



Multiple Modernities

Readings on Kerala

Edited by
Board of Editors

Prescribed as a textbook for English Common Courses (ECC) for Kannur University for 'Readings on Kerala' (Course Code: 1A02ENG)

Multiple Modernities: Readings on Kerala is prescribed as a course book for “English Common Courses” for entry level undergraduate students of Kannur University. This book contains a variety of writings that map the multiple expeditions undertaken by various movements and people towards the formation of contemporary Kerala. While exposing the students to the evolution of contemporary Kerala it also provides them with ample opportunities to engage with English in a wide variety of styles and related to situations and to adopt different styles of expression and articulation.

Key Features

- Focuses on Kerala
- A literature based approach of a socio-cultural theme
- Variety of materials drawn across diverse genres
- Highlights the plural perspectives within the theme of modernity
- Blends regional themes and narratives with English
- Opportunity to engage with different uses of English



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Students book

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Curing Caste

Sahodaran Ayyappan

There are two types of cures for the caste disease,
One from the outside and another from inside.

Some use external ointments to cure caste,
This is of transitory value.

Caste may disappear from outside;
But it will retreat into the inside and do damage.

Hate, gossip and nationalist rhetoric are symptoms
Of inwardly drawn caste, says sages.

Those who nurture it inside are becoming big shots
In politics here through their hate rhetoric.

Those who curse caste without trying to alleviate it
Are trying to cool off without extinguishing the fire.

To eradicate caste from inside and outside
First the faith in caste must go.

That caste is truth; caste is morality; and caste is divine.
And breaking the caste is taboo and being casteless is a
shame.

These dogmas must go and the medico must ensure it
Through proper medication for cleansing.

When the dogmas and conventions of caste change,
We see human as human and become healthy and
normal.

The faults and qualities of a person are truly identified
By those who are cured of the caste disease.

How much you study and how much your intelligence
grows
You can't gain this potential without getting rid of caste.

(Translated by Dr. Ajay S. Sekher and published in his book *Sahodaran Ayyappan: Towards a Democratic Future*. Calicut: Other Books, 2012. The book won the Sahodaran Sahitya Puraskaram in 2014)

About the Author

A social reformer, revolutionary, poet, rationalist, an impeccable administrator and a legislator who brought in several landmark legislations, Sahodaran Ayyappan is considered one of the foremost figures who changed the face of history in Kerala.

Ayyappan was born on 21st August 1889 in Cherai, Vypeen in Ernakulam. Kumabalathuparambil Kochavu Vaidyar and Unnuli were his parents. After completing formal education, he joined for a pre-degree course at Malabar Christian College. After completing B.A. in Literature from Maharajah's College in Ernakulam, he

About my Race: A Song

Poykayil Appachan

Not a single word
About my race is seen
But of other races
I see histories in plenty.

Histories in this world
Each of them conceives
Two races; but then
Not a single word about my race.

Alas, there was nobody here
No one at all in the past
To write the story
Of this race of mine.

The thought grieves me
Therefore let me add
In my own tune
A few notes.

The story of how
The earliest occupants
Came to be regarded

Narayana Guru, Chattambi Swamikal, Tykad Ayya, Ayya Vaikundhar, Sahodaran Ayyappan, Chavara Achan and Vakkam Maulavi. The early contributions of Christian missionaries in education and healthcare in 19th century may also be remembered here.

“About my Race: A Song” is the first song in a series that forefronts the question of race. The concept of “race,” which refers to the evicted and marginalised first people of Kerala, occupies a central place in the works related to PRDS. This song has the honour of being recited by Appachan in the Legislative Assembly of Tiruvithamkoor in the year 1921.

(Adapted with modifications from the article “Poykayil Appachan, Practitioner of Critique and Co-option” by Dr. Ajay S. Sekher)

Glossary and Explanations

- word: in the original poem Appachan uses the word ‘*aksharam*’ and most translators have opted for the word ‘alphabet’
- race: the word has a special significance with reference to Appachan’s poems and the literature of the PRDS. It denotes the original inhabitants, the first people of Kerala
- conceives: form or devise an idea,
- grieves: saddens, fills with grief
- wretched: a person in a deprived and unfortunate state
- unveil: uncover