

‘Kutumbin’: A Pan-Indian Connections of the Subaltern Peasantry during the Medieval Period

Dr. B. Prabu

Assistant Professor of History,

Sri Krishnaswamy Arts and Science College, Sattur (Virudhunagar), Tamilnadu

Abstract: *About India, there is a general perception among the western scholars that the location of any caste in the Varna order is unchanging for thousands of years. In the Indian agrarian rural social structure the varna played a decisive role in fixing the place of each and every castes in the hierarchical system of the Hindu social structure. Studying the medieval subaltern peasantry, particularly, the category of people who directly engaged in tilling the lands still requires the historical revisiting. In this context, this paper highlights the way in which an actual cultivator caste in Tamilnadu, the Kudumban/Kutumbin decayed to the layer of untouchability. At the same time, in contrary to the said case in Tamilnadu, their counterparts – the Kutumbins in Western India, North India, Bengal and Deccan are disproving the above narrative. This study brings together the experiences of Kutumbin in Tamilnadu in comparison to the Kutumbin in rest of the India historically.*

Keywords: *Subaltern, Peasant, Mediaval, India, Tamilnadu*

Introduction

From the foundation of Delhi Sultanate upto the ending of British colonialism, from 10th century upto 1947, the premodern Indian culture was effectively exposed towards Islamic and Christian religious traditions. They made a remarkable influence upon the varna based caste structure of the Hindu socio-cultural system. In this connection, in modern India, the Nadar caste in Tamilnadu and Kerala is a prominent one in the case of a untouchable toddy-tappers and palmyra jaggery producers escaping from their untouchability, claimed Kshatriya status in 1901 census, and emerged to be one of the advanced castes in the socio-economic scale at the wake of colonialism. The Nadars, being a peasantry based upon the cultivation of palmyra trees, have such a wonderful historical narrative.¹ On the other hand we have another entirely opposite narrative of becoming untouchable from a non-untouchable subaltern agrarian caste. The case here is about the Kutumbin/Kudumban caste in Tamilnadu, this

became an untouchable caste only after the 15th century.

The name Kudumban was placed under the number 35 in the list of Scheduled Castes in the state of Tamilnadu. Historical studies conducted by a number of eminent historians inform us about the pan-Indian nature of this peasant category, the Kutumbin. Thus, the studies discussed in the following inform us that there was a single category of direct tillers on the land found throughout India during the medieval period, confirming the existence of an organised system. In this regard, the scholars have studied the different kinds of sources such as inscriptions and literary texts belonging to the pre-modern periods. The epigraphical sources have recorded the term 'Kutumbin' which is spelled in the Tamil literary sources as 'Kudumban/Kutumban. Besides Kutumbin, there are titles such as Kutumbina, Kutumbika, Kutumbi, Kutumi, Ulukudi and Kudi were the terms interchangeably used in the medieval inscriptions both in North India, Bengal, South India, and Deccan.

The Kudumban and Kutumbu System in Tamilnadu:

Prof.Y.Subbarayalu, who has studied about agrarian relations based upon inscriptions which explores that the earliest reference to the term kutumban is found in the Pulankurichi inscription by Chendan Kuttran issued in 5th century AD. Accordingly, Chendan Kuttran was the king who issued the Pulankurichi inscription "states that only the tenants (kudumbi) assigned specifically for the purpose by a previous ruler continue as tenants after the donation."² During the Pallavas the evicting the peasants (mun-perrarai marri/ kudi-neekki) from the lands which would be meant for granted to temples or Brahmins acquired importance. Kasakudi and Pattamangalam copper-plates of Pallavamalla (CE. 731-795), and Bahur copper-plates of Nirupatunga (CE. 855-896) bear the evidence.³

The finest model for the kutumban system is found in Tamil inscriptions of the Cholas and Pandyas.⁴ Uttaramerur inscriptions of the Parantaka I of Cholas (10th c.) is a better evidence for local-self government of the village assemblies under the kudumbu system of the cultivators.⁵ Prof.Y.Subbarayalu has made historical analysis about the kudumbu system through the Udayarkudi (9th c.), Uttaramerur (10th c.), and Kuram inscriptions (947 CE). Kudi, kutumbin, and Kutumbiyar are the terms used in these inscriptions connoting the same group of cultivators who directly engaged with cultivation, and the term Kutumbu Ada is used to denote the process of cultivation carried by kutumbar.⁶ It is considered that the Kutumbar are a non-Vellala cultivating groups, like karaiyars.⁷

According to Prof. Y. Subbarayalu the term kudumbu mentioned in the inscriptions did not contextualise the direct meaning of 'house-hold', but the kudumbu as a generic name for the agrarian system that "This was to introduce uniformity among the shares enjoyed by different households."⁸ The households of the cultivators, kutikal, had to pay a tax called kutimai. It occurs

recurrently in the inscriptions of both the Cholas and Pandiyas.⁹ The Kudumbu system was prevalent throughout the Cholas since the 10th century CE. Simultaneously there was an increase in the land-grants such as kudi-neekki (donated lands after the eviction of peasants) and kudi-neenga (donated lands without the eviction of peasants) meant for devedana, agrahara, and brahmadeya settlements.¹⁰ The kudi-neekki (eviction of peasants) was meant for pacifying the expected peasant unrest against land-grants.¹¹ The state used the religious ideology of Bhakti as a form to make consensus of the subaltern cultivators who lost their lands due to the said land-grants. Further the state officials began to receive the lands in lieu of their salaries for the service they provided to the state, sub-infeudation was flourishing. For the state it was comfortably very convenient to administer the revenue resources. The installation of officials by the state through land-grants led to the emergence of landlordism, one of the variants of feudalism. It can be classified as 'feudalism from above' as in the words of Prof. D. D. Kosambi.¹² In the analytical sense, for the peasants these were not land-grants but a medieval method of land-grabbing. The peasants lost their hereditary kaani-rights over their lands. It turned the peasants into landless labourers, otherwise mere serfs.

The Kutumbins in North India, Bengal, Western India, and Deccan:

Indian Epigraphical Glossary (IEG) mentions that Kutumbin is meant to be "a cultivator; an agriculturist householder; a householder or ryot."¹³ The IEG made references for Kutumbin derived from the inscriptions published in the *Epigraphica Indica* volumes of 12, 17, 23, 33 and *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol.1.¹⁴ According to the *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency* (1896), "The word Kunbi is from the Sanskrit Kutumbin, that is one possessing a family or a house. From ancient times the title Kutumbin has been prefixed to the names of the cultivators...those of the tribe who settled to cultivation came to be specially known as Kutumbin or householders."¹⁵

In the Bengal inscriptions between 10th and 12th c, the Kutumbins are also mentioned, particularly in the land transactions records of the Chandras, Varmans, and the Senas along with Brahmins, and Kshetrakaras. In some of the sources the Kutumbins had occupied the place of non-official elements but prominent members of village communities like Brahmins and Mahattaras. But in the Varaka mandala-visaya the responsibility of the village administration was shared by prominent members of the village such as Brahmins, Kutumbins and Mahattaras. Even the inscription informs that the Kutumbins were also prominent eye-witness along with Brahmins and village officials for the case of measuring the land which was on sale.¹⁶ Similar case also found in the inscription of the Chalukyas, during the reign of Vikramaditya VI (=1115-16) accorded a gift of land granted to honour the brave Brahmin military-general Anantapalaya in the presence of Mantri, Prohita, Senapati, Dauvarika, Yuvaraja, Rashtrakuta and Kutumbin.¹⁷ Prof. V. D. Mahajan talks about "The cultivators and mercantile

people were divided into a number of Grihas (homesteads) or Kutumbas or Kulas (families). The head of each of them was called a Grihapati or Kutumbin. He occupied a position of authority."¹⁸

Prof. D. D. Kosambi, the great scholar on the application of Historical materialism in Indian history, finds references to the existence of kutumbin, and kutumbina in the North Indian inscriptions and other literary texts in ancient India. He states that "...the normal cultivating settlers, the kutumbinas. The latter name means merely 'with a family', and ultimately turns into the large modem, kunbi caste of peasants."¹⁹ Prof. D. D. Kosambi, drawing epigraphical references from the area around Goa in Maharashtra, makes clear about the Kutumbins that they were the private land-owning class consisting of families belonging to a number of households, and settled widely in villages, depending upon agriculture, had an assembly called Sabha.²⁰ According to D. D. Kosambi, these Kutumbin-peasants each paid a small portion out of their harvest (Marathi: balutem, it reminds pallium of kutumban in TN) to twelve kinds of village artisans who were blacksmith, carpenter, potter, priest, skinner of dead cattle, tanner, barber and so on.²¹

Prof. B. N. S. Yadava's analysis brought out the conclusion regarding the term Kutumbins that was "the generic term for peasants, prevailed all over North India during early medieval period."²² The analysis on Vedavyasa-Smṛti (1:11) mentions the Kutumbins as Sudras, and it was meant for sharecroppers during the early medieval period.²³ Further Prof. B. N. S. Yadava highlights that Bhūmisamsthā in Lekhabaddhadi informs the chief (Rana) ordered the kutumbikas (the peasants cum sharecroppers) to cultivate the lands individually without leaving any land uncultivated, and to follow the local customs in paying dues, services, and taxes.²⁴

Prof. R. S. Sharma in his "Sudras in Ancient India" elaborately discussed with appropriate references about kutumbins. Accordingly, in the Pali texts, the kutumbins were cultivating householders and seemed to be Vaishyas. The Arthashastra speaks about the sharecropping kutumbins who might be Sudras. Arthashastra's commendator mentioned about the gramya-kutumbina sharecroppers. Kurmis of Bengal, Bihar, UP and Kunbis of Maharashtra and Western Madhya Pradesh correspond to the kutumbins of ancient period. The Central Indian Inscriptions belong to the early Medieval period and talks about tax-paying kutumbins.²⁵ Prof. R. S. Sharma writes that the Kutumbins might be autonomous peasant families that are only found in the early land records of Eastern India and Madhya Pradesh. But in the inscriptions of Rajasthan and Gujarat the status of the kutumbin began to fall down, to be granted to the beneficiary along with the land.²⁶

Prof. R. S. Sharma writes in his thesis on Indian Feudalism, the term 'Kutumbin' occurs in the sense of householder in earlier Gupta inscriptions, *"this term does not seem to be of Sanskrit origin. It may be derived from the Prakrit*

root Kud. It is interesting that kudi means both land measurement and as well as container for drawing water either from well or from some other reservoir of water. In Dravidian languages the term for land tax is Kudimai . . .therefore the Kutumbins were certainly connected with land measures and irrigation and they were clearly cultivators."²⁷

Moreover, he added,

*"From the term 'Kutumbin' have been derived many cultivating caste names such as the Kurmis and the Koeries of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and the Kumbis of Maharashtra and Gujarat. Most seem to have been Sudras, who emerged as the principal paying peasants in medieval times....the rural areas came to have two strata consisting of the mahattaras on top and the kutumbins below."*²⁸

Prof. D. N. Jha mentions the kutumbin being autonomous peasant families found in the early land records of Eastern India and Madhya Pradesh.²⁹ Prof. Romila Thapar writes Kutumbis were the village elders.³⁰

Prof. Hermann Kulke and Prof. Dietmar Rothermund asserts that During the Gupta period, in the villages head of the village was gramika who was assisted by scribes, whereas the Heads of the peasant families were kutumbins. During the early Medieval period (5th c AD) in Deccan particularly in the Maratha principalities the village communities had enjoyed greater autonomy, Maratha land grants mentions the peasants (kutumbins) as eye-witness.³¹ Prof. Upinder Singh says "most of the copperplate grants are addressed to the inhabitants of the gifted land (the term kutumbin or householder appears very often in this context)"³² Prof. Upinder Singh finds the usage of the term kutumbin increasingly in the sense of a farmer during 600-1200 CE.³³

Around the Konkan coast near Goa in Maharashtra, about 12000 Hindu families comprising Brahmins, some Vaishyas, and Kudumbi peasants migrated to Kerala during the 16th century. The mother tongue of these migrants is Konkani. The migrations were caused by the cruel and oppressive measures introduced by the Portuguese. Some of the brutal measures were excessive amounts of tax collection, converting the peasants to slaves etc. Prof. Irfan Habib finds that the Portuguese followed the practice of the cruel methods to exploit the peasants even continued upto the end of the 17th century (1695).³⁴ The reason for the migration of Gowda-Saraswat Brahmins and other upper caste population to Kerala might have been due to the Portuguese policy. Alfonso de Albuquerque, the governor of Portuguese settlements in India from 1509-1515 took the step of promoting the 'intermarriage of Portuguese soldiers or artisans with Hindu Women belonging to upper castes.' The Portuguese crown went further with a step of a policy level implementation 'by granting each couple a dowry in money' for those who engaged in the mixed marriages.³⁵ For the inter-racial cohabitation the Portuguese even abducted Indian women in Tamilnadu also fits in with the context, as mentioned in his letters by the 16th century Jesuit

missionary St. Francis Xavier.³⁶

Among these Konkani migrants the considerable numbers of Kutumbi Peasants were being part, as already mentioned. They originally belonged to the Kunbi caste of Marathas. Kudumbi migrations happened for the fear of forced religious conversion otherwise execution at the hands of the Portuguese. They first reached Kodungallur Kannagi (Bhagavati) temple, stayed for sometime and prayed to the goddess. To remember this incident, every year the Kutumbi peasants pray and celebrate the goddess Kodungallur Kannagi on the festival day which is the first day of Makaram month (January).³⁷ The Cochin King Kesava Varma (1565-1601) extended helping hands by providing them with lands for cultivation. These Kutumbi peasants possess extraordinary talents in the conversion of marshy lands into fertile cultivable paddy-fields (Pokkali) across the coastline in Kerala.³⁸ King Marthanda Varma (1729-1758) took and recruited women from some 40 Kutumbi families for the job of rice-pounding in his palace.³⁹ They were known as 'Idiyammar'.⁴⁰ About the Kutumbi female domestic servants there is a study by Sandbergen.⁴¹ At present, these Kutumbi peasants live in poverty.⁴²

Decline in the conditions of the Kutumbins:

Sometimes very tactically the land-grants were made by the rulers to the temples in the name of kudi neengaa devadana (lands granted to the temples without evicting the cultivators). Similar evidence has been even found by Prof. D. D. Kosambi that the kutumbins and lands were donated to temples and Buddhist foundations in the regions of Champa country (5th to 9th c AD) and also Vallabhadeva of Assam (12th c CE). In these cases the kutumbins were turned into serfs on their own land.⁴³ According to Prof. D. N. Jha, in Gujarat and Rajasthan the Kutumbika began to lose their status.⁴⁴

The system of tax free land-grants began during the Pallavas was an element of inception that had been slowly grown for more than 1000 years from 5th c CE to 17th c CE. It gradually turned all the cultivators as landless labourers. So all the lands were made towards the process of the elite formation which covered both political and religious spheres in Tamilakam. In the religious sphere, Brahmadeyam, Agraharam, and Devadanam, created elites as servants of the Temple, in the level of both Brahmins and non-Brahmins. It all continuously engaged in increasing the land grants such as kudi-neeki devadana (granted after removing the peasants from lands) and kudi-neenga (without removing the peasants from lands). Both the categories of land-grants created the same result that the hereditary rights of the cultivators over their lands were made to be delegitimised. It began parallelly contributing to the meaning of landless and poverty stricken peasants, the Pallans, with low-land, lower, low caste, ultimately attributing the meaning of 'untouchables'.

On the side of the state, besides the priests and other temple servants there were a larger number of state officials who received land-grants in lieu of

salaries. Such as, Nattars- the officials of Nadu Assembly of Pallavas, Pandyas, and Cholas, office-bearers of Nayakka-Thaanam, and Poligars and their Accountants, contingents and other officials were paid by land-grants. In this sequence, there was a creation of sub-infeudation, the non-cultivating lease-holders who acted as middlemen between the lands and the peasants. These middlemen collectively contributed to the composition of non-cultivating new gentry called upper peasantry who owned or held land rights and benefited upper share over the harvest, most probably orbitarily oppressive over the lower peasantry who were the actual cultivators. The degenerate and degradation of the lower peasantry is also expressed in a 17th century Tamil literary text, Mukkudal Pallu. The theme of the text is entirely revolving around the Pallan peasantry in the rice-paddy growing wet-land fertile valley, remembering the genealogy of Marutham ecozone of Sangam texts. The Mukkudal Pallu mentions that a person from cattle-rearing caste (Konar) identifies the pallan-peasant by the term Kutumban.⁴⁵ In the same Mukkudal Pallu text, the elder wife of Pallan, lamented with the complaint that her husband had set-up the kutumbu system for serving to make progress of the village, but his own seri- the pallar's ward have no progress, and moreover the seri is disgusting.⁴⁶

The Descendants of the Kutumbins and their Political Rise-ups:

After the 11th century in Northern India this term began to disappear which raises the pursuit of the whereabouts of the kutumbans. The answer might be residing upon studying the medieval peasantry. At the presence of Islamic states, since Muhammad Bin Qasim in the Indus Valley in 712 C.E, with the arrival and influence of Arabic and Persian languages, interacting with Indian Sanskrit through Brahmins, a process of translation occurred. The Tamil term kutumban/kutumbi is corrupted or equated to be kutumi— tuft of heir, metaphorically equated with Jata (Sadai, jadai: hair thread). Henceforth all the cultivating families, kutumbins, began to be called as Jats in the Arabic and Persianised translation. There was an ancient Pandyan king named Mudhu-kutumi (literally: tuft of heir the elder, meaning, the king of the Kutumban peasants). The genealogy of that name was later descended by another Pandyan king Ko-sadayan (literally: kingly hair), further later in the same dynasty, several kings had the name Jata-varman (Jata= Jat). So in course of time, the term Kutumi became Jat. These Jat peasants in North India and in Pakistan even had converted into Islam and also to a larger extent to Sikhism.⁴⁷

The descendant castes of Kutumbin peasants such as Kurmis and Koeries of Bengal, Bihar, UP and Kunbis of Maharashtra and Western Madhya Pradesh, and Jats of Delhi, Punjab, and Haryana were never declined to the status of untouchability. These peasant castes were classified as Shudras in the classic varna pattern, and they broke away from the view by assuming the role of Kshatriya varna in North India and Deccan. In fact, these castes even proved

that they could managed to climb up on the ladder of social hierarchy and produced kings and other ruling elites, such as Maratha emperor Shivaji,⁴⁸ and his brother Vyenkoji- the founder of Thanjavur Maratha kingdom, both of them from the Kunbi peasant caste. The 17th century Sikh rebel Zamindars against excessive tax-burden by Mughals, such as Gokula Jat,⁴⁹ Raja Ram Jat, and Churaman Jat, and the 19th century Punjab emperor Ranjit Sing all belonged to the caste of Jat peasants.

Conclusion

The 'Kudumban' in Tamilnadu were ultimately marginalised and fell into the tracks of untouchability to a wider extent, between the 16th and 19th centuries. In this Context, colonial-modernity provided certain spaces for the oppressed castes for the annihilation of caste. The Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and the other oppressed subaltern caste groups follow various strategies to eradicate untouchability. One of the such moves by the subaltern Pallan caste have been historically reclaiming their dignified socio-cultural life, and economic vibrancy through the cultural values belongs to the pre-feudal Marutham wet-land ecozone ruled by the godly King Indra in the ancient Sangam period.⁵⁰ It led to their demand for terming their caste under the single title "Devendra Kula Velalar". In the records of independent India the 'Kudumban' title is one of the seven names of Pallan caste. They are listed under scheduled castes in Tamilnadu, such as 17.Devendrakulathan, 26.Kadaiyan, 28.Kalladi, 35.Kudumban, 49.Pallan, 54.Pannadi, and 72.Vathiriyan. Recently, they are all brought under the single title "Devendra Kula Velalar" by the Indian Parliament through the "Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order (Amendment) Act, 2021."⁵¹ By doing so, the act is trying to liquidate the static nature of the varna order itself. So the perceived notion of unchanging nature of rural agrarian communities in the Hindu-varna order needs to be replaced with a dialectical and contingent process, which is also the demands of time in modernization.

Notes and References (Endnotes)

1. Sarkar, Sumit. 1983. *Modern India, 1885-1947*. Delhi: Macmillan, pp. 56, 158-159.
2. Menon, Parvathi and Y. Subbarayalu (Interview), 2023. *Reconstructing Chola Agrarian History*, Review of Agrarian Studies, Vol.13, No.1, January-June. https://www.ras.org.in/index.php?Article=reconstructing_chola_agrarian_history&q=Reconstructing&keys=Reconstructing
3. Minakshi, C. 1938. *Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas*. Madras: University of Madras, p. 147.
4. ARE:ASI, 1904-05, pp.131-145; SII, vol.vi, no.12; SII, vol.vi: nos 294, 347; SII, vol.xiii, no 93; SII, vol.xix, nos 322 and 183; SII, vol.xxiii, no.384; ARE 1918,no.534; ARE 1925, no 210; SII, vol.vi, no.58.
5. —1908. *Annual Report, 1904-05; Archaeological Survey of India*, Calcutta:

- Superintendent Government Printing, pp. 131-145.
6. Subbarayalu, Y. 2012. South India Under the Cholas. New Delhi: OUP, pp.30-33.
 7. Ibid., p. 154.
 8. Ibid., p. 154.
 9. Karashima, Noboru. 1995. VaralaRRup POKkil Thennakach SamUkam: 1 Chozhar KALam, 850-1300. Thanjavur: Thamizhagath Thozhiyal Kazhagam, p. 125.
 10. Op.cit., Subbarayalu, Y. 2012. p. 148.
 11. Op.cit., Subbarayalu, Y. 2012. p. 33.
 12. Kosambi, Damodar Dharmanand, 1956. An Introduction to the study of Indian History. Bombay: Popular Book Depot, p. 275.
 13. Sircar, D.C. 1966. Indian Epigraphical Glossary. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, pp. 68-69.
 14. Ibid., pp. 68-69.
 15. Campbell, James Macnabb. 1896. Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, Vol.1, Part. 2. History of Gujarat. Bombay: Government Central Press, p. 5.
 16. Sen, Benoychandra. 1942. Some Historical Aspects Of The Inscriptions Of Bengal. Calcutta: Calcutta University, pp. 504-505, 509, 514, 558.
 17. Vasudevan, C. S. 1999. Kannada Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh. Prasaraanga: Kannada University, p. 105.
 18. Mahajan, Vidya Dhar. 1962. Ancient India, New Delhi: S. Chand, pp. 297, 302; Mahajan, Vidya Dhar. 1962. Political and Cultural History of Ancient India. New Delhi: S. Chand, p. 242; Mahajan, Vidya Dhar. 1965. Early History of India. New Delhi: S. Chand, p. 242.
 19. Op.cit., Kosambi, Damodar Dharmanand. 1956. p. 335.
 20. Kosambi, D.D. 1955. The Basis of Ancient Indian History (II), Journal of American Oriental Society, Vol. 75, No. 4, (Oct- Dec), pp. 226- 237.
 21. Kosambi, D.D. 1972. Culture and Civilisation of Ancient India in Historical Outline. Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, p. 195.
 22. Prasad, Pushpa. 2011. "The Economy of Gujarat in the Thirteenth Century," in D.P. Chattopadhyaya (Gen. Edi.), History of Science, Philosophy, and Culture in Indian Civilization, Vol. 8, Part. 1: Economic History of Medieval India (1200-1500) edited by Irfan Habib, New Delhi, Centre for Studies in Civilizations: Pearson, p. 17.
 23. Ibid., p. 17.
 24. Yadava, B. N. S. 2008. "Some Aspects of Sharecropping in India in Ancient and Early Medieval Times," in D.P. Chattopadhyaya (Gen. Edi.), History of Science, Philosophy, and Culture in Indian Civilization, Vol. 5, Part. 1: History of Agriculture in India (up to c. 1200 AD) edited by Lallanji Gopal and V. C. Srivastava, New Delhi, Centre for Studies in Civilizations: Concept Pub, pp. 490, 494: f22.
 25. Sharma, Ram Sharan. 2002. Sudras in Ancient India, A Social History of the Lower Order Down to Circa A.D. 600. Delhi: Motilal Banersidass, pp. 164-165, 258-259.
 26. Sharma, R.S. 1984. How Feudal Was Indian Feudalism? Social Scientist, Vol. 12, No. 2, Marx Centenary Number 3 (Feb.), pp. 22-23.; Sharma, R.S. 1985. "How

- Feudal Was Indian Feudalism?," in T. J. Byres and Harbans Mukhiya, Eds., *Feudalism and Non-European Societies*. London: Frank Cass, pp. 24-25.
27. Sharma, R.S. 2003. *Early Medieval Indian Society: A Study in Feudalisation*, Kolkata: Orient Longman, pp. 29-30.
 28. Ibid., pp. 29-30.
 29. Jha, Dwijendra Narayan. 1987. *Feudal Social Formation in Early India*. Delhi: Chanakya Publications, pp. 172-173.
 30. Op.cit., Thapar, Romila. 2000. p. 291.
 31. Kulke, Hermann and Dietmar Rothermund. 2004. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, pp. 95, 135.
 32. Singh, Upinder. 1994. *Kings, Brahmanas, and Temples in Orissa: An Epigraphical Study AD 300-1147*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, India: Pearson. p. 321.
 33. Singh, Upinder. 2009. *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*. India: Pearson. p. 582.
 34. Habib, Irfan. 2014. *The Agrarian System of Mughal India 1556-1707*, New Delhi: OUP, pp. 132f, 48-133.
 35. Holms, John A. 1989. *Pidgins and Creoles, Vol. 2: Reference Survey*, Cambridge: CUP, pp. 285.
 36. Prabu, B. 2014. *Women in 18th Century Tamilakam: A Historical Survey*, An Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation submitted under the Supervision of Prof. Rekha Pande, Department of History, University of Hyderabad, pp. 126-128.
 37. Perumal, A.K. 2023. "Kodungalluril Kannagi," Kurugu: Kalai, Thathuvam, Varalaru, May 14. https://www.kurugu.in/2023/05/blog-post_14.html;
 38. Mohan, Aswathy and Chitra Karunakaran Prasanna, 2022. "Indigenous Pokkali Farming in Kerala: A Sustainable Social Ecological Model," Walter Leal Filho, Marina Kovaleva, and Elena Popkova (Edi). *Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security*. Switzerland: Springer, pp. 108-109.
 39. Special Correspondent, 2015. "Documenting Kudumbis in pursuit of self-assertion," *The Hindu*, 12th November, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Kochi/documenting-kudumbis-in-pursuit-of-selfassertion/article7868188.ece#>
 40. Thampuran, R.R. "Process of Convergence and Language Shift: A Case Study of the Kudumbis of Kerala," *Papers in Indian Linguistics, Part - I on Convergence*. <http://www.ciil-ebooks.net/html/piil/acharya4.html>
 41. Schenk-Sandbergen, Loes Ch. 1988. *Poverty and Survival: Kudumbi Female Domestic Servants and Their Households in Alleppey, Kerala*, Delhi: Manohar Publications.
 42. Thurston, Edgar. and K. Rangachari. 1909. *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, vol. iv (K-M), Madras: Government Press, pp. 106-111; Menezes, Walter and Ancy S. D'Souza. 2012. *The Rich Tradition of Konkani and The Kudumbis Of Kerala*, 15 July 2012, Ernakulam: Bellevison Media Network. <https://www.bellevison.com/index.php?action=topnews&type=4206#:~:text=Mention%20is%20also%20made%20in,reign%20of%20Maharaja%20Marthanda%20Varma;> "Meet the

- Kudumbies", The New Indian Express, 17 May 2012, <https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/kochi/2011/Oct/22/meet-the-kudumbies-302749.html>
43. Op.cit., Kosambi, D.D. 1955. pp. 233-234.
 44. Jha, Dwijendra Narayan. 1987. Feudal Social Formation in Early India. Delhi: Chanakya Publications, pp. 172-173.
 45. Mukkudal Pallu, verse 84, pp. 96-7
 46. Mukkudal Pallu, verse 89, pp. 102-3. "ஊரக்கள் ஏற்றம்—இவனிந்தச் சேரிக்கள் நாற்றம்—கடம்புசெய் துராரக் கழைத்தான்."
 47. Grewal, J.S. 1998. The New Cambridge History of India-II. 3: The Sikhs of the Punjab. Cambridge: CUP. pp. 5, 20-21, 40; Op.cit., Romila Thapar, 2000. p. 106.
 48. Jaffrelot, Christophe. 2014. "Analysing and Ethnicizing Caste to Eradicate it More Effectively," in Sumit Sarkar, and Tanika Sarkar (Edi), Caste in Modern India: A Reader, vol. 2. Ranikhet: Permanent Black, p. 324.
 49. Habib, Irfan, 2014, The Agrarian System of Mughal India 1556-1707, New Delhi: OUP, pp. 388f, 390-392; Op. cit., Grewal, J. S. 1998. p. 116.
 50. Paripadal: (verse 8.33); Chithalai Chathanar's Manimekalai (verses:14.33-14.43); Prabu, B. 2014. Shifting Sexuality and Contingent Religiosity: Historical Linkages of Buddhism and Mariyamma Cult and Buddhism in Tamilnadu, in Dr. Mahendra Wankhede (Edi), Shoryabhumi, Vol. 2, Issue. 5, Feb-April, pp. 36-40.
 51. Bill No. 18 of 2021, THE CONSTITUTION (SCHEDULED CASTES) ORDER (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021.