala's agricultural diversity and ecological richness.

### 3.Question:

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What role have the mountains and hills of Kerala played in its historical and cultural development?

The mountains and hills of Kerala, particularly the Western Ghats, have functioned as a protective barrier, safeguarding the region from large-scale military incursions and foreign invasions. Notable peaks, like Anamudi and Agastyakutam, not only serve as geographical landmarks but also hold cultural significance, often being the sites of important temples and pilgrimage centers. Historical events, such as the Pazhassi revolt, are associated with these hills, emphasizing their role in shaping Kerala's political landscape.

#### 4.Question:

**Discuss the significance of the rivers and backwaters in Kerala's socio-economic history. What roles have they played?**

Kerala is endowed with a network of rivers and backwaters that have played pivotal roles in its history and culture. The rivers, like the Bharatapuzha, Periyar, and Pamba, have been vital for trade, agriculture, and settlements, influencing regional development. Historical events, such as the Mamankam assembly, were held along these rivers. The backwaters, particularly Vembanad Lake, facilitate communication and tourism, and contribute to the local economy through fishing and agriculture. Overall, the river systems support hydroelectric projects and irrigation, thereby enhancing Kerala's agricultural productivity and industrialization.

#### 5.Question:

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What is the relationship between Kerala's climate and its agricultural practices, as described in the chapter?

Kerala's climate, characterized by high humidity and significant rainfall primarily resulting from the south-west and north-east monsoons, directly impacts its agricultural practices. The average annual rainfall of around 96 inches, with the highest in the high ranges, promotes diverse agricultural yields throughout the state. The monsoon season is crucial for the agricultural cycle, determining planting and harvesting patterns. The state is known for its production of rice, spices, and cash crops, benefitting greatly from the climatic conditions that facilitate such a wide range of cultivation.

## **Chapter 2 | A PEEP INTO THE SOURCES | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**What is the significance of the Mushakavamsa in Kerala historiography?**

The Mushakavamsa, a Mahakavya composed around 1100 AD by Atula, serves as an important historical text in the context of Kerala historiography. It is notable for being the first independent dynastic history of Kerala, detailing the Mushaka kingdom of Kolathunad. Its significance lies in the fact that it predates similar historical works from other regions, such as Kalhana's Rajatarangini, showcasing an early form of historiographic tradition in Kerala. The work reflects the sociopolitical structure of the time and provides both legendary and historical information concerning the Mushaka rulers, marking a key development in the documentation of Kerala's past.

### **2.Question:**

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How did K.P. Padmanabha Menon's work influence Kerala's historiography?

K.P. Padmanabha Menon (1857-1919) significantly impacted Kerala historiography by emphasizing social history in his writings, a perspective previously lacking among historians who primarily focused on political events. His works, including the Kochi Rajya Charitram (1912) and the posthumous History of Kerala (Volumes I-IV, published 1924-1937), shifted the focus toward understanding the social dynamics, caste systems, and customs of Kerala. Although his efforts faced limitations due to the lack of archaeological and epigraphical advancements at the time, Menon's approach marked a new trend in which social context was seen as essential in the understanding of Kerala's history.

### 3.Question:

**What role did foreign accounts play in the reconstruction of Kerala's history?**

Foreign accounts profoundly enriched the historiography of Kerala by providing insights into its historical, cultural, and economic contexts. Accounts from travelers and merchants such as Marco Polo, Ibn Battuta, and various Portuguese writers detailed various aspects of life in Kerala, including trade practices, interactions among communities, and descriptions of the political landscape. Their narratives complement indigenous historical sources by serving as independent records that validate or challenge local accounts. These foreign perspectives helped historians draw a more comprehensive picture of Kerala's socio-economic structures and external



relations, especially during periods of European exploration and colonial influence.

#### **4.Question:**

**What are some limitations of the traditional sources Keralolpathi and Keralamahatmyam for historical reconstruction?**

Both Keralolpathi and Keralamahatmyam are considered to have significant limitations concerning their historical validity. They were composed in the 18th or 19th centuries and do not provide contemporary accounts of Kerala's early history. These texts are filled with inaccuracies, improbabilities, and anachronisms, and they primarily serve to reinforce Brahminical authority rather than presenting factual historical events. Historians have criticized them for their lack of reliability, as they blend history with legend and tradition, ultimately leading to confusion when reconstructing the historical narrative of early Kerala.

#### **5.Question:**

**How did archaeological sources contribute to the understanding of Kerala's early history?**

Archaeological sources play a crucial role in reconstructing Kerala's early history, as they provide tangible evidence of past human activities, cultural practices, and socio-political structures. The classification of archaeological data into monuments, inscriptions, and coins allows historians to gain insights into the prehistoric cultures of Kerala, as well as the establishment of significant sites, such as temples, forts, and palaces. For example,



findings from megalithic sites and the intricate carvings in rock-cut temples reveal insights into religious practices and architectural styles. Inscriptions, particularly, give direct information about rulers, the administration, and social customs, aiding historians in verifying and understanding the chronological framework and cultural developments of ancient Kerala.

## **Chapter 3 | PREHISTORY | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**What does the term 'Megalith' denote in the context of Kerala's prehistory?**

The term 'Megalith' (from the Greek 'mega' meaning great and 'litho' meaning stone) refers to monuments constructed from large blocks of stone, often associated with funerary practices. In Kerala, megaliths are linked to the cult of the dead and represent a form of burial monument, involving practices such as fractional burial, where the remains of the dead were interred along with possessions, such as tools and ornaments.

### **2.Question:**

**How does the archaeological perspective on Palaeolithic existence in Kerala contrast with the findings related to Neolithic and Megalithic cultures?**

According to H.D. Sankalia, the Palaeolithic era is not represented in Kerala primarily due to geographical constraints, such as a scarcity of quartzite and dense forests that limited exploration by primitive man. In contrast, the abundance of traprock during the Neolithic era, along with the discovery of megalithic structures indicates the presence of settled agricultural communities. The evidence shows that while Palaeolithic man may not have inhabited the region, Neolithic and Megalithic cultures took root, marked





by burial practices and societal organization.

### 3.Question:

**What are some of the burial practices associated with megalithic culture in Kerala?**

Megalithic burial practices in Kerala included fractional burial, where parts of the dead, such as skulls and long bones, were interred in various structures including urns, cists, or rock-cut caves. In contrast, primary burial involved burying the complete skeleton or body usually in a full articulation position. Grave goods, including weapons, ornaments, and pottery, were often included in the burials, indicating the social significance of the deceased.

### 4.Question:

**What role did racial and cultural synthesis play in the development of the population in Kerala?**

The population of Kerala is characterized by a complex racial composition resulting from historical migrations and interactions between different ethnic groups. The Negrito and Proto-Australoid elements were succeeded by Mediterranean races, leading to a rich cultural synthesis with the arrival of Aryans and subsequent interactions. This synthesis involved intermarriage and cultural exchange, such as the hypergamous relationships between the Nairs and Namboothiri Brahmins, which resulted in a blending of physical traits and cultural practices, shaping the pluralistic society of Kerala.

### 5.Question:

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What are some archaeological sites mentioned in the chapter that provide evidence of megalithic culture, and what were some notable discoveries?

Notable archaeological sites in Kerala that provide evidence of megalithic culture include Pulimathu, where underground cists with bronze bells and iron spearheads were found; Marayur, with extensive dolmens and cists; and Kodanad, where terracotta figurines and pottery with engravings were discovered. Other significant finds include burial jars and various types of megaliths like dolmens, menhirs, and Topikallus, which have been unearthed throughout regions like Trichur and Malabar, showcasing the widespread presence of megaliths in the state's ancient history.

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## Chapter 4 | EARLY FOREIGN CONTACTS | Q&A

### 1.Question:

**What were the primary reasons for early foreign contacts with Kerala?**

The primary motivations for early foreign contacts with Kerala were mainly commercial in nature, largely revolving around the spice trade. Kerala's reputation as the land rich in spices, particularly cardamom and cinnamon, attracted various foreign cultures such as the Arabs, Assyrians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, and Chinese. These interactions not only facilitated trade but also introduced diverse religions including Christianity, Judaism, and Islam into Kerala, significantly contributing to the region's rich, composite culture.

### 2.Question:

**How did spice trade influence international relations during ancient times?**

The spice trade played a crucial role in establishing and maintaining international relations in ancient times. As Kerala became a significant center for spices, it conducted trade with foreign nations, leading to ongoing cultural and economic exchanges. For instance, the spices from Kerala were highly sought after by the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, creating a robust trade network. This not only resulted in the influx of wealth and commodities into Kerala but also spurred diplomatic and cultural relations with powerful empires, thereby making Kerala a key player in global trade during antiquity.

### 3.Question:

**Describe the significance of Muziris in the context of ancient trade. What factors contributed to its prominence?**



Muziris was arguably the most important port of ancient India, functioning as the emporium for trade in spices and other goods. Its significance stemmed from several factors: its strategic location along trade routes, the discovery of the monsoon winds by Hippalus that facilitated maritime trade, and the high demand for spices like pepper among foreign traders. Classical authors highlighted its bustling market and warehouses filled with goods. It provided a significant gateway for interactions, trade, and cultural exchanges with civilizations such as the Romans, Greeks, and later the Chinese before its decline due to the silt from the Periyar River.

#### 4.Question:

**What archaeological and literary evidence supports the existence of maritime trade in ancient Kerala?**

There is a wealth of archaeological and literary evidence supporting the existence of maritime trade in ancient Kerala. Archaeological findings, like Chinese coins and pottery in sites such as Chandravalli and Cheraman Parambu, suggest pre-Christian trade relationships. Literary sources include the works of classical writers like Pliny the Elder, who documented the thriving trade at Muziris and referenced its spices. Tamil Sangam literature also details the voyages of Kerala's ships, showcasing the indigenous maritime tradition and the importance of trade in the region's history.

#### 5.Question:

**What were the later developments in the key ports of Kerala post-Muziris?**

Post-Muziris, the maritime landscape of Kerala evolved with the rise of



other significant ports such as Quilon, Calicut, and Cochin. Quilon emerged as a major center for Chinese trade by the 9th century, while Calicut rose to prominence in the 13th century following the decline of Muziris, aided by its strategic location and favorable trade policies of the Zamorins. Cochin became significant after 1341, when extensive floods shifted trade routes, enabling it to rival Muziris and establish itself as a hub for spices, especially following the arrival of the Portuguese in the late 15th century. This shift marked the beginning of a new commercial era in Kerala's history.

## **Chapter 5 | KERALA IN THE SANGAM AGE | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**What were the primary divisions of Kerala during the Sangam Age and what characterized each division?**

Kerala during the Sangam Age was divided into five main divisions based on topography: Venad, Kuttanad, Kudanad, Puzhinad, and Karkanad. Venad, which included parts of the present Trivandrum district, was known as 'the land of the Vels' (Chieftains). Kuttanad, identified as the 'land of lakes,' encompassed areas including Ernakulam, Alleppey, and Kottayam. Kudanad, referred to as 'Western land,' covered the northern region of Kuttanad, while Puzhinad, known as the 'marshy tract,' comprised the coastal areas of Cannanore and Kasargod. Finally, Karkanad, or 'the impregnable area,' included the mountainous regions to the east of Puzhinad.

### **2.Question:**

**Discuss the political landscape of Kerala during the Sangam Age with emphasis on**



the major ruling powers and their influence.

During the Sangam Age, Kerala was politically influenced primarily by three key powers: the Ays, the Cheras, and the Ezhimala rulers. The Ays, who dominated the southern regions, served as a buffer state between the Pandya and Chera kingdoms. The second significant power was the Ezhimala Kingdom in the north, ruled by notable figures like King Nannan, who expanded their influence across regions such as Wynad and Coimbatore until their eventual defeat by the Cheras. The Cheras emerged as a dominant force in early centuries of the Christian era, with a complex princely hierarchy and extensive military campaigns that shaped the political scene. Their capital Vanchi was pivotal in the administration and cultural life of the period.

### 3.Question:

**What significant achievements and cultural practices were observed during the reigns of the Chera kings, particularly during the Sangam Age?**

The Chera kings of the Sangam Age, notably Utiyan Cheralatan and his descendants, were celebrated for their military prowess and cultural patronage. They engaged in extensive military campaigns, often depicted as conquests that marked their status as 'Adhirajas' (great kings). Culturally, they sponsored poets and artists, creating a vibrant artistic milieu where literature flourished. The courts of the Chera kings were known for elaborate feasts, social gatherings, and generous rewards for artistic accomplishments.





The poets, who had significant freedom and were often of humble backgrounds, enjoyed close ties with royalty, reflecting a society that revered artistic expression.

#### 4.Question:

**How did the social structure in Kerala during the Sangam Age compare to later periods, especially regarding caste and gender roles?**

The social structure in Kerala during the Sangam Age exhibited a notable degree of fluidity, lacking rigid caste divisions that would emerge in later periods. This age saw communities like the Panas and Kuravas enjoying respect and social freedom, contrary to the strict caste hierarchies that developed later. Women held a comparatively high status, participating freely in social life and benefiting from education; practices like child marriage were absent, and widow marriage was accepted. However, this egalitarian ethos began to fragment into more defined caste roles in the subsequent periods, influenced by the arrival of Aryan culture and its implications on social organization.

#### 5.Question:

**What were the economic conditions in Kerala during the Sangam Age, and how did these conditions facilitate trade and agriculture?**

The Sangam Age in Kerala was marked by considerable economic prosperity, primarily driven by agriculture, with the land's fertility supporting a variety of crops, including rice, jackfruit, and spices.

Agricultural techniques were advanced, with tools made of iron being



commonly used. The economy was bolstered by internal trade and extensive international commerce, wherein Kerala exported spices, ivory, and precious stones. The barter system was prevalent, alongside the use of coins. Trading hubs, particularly ports like Muziris, facilitated vibrant trade networks, shaping the economic landscape as domestic producers interacted with foreign merchants, enhancing the wealth and complexity of Kerala's economy.

## **Chapter 6 | THE CONFLUENCE OF RELIGIONS | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**What were the main indigenous and foreign religions present in ancient Kerala?**

In ancient Kerala, the main indigenous religions included Dravidian religions, Jainism, and Buddhism, while the foreign religions that took root included Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. The Dravidian practices involved primitive rites and the worship of totem gods and local deities, whereas Jainism and Buddhism were introduced from North India prior to the Christian era. Christianity, according to tradition, was founded by Apostle St. Thomas in the 1st century AD, while Judaism is believed to have been established by Jewish immigrants around 68 AD. Islam arrived in Kerala around the 7th or 8th century AD through Arab traders.

### **2.Question:**

**How did Jainism influence the culture and society of Kerala?**

Jainism significantly influenced early Kerala society, especially from the 3rd century BC onward. It established its presence through royal patrons and numerous temples,



many of which have transformed into Hindu shrines over time. Jain principles and aesthetics impacted local architecture, leading to stylistic similarities in Hindu temples and even mosques. The religious practices included reverence for Tirthankaras, which were absorbed into later Hindu worship. Jainism remained prevalent until the 8th century AD, after which it began a gradual decline, primarily due to the rising popularity of Hinduism but leaving traces in Kerala's cultural fabric, like the architectural style of buildings and elements of worship adopted by Hindus.

### 3.Question:

**What role did Buddhism play in Kerala's religious landscape, and what contributions did it make to society?**

Buddhism entered Kerala during the reign of Emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century BC and gained considerable traction, contributing to various aspects of society and culture. Its teachings influenced health care practices, as evidenced by the establishment of hospitals by Buddhist monks. The religion, while declining by the late 8th century due to Hindu reform movements, left profound influences, such as the integration of Buddhist symbols and festivals into Hindu practices. Additionally, Buddhism is credited with advancing literacy in Kerala, as Buddhist monasteries served as educational centers, inspiring the establishment of schools in later periods.

### 4.Question:

**Can you explain the process of Aryanization in Kerala and its socio-cultural impacts?**



The process of Aryanization in Kerala, mainly facilitated by Brahmin immigrants beginning in the 3rd century BC, significantly transformed the social dynamics and cultural landscape. This process, characterized by the imposition of the caste system, led to a decline in the status of indigenous communities such as the Panas and Parayas, who once held higher social positions. With Brahmins establishing the supremacy of Vedic religion, the societal structure shifted to one based on caste, where occupations determined social standing. This shift also resulted in the decline of women's status and educational opportunities, as the social fabric transitioned from a previously casteless society to one stratified by rigid caste distinctions.

### 5.Question:

**What are the historical accounts regarding the introduction of Christianity in Kerala and its evolution?**

Christianity is believed to have been introduced to Kerala in 52 AD by Apostle St. Thomas, who reportedly established seven churches along the Malabar Coast. Over the centuries, the community evolved significantly, marked by the influx of Syrian Christians in the 4th century AD, who contributed to its growth and integration into local society. The church received privileges from rulers, such as those documented in various copper plates during the medieval period. Despite facing challenges such as the Latinization from Portuguese influence in the 16th century, the church diversified into multiple branches, including the Marthoma Syrian Church and Jacobite Church. The integration into Kerala's social fabric ensured that



the Christian community adopted local languages and cultural practices, embodying a unique identity of being “Hindu in culture, Christian in religion”.

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## Chapter 7 | THE AY KINGDOM | Q&A

### 1.Question:

**What was the geographical extent of the Ay kingdom at its height?**

At its height, the Ay kingdom extended from Tiruvalla in the north to Nagercoil in the south. This included the territories that lay within the Western Ghats, which was the most significant area of their dominion. The kingdom also encompassed what is now known as South Travancore, which was referred to as Nanjanad in the early records.

### 2.Question:

**Who were the prominent kings of the Ay dynasty during the Sangam period, and what were their contributions?**

The most prominent kings of the Ay dynasty during the Sangam period included Ay Antiran, Titiyan, and Atiyan. Ay Antiran is known for his patronage of the arts and his efforts in maintaining peace in his kingdom. He was renowned for his generosity and is celebrated in numerous poems for his benevolence towards poets and bards. Titiyan, referred to as 'Podiyil Selvan', followed Antiran and was contemporaneous with poets Kapilar and Paranar, although not much evidence of conflict between the Ay and Pandya rulers exists during his reign. Atiyan, on the other hand, faced invasions from the Pandyan warrior-king Pasumpun Pandyan, which signaled the beginning of the Ay kingdom's decline.

### 3.Question:

**What events led to the decline of the Ay kingdom after the reign of Vikramaditya Varaguna?**

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The decline of the Ay kingdom began after the reign of Vikramaditya Varaguna (885-925 A.D.), marked by conflicts with the Chola Empire which had emerged powerful on the Indian political scene. The Pandyas sought to annex Ay territories, and following their victories over the Ay kings, namely through the campaigns of Pandya kings like Jayantavarman and Arikesari Maravarman, the Ay kingdom lost its sovereignty. After Varaguna's death, the Ay dynasty lost its status as a separate power with its northern territories merging into the Venad region of the Chera Empire.

#### 4.Question:

**How did the Ay kings impact education and cultural life in their kingdom?**

The Ay kings were significant patrons of education and cultural advancements within their realm. They established institutions known as Salais, which served as boarding schools for Brahmin youth, teaching the Vedas and other aspects of Sanskrit learning. Notable Salais, such as Kandalur Salai and Parthivasekharapuram Salai, were considered ideal educational institutions with strict regulations to uphold discipline and moral character among students. These educational institutions not only contributed to religious studies but also fostered a rich cultural life during the Ay rule.

#### 5.Question:

**What are some theories regarding the origin of the Kollam era?**

The origin of the Kollam era, introduced in 825 A.D., remains a topic of debate among historians. One theory suggests it was established by king



Udaya Marthanda Varma of Venad during a grand assembly. However, this is contested due to a lack of supporting evidence and records. Logan's theory posits that the era commemorated the independence achieved by Venad and Kolathunad from Perumal rule. Another theory relates it to the establishment of towns in the region. Various other theories also attribute its origin to different historical events, including the introduction of customs by Sankaracharya and the founding of significant temples. Some scholars suggest it might be a modified version of the Saptarshi era, adapted locally.

## **Chapter 8 | KULASEKHARAS OF MAHODAYAPURAM (800-1102 A.D.) | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**What marked the beginning of the Second Chera Empire under the Kulasekhara dynasty?**

The revival of Chera power under Kulasekhara Varman around 800 A.D. marked the beginning of the Second Chera Empire. This era is characterized as the end of a long 'historical night' that followed the Sangam age, leading to a unified rule over Kerala, beginning with the capital at Mahodayapuram.

### **2.Question:**

**Who was Kulasekhara Alwar, and what is his significance in this chapter?**

Kulasekhara Alwar, who ruled from 800 to 820 A.D., is a key figure in the history of the Kulasekhara Empire. He was a prominent Hindu saint and a pivotal author of devotional literature in Tamil, notably the 'Perumal Tirumozhi'. His contributions to



literature, coupled with his political role in establishing the Second Chera Empire, made him an important personage in the history of Kerala.

### 3.Question:

**Describe the contributions of Sthanu Ravi Varman during his reign.**

**What were notable features of his rule?**

Sthanu Ravi Varman (844-885 A.D.) stands out as one of the most distinguished rulers of the Kulasekhara dynasty. His reign was noted for its friendly relations with the Chola emperor Aditya Chola, which was significant as no Chola invasions of the Chera Empire occurred during his time. Sthanu Ravi was also known for his patronage of the sciences, particularly astronomy, exemplified by the presence of a well-equipped observatory at Mahodayapuram. His reign also saw economic prosperity as evidenced by the visit of the Arab merchant Sulaiman in 851 A.D., who indicated robust trade links between Kerala and China.

### 4.Question:

**What events characterized the reign of Rama Varma Kulasekhara?**

**How did his actions contribute to the history of Kerala?**

Rama Varma Kulasekhara (1090-1102 A.D.) was the last ruler of the Kulasekhara dynasty. His reign was marked by intense conflict with Chola imperialism, culminating in his rallying of forces to resist Chola incursions into Kerala. He organized a revival of the Chera army, which included the formation of the Chaver army, known for its suicide squads. His successful resistance culminated in repelling the Chola forces, thus ending their



domination in Kerala and allowing for the establishment of the independent Venad kingdom. This marked a significant turning point in Kerala's history.

### **5.Question:**

**How did modern historical studies challenge the traditional narratives regarding the rulers of Kerala?**

Modern historical studies, particularly those conducted by historians such as Prof. Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai and Prof. M.G.S. Narayanan, have critically assessed the traditional narrative of foreign Perumals (imported rulers) in Kerala's history. These studies have revealed that the rulers of the Second Chera Empire were indigenous to the region and not foreign invaders. They showed how earlier assumptions about the imported Perumals and the legends surrounding the last Chera emperor, such as Cheraman Perumal's conversion to Islam, lacked contemporary evidence and could be dismissed as fictional. This revisionist history emphasizes a continuous indigenous rule and a coherent historical narrative for Kerala.

## **Chapter 9 | GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY IN THE KULASEKHARA AGE | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**What characterizes the political landscape of Kerala during the Kulasekhara age?**

During the Kulasekhara age, particularly in the 9th and 10th centuries, Kerala was marked by a well-organized central authority under the emperor, known as Perumal, who held significant power over an expansive territory. The empire was divided into

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various administrative units called nadus, governed by feudatory chieftains and local assemblies, which played crucial roles in regional governance. The system was characterized by a patrilineal inheritance model, and it was evidenced through inscriptions that none of the local governors had independent status, indicating a centralized administration reflecting strong control by the emperor.

## **2.Question:**

**How did the economic system function during the Kulasekhara age, including taxation and trade?**

The economic system during the Kulasekhara age was robust and hierarchical, based on agriculture and extensive trade. It featured a structured taxation system where land tax was prominent, with various other taxes imposed on professions, goods, and resources. The most significant tax was Patavaram, which encompassed several subcategories, and the rental agreements indicated a collective tax burden on tenants. Trade flourished, with significant connections to foreign lands, particularly through important ports such as Quilon and Kandalur. Trade goods included local products like spices, which were exported, while imports included textiles and ceramics, highlighting a diversified economy and extensive mercantile networks.

## **3.Question:**

**What social and cultural changes occurred in Kerala under the Kulasekhara dynasty?**

The era under the Kulasekharas saw significant cultural and social developments, including the emergence of a distinct Malayalam language



and literature, which began to evolve from Tamil roots. While Tamil and Sanskrit dominated literary production, the gestation of Malayalam laid foundations for future poetic expressions. The temples gained prominence as centers for education, arts, and community gatherings, facilitating the diffusion of Hindu culture. The decline of Jainism and Buddhism concluded with Hinduism establishing prominence, largely driven by the Bhakti movement, which fostered devotional worship through community involvement and emotional engagement with deities.

#### 4.Question:

**What role did the Kulasekhara rulers play in promoting arts and education during their reign?**

The Kulasekhara rulers were strong patrons of the arts and education, significantly contributing to Kerala's cultural rich tapestry during their reign. They supported the establishment of educational institutions called Salais, attached to temples, that provided free education along with food and clothing to students. Literary figures and poets, including Kulasekhara Alvar and other local scholars, were nurtured under royal patronage, resulting in advancements in literature, drama, and temple arts such as Kuthu and Kudiyaattam. Additionally, temples became pivotal in hosting cultural events, festivals, libraries, and the performance of plays, thus integrating education, art, and religious practices into the social fabric.

#### 5.Question:

**What were the implications of the Chola-Chera wars on the**



socio-economic structure of Kerala?

The Chola-Chera wars profoundly altered the socio-economic landscape of Kerala in the 11th century. The prolonged conflict necessitated a total mobilization of local resources, shifting the focus from agriculture and trade towards military preparedness, which led to a drastic decline in foreign trade and contact. Namboothiri Brahmins became increasingly influential, having transitioned from traditional roles to military leaders. The wars catalyzed the evolution of the Janmi system, marking a shift from conventional landholding to a system where Brahmins and others amassed significant landholdings. Following the wars, societal structures became more caste-oriented, marking a departure from earlier relationships. The political unity fractured, transitioning from centralized rule to a feudal polity characterized by localized authority and numerous petty principalities emerging throughout Kerala.

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## Chapter 10 | VENAD TILL 1314 | Q&A

### 1.Question:

**What factors contributed to the rise of Venad as a political power in Kerala during the 12th century?**

The rise of Venad as a political power in Kerala was significantly marked by the downfall of the Kulasekhara dynasty, which had dominated the region. Historical records indicate that references to Venad can be found in Pandyan records from the 8th century onward, but it only gained prominence when the Kulasekharas faded from power in the 12th century. The merging of different factions of local rulers, particularly that of the Kizhperur family and other branches like Ay and Chiravai, helped to solidify the political cohesion necessary for asserting independence. Additionally, during the early 12th century, Venad transitioned from being a subservient province under the Kulasekharas to establishing its own royal lineage and administrative structures, thereby asserting its status as an independent kingdom.

### 2.Question:

**Who was the first known ruler of Venad, and what evidence exists regarding his reign?**

The first ruler of Venad, whose reign is well-documented, is Ayyan Atikal Tiruvatikal. He is notably mentioned in the Terisapalli Copper Plate Grant dated to 849 A.D., which is significant for its historical accounts, as it establishes not only his authority but also his involvement in land grants and the establishment of a church and trading center at Kurakkeni Kollam. This inscription reflects the socio-economic dynamics of the time and highlights the administrative practices of early Venad, showcasing the ruler's role in



promoting trade and religion.

### 3.Question:

**Explain the significance of Ravi Varma Kulasekhara's reign for Venad and its expansion beyond Kerala.**

Ravi Varma Kulasekhara's reign from 1299 to 1314 is pivotal in the history of Venad as he transformed it into a formidable military state and expanded its territories significantly. After claiming independence from the Pandyan rulers and taking advantage of the political instability in their dominion, he conquered parts of South India including territories that were under Pandyan control. His military prowess earned him the title Sangramadhira, and he was seen as a defender of Hinduism against Islamic expansion. His conquests facilitated his brief coronation as Emperor of South India, a title that enhanced Venad's prestige. The legacy of his reign is particularly noted for the assertion of Hindu dominance in the region and laying groundwork for subsequent rulers like the Hoysala Bellalas and Vijayanagar Rayas.

### 4.Question:

**What role did trade play in the economic prosperity of Venad during this period?**

Trade was a critical component of Venad's economy and played a significant role in its prosperity during the late 12th and early 13th centuries. The port city of Quilon emerged as a major trading hub known for its bustling commerce, engaging with both local and international markets, notably with Persian and Chinese merchants. A variety of goods, especially spices like



pepper, cinnamon, and ginger, were transacted vigorously, fostering economic growth. Foreign travelers like Marco Polo praised the integrity and efficiency of the administrative apparatus overseeing commerce at Quilon, emphasizing the protection afforded to merchants and the vibrant market conditions. This energetic trade ecosystem not only highlighted Venad's economic status but also reinforced its political stability and influence.

### 5.Question:

**Discuss the impact of local assemblies or Kuttams on the governance of Venad during the 10th to 12th centuries.**

The Kuttams, or local assemblies, played a crucial role in the governance of Venad from the 10th to 12th centuries. Through distinct administrative bodies like the Munnuttuvar and Arunuttuvar, these assemblies facilitated the participation of local elites in decision-making processes and ensured that the governance reflected the populace's interests. Despite the king's considerable authority, the administration was underpinned by these assemblies which voiced the needs and opinions of the local communities, fostering a sense of involvement and accountability in governance. The functioning of these Kuttams reveals an early form of participatory administration, blending monarchical authority with collective local leadership that contributed to social stability and effective governance.

## Chapter 11 | RISE OF KOLATHUNAD AND COCHIN | Q&A

### 1.Question:

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What were the key factors that contributed to the rise of Kolathunad and Cochin during the period following the break-up of the Kulasekhara Empire?

After the fall of the Kulasekhara Empire around 1102 A.D., Kerala became fragmented politically, leading to the emergence of several independent Swarupams, including Kolathunad and Cochin. Key factors that contributed to the rise of these kingdoms included:

1. **Political Instability**: The disintegration of the Kulasekhara Empire created a power vacuum, allowing local rulers to establish independent states.
2. **Geographical Advantages**: Kolathunad, situated in North Malabar, had strategic access to trade routes and resources, facilitating economic prosperity. Similarly, Cochin, which had a favorable maritime position, benefited from trade and the establishment of its port.
3. **Cultural Patronage**: Both Kolathunad and Cochin emerged as cultural hubs, where rulers like the Mushaka kings in Kolathunad and the Perumpadappu Swarupam in Cochin patronized literature and learning, enhancing their prestige and influence.
4. **Military Strength**: The early rulers established effective military structures, which were crucial in maintaining power and protecting their territories from rival states, particularly from encroaching powers like the



Zamorins of Calicut.

5. **\*\*Trade Relations\*\***: The rise of maritime trade, particularly in spices and textiles, turned these kingdoms into important commercial centers, drawing foreign traders and increasing wealth.

## 2.Question:

**What important changes in succession practices occurred in the Mushaka dynasty of Kolathunad and how did this impact the kingdom's governance?**

The Mushaka dynasty originally followed a patrilineal system of succession, where inheritance passed through male lineage. However, by the 11th century, there was a gradual shift towards a matrilineal system. This change had significant implications for the governance of Kolathunad:

1. **\*\*Inheritance Patterns\*\***: With the shift to matrilineal succession, property and titles began to be inherited through female lines, which could lead to more complex family dynamics, especially regarding claims to the throne.
2. **\*\*Empowerment of Women\*\***: The matrilineal system often empowered women in the society, as they retained certain rights and control over property, which could influence political alliances and family strategies.



3. **Political Alliances**: The new system may have facilitated strategic marriages between families, allowing for better alliances that enhanced the kingdom's political stability.

4. **Challenges to Authority**: The shift could lead to challenges in authority as royal succession became less predictable; rival factions could arise based on differing interpretations of claims to the throne, potentially leading to civil strife.

### 3.Question:

**How did Marco Polo's account of the Kingdom of Kolathunad reflect the socio-economic conditions of the time?**

Marco Polo's account of the Kingdom of Kolathunad, particularly referring to it as 'Eli,' provides valuable insights into the socio-economic conditions of the time:

1. **Economic Prosperity**: Polo noted the abundance of spices like pepper and ginger, indicating a thriving agricultural and trade economy, which was essential for the wealth of the Kolathiri kingdom.

2. **Geopolitical Isolation**: The account mentions that the king was 'tributary to nobody,' highlighting a degree of political autonomy and strength, despite the absence of a significant maritime harbor, which points to the kingdom's natural defenses and strategic coastal location.





3. **Trade Practices**: Polo observed practices related to foreign trade, including the seizure of goods from ships, illustrating issues related to maritime law and commerce that were prevalent, showing the complexities of trade relationships with foreign powers.
4. **Cultural Diversity**: His description of the unique customs and the mention of a distinct language suggest that Kolathunad had developed a unique cultural identity, influenced by its interactions with various traders and regions.
5. **Military Preparedness**: Marco Polo's remarks about the natural fortifications of the region imply that despite limited military resources, the geopolitical landscape allowed for defensive strategies that empowered rulers within Kolathunad.

#### 4.Question:

**What were the circumstances that led to the emergence of the Perumpadappu Swarupam in Cochin, and how did it evolve politically?**

The Perumpadappu Swarupam emerged in Cochin after the fall of the Kulasekhara Empire, evolving politically in a manner that reflects the complex regional dynamics:

1. **Historical Context**: The traditional view holds that the



Perumpadappu royal family descended from the last of the Kulasekharas, which granted them a sense of political legitimacy and continuity following the empire's collapse.

2. **Matrilineal Inheritance**: The lineage of the Perumpadappu chief maintained connections to both the Kulasekharas and the Namboothiri community, influencing how power was structured and inherited within the kingdom.

3. **Geographical Shift**: The initial seat of the Perumpadappu was at Chitrakutam, but as threats from the Zamorin and the rise of Cochin's port grew, they relocated to Cochin, strategically placing their capital where they could better guard against invasions and control trade routes.

4. **Conflict with Zamorin**: The internal conflicts within the Perumpadappu Swarupam, especially with the emergence of two factions (Mutha and Elaya), provided opportunities for the Zamorin to assert influence and extend control over Cochin, illustrating the power struggles that characterized the region.

5. **Cultural and Religious Authority**: The Perumpadappu chiefs executed significant moral and spiritual authority over various temples in Kerala, which, despite their limited political power, bolstered their status among regional leaders and facilitated trade with distinct communities like



Christians, reflecting an adaptive political strategy.

### 5.Question:

**How did the Zamorin of Calicut establish and consolidate power over the surrounding regions, including conflicts with other rulers like the Valluvanad and Cochin?**

The Zamorin of Calicut established and consolidated power through a series of military campaigns and strategic political maneuvering:

1. **\*\*Conquest Campaigns\*\***: The Zamorin launched military campaigns to assert control over neighboring regions, notably targeting key territories such as Tirunavai from the Valluvanad ruler, reflecting a proactive approach to territorial expansion.
2. **\*\*Political Alliances\*\***: During his campaigns, the Zamorin allied with local factions, particularly the support from the less orthodox Panniyur Namboothiris against Valluvanad's more conservative elements, showcasing a strategic approach to gaining military and political support.
3. **\*\*Assertion of Prestige\*\***: By presiding over the Mamamkam festival after conquering Tirunavai, the Zamorin not only increased his territorial control but also obtained symbolic legitimacy that appealed to both local traditions and broader Kerala politics.



4. **\*\*Interference in Cochin\*\***: The internal dissensions within the Perumpadappu Swarupam allowed the Zamorin to intervene and manipulate succession disputes in Cochin to install rulers favorable to his interests, thus extending his influence further.

5. **\*\*Utilization of Trade\*\***: The rise of Calicut as a free trade port under the Zamorin attracted merchants, enhancing economic power, which in turn funded military campaigns and helped assert dominion over several local chieftains, including those of Cochin and Kolathiri.

## **Chapter 12 | MINOR PRINCIPALITIES | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**What were the major kingdoms in Kerala prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, and how did they influence the minor principalities?**

The major kingdoms in Kerala prior to the Portuguese arrival in 1498 were Venad, Kolathunad, Cochin, and Calicut. These kingdoms emerged from the remnants of the Kulasekhara Empire and dominated the region politically and commercially. Their rulers held sovereign powers, with the Zamorin of Calicut and the rulers of Venad being particularly influential. Minor principalities acknowledged the supremacy of these major powers, leading to a fragmented political landscape where many small kingdoms were involved in internal strife and rivalries. This fragmentation made the region politically unstable and provided opportunities for European powers to assert control.

### **2.Question:**

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Describe the political and religious dynamics of Kerala polity before the Portuguese presence, particularly the role of temples and local chieftains. Before the Portuguese arrived, Kerala's political landscape was characterized by weak feudal structures and numerous minor principalities often engaged in conflict. The religious dynamics were significant, with Hindu temples (Devaswams) playing central roles in governance. Temples controlled specific territories (Sanketam) and were managed by Uralars, effectively functioning as independent entities with little oversight from the ruling sovereigns. Rulers often sought to acquire rights (Melkoyma) over temples to bolster their authority. Furthermore, Nair chieftains, similar to feudal barons, provided military support to their sovereigns but also exercised considerable power. This led to a complex interplay of politics where local rulers relied on religious institutions and chieftains for authority.

### 3.Question:

**What was the significance of the Elayadathu Swarupam in the context of minor principalities and its eventual annexation by Travancore?**

The Elayadathu Swarupam originated as an offshoot of the Venad royal family in the 14th century and governed territories primarily north of Trivandrum. It played a crucial role in Kerala's politics during the Dutch period and was notable for its rivalry with other powers. The kingdom had its administrative center at Kottarakara before it was annexed by Travancore in 1742 under Marthanda Varma. This annexation illustrated the consolidation of power by Travancore as it absorbed smaller principalities



and diminished the political influence of fragmented kingdoms, highlighting the shift towards a more centralized authority in the region.

#### **4.Question:**

**How did the minor principalities like Kayamkulam and Vadakkumkur interact with major powers such as Travancore and the Dutch during this era?**

Kayamkulam, originally Odanad, became an influential principality with strategic coastal territories. It engaged in multiple alliances, notably with the Quilon Raja to defy the ambitions of Marthanda Varma. Its incorporation of neighboring territories, such as Marta and Bettimeni, bolstered its significance during its interactions with European powers like the Portuguese and the Dutch. Vadakkumkur, alongside Kayamkulam, supported northern principals against Travancore, but faced annexation due to conflicts with the latter. Both principalities were caught in the web of European rivalries, demonstrating their attempts to assert local autonomy amidst broader imperial competition.

#### **5.Question:**

**Explain the changes that occurred to the Kumbla principality and its royal lineage during the British colonial period.**

Kumbla was the northernmost principality in Kerala, ruled under the Marumakkathayam matrilineal system, with claims of descent from the legendary Cheraman Perumal. During the British colonial period, Kumbla, along with other minor principalities, was pensioned off after British



annexation. The royal lineage maintained its local customs and governance while adapting to the colonial framework, where the British often leveraged these local rulers to administer and exert control over the regions. The Kumbla Rajahs had their territories significantly influenced by British policies and economic needs, leading to a change in traditional power dynamics where they transitioned to roles mainly as figureheads under British protection.

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## Chapter 13 | THE PORTUGUESE PERIOD | Q&A

### 1.Question:

**What marked the beginning of the Portuguese period in Kerala, and what were the initial goals of Portugal's involvement in the region?**

The Portuguese period in Kerala began with the landing of Vasco da Gama at Calicut in May 1498. The initial goal of this expedition was to discover a new trade route to India and to expand trade with the Orient, as Portugal was looking to gain access to the lucrative spice trade. However, over time, the Portuguese aimed to build an empire in India by subjugating local powers and exploiting the rivalries among them, particularly between the Zamorin ruler of Calicut and the Raja of Cochin.

### 2.Question:

**Describe the relationship between the Portuguese and local rulers such as the Zamorin and the Raja of Cochin during the early years of Portuguese colonization in Kerala.**

The relationship between the Portuguese and local rulers was complex and shifted over time. Initially, Vasco da Gama was received with hospitality by the Zamorin but failed to establish trade relations due to the Zamorin's insistence on customs duties and refusal to allow the Portuguese to establish a permanent base. This cold reception pushed the Portuguese to ally with the Raja of Cochin, who was seeking foreign assistance against his rival, the Zamorin. The Cochin Raja saw the Portuguese as a potential ally to build up his political strength, while the Zamorin adopted the role of defending Kerala against Portuguese aggression. Eventually, this alliance facilitated the Portuguese establishment of their trading dominance in the region.

### 3.Question:

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What were the key events and battles that characterized the conflict between the Portuguese and the Zamorin of Calicut during the early 1500s?

Key events included Vasco da Gama's second voyage in 1502, where he bombarded Calicut and imposed harsh terms on the Cochin Raja to secure pepper trade concessions. The conflict escalated when the Zamorin launched military campaigns against Cochin to challenge Portuguese influence, notably attacking the Cochin fort at Edappalli. The involvement of the Portuguese in battles alongside Cochin led to heavy casualties on both sides, with significant military operations occurring in 1503 and again in 1504. The arrival of Portuguese reinforcements in September 1503 played a decisive role in repelling the Zamorin's forces and restoring the Cochin Raja to power.

#### 4.Question:

**What was the significance of the treaty between the Portuguese and the Zamorin in 1513, and how did it affect the balance of power in Kerala?**

The treaty of 1513 was significant because it marked a diplomatic triumph for the Portuguese. Under the agreement, the Portuguese were allowed to build a fort in Calicut and conduct trade freely while receiving tribute from the Zamorin. This agreement altered the balance of power in Kerala by legitimizing Portuguese interference in local affairs and securing a foothold for the Portuguese amidst the ever-present conflicts among local rulers. It symbolized the Portuguese strategy of leveraging diplomatic ties with the Zamorin to counterbalance the influence of the Cochin Raja, further



entrenching their presence in the region.

### 5.Question:

**Discuss the decline of Portuguese power in Kerala and the factors that contributed to their eventual loss of control in the region.**

The decline of Portuguese power in Kerala was accelerated by various factors, including the rise of the Dutch as a formidable competitor in the region. The Dutch began conquering Portuguese strongholds in Ceylon and Kerala by the mid-17th century, culminating in the Portuguese being expelled from key locations like Quilon, Cranganore, and even Cochin by 1663. Internal corruption, ineffective administration, and alienation of local allies diminished the Portuguese ability to maintain control. The dispossession of local Muslims from trade and subsequent alienation also undermined their authority. Ultimately, the ill-fated policies of the Portuguese, lack of military strength, and failure to establish a lasting alliance with local powers contributed to their downfall.

## Chapter 14 | VENAD (1314 -1720) | Q&A

### 1.Question:

**Who was Vira Udaya Marthanda Varma and what was significant about his reign in the Venad kingdom?**

Vira Udaya Marthanda Varma (1314-1344) was the first king of the Venad kingdom to ascend the throne according to the matrilineal system of succession. His reign was marked by military conflicts, notably a defeat alongside Vira Pandya against the

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Kakatiya ruler in 1317. Despite setbacks, he maintained control over certain territories including parts of the Tirunelveli district. His significance is also noted in the adoption of two princesses from the Kolathunad royal family into the Venad royal house, indicating strategic alliances.

## **2.Question:**

**What achievements characterized the rule of the brothers Iravi Iravi Varman and Iravi Aditya Varman in Venad?**

The period from 1350 to 1383 A.D. was a golden era for the Venad kingdom, largely due to the joint rule of Iravi Iravi Varman and Iravi Aditya Varman. They are celebrated for their defense against Muslim raids, as both rulers focused on strengthening frontier defenses. Iravi Iravi Varman was known for his patronage of literature, particularly the Malayalam poem *Unnunilisandesam*, which was likely composed under his influence, emphasizing the cultural advancements of this era. Their reign is noted for its educational and cultural prosperity alongside military resilience.

## **3.Question:**

**How did Aditya Varma Sarvanganatha contribute to the cultural and military aspects of Venad during his reign?**

Aditya Varma Sarvanganatha (1376-1383) was notable for being a multifaceted ruler: a poet, scholar, and accomplished warrior. His contributions to culture included significant literary works, including devotional hymns, and masterful portrayals of various branches of knowledge, as recorded in inscriptions from temples. Militarily, he is





revered for successfully defending the kingdom against Muslim invaders, reaffirming Venad's sovereignty and cultural identity during a tumultuous period.

#### 4.Question:

**Describe the political dynamics and conflicts involving Chera Udaya Marthanda Varma's reign and territorial extent.**

Chera Udaya Marthanda Varma (1383-1444) presided over the longest reign in Venad history, characterized by territorial expansion into the Tirunelveli region. He successfully repelled invasions, such as the attempted incursion by the Zamindar of Rettiyapuram. His reign saw the construction of the Sabha Mantapa at the Suchindram temple, marking significant contributions to both architecture and local governance. This era highlighted the increasing tension between the royal authority and local zamindars, foreshadowing future conflicts in the region.

#### 5.Question:

**What were the consequences of the conflict between Venad and Vijayanagar during Bhutalavira Sri Vira Udaya Marthanda Varma's reign?**

The confrontation between Bhutalavira Sri Vira Udaya Marthanda Varma and the Vijayanagar Empire resulted from the Venad king granting asylum to a rebellious Vijayanagar feudatory, Chellappa. The subsequent conflict, culminating in a significant battle on the Tamraparni banks, led to Venad's defeat, with Udaya Marthanda forced to recognize Vijayanagar's supremacy



and effectively returning conquered lands to the Pandyan king. This defeat marked a shift in territorial control and dependencies, impacting the political landscape of southern India.

## **Chapter 15 | THE RISE AND FALL OF THE DUTCH | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**What role did the Dutch East India Company play in establishing Dutch trade relations with Kerala?**

The Dutch East India Company, formed in 1602, played a pivotal role in initiating and organizing expeditions to establish trade contacts with Kerala. The company's strategic missions aimed at undermining the Portuguese monopoly over Indian trade, particularly in spices. In 1604, the expedition led by Admiral Steven Van Der Hagen resulted in the first recorded treaty between the Dutch and the Zamorin of Calicut, which created a mutual alliance aimed at expelling the Portuguese. This set the groundwork for subsequent treaties and increased Dutch trading presence in the region.

### **2.Question:**

**How did the Dutch manage to capture and establish control over Cochin in 1663?**

The Dutch capture of Cochin was facilitated by internal strife within the Cochin royal family. The Dutch intervened in the succession dispute by supporting the Mutha Tavazhi branch against the Portuguese-backed usurper. This was instrumental in gaining local alliances, particularly from the Zamorin and other regional powers. Following a series of military engagements, including the siege of the Cochin fort, the Dutch captured Cochin on January 6, 1663. They subsequently installed Vira Kerala





Varma as a puppet ruler and secured monopolistic control over the spice trade, fundamentally altering the political landscape in Kerala.

### 3.Question:

**What were the key treaties established by the Dutch with local rulers, and what were their implications?**

The Dutch established several important treaties with local rulers, including the one with the Zamorin in 1604 for mutual alliance against the Portuguese, and multiple treaties with the Rajas of Purakkad and Kayamkulam to secure exclusive trade rights for pepper and other commodities. The treaty with Cochin in 1663 turned the Cochin Raja into a puppet, mandating him to deliver all pepper production to the Dutch. These treaties generally served to enhance Dutch commercial interests while simultaneously diminishing the authority of local rulers, leading to a precarious balance of power that ultimately set the stage for future conflicts.

### 4.Question:

**What factors contributed to the decline of Dutch power in Kerala by the late 18th century?**

Several factors combined to undermine Dutch power in Kerala by the late 18th century. The increasing strength of the Travancore state under Marthanda Varma significantly disrupted Dutch ambitions, culminating in a decisive defeat at the Battle of Colachel in 1741. Additionally, internal conflicts and the growing assertiveness of local rulers, particularly the Zamorin, reasserted regional power dynamics that curtailed Dutch influence.



The Dutch also faced external pressures from the British and the French, with whom they entered into complex conflicts that further strained their resources and authority. These factors culminated in the Dutch ceding their territories to the British as part of the Treaty of Paris in 1814.

### **5.Question:**

#### **How did Dutch administration policies differ from those of the Portuguese in Kerala?**

The Dutch administration in Kerala established a more efficient, non-feudal system, contrasting with the Portuguese model, which was plagued by corruption and mismanagement. Dutch officials were paid regular salaries and their administration focused on structured governance over political, military, and ecclesiastical functions, fostering a more organized and effective approach. Moreover, the Dutch implemented fair and transparent practices, while also ensuring that local customs were respected, contributing to a more stable governance structure that fostered trade without the heavy-handedness typical of Portuguese rule.





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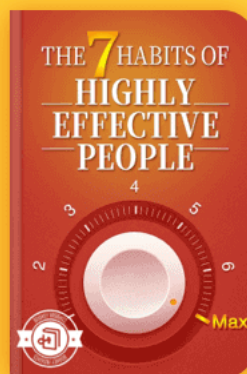
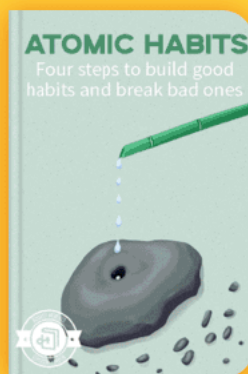
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## **Chapter 16 | KERALA POLITY AND LIFE IN THE 16th AND 17th CENTURIES | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**What were the main features of the political structure in Kerala during the 16th and 17th centuries?**

The political structure of Kerala during the 16th and 17th centuries was characterized by a feudal system where the land was divided into numerous principalities called Nadus, each governed by a local chieftain known as Naduvazhi. There was no central organized government; instead, power was decentralized and limited by local organizations called tara, which functioned as civil units governed by representatives of the local caste. The Naduvazhi had significant authority but could not act as an arbitrary despot due to the social structures in place. Their sources of income included customs revenue, succession fees, and various taxes on merchants and common folk, as well as fines and profits from war-related activities.

### **2.Question:**

**How did the Kalari institution influence martial training in Kerala society during this period?**

The Kalari, or gymnasium, was a critical institution for martial training in Kerala during the 16th and 17th centuries. It played a vital role in the training of the youth in the techniques of combat, particularly among the Nair community, known as the traditional martial class. However, the Tiyyas and other communities also had their martial traditions. The training in Kalaripayattu (the martial arts practiced in a Kalari) started at a young age and was aimed at imparting proficiency in warfare techniques.

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Notable historical figures such as Unniarcha and Kodumala Kunki, who were celebrated for their bravery, rose from this institution, showcasing its deep-rooted significance in the culture of the time.

### **3.Question:**

**What was the role and significance of the Ankam and Poithu in the martial culture of Kerala?**

Ankam and Poithu were integral to the martial culture of Kerala, serving as formalized methods for resolving disputes. Ankam was a public combat where parties involved in a disagreement, or their champions, would engage in a duel arranged with the consent of the Naduvazhi, involving payment for the right to fight. Preparation for an Ankam required extensive training, lasting up to 12 years, illustrating the seriousness with which conflicts were handled and the honor associated with combat. In contrast, Poithu was a private affair between individuals, not requiring advance notice to the Naduvazhi and often stemming from personal rivalries. Both customs emphasized the martial spirit of the community, allowing disputes to be settled through honorable combat rather than through verbal contests or legal mediation.

### **4.Question:**

**What were the prevailing social customs regarding women in Kerala during this era?**

Women in Kerala during the 16th and 17th centuries enjoyed considerable freedoms compared to many other regions. Women of the Nair community,





for example, did not practice purdah and had the right to dress freely and adorn themselves. They participated in public life and practiced polyandry without societal stigma. While Nair women could have multiple husbands, Namboothiri women were more restricted in their freedoms, being obliged to maintain modesty. The polyandrous arrangement was generally intended to prevent property fragmentation, reflecting the societal norms of the time. Women's rights to inheritance also varied, with the matrilineal system prevalent among Nairs and certain Muslims, allowing women a significant role in familial matters.

### 5.Question:

#### **What were the economic conditions and trade practices in Kerala during the 16th and 17th centuries?**

The economy of Kerala in the 16th and 17th centuries was characterized by active trade with foreign nations, with major port cities such as Quilon, Cochin, and Calicut serving as trading hubs. The commerce was primarily in spices, particularly pepper, which was in high demand from European traders. The Mappilas, along with various native trading classes, played a significant role in the region's commerce, acting as intermediaries between foreign merchants and local producers. Despite the vibrant trade, the period also witnessed economic strain due to fluctuating prices of commodities like pepper, leading to increased poverty among segments of the population. Moreover, the presence of foreign powers like the Portuguese and the Dutch greatly influenced local trade practices, often leading to conflicts between



local traders and foreign merchants.

## **Chapter 17 | MARTHANDA VARMA AND DHARMA RAJA | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**What were the main challenges faced by Marthanda Varma upon his accession to the throne of Travancore?**

Upon his accession to the Trippappur Swarupam in 1729, Marthanda Varma encountered a severely disordered state. The kingdom's administrative machinery was ineffective, finances were in a dire state, and royal authority was largely undermined by powerful feudal elements such as the Pillamar and Matampimar, supported by the local priestly class. The political landscape was further complicated by rivalries between European powers, specifically the Dutch and English, which created additional instability. Therefore, Marthanda Varma had to implement strong measures to restore order and consolidate his authority.

### **2.Question:**

**Describe the key policies implemented by Marthanda Varma to strengthen the monarchy in Travancore.**

Marthanda Varma implemented a policy of 'blood and iron' to assert royal authority by decisively crushing feudal elements. He sought external assistance from the English East India Company and the Nayaks of Madurai to consolidate power. Key measures included reorganizing the administrative system, improving the state's finances, annihilating the Pillamar and Yogakkar's authority through military and punitive actions, and establishing a centralized monarchy. This structured administrative





overhaul laid the foundation for a strong military state and promoted economic stability.

### 3.Question:

**What was the significance of the Battle of Colachel in 1741 for Travancore?**

The Battle of Colachel in 1741 marked a pivotal victory for Marthanda Varma against the Dutch forces, which significantly altered the balance of power in Kerala. The defeat of the Dutch, who had aspirations of dominating Kerala, not only asserted Travancore's military might but also thwarted Dutch ambitions in the region. The victory resulted in the capture of a large number of Dutch troops, including the distinguished D'Lannoy, who later served in Varma's army, enhancing its effectiveness. This battle solidified Travancore's position and enabled it to pursue further territorial expansion.

### 4.Question:

**How did Dharma Raja continue the achievements of Marthanda Varma during his reign?**

Dharma Raja, who ascended the throne in 1758 after Marthanda Varma, diligently continued and built upon the administrative and territorial gains of his predecessor. He maintained the centralization of authority and upheld alliances, such as the significant treaty with Cochin, which ensured mutual defense against external threats, particularly from the Zamorin of Calicut. Under his rule, the state saw significant developments in agriculture, infrastructure, and cultural patronage, further consolidating Travancore's



regional dominance and stability. He is noted for his charitable governance, which earned him the title Dharma Raja, reflecting his mission to protect and promote the welfare of his subjects.

### **5.Question:**

#### **What cultural advancements occurred during the reigns of Marthanda Varma and Dharma Raja?**

Both Marthanda Varma and Dharma Raja contributed to a rich cultural landscape in Travancore. Marthanda Varma's dedication of the kingdom to Lord Sri Padmanabha not only bolstered political stability but also promoted religious and cultural activities. Under his reign, arts such as Kathakali and mural painting flourished, exemplified by the murals in Padmanabhapuram palace. Dharma Raja further enriched this cultural renaissance through his patronage of literature and the arts, engaging iconic poets and promoting local traditions and performances such as Kathakali. He established institutions for literary discourse, which facilitated intellectual growth and elevated Travancore as a cultural hub in Kerala.

## **Chapter 18 | HISTORY OF COCHIN (1500-1805) | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

#### **What was the significance of the arrival of the Portuguese in Cochin in 1500?**

The arrival of the Portuguese in Cochin in 1500 marked a crucial turning point in the region's history. Initially, the Portuguese, led by Captain Cabral, established strong trade relationships with the local rulers, particularly with Unni Rama Koil I. This



relationship not only facilitated the growth of Cochin as an important trade hub but also allowed the Portuguese to gain influence over local politics. Under successive rulers, such as Unni Rama Koil II and Vira Kerala Varma, the ties with the Portuguese were strengthened, leading to Cochin's rise in political prominence during the early 16th century.

## **2.Question:**

**Who were the main rulers of Cochin during the Portuguese period, and what characterized their reigns?**

The main rulers of Cochin during the Portuguese period included Unni Rama Koil I, II, Vira Kerala Varma, Kesava Rama Varma, and Vira Kerala Varma (1601-1615). Unni Rama Koil I was the first to engage the Portuguese favorably, while Vira Kerala Varma faced strains in relations due to Portuguese actions, notably the plundering of temples. Kesava Rama Varma (1565-1601) is recognized as the most outstanding ruler, promoting literature and culture, and witnessing significant events like the Synod of Diamper. His reign saw a successful revolt against Portuguese dominance, and he played a vital role in the establishment of Jewish settlement in Cochin. Subsequent rulers experienced varying degrees of influence and conflict with the Portuguese, with some suffering from political ineffectiveness.

## **3.Question:**

**What events marked the transition of Cochin from Portuguese to Dutch control?**



The transition of Cochin from Portuguese to Dutch control occurred when the Portuguese fort was surrendered to the Dutch in a series of conflicts in the 17th century. The key turning point was the fall of the Mattancherri Palace in February 1662, culminating in the Dutch installation of Vira Kerala Varma on the throne after Goda Varma's defeat. The first treaty signed in March 1663 formalized the relations between the Cochin Raja and the Dutch East India Company, effectively subordinating Cochin's authority to Dutch control. Over the following years, additional treaties reaffirmed this relationship, diminishing the Raja's power and relegating him to a figurehead role while ensuring the Dutch managed Cochin's political and economic affairs.

#### 4.Question:

**How did Saktan Tampuran's rule (1790-1805) differ from his predecessors in terms of administration and societal reforms?**

Saktan Tampuran's rule was marked by significant reforms that centralized governance and curtailed the powers of local feudal lords and Brahmin clergy, which starkly contrasted with the ineffectiveness often seen in previous rulers. He implemented a rigorous administrative structure, dividing the state into taluks overseen by appointed officials, thus rooting out corruption and improving state finances. Unlike earlier kings who maintained feudal ties, Saktan Tampuran actively diminished noble influence, imposing direct royal authority over local governance. Furthermore, he supported the Syrian Christians and facilitated their



economic activities while confronting elite groups such as the Konkanis and Latin Christians harshly, leading to a coded, centrally controlled state.

### 5.Question:

**What were the long-term impacts of the Mysorean invasions on Kerala's socio-economic and political landscape?**

The Mysorean invasions led by Haider Ali and later Tipu Sultan had profound effects on Kerala's socio-economic and political landscape.

Politically, the invasions marked the decline of the feudal system, replacing it with centralized governance, which paved the way for British colonial administration later. Many local chieftains lost power, leading to increased government control over land and tax innovations that favored direct revenue collection from peasants. Socially, the invasions disrupted the traditional caste hierarchies, as high castes like the Nairs faced humiliation and loss of status. The invasions also intensified communal tensions, particularly between Hindus and Muslims, leading to long-standing conflicts that persisted even after British rule was established. Economically, while some infrastructure, like roads, improved under Mysorean rule, agriculture suffered severe losses due to warfare, resulting in a decline in trade and economic stability for many citizens.





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## **Chapter 19 | THE GROWTH OF BRITISH POWER | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**Who was the first Englishman to arrive in Kerala and what significance does he hold?**

Master Ralph Fitch is often recognized as the first Englishman to visit Kerala, arriving in 1583. His voyage predates the expedition of James Lancaster, and thus, Fitch is referred to as the 'Pioneer Englishman.' His arrival marked the beginning of English interest in Kerala primarily for trade purposes.

### **2.Question:**

**What significant treaties or agreements did the English East India Company establish with local rulers in Kerala, and what were their implications?**

The English East India Company established several important treaties, including one with the Zamorin of Calicut in 1615 for trade freedom, and another with the king of Travancore in 1723, which was the first treaty negotiated by the Company with an Indian state. These agreements allowed the Company to build factories, gain trade access, and support local rulers in internal conflicts, effectively increasing British influence and control over these territories.

### **3.Question:**

**Discuss the Anjengo Outbreak of 1721 and its significance in the context of British rule in Kerala.**

The Anjengo Outbreak of 1721 was significant as it represented one of the first organized revolts against British authority in Kerala. The local resentment towards the





English was fueled by corrupt practices and overbearing conduct by the English factors. The rebellion resulted in a violent attack on the English factory at Anjengo, leading to a six-month siege of the fort, highlighting the rising tensions between colonial powers and local populations.

#### 4.Question:

**What were the outcomes of the two major revolts led by Pazhassi Raja against British rule, and how did they reflect the struggles for independence in Kerala?**

The first Pazhassi Revolt (1793-1797) was sparked by resentment against harsh revenue policies and began due to the misunderstandings with the British regarding revenue collection. Although initially successful in garnering local support, it ended with a negotiated settlement after heavy conflict. The second revolt (1800-1805) was more structured, with Pazhassi Raja utilizing guerilla warfare. Ultimately, both revolts highlighted local resistance against British rule and set the stage for future independence movements in Kerala.

#### 5.Question:

**How did the revolts against British authority reflect the socio-political conditions of the time in Kerala?**

The revolts against British authority in Kerala reflected deep-seated grievances over revenue policies, local collaboration with the British, and interference in traditional governance structures. The uprisings often involved varied local entities, including chiefs and common folk, signifying



widespread dissent against foreign domination. These revolts underscored the complexities of colonial rule, where local power dynamics and popular resistance frequently intersected in the struggle for autonomy.

## **Chapter 20 | ENLIGHTENED ADMINISTRATION IN TRAVANCORE | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**What were the key reforms introduced by Velu Tampi during his tenure as Dalawa of Travancore?**

Velu Tampi, appointed as Dalawa after the popular revolt against the unpopular ministers, implemented several significant reforms during his tenure. He focused on purifying the administration by dismissing corrupt officials and streamlining governmental processes to enhance efficiency. This included reorganizing the revenue department under his direct supervision, thereby ensuring the prompt collection of revenue from all divisions and taluks. Furthermore, Velu Tampi promoted education at the village level and initiated urban development projects in towns like Trivandrum, Quilon, and Alleppey, which included public building constructions and improvements in infrastructure such as roads and markets. Moreover, he advocated for agricultural improvements, bringing uncultivated land under paddy cultivation.

### **2.Question:**

**How did Rani Gouri Lakshmi Bai's administration shape the governance of Travancore?**

Rani Gouri Lakshmi Bai's reign (1810-1815) was marked by significant reforms,



chiefly facilitated by her advisor, Diwan Munro. He introduced an administrative system resembling that of British India, including the establishment of a secretariat, improved auditing processes, and the restructuring of landholdings through the issuance of Pattayam to landholders. Under her rule, corrupt officials were dismissed, and the efficiency of revenue collection improved. Notably, the judicial system was reformed with the establishment of Zilla courts and a Court of Appeal. Furthermore, Munro abolished oppressive taxes and instituted new laws to prevent embezzlement, which significantly modernized the administration of Travancore.

### 3.Question:

**What measures did Swati Tirunal implement that contributed to the cultural and educational advancements in Travancore?**

Swati Tirunal's reign (1829-1847) is often described as a 'Golden Age' due to his contributions to the promotion of the arts and education. He established Munsiff Courts to address petty civil and police cases and introduced a comprehensive code of regulations based on British Indian law. His administration initiated English education in Travancore, establishing an English school in 1834, which later became the Raja's Free School, as well as district schools across the state. The era also saw the opening of the Trivandrum Observatory and the establishment of various public utilities, including charity hospitals and engineering departments aimed at facilitating public works.

### 4.Question:

**What were the key achievements of Sri Mulam Tirunal during his**



reign?

Sri Mulam Tirunal Rama Varma's reign (1885-1924) was characterized by extensive administrative reforms and social advances. He prioritized land revenue reform, completing settlement operations and establishing a Department of Agriculture. Significant educational improvements were made, including the recognition of free primary education, the appointment of a Director of Public Instruction, and the establishment of various colleges for specialized education. His governance saw substantial enhancements in communication, as well as medical services, with qualified medical personnel being appointed in hospitals. The formation of a Legislative Council in 1888, which consisted of a notable proportion of non-official members, marked a significant step toward representative governance in Travancore.

### 5.Question:

**What social reforms were introduced during the reign of Sri Chitra Tirunal Balarama Varma?**

The reign of Sri Chitra Tirunal Balarama Varma (1931-1949) was notable for extensive social reforms and the reconstitution of the Legislature. The Legislative Reforms Act of 1932 established a bicameral legislature, allowing for broader representation. Among significant achievements were the Temple Entry Proclamation of 1936, which enabled lower castes to enter temples, and the establishment of the Travancore University in 1937. The administration also focused on alleviating rural indebtedness and fostering

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rural development. Under Chitra Tirunal's governance, the State saw substantial industrial growth with the establishment of various factories and the execution of infrastructure projects like the Pallivasal Hydroelectric scheme, reflecting a commitment to modernization.

## **Chapter 21 | BRITISH MALABAR | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**When did Malabar become part of the Madras Presidency and who was the first Principal Collector in charge of its administration?**

Malabar became part of the Madras Presidency on May 21, 1800. The first Principal Collector in charge of its administration was Major Macleod, who took charge on October 1, 1801.

### **2.Question:**

**What were the significant developments in the judicial system of Malabar during British administration?**

The British administration's early effort to establish a judicial system included the promulgation of a code for civil and criminal justice by the Joint Commissioners in 1793. The establishment of civil and criminal jurisdictions was assigned to the Northern and Southern Superintendents, along with local Darogas in key centers. In 1802, the judicial and executive functions were separated under the Cornwallis Code, leading to the formation of a Provincial Court at Tellicherry and Zilla Courts at Tellicherry and Calicut. Over time, Malabar's judicial structure evolved into two District Judgeships for North and South Malabar, with headquarters at Tellicherry and Calicut, respectively.

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What role did the British administration play in the improvement of communication in Malabar?

Under British administration, communication in Malabar saw significant improvements. The Pazhassi revolt heightened the need for road construction, resulting in military roads that opened up interior areas.

Madras Pioneers contributed to road building between 1810 and 1830, with the Periya Ghat road being notably important. Furthermore, a crucial road linking Cannanore to Coorg was built between 1848 and 1851. The rise of the plantation industry in Wynad also spurred road construction, complemented by the laying of a railway line from the southern end of the district to the north between 1861 and 1907.

#### **4.Question:**

**What were the Mappila Riots, and how were they related to the socio-economic conditions in Malabar?**

The Mappila Riots were a series of twenty-two violent disturbances occurring between 1836 and 1856, primarily in the Ernad and Valluvanad taluks. These riots involved Mappilas attacking Hindu landlords and desecrating temples, often attributed to underlying agrarian grievances and poverty. Initial interpretations viewed these riots as acts of religious fanaticism, leading to repressive measures like the creation of the Malabar Special Police. However, an investigation in 1881 highlighted that the riots stemmed from the economic exploitation faced by Mappila tenants under the revenue policies favoring Hindu Janmis. This agrarian distress, compounded



by poverty and social discontents, ultimately sparked the violent outbreaks.

### **5.Question:**

**How did the political landscape in Malabar evolve during the Independence movement, particularly through events like the Malabar Rebellion and subsequent movements?**

The political landscape in Malabar shifted significantly during the Independence movement, marked by events such as the Malabar Rebellion of 1921, which arose from discontent related to the Khilafat movement and resulted in widespread violence against British authorities. The rebellion started as a reaction to police repression but evolved into communal violence targeting the Hindu population. This led to severe governmental repression. The post-rebellion period saw the rise of political journalism, the establishment of Congress as a major political force, and active participation in subsequent movements like the Salt Satyagraha and the Civil Disobedience movement. Political factions began to emerge, including the rise of the Muslim League and the Communist Party, further diversifying and complicating the political landscape as different groups sought to address various social and economic grievances.

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## **Chapter 22 | POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN TRAVANCORE AND COCHIN | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**What were the early political struggles in Travancore during the British period?**

The early political struggles in Travancore began with the revolt led by Velu Tampi in 1799 against the misrule of a triumvirate of ministers. This marked the first instance of organized political action in the state, where Tampi mobilized thousands to demand the dismissal of unpopular ministers, leading to the appointment of leaders from the community to governmental positions. Throughout the first half of the 19th century, however, the region saw little significant political upheaval, with internal governance proceeding relatively peacefully under external Diwans.

### **2.Question:**

**How did the Malayali and Ezhava Memorials contribute to political consciousness in Travancore?**

The Malayali Memorial, submitted in 1891, was a petition signed by over 10,000 individuals protesting the government's practice of employing outsiders, particularly Tamil Brahmins, in public service, thus excluding qualified locals. This anger sparked the political awakening among the educated classes, with G. Parameswaran Pillai being recognized as a pivotal figure in this movement. Following this, the Ezhava Memorial, submitted in 1896, further highlighted the grievances of the Ezhava community, who were denied access to education and public services. Although both memorials were largely ignored by the government, they significantly raised political awareness and mobilization among various communities in Travancore.

### **3.Question:**

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What was the Nivarthana (Abstention) Movement, and what were its key outcomes?

The Nivarthana Movement arose in the early 1930s in response to fears among the Ezhavas, Muslims, and some Christians that they would receive less representation in the State Legislature than their proportion of the population warranted under proposed constitutional reforms. This led to the formation of the Samyukta Rashtriya Samiti, which called for a boycott of the elections under the new scheme. The movement led to significant political mobilization and, although some leaders faced arrest, it resulted in the appointment of a Public Service Commissioner to ensure fair representation in government positions, thereby temporarily addressing some of the demands for equality.

#### 4.Question:

**Describe the role and significance of the Travancore State Congress in the push for responsible government.**

The Travancore State Congress, formed in February 1938, aimed to achieve full responsible government in Travancore. Specifically, it sought to escalate political activism and directly engage with the government following frustrations with the Diwan's administration. They initiated a Civil Disobedience movement in 1938, which involved widespread protests and confrontations with law enforcement, marking a critical phase in political activism in Travancore. While the government initially suppressed these actions, the sustained agitation ultimately highlighted the demand for



responsible governance, culminating in the eventual acceptance of constitutional reforms that granted increased political representation.

### **5.Question:**

#### **What events led to the establishment of responsible government in Travancore by 1947?**

The establishment of responsible government in Travancore was precipitated by a series of political upheavals and the impact of national movements. Key events included the violent Punnappra-Vayalar uprisings in 1946 against autocratic rule, and the rejection of Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Ayyar's proposal for constitutional reforms. Following the British announcement of independence, Ayyar's declaration of Travancore's intention to remain independent provoked widespread unrest. Escalating tensions culminated in the government's repressive measures against demonstrators, leading to the Diwan's eventual resignation on August 19, 1947, and the Maharaja's decision to integrate Travancore into the Indian Union, thus establishing responsible governance.

## **Chapter 23 | TRAVANCORE - COCHIN AND KERALA | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

#### **What led to the formation of the State of Kerala on November 1, 1956?**

The formation of the State of Kerala on November 1, 1956, was the culmination of a long-standing desire among Malayalam-speaking people for a unified state. Public opinion and political movements advocating for 'Aikya Kerala' or united Kerala had



been gaining momentum since the early 20th century. The British colonial administration had divided Kerala into three units—Malabar, Travancore, and Cochin—complicating unification efforts. Additionally, the inclusion of Malayalam-speaking regions like Kasargod in South Canara further obstructed the path to a consolidated state.

## **2.Question:**

**What were some key events and conferences that contributed to the Aikya Kerala Movement?**

Key events in the Aikya Kerala Movement include the State Peoples' Conference in Ernakulam in April 1928, which passed a resolution demanding a united Kerala. Subsequent conferences, such as the Payyannur Political Conference that same year, called on the Central Congress leadership for a separate province. The Kerala Provincial Congress Committee's series of All-Kerala Political Conferences from 1921 onward helped unite political voices across the three districts. Significant resolutions exchanged at the Aikya Kerala Conference in Trichur in 1947 urged for the formation of a Kerala state, further solidifying the movement's foundation.

## **3.Question:**

**How did the integration of Travancore and Cochin influence the formation of Kerala?**

The integration of Travancore and Cochin on July 1, 1949, marked a pivotal step toward the realization of a united Kerala. Spearheaded by the States Ministry under Sardar Vallabhai Patel, the merger was notable for the



willingness of the Maharajas to collaborate, with the Maharaja of Travancore serving as Rajapramukh. This consolidation of administrations created the State of Travancore-Cochin, conducive to political unity. It allowed for a legislative and administrative framework that facilitated discussions for further integration, particularly the inclusion of British Malabar into the envisioned Kerala.

#### **4.Question:**

**What was the political situation in Kerala following the formation of the state in 1956?**

Following the formation of Kerala in 1956, the political landscape was marred by instability. The first general elections were held in early 1957, resulting in a Communist government led by E.M.S. Namboothiripad. However, this government faced agitation from various political factions and was challenged by a 'Vimochana Samaram' or 'Liberation Struggle' in 1959, which resulted in police violence and increased unrest. Throughout the subsequent years, Kerala experienced frequent changes in government, with various ministries formed and dissolved amidst competing interests between the Congress, Communist Party, and emerging factions, often leading back under President's Rule.

#### **5.Question:**

**What significant political changes occurred in Kerala during the 1960s and early 1970s?**

The 1960s and early 70s in Kerala witnessed dramatic political shifts. In



February 1960, a new Congress-Praja Socialist Party coalition took office after a significant electoral victory over a beleaguered Communist Party. However, subsequent elections saw the rise of the Communist Party (Marxist) and a coalition of seven parties that won a significant majority in 1967. This led to the establishment of a United Front government. Political fragmentation continued, with numerous ministries formed and dissolved amid dissent and political realignments, including splits within the Congress Party and other left factions, leading to ongoing instability.

## **Chapter 24 | TOWARDS A NEW SOCIETY | Q&A**

### **1.Question:**

**What factors contributed to the emergence of a new social order in Kerala during the 19th and 20th centuries?**

The emergence of a new social order in Kerala during the 19th and 20th centuries can be attributed to several interrelated factors, including the decline of the traditional feudal system, the impact of the British colonial administration, and the influence of various social reform movements. The weakening of the caste aristocracy and the centralizing policies of rulers like Marthanda Varma and Saktan Tampuran significantly disrupted the old social structures. Moreover, the British prioritized gaining support from local elites, thus empowering upper castes while simultaneously provoking discontent among lower castes through their oppressive practices and taxations. This backdrop led to a demand for social, economic, and political reforms, illuminated by the rise of liberal ideas and the influence of Western education introduced by Christian missionaries.

### **2.Question:**

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How did the British colonial rule affect the social hierarchy in Kerala, particularly regarding caste privilege?

Under British colonial rule, the existing social hierarchy in Kerala became more entrenched, particularly due to the privileges enjoyed by upper castes such as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Nairs. The colonial government relied on these upper castes for local governance, which inadvertently strengthened their power and authority over lower castes like the Ezhavas and Mappilas. The law favored these upper castes, exempting them from taxes and offering them judicial privileges. As a result, caste-based discrimination escalated, with severe punishments meted out to lower castes, exacerbating the social divide. However, British rule also sparked social movements seeking to dismantle these injustices, eventually leading to broader calls for equality and reform.

### 3.Question:

**What was the significance of the Shanar agitation in the context of social reform in Kerala, and what were its outcomes?**

The Shanar agitation, also known as the 'Breast-Cloth Agitation', was a pivotal moment in Kerala's social reform movement, aimed at granting Shanar women the right to wear clothing similar to that of upper-caste women. This agitation was significant as it highlighted the rigid caste norms and the oppressive social structures faced by lower castes. It sparked widespread unrest and drew attention from authorities, indicating a growing resistance against caste-based discrimination. The culmination of the



agitation was the Royal Proclamation of 1859 which abolished the specific dress restrictions on Shanar women, a landmark moment in the fight for social equality. This protest also laid the groundwork for subsequent larger movements aimed at ending caste-related restrictions and promoting social justice.

#### **4.Question:**

**Who were some of the key social reformers of the 19th and early 20th centuries in Kerala, and what were their contributions?**

Key social reformers in Kerala during this period included Chattampi Swamikal, Sri Narayana Guru, Brahmananda Sivayogi, and Vaikunta Swami. Chattampi Swamikal focused on rousing the Nair community against Brahmin dominance and advocated for societal reforms addressing untouchability and irrational customs. Sri Narayana Guru, born into the Ezhava community, emphasized the idea of social equality and established temples that permitted entry for all castes, challenging Brahmin hegemony. Brahmananda Sivayogi criticized caste practices and championed women's rights and widow remarriage, while advocating for societal education and reform. Vaikunta Swami founded the Samatva Samajam to advocate for the rights of marginalized communities and against social injustices. Collectively, their efforts galvanized public consciousness about caste issues and spurred broader movements towards achieving social justice in Kerala.

#### **5.Question:**

**What legislative reforms were introduced in Kerala concerning**

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inheritance and land, and how did they transform society?

Legislative reforms were crucial in transforming the social landscape of Kerala, particularly regarding inheritance and land ownership. The Nair Act (1912 and 1925) was significant as it aimed to alter the Marumakkathayam system by allowing individual partition and restricting polygamy, granting legal rights to wives and children. Similar steps were taken with the Ezhava Act (1925) and the Nanjanad Vellala Act (1926) to modernize the inheritance laws. Land reforms were also enacted, starting with the Pandara Pattam Proclamation (1865) in Travancore, which protected tenant rights and conferred ownership rights on them. The Kerala Agrarian Relations Act (1960) aimed at ceiling provisions and land distribution, abolishing the feudal land ownership system. These reforms not only empowered tenant farmers but also fragmented the traditional landlord system, facilitating a shift towards a more egalitarian social structure.

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## Chapter 25 | LITERATURE AND ARTS | Q&A

### 1.Question:

**What is the origin of the Malayalam language according to Chapter 25 of 'A Survey of Kerala History'?**

The Malayalam language originated as a distinct language around the 9th century AD, evolving from the primitive Tamil spoken in Kerala. Initially, Kerala was part of Tamilakam, where the primary language was Tamil with local characteristics. As Malayalam developed, it was influenced by Sanskrit and Prakrit due to the presence of Brahmins in Kerala, eventually leading to a literary tradition of its own. The script of Malayalam also evolved, moving from the old Vattezhuthu script to a new script based on Grantha.

### 2.Question:

**Can you explain the significance of the Manipravalam literary style introduced between the 9th to 12th centuries?**

Manipravalam, a linguistic blend of Tamil and Sanskrit, became prominent between the 9th and 12th centuries in Kerala. This poetic form served as a means of literary expression that catered to the socio-cultural milieu of Kerala. The earliest known poet using this style is Tolan, and the first significant work is the Vaisikatantram, a guide for women on seduction. This literary form displayed early complexity in thought and structure, and its prominence indicates the evolving sophistication of Malayalam literature during this period.

### 3.Question:

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Who are the Niranam poets and why are they significant in the history of Malayalam literature?

The Niranam poets, active in the 15th century, are significant figures in Malayalam literature, most notably Rama Panikkar, also known as Kannassan. They are renowned for their devotional poetry that revived the religious themes in Malayalam literature, which had previously been overshadowed by secular works. Among their contributions are translations of major Sanskrit texts like the Ramayana, Bharatam, and Bhagavatam, characterized by originality and artistic merit. This revival contributed to a broader appreciation of Malayalam as a literary language with religious depth.

#### 4.Question:

**What impact did Christian missionaries have on the development of Malayalam literature, especially in the 19th century?**

Christian missionaries had a profound impact on Malayalam literature beginning in the 18th century. With the establishment of printing presses, such as those by the Portuguese in 1577 and later the C.M.S. Press in 1821, a significant amount of literature was published. This included grammars, dictionaries, and religious texts, which laid the foundation for modern Malayalam. The missionaries' focus on education and literacy helped cultivate a readership and stimulated literary output, leading to the eventual flourishing of Malayalam literature in the 19th century.

#### 5.Question:

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Describe the themes found in the modern Malayalam poetry of notable poets like Kumaran Asan and Vallathol Narayana Menon.

Kumaran Asan's poetry emphasized romantic themes, social justice, and compassion, reflecting his activism against caste barriers and advocating for social reform. Notable works include 'Vina Puvu' and 'Chandala Bhikshuki', where he explores the plight of marginalized communities. Vallathol Narayana Menon, on the other hand, presented themes of Indian nationalism and freedom, showcasing a deep appreciation for local culture through his works while paralleling contemporary global movements. His poetry, marked by historical and mythological references, also revitalized traditional art forms like Kathakali, integrating them into the broader cultural narrative of Kerala.