



The Emergence and Evolution of Purogamana Sahitya Prasthanam in Kerala: A Historical Perspective (1934–1944)

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Abstract

Purogamana Sahitya Prasthanam or Progressive Literature Movement had a profound impact on the political, social, and cultural aspects of Kerala. It was the first movement in Kerala to demonstrate that literature could be a weapon for social change. In this paper, an attempt has been made to trace the history of the progressive literature movement in Kerala, beginning with its inception as Jeeval Sahitya Prasthanam in 1937 and evolving into Purogamana Sahitya Prasthanam in 1944. The year 1934 has been marked as a significant point in Kerala's history because this period saw the rise of the Congress Socialist Party in Kerala, which created an alternative culture—particularly in Malabar—and supported writers, playing a crucial role in the establishment of Jeeval Sahitya Prasthanam in Kerala. The year 1944 is significant because, after the formation of Jeeval Sahitya Prasthanam, it



influenced many ideological currents, especially impacting both international and Indian politics at the time. It caused internal conflicts among writers, which ultimately led to its split in to different groups after 1944.

Keywords: Congress Socialist Party, Communist Party, Jeeval Sahithyam, Purogamana Sahithya Prasthanam, Karshaka Sangham, Thozhilali Sangham.

Introduction

Purogamana Sahithya Prasthanam or the Progressive writers movement (these terms are used interchangeably throughout the text) was generally influenced the philosophical ideas of “Socialist Realism”, which were: “art is not for art’s sake, but social progress”, and that “Art is social and art belongs to people”. Thus art should have a purpose. Maxim Gorky opined that “the creative energies of writers had to be subordinated to the aims of society”. Art or literature is the result of a produced society. An artist cannot escape tendencies that work in that society in that particular period. Socialist Realism highlighted the importance of truthful representation of life. Maxim Gorkey is considered as the exponent of the idea of socialist realism. The writers of the soviet union came forward with the idea of socialist realism in 1934. They found equal importance for literature and politics in socialist realism.¹ Socialist realism is a novel product of Soviet literature.

There are various kinds of study appeared which dealing with the aspects of progressive literature movements in India and Kerala. Most of the studies have concentrated on the literature aspect of the movement. But some of the studies which concentrated on the aspect of the formation of progressive writers movement in the international and national level were the works of Carlo Coppola and Sudhipradhan. Carlo Coppola edited the work *Marxian Influence and South Asian Literature* (1974). This study linking Marxism and literature, and Marxist aesthetics in the backdrop of India were also made. Most of these examined the history of the Progressive Literature Movement along with an analysis of the literary works produced at that time.²

Marxist Cultural Movements in India: Chronicles and Documents, 1936-1947, Vol 1 (1960) edited by Sudhi Pradhan, in three volumes that have examined in detail, the Marxist Cultural Movement in India. However, for this present research, only the first volume has been used as a work of reference. Articles by prominent Left-thinkers and other writers have been included in this collection. There are also essays describing the formation of some of the major Left Cultural organizations.



The history of the formation of the IPTA (Indian People Theatre's Association), and the AIPWA (All India Progressive Writers Association) are described in this collection.³ Another work which studies the progressive literature movement is *Literature and Politics in the Age of Nationalism: The Progressive Episode in South Asia, 1932-56* (2009) by Talat Ahmed critiques the Indian Progressive Writers Association between 1932 and 1956.⁴

So far, studies having an All-India perspective on the Progressive Movements have been discussed. In the case of Malayalam Language and Literature, there have been many studies on the history and growth of the Progressive Literature Movement in Kerala. K.K.N. Kurup's *Nationalism and Social Change: The Role of Malayalam Literature* (1998)⁵ focused on literary works to examine how Nationalist Movements and literature brought about a holistic social change. In this work, he attempts to analyse the role of literary forms such as poems, novels, plays, short stories, and folklore containing nationalist and socialist ideals in the development of the Nationalist Movements.

E.M.S. Namboothirippad and K. Damodaran, who formulated the doctrinal approach of the party, and who played pivotal roles in the formation of the Progressive Literature Movement, have written numerous articles about the Jeeval Literary Movement, Marxism, Literature and Socialist Realism. A collection of articles written by E.M.S. Namboothirippad about literary topics is available as *Thiranjedutha Prabandangal* (1990)⁶ (Selected Essays). Prominent literary works in Malayalam, the Progressive Literature Movement, ideological tendencies, are discussed in this collection along with a history of the Progressive Literature Movement and the factors that led to its split.

The *K. Damodharan: Sampoorana Krithikal* (2011)⁷ (The Complete Works of K. Damodharan), is a collection of the writings of K. Damodharan who was a writer, Marxist philosopher, and an active worker of the Progressive Movement. He had written at various points of time upon topics such as literature, art and Marxism. In Malayalam Literature, there have been some books that describe the growth of the Progressive Literature Movement, its ideology, and its contributions. One of the first studies about the Progressive Literature Movement was E. K. Nayanar's *Purogamana Sahitya Chintakal* (1974) (Progressive Literary Thoughts). However, this book was subjected to criticism for taking a communist party-based perspective. An objective and factual description of the rise and fall of the Progressive Literature Movement is found K. Sardar Kutty's "*Purogamana Sahitya Niroopanam*" (1985).⁸



This book greatly influenced further studies on the Progressive Literature Movement.

P.K. Gopalakrishnan's *Purogamana Sahitya Prastanam: Nizhalum Velichavum* (1987)⁹ (Progressive Literature Movement: Shadow and Light) contains an objective and largely unbiased description of the nature of the Progressive Literature Movement, a brief history of the movement, its contributions, and finally, its split. Varying from this pattern is M.R. Chandrasekaran's *Keralathile Purogamana Sahitya Prasthanathinte Charithram* (1998)¹⁰ (The History of the Progressive Literature Movement in Kerala), which subjected to criticism the Left-movement and the Left-Wing literature that played active roles in the functioning of the Progressive Literature Movement. This work in turn has been subjected to heavy criticism

In the early decades of the twentieth century, the national movement had already reached Kerala. In 1905, the Congress Party established its branch in Kozhikode. Malabar was the main center of the national agitation because it was under direct British rule, whereas Cochin and Travancore were princely states. The Home Rule Movement of 1917, the Khilafat–Non-Cooperation Movement of 1921, and the civil disobedience movement and Salt Satyagraha helped the growth of the Congress movement in Malabar. However, after 1930, changes in national and international politics, along with the growing distrust among emerging young leadership towards Gandhian methods of struggle, and the influence of the rising Soviet Union and its ideology, attracted many people in India. It was in this context that, in 1934, under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan, Minoo Masani, and Achyut Patwardhan, the Congress Socialist Party was formed at Patna.

When the All India Congress Socialist Party was formed, a regional unit of the organization was also established in Malabar at the Kozhikode Town Hall in 1934. The formation of this organization was largely led by a group of active leaders within the Congress party of Malabar, who had socialist and communist leanings. Prominent among them were E.M.S. Namboodiripad, A.K. Gopalan, Comrade Krishna Pillai, N.C. Sekhar, K. Damodaran, and others. The Congress Socialist Party formed in Malabar operated within the Congress, and its main goal was to guide the Congress toward a socialist perspective. The methods used by the CSP differed from the existing modes of struggle followed by the Congress. By mobilizing peasants, workers, students, and teachers, it integrated them into the national movement, and through leading anti-feudal struggles, the organization connected with the common people. Later, it focused its efforts on the cultural aspects of the society. The CSP propagated its ideas through newspapers, books, and pamphlets



among the common man. The Mathrubhumi, Al Ameen, Mitavadi, and Prabatham published articles on Communism and the Soviet Union. Through them, the people of Malabar were able to have an overall view of world politics at that time.¹¹

Formation of Jeeval Sahithya Prasthanam:

The major events that happened in the international scenario in 1935 in connection with the Second World War influenced the Indian national movement and the working direction of CSP in Kerala. Many of the incidents that led to the outbreak of the Second World War started with the impact of great depression in 1929. The economic depression affected Europe as a whole worst hit at Germany. This helped the Nazi party to become powerful in Germany. Under the leadership Adolf Hitler Nazi created a host of problems in Europe. Due to the internal conflict in Germany, many refugees fled to London and Paris. The news about the persecution of Communists and freethinkers by the fascist government of Germany spread all over the world.¹² France also was under the threat of fascist attacks, and criminal groups were formed in France. The workers of France formed a Trade union named the United front against the fascist movements. Opposition against fascism was rampant in many European countries during this period.¹³

On June 2nd 1935 a meeting of writers, thinkers and political leaders was held in Paris. This meeting was known as the International Congress for the Defense of Culture. In this meeting, Maxim Gorkey, Romain Rolland, Andre Matreaux, E.M.Foster, Julian, Henri Burbusse, etc. were participated. The part played by the Soviet Union in organising the meeting was a matter of dispute among the historians. This was the first occasion on which writers from different parts of the world were assembled for a common cause. Many of these writers had believed in different ideals. But all of them were determined to retain freedom of thought and freedom of expression at any cost.¹⁴ This Congress lasted for six days. According to Sajjad Saheer, the Indian who participated the meeting, the fascinating aspect of this meeting was the gathering of labourers and writers in a common platform.¹⁵

An official member from India represented the meeting was a Parsi writer named Sophia Wadia. Mulk Raj Anand and Sajjad Zaheer were two unofficial Indians who participated in this meeting¹⁶. The important message of this meeting was to inculcate anti-fascist ideals among the common people and two ward off the threat of an imminent war. This meeting called upon the world writers to fight against imperialism and political Independence, peace and democracy¹⁷. This meeting inspired the writers to fight with their pen against imperialism and fascism.



Sajjad Saheer and Mulk Raj Anand were students when they participated in the 1935 Paris Congress. The idea of progressive literature had taken roots among the Indian students in London even before 1935. Sajjad Saheer and his friends had written books against social evils and religious fanaticism before going to London. A collection of 10 stories entitled *Angare* was one such work. It was published in 1932 at Lucknow. Sajjad Saheer, Rashid Khan, Ahmmmed Ali, and Mohammed Safar contributed to this work. It criticized the influence of religion and politics in modern literature. This work exuberated the spirit of youth.¹⁸ As it was a work against the existing social system there was a lot of criticism against this work. Religious centres and civil officials were the major critics. In 1939 an article was published in Hindustan Times criticising this book. 'Urdu Pamphlet Denounced: Shias Gravely Upset' was the title of the article. The major contention of this article was that there were humiliating references to god and the Prophet in *Angare*. This was a shame to the entire Muslim community in India. When the matters get worse, the religious leaders pronounced a fatwa against this. The book was prohibited in the United Province. Sajjad Saheer left India for London when there was a threat of legal action against the writers¹⁹

In Sajjad Saheer's memories, after 1930's, the young Indians who reached England had a socialist affinity, and frequent discussions related to progressive literature were common among them. An association called the Progressive Writers Association was formed in 1935 among the Indians in England. Many English writers and thinkers played an important role in the formation of this organisation. Ralph Fox, the famous English writer, was one among them. Priyamvada Gopal, a scholar of post-colonial literature, opined that the acquaintance of Sajjad Saheer and Mulk Raj Anand with European scholars is based on the Bloomsbury circle, where they worked and studied in London.²⁰ The assembly place for the meeting was in the Chinese restaurant Nanking on Denmark Street. In this meeting, Sajjad Saheer, Mulk Raj Anand, Jyotirmayi Ghosh, etc. participated. A manifesto of this association was also drafted. The main clauses in this manifesto were issues like poverty, social backwardness, Colonialism should be the issues discussed in the books published in India hereafter. Some of the other points discussed in this meeting were the concept related to what progressivism is, what is the aim of the progressive writers, and how they should work. Etc²¹

The International Association of writers held its second conference on 19th June 1936 in London. Mulk Raj Anand participated in this conference²². At this time Sajjad Saheer left England and reached India via Paris. The time was ripe in



India for Sajjad Saheer to spread the new ideologies among the writers. The First World War gave Indians a new insight into the conditions and way of life in other countries. Many world-famous books came into circulation in India, and they were received with great enthusiasm.²³ Indians got an idea about the Russian Revolution from the major works of the period, especially Premchand's *Premashramam*. The protagonist of this novel Balraj a young farmer addresses his peasants "you believe as if the cultivator is nobody and that he has been created only to provide forced labour to zamindar, I read in the newspaper that the cultivator constitute the ruling class in Russia they do what they want. In another country the cultivators have overthrown the king and they are now being ruled by a panchayaths of peasants and workers²⁴. This speech express an idea of the Indian people to the world issues.

The formation of the congress socialist Party in 1934 created a congenial atmosphere for the spread of the ideas of progressive literature²⁵. Sajjad Saheer who returned from England to India, worked for the establishment of the progressive literature movement. A committee was formed in 1936 for the formation of the progressive literature movement. Prem Chand, Abdul haq, Daya Narain Nigam, Abid Hussain, etc. signed this committee manifesto. This committee had sub-committees established in Lahore, Delhi, Allahabad, Aligarh, etc. These subcommittees were engaged in the formation of the movement. Every week, there were discussions on the stories and poems that expounded the progressive ideas.

On April 10th 1936, the official meeting of the All-India Progressive Literature Association was held at Lucknow. Sajjad Saheer took the initiative to conduct the meeting. Munshi Premchand was invited to preside in the meeting. Premchand was well known as the leading writer in urdu and Hindi and he was also interested in socialist ideas. The stories that he wrote in the 1930s expressed the issues of exploitation by the British government. Many copies of his work were confiscated by the British collector and were set on fire before him. The presidential address of Premchand in Lucknow marked a new chapter in the history of this movement. In his address, Premchand highlighted the aesthetic sense of the progressive literature movement. He extolled "we have to change the criteria of our aesthetic sense, so far art is narrow, it does not have any connection with life. Literature assumes a sense when it represents reality".²⁶

In the Lucknow meeting there were lengthy discussions and talks on its conclusion all those who participated unanimously formulated the aims of the organisation and included in its manifesto.



On the exhortation of all india progressive writers conference, writers started forming units of the Progressive Literature Movement in different parts of India. As a part of this a unit of this movement was formed in Kerala also. Kerala had a conducive atmosphere for the growth of this movement. Kerala has a noble legacy of literature criticism and literature reformation. Its historical roots can be seen right from the Bakthi movement in Kerala. The socio-religious reform during the British rule coupled with missionary work and printing culture led to the development of literature.²⁷

Before the establishment of progressive literature association in kerala, there were literary association of various types existed in kerala. An evaluation of these literary associations show that the important ones were the Kochin Sahithya Samajam started under the auspicious of appan thamburan in 1913. Samastha kerala Sahithya Samajam started by the Vaikom Sanmargaposhini Sabha and Edappalli sahithya samajam formed by edappally Krishna raja. This Samajam was later renamed as Samastha Kerala sahithya Parishad.²⁸ This association was established in 1927 and officially registered in 1933 and this was the earliest literary association which encompassed all the literary figures in kerala at that time. It was one of the noted achievements of Samastha Kerala Sahithya Parishad that even when kerala existed as different political regions a pan kerala idea was formed through literature. Samastha Kerala Parishad had a tri-monthly publications this was name Parishad later it became a bi-monthly publication.²⁹

On 20th April 1937 some left oriented socialist thinkers, politicians and writers jointly formed a literary association called Jeeval Sahithya Sangham. This was the humble beginning of progressive writers association in Kerala. E.M.S Namboothiripad, K. Damodaran, K.A Damodara Menon, K.P. Kesava Dev, N.P. Damodaran, C. Narayana Pillai, K.K. Varrier, P. Narayanan Nair, A. Madhavan, C.K. Narayana Swamy etc. participated in this meeting³⁰. According to E.M.S. Namboothiripad Jeeval Sahithya Sangham was formed by the CSP workers who were involved in agricultural and trade union movements and who strived to foster their ideas in literature.³¹

By analysing the development of Jeeval Sahithya Sangham, E.M.S Namboothiripad made these comments: “ Progressive literature in Kerala as party literature. A group of young politicians who were till then not known as writers formed Jeeval Sahithya Sangham in 1937. But K. Damodaran opposes this opinion according to him, it is not fair to consider Jeeval sahithya movement as party



literature and the progressive literature was not initiated by the communists, as many of the people who participated in the meeting of this movement were not communist or trade union workers. This meeting was presided by left wing congress leader and editor of Bombay chronicle Sri. C.K Narayana Swamy. The intention of this meeting was to found the Kerala unit of the All India Progressive Literature Movement as per the decision of the Lucknow meeting.³²

There was a controversy regarding the translation of name of progressive writers association in to Malayalam to avoid grammatical error of the joining the two words progress and literature a new term jeeval sahithya was adopted. Jeeval Sahithya Movement had to face lot of criticism. It was said that a group of about forty hooligans who had no connection with literature had started this organisation. Sri kesava Dev who was an important member of the Jeeval Sahithya Sanhgam was considered as a “literary pariah” who could remain only in the outskirts of sanctum sanctorum of literature.³³

On 12th June 1939 a meeting of jeeval Sahithya Sangham had convened in Malabar in which K. Damodaran made a speech “Unfortunately, some people are considering the jeeval sahitya prasthanam with anger and spite. The jeeval sahithya writers are not considering the literature of the past as worthless literature. This is an argument meant only to misguide the public. Jeeval sahithya is not a socialist literature. Socialist literature can be Jeeval sahithya but jeeval Sahithya is not totally socialist literature”. In this meeting the sub unit of this association named Malabar Jeeval Sahithya Sangham was formed.³⁴

According to E.M.S another criticism against the progressive literature movement was that it was unnecessarily involving state issues in literature. He countered this criticism by stating that many famous literary works either directly or indirectly discuss state issues. Without mentioning the state affairs no literary work will be possible. Another criticism against jeeval sahithya was it was ignoring classical literature.³⁵

Sanjayan and Kuttikrishna Marar satirical writer and literary critique in the Malayalam language strongly criticised the progressive literature movement. Sanjayan rebuked jeeval sahithya by denoting it as ‘Wanka Sahithyam’. Kuttikrishna Marar opposed it as a movement that did not have an artistic sense³⁶.

The second meeting of jeeval sahithya sangham was held at Thrichur in 1938. This meeting was presided over by A.D.Harisharma ³⁷. In 1939 the third meeting of the Jeeval Sahithya movement took place in the congress meeting held at Bakkalam



in Kannur. In this meeting K.Damodaran was elected as president K.P.C Namboothiri as secretary. When the second world war started the workers of the Jeeval Sahithya Sangham were arrested and some were compelled to underground.³⁸

Congress Socialist Party and Communist party played a leading role in propagating the works and popularising the writers of the Jeeval Sahithya Movement. The peasant movement, Trade unions and the teachers movement which flourished under the CSP and later under the Communist party helped very much to popularise the works written by the members of the Jeeval Sahithya Sangham and helped to spread the left ideology among the masses.

Progressive Writers' Movement brought out Dramas and rally songs based on the perils of the oppressed farmers. Dramas and songs were written on political ideas. Many works depicting the problems and issues of the peasants written during this period. Progressive writers brought out many works connected the life of the peasants.³⁹

The problems of the peasants were discussed in novels and dramas as well as poems. K.Damodaran wrote a number of plays based on the problems faced by the farmers. He was an active member of the Jeeval Sahithya Sangham. He was also a noted exponent of CSP. *Pattabakki* and *Rakthapanam* were his two famous plays. *Pattabakki* dealt with the perils of farmers and *Rakthapanam* troubles of the labourers. The play *Pattabakki* was staged all the important meetings of the peasants unions.

The state of the industrial field was also similar to that of the agricultural field. The problems faced by the industrial labours also got addressed in poems and other literature. The revolutionary songs poems and prose works succeed in invigorating the labours strike in Malabar

“Praise to nabi
who preached that
wages should be paid
before the sweat of labour dried”

This song, written and sung by Aziz, the revolutionary leader of Ponnani, touched the hearts of all true believers⁴⁰. Number of literature was produced in connection with the labour movements. Most of these literature was written by the writers who were closely associated with the Jeeval Sahithya Sangham. One such work was the poem written by Edasserri Govindan nair titled as *Panimudakkam*



(strike). The poem depicted the atrocious working condition faced by the labours in textile factories. Some of the lines in this work are mentioned below.

“the landlord handed out benevolence
the workers fought for justice
cover all your pain in a ditch
let’s rush for strength and glory”⁴¹

The teachers movement was another movement which started in kerala under the auspicious of CSP, like the peasant movement and trade union movement. Many leaders of the teachers movement were members of Jeeval Sahithya Sangham. The elementary schools played an important role modernising the villages of Kerala. In many places they played a major role in organising peasant unions and labour unions. They took initiative to bring about change in the society. These teachers did not have fixed pay or assurance in job. They were terminated from service without proper reason.⁴²

Adima a mono act play written by Cherukad Govinda Pisharodi, portrays the problem faced by the teachers. *Muthassi* a Novel written by the same author solely connected with the teachers movement. The important character in this novel called Nani was a teacher. In this novel the head master Krishnan kutty Ezhuthachan tells the union workers “I am the only person to peak about the this school and the staff. This is our school and we pay salary to them. Let me ask you what would be your feeling if I come and distract the Harijan workers whom you have employed.” Does it mean that teachers and coolies are alike? “There is no difference the coolies are given their daily wages and the teachers are given their wage when I get the yearly grant”. Through this speech cherukad who himself was a teacher illustrate the condition of the teachers of that period.⁴³

In 1939 government recognition was granted to Aided elementary school in Malabar but this was stopped by a disgraceful government order, V.T.Kumaran has written a poem about this

“politics is a taboo for the teachers
Who helped to fly the flags of freedom
Sacrificing their lives
They are the ones who enlightened the ignorant villagers
They converted them to valiant lions
And fought against foreign rule
They are the ones who sharpened the weapons of Gandhiji”⁴⁴



In the beginning of the teachers movement exerted its influence in literature in two ways. One in the form of belittling the teachers as a result of poverty and injustice. The other was in the form of teacher's resistance. Karur's *pothichoru sir vandananm*, *Sirinu Pattikku Kudumba Budget*, *Absent*, *Shishya Sambath*, *Melkkoyamayude mudramothiram* etc. portrays the two sides of problems faced by the teachers.⁴⁵

The period after 1940 was one where novels that depicted social realities began to come out in Malayalam. The Progressive Writers' Movement in Kerala significantly influenced the field of novel writing, fostering a generation of authors who skillfully wove social and political critiques into their narratives. The main writers who appeared in this field were P. Kesava Dev and Takazhi Sivasankara Pillai. The writer who firstly engaged with Jeeval sahithya prasthanam was P. Kesavadev.

P. Keshavadev was a notable Malayalam writer and social activist who viewed Marxism as a philosophy of human liberation he was an active member among the writers who gave a theoretical background for the Purogamana Sahithya Prasthanam. He believed literature should serve society and uphold the basic dignity of man, going beyond strict ideological boundaries. As a writer, he regarded humans as social beings, and his works—published in newspapers and magazines—helped introduce Marxist ideas and figures like Marx and Lenin to the people of Kerala. He was a key leader in the labour movement in Alappuzha (Alleppey), particularly among coir workers. His short stories and novels from the 1930s and 1940s were deeply connected to labour struggles. Notable works include the 1938 novels *Panimudakkam* (Strike) and *Kannadi*, which portray the emergence and growth of the coir labourers' union in Alappuzha.⁴⁶

In his autobiography, Keshavadev described himself as starting life as a revolutionary, aiming to spark a revolution in India similar to Russia's, through writings and speeches. This Marxist perspective shaped his landmark 1944 novel *Odayil Ninnu* (From the Gutter), a turning point in Malayalam literature for its focus on the lives of ordinary, oppressed people. The novel's protagonist, Pappu, is a courageous rebel against injustice and authority. Expelled from school for challenging a teacher who protected the landlord's son's wrongdoing, Pappu leaves his village for the city. He becomes a rickshaw puller, where he encounters a young girl (found in the gutter), takes her under his care along with her mother, educates the girl through his hard labour, and ensures her marriage. Exhausted by his demanding



life, Pappu eventually leaves home to wander alone. Overall, Keshavadev's writings and activism blended progressive ideology with a deep humanistic concern for the marginalized, making him a pioneer in socially realistic Malayalam literature.⁴⁷

The spark created by Keshav Dev writing novels depicted social realities were further carried over by Thakazhi Sivasankarapillai. He was one of the novelists of the Kerala Renaissance who in his younger days made decisive contributions to the Malayalam literary field. However, he was also a novelist who patiently intertwined the principles of Marxist aestheticism into the genre of Malayalam novels. Thakazhi's works were different due to the variety of ideas and concepts contained within them. Though his important novels such as *Thottiyude Makan* (1945) and "*Randidangazhi*" (1949) were intense Socialist works, his later writings shunned and severed the 'placental relation' with Marxism, turning towards the Romantic imagination and emotional writings. Thakazhi remarks that it was after studying Marxism that he had a clear understanding of literature, and realised that literature was political, social and historical. "I was, caught in a dense haze. It was Marxian ideology that gave me an awareness of reality. I admit this openly. I felt as if it had shed light upon me."⁴⁸

A major change that helped the Communist Party to hold on to the cultural movement of Kerala was its influence upon the Jeeval Sahithya Sangham. This organization was formed in 1937 incorporated many noted writers who were not members and became an important organisation. This transformation was not a sudden one. From 1937 onwards the steps taken by the CSP, growth of peasants movement, Workers movement, Teachers movement, Student movement, and the anti- Japanese meetings led to an intimacy between the left-wing leaders and writers of Kerala and the popularisation of literature and writers among the common people.

When the communist party's ideological influence was at its height in and out of this organization, a meeting of the Jeeval Sahithya Sangham was held in 1944 at Shornur. This meeting was convened by the communists and their sympathisers. There was a lot of changes after this meeting. Many noted writers like Vallathol, Changanpuzha, G. Sankara kurup etc became part of this association. This meeting was organised by the communists of Malabar. The communist workers from Travancore and cochin did not participate. But noted writers from Thiru-Kochi region like P.Kesava Dev, Ponkunnam Varkey, Thakazhi, Joesph Mundassery, M.P. Paul etc were participated. The main organisers of the shornur meeting was C. Achutha Kurup and M.S.Devadas.⁴⁹



In the Shornur meeting of 1944 Jeeval Sahithya Sangham changed its name and became to be known as Purogamana Sahithya Prasthanam Progressive Literary Association. In this meeting a manifesto of the association was released. This was drafted by P.Kesava Dev. He stressed two aspects in the manifesto. One was the social commitment of writers and the other was the importance of the artistic regulations. According to Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai the most boring part of this meeting was the overflow of anti -Japanese literature. The theme of the one act plays and stories were all anti -Japanese. A group of writers interpreted it as the a part of the communist propaganda. M.P Paul presided over the meeting. He was elected as the president of this organisation and C. Achutha Kurup and P. Kesava Dev as Secretaries of Kerala Progressive Writers Association.⁵⁰

Conclusion

After the 1944 meeting of Purogamana Sahithya Prasthanam this movement influenced by the various political movement in India and the world. The ideological clasp in the later years led the split of this organisation in 1948. According to Sardarkutty noted writer of Progressive literature Movement, the split in the movement in 1948 was actually stated in this meeting⁵¹. This meeting led to the intimacy of the left winged politicians and writers and also helped to circulate the ideals of the movement among the common people. This also gave an upper hand to communist movement in the cultural scenario of Kerala.

After 1949, the Progressive Literature Movement faced collapse and divisions. Numerous factors contributed to this split. The internal differences of ideologies and perspectives between various writers who were part of this movement, political differences, and the formalism debate against Joseph Mundassery, ultimately led to the fragmentation of the Progressive Literature Movement. However, the works that were created in Malayalam Literature during the period of this movement were highly effective in bringing about a change in the social outlook of the Malayali, and in sowing the seeds of socialist-communist ideologies in the minds of the people. This movement also makes significant contributions towards the growth and development of Malayalam Literature

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