CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION

The life of the vast majority of Hindus in India is centered around temples even today. This is true not only of life at the individual level but also at the social level. The fabric of socio-cultural activities of the Hindus is made up of the warp and woof of religious beliefs and rituals. Music, sculpture, painting, dance and a host of performing arts, besides architecture, Vaastu shashtra, astronomy and astrology owe their origin to the institution of the temple. Though temples are devoted for the worship of the supra-mundane, it is paradoxical but true that they serve as the centre of the mundane life of the people (Menon.S, 1937:14). Some temples turn into pilgrim centers and they in turn attract trade and commerce. In course of time, some of them develop into not only economic growth centers but also into centers of political power. Banaras, Kanchipuram, Thirupathy, Puri, Kolkata, Dwaraka, Gaya and Thiruvananthapuram are examples of temple centered urban development. (Rao, 1988:23).

Hindu rulers used to take keen interest in the establishment and management of temples. Kautilya in his treatise on statecraft ‘Arthasasthra’ recommends that the king construct and protect places of worship (Anindita Chakravarty, 2004:80). He is of the view that the king must support ashrams (Monastries) by donating land for their establishment. Kautilya had great influence on the rulers of yester years. And it is not surprising that Indian rulers, realizing the importance of the political economy of religious institutions were great patrons of temples. In this respect, the hundred years of Gupta dynasty has no parallel in the annals of Indian history. The Gupta kings not only constructed numerous temples, but they also appointed priests to perform religious rituals in those places of worship. (Rao, 1988:80) The kingly patronage was not merely a matter of simple and pure piety, but a matter of political economy as well.

Monarchs managed temples with great care and devotion. Saints and spiritual personalities were consulted by the rulers in matters regarding rituals. Adi Sankara advised the rulers of Kerala in fixing many practices in temples. According to Paripoornan, Sankaracharya had a say in institutionalizing the rituals of Sree Krishna temple at Guruvayoor (Paripoornan, 1990:23). Even during the Mughal and the British periods, the management of temples remained in the hands of the kings. Temples in
Travancore, Cochin and Malabar, the three princely states of Kerala under the colonial rule during 1458 – 1947 A.D were managed in the same way as they were during monarchy.

After the princely states acceded to the Indian union in 1947, subsequent to independence, the democratically elected government took over the management of temples ending the role of monarchs in temple management. Prestler (1987:27) states that the relationship between the state and the temples varied from state to state in India according to the political and socio-religious scenario in each state after independence. Prevailing social, political and economic conditions became more important in determining the nature of relationship between the state and the temple managements.

Monarchs were considered as the head of the Hindu community; their role in temple management was accepted as legitimate. However, it became a delicate issue for the central and state governments to interfere in the area of rituals while managing temples. This was because the Indian constitution separates state from religion. Based on the principle of secularism, governments were not designed to have a role. The state governments had to continue the customs and practices that prevailed in temples during the days of monarchy. For example non Hindu devotees are being denied entry in many important temples like the Sree Krishna temple at Guruvayoor although it is contrary to what is enshrined in the constitution. The temples in Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh do not follow such customs. The old customs and practices in the temples of Tamilnadu were subjected to many reforms voiced by social and political movements in that state. In comparison with Tamilnadu there are no significant reforms in the age old practices in Kerala. The above discussion points to the need to understand the socio-religious political developments in the state, that have shaped the relationship between the state and the temple managements in Kerala.

I.1. **Socio-religious scenario in Kerala**

The socio-religious scenario in Kerala presents a medley of contradictions. Kerala witnessed the most virulent form of un-touchability called ayitham until the middle of the 20th century.

Untouchability was practised mainly by Brahmins and Kshathriyas. Unlike other states, Kerala does not have a Vaisya community (Menon.S,
1967:391). The Nair community though Sudras were also considered to be a forward caste. Nairs were the warriors of the princely States (ibid:391). Both Brahmin and Kshathriya men married Nair ladies. The children from such marriages are Nairs due to the matriarchal system followed by the Nair community (ibid: 401). The Brahmin and Kshathriya ladies were allowed to marry only from their own communities. This system of inter-caste marriage reduced the numerical strength of Brahmins and Kshathriyas. The absence of the Vaisyas community and the decline in the numbers of Brahmins and Kshathriyas gave the Nair community the privilege of being the larger dominant group by virtue of the numerical superiority (ibid: 361). As per 1980 census Hindus constitute 49% (Sanu, 1989:71) in Kerala. The Nair population is 40% of the Hindu Population. Ezhavas a prominent backward community constitute 52% of the Hindu Population. Brahmins and Kshathriyas constitute only 2% of Hindus in Kerala. The remaining 6% are Scheduled Castes - untouchables (ibid:22).

The Ezhavas are the largest Hindu community in the state. The only reform movement in Kerala was initiated by Sree Narayana Guru, the Ezhava saint, who was the founder of SNDP (Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam). The Guru’s movement was aimed at overcoming the brahminical cult and for emancipating the Ezhava community from the strong hold of the caste system (ibid:76). Sree Narayana Guru’s eclectic outlook on religious matters is evident in his philosophy “one caste, one religion, one God for man” (Menon.S;1967:399). He consecrated shrines in several parts of the state and appointed Ezhavas as priests in these temples. The SNDP established in 1903, under the inspiration of Sree Narayana Guru became a strong social organization in the state. The Ezhava community holds an important role in the socio-religious and political life of Kerala. The reform movement initiated by Sree Narayana Guru was a model for the whole nation not only in overcoming the dominance of the Brahmanic cult but also in freeing backward classes from the grip of the caste system. But now, the Guru himself is made a deity and is worshiped by new ‘Brahmanism’. Fuller (2003) commenting on the priesthood in Kerala says that despite the strong presence of SNDP and its leaders in the government, the traditional monopoly right of Brahmins in temples controlled by the state continues. The religious sentiments are used by many to widen their political and social influence in society and government. Sanu (2001) says that despite the acceptance of Guru in the state as a social reformer, the state continues to be dominated by the upper castes. In Tamilnadu many reformers like E.V.Ramaswamy Naicker were able to use their influence as
political leaders in introducing social reforms regarding temple entry for lower castes and other temple practices (Fuller; 1987:199). It is necessary to understand why such reform movements of the social leaders like Sree Narayana Guru were not translated into reforms in temple practices in temples like the Aiyappa Temple at Sabrimala and Sree Krishna Temple at Guruvayoor owned and managed by the statutory bodies in Kerala.

I.2. Social reforms and the political developments in Kerala.

When the political scenario of Kerala is compared with that of Tamilnadu, two important differences can be seen. First, many of the Congress leaders in TamilNadu during the Independence movement were also involved in temple reforms (ibid:200). They introduced legislations bringing an end to the monopoly of Brahmins in performing temple rituals. Though the Congress party was active in Kerala also, leaders like R. Shanker and Ayyankaki were not able to introduce any legislative measures regarding temple management or reforms in temple rituals though they were strong advocates of social change. The emergence and growth of Communism in Kerala in the mid 20th Century also did not end hereditary braminical monopoly in temples though the party was opposed to the caste system. The party did not initiate any major social changes even when they were in power (Nair; 1956:75). Secondly, the broad based Dravidian movement in Tamilnadu made it possible to bring about some social changes. There was no such movement in Kerala. As a result many age - old customs continue to be practised in temples till today. For example, women between the age of 10 and 50 years are not allowed to enter the Sree Dharma Shasta shrine at Sabrimala, non Hindu devotees are barred from entering the Sree Krishna Temple in Guruvayoor and Brahmins and certain castes have hereditary monopoly in performing rituals in temples. This study attempts to examine the influence of political parties in shaping the nature of the relationship between the state and the temple managements.

I.3. Economic contribution to the state

The importance of the contribution of temples to the economy of the state can be gauged from the statement made by the minister of state, Sudhakaran in the assembly – “Kerala state has to improve the infrastructure to facilitate the growth of pilgrims to temples in order to increase the revenue of the government (Malayala Manorama, 15th September 2006: 1). Both the ruling and the opposition parties play an
important role in determining the nature of the relationship between the state and the temple managements. Starting a separate department called Devasom under a cabinet minister which was accepted by all the political parties in 1959 is an example of the importance given to the management of temples in the state’s administration.

Prasanna Kumar (1999) identified three different ways through which temples contribute to the economy of the state – increased revenue generated by pilgrim tourists, employment and increased sales tax revenue. Kerala’s tourist industries depend upon the temples to a great extent. The pilgrim tourists are more than 60% of the total tourists visiting the state in the year 2004 (ibid:42). The Devaswom board and the temples under it provide employment to more than 5 lakhs of people which is nearly 17.5% of the total government employees in the state. Out of the total sales tax revenue the temples contribute almost 35% (ibid:42). This study aims at understanding whether there are other ways through which the government benefits from the state owned temples. The study also examines the influence of state government policies on the development of temples and the infrastructure in the state.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to understand the concept and issues involved in the relationship between the state and the management of temples, a survey of relevant literature was conducted. Books written by scholars were helpful in identifying the evolution of Hindu temple worship and its administration. A few books by historians and ethnographers helped in identifying the sources of data for the study. Few scholarly works examine different perspectives on secularism vis-à-vis state. Some examine the conditions under which the state intervenes in the affairs of religious institutions. There is almost no scholarly research pertaining to the relationship between the state government and the management of Hindu temples per se. The rules governing accountability and transparency in the Hindu temples have not been researched at all although temples work in the public domain and are governed by public laws under the constitution.

The available literature is divided into two, namely the development of temple worship and its administration, and the state intervention in the management of temples. State intervention in the management of temples is classified into state and management of temples, classification of temples
and contribution to the state economy.

II.1. Development of temple worship and administration

Rao (1988) in his book *Indian Heritage and Culture* presents a brief, yet vivid account of Indian heritage and culture. The book also describes the contributions made by various dynasties to the social, cultural, and religious fabric of India. The author has identified various religious institutions functioning in India. The book provides information on how the practices of worship in temples got institutionalized during the periods of different monarchs. The author has examined the role of Brahmins and Kshatriyas in the development of temple worship. The work mentions the saints and social reformers during the pre-colonial period in the development of temple worship. The role of Vaishyas, Shudras and untouchables are not included in the work. The book gives an overview of the growth of temple worship in India as a whole, but not as practiced in Kerala specifically. Since the entire work is centered on Central and North Indian, it becomes necessary to examine the practices prevailing in Kerala.

The Unpublished PhD thesis of Narayanan M.G.S (1969) - *A Study on Chera Dynasty* on the history of Chera dynasty which ruled central Kerala for three centuries is an important scholarly research work. The Chera rulers were strong Shivites and they promoted the bhakti movement during the period. They constructed and renovated many temples. The thesis includes details about the records regarding the existence of many temples, social and cultural activities at different points in history and the important changes introduced by the rulers in the administration of temples. The most important records for establishing the period of construction of temples and the systems of worship during the period were copper plates kept in temples. The scholar through his research gives conclusive evidence of the beginning of temple worship in Kerala. The thesis also gives an understanding about the early stages in temple worship in different districts in the state. It throws light on the fact that many practices of worship such as idol worship, brahminical monopoly over the rituals etc developed stage by stage during this period. From this research work, the role of the rules, chieftains, and the prominent families in fixing various practices of worship can be understood.

The study also gives evidence that Brahmins came to Kerala from the neighbouring states by the end of first century A.D. At the same time the
author has given evidence regarding the existence of a Raja Rajeshwara temple at Thaliparambu in North Kerala. The author states that a system of worship in temples was in existence much before the arrival of Brahmins in Kerala. The research work does not describe who controlled the worship in temples before the entry of Brahmins. This is a missing link in the evolution of temple worship. To understand this gap, it is necessary to examine whether the original non-brahmin residents practised any form of worship. The references of the scholars like Padmanabha Menon, Achyutha Menon and Sreedhara Menon whose references are given in the research study are examined for this purpose.

Menon.P (1937) *Kerala History*. The author states in his historical data that there were different forms of worship practised in Kerala during the fourth, third, second and the first century B.C. Among them are worship in the forest, worship of the powers of nature and the practice of animal sacrifice. The emergence of Jain and Buddhist religious and their places of worship are presented in the study. The book gives evidence that Jainism and Buddhism did not get acceptance in Kerala and eventually by the end of the 1st century B.C all the Jains left the state. Many Jain temples were taken over by the local chieftains. Buddhism also declined in the same way and the Buddhist Viharas were also taken over by local chieftains. However the author has not stated the extent of the influence of Jainism and Buddhism on the Hindu forms of worship in temples. The author refers to the emergence of non-Hindu worship places and religious practices in Kerala. It also throws light on the influence of non-Hindu religious practices influenced Hindu religious worship places. Also it has to be examined whether other faiths got merged with Hinduism and their worship places were converted to Hindu temples.

Gupta (1969) in his *Political Theory* studies the role of the state in managing religious institutions and explains various factors such as dynasty rule, foreign invasions and colonial expansion that had an influence on the nature of the relations between the state and the management of temples. He explains that both religious institutions and the government are products of the civil society and that they influence one another. The book also describes various stages in the development of temples in India from the 1st century B.C and the role of the state in managing religious institutions at different stages of political history of Central India. He opines that the rulers like the Gupta Kings institutionalized temple worship. The author points out the role of monarchs in the growth of temples in India and their management. The
growth of temples under the colonial rule described by the author suggests the need for an examination of whether there was an attempt to standardize the practices of worship in temples. The system of worship in Kerala and the neighbouring state have to be examined for the purpose.

Madhavan P (1985) *Xhethra Chaithanya Rahasyam*, refers to *Thantra Samuchiyam* a monumental Sanskrit work which describes the temple rituals to be observed in detail. The procedure of the installation of idols and different rituals and norms to be followed are explained in detail in *Thantra Samuchiyam*. The *Thantra Samuchiyam* identifies two areas of control in temples, namely rituals and temple architecture. Many temples in Kerala follow the guidelines given in this book for designing the structure of temples and for institutionalizing rituals. From the *Thantra Samuchiyam*, it can be understood that there are sacred and non-sacred areas and that hereditary priests control the former and the monarchs control the latter. According to Madhava, *Thantra Samuchiyam* suggests that finance and security should be controlled by the rulers. And that, the state has the duty to control the non-sacred area to ensure that management of temples is done in socially accepted way.

The *Thantra Samuchiyam* describes the importance of the Tanthric form of worship which is practised in Kerala even today. It is an important development in the evolution of temple worship in the state. Under this system, there are three layers of priests in temples. “Tantri” occupies the top position in the hierarchy. The daily worship is performed by the head priest known as the Melshanthi. The Melshanthi is appointed by the temple Administrator subject to the approval of the Tantri. The Melshanthi can appoint an additional priest or assistant subject to the approval of both the Tantri and the Administrator. All the rituals practised by the priests in the temples in the state are based on what is prescribed in *Thantra Samuchiyam*.

The “Tantri” refers to the hereditary monopoly right of a particular Brahmin family associated with the temple which confers the right to prescribe the procedures to be followed in the “sacred area” of a temple. “Tantri” also refers to the person who inherits the right to prescribe over the ‘sacred’ area of temple. The High Court of Kerala has quoted *Thantra Samuchiyam* in its landmark judgment favoring the hereditary monopoly right of the Tanthri and Melshanthi in 1982 legitimising what is prescribed in the *Thantra Samuchiyam*. This decision serves as a precedent till today.
Madhava does not clarify whether the system prescribed by *Thantra Samuchiyam* has been adopted by other states. And, reciprocally it is necessary to understand whether the system of worship as practised in the neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu has influenced the separation of the sacred and the non-sacred areas of temple management in Kerala.

C.J. Fuller (2003) *The Renewal of the Priesthood: modernity and traditionalism in a south Indian temple*, discusses state intervention in temple administration. He observes that in pre-colonial India the ruler’s relationship with the temples in his kingdom was vital to his power. Fuller cites the case of Madurai Meenakshi Temple, Tamil Nadu, where from the early 16th century onwards the king was the patron and protector. Fuller discusses the changes that have taken place in the management practices of Meenakshi Temple such as the practice of appointing priests, rights and duties of priests etc. Fuller believes that interpretation, justification, and authentication of tradition not only keep the tradition alive, but also promote modernity. For example, priests undergoing modern education have helped retain the age-old traditions of temple rituals. Fuller’s observations are helpful in the present study as they clarify the concepts of modernity and their effect on temple management. After the collapse of the Nayaka dynasty (1736-1801) Madurai was under the intermittent control of Muslim Chieftains. The ruler did not interfere in the Meenakshi temple administration. The priests’ rights and privileges within the temple were enhanced, or at least consolidated. Disputes between two factions of the priests were settled by the courts and the British officials.

In the early period of British rule, British administrators assumed control over temples in Madras Province. By 1836, the British decided to withdraw their role as controllers of temples. Following this decision, the Religious Endowment Act 1863 stipulated that temple administrations should be handed over to the local management committees. This led to complaints of mis-management which ultimately resulted in the creation of the Hindu Religious Endowment Board in 1926. The HREB assumed control of the Meenakshi Temple at Tamil Nadu in 1937.

People low in the caste hierarchy, had, in accordance with the age old custom, no right of entry into the Meenakshi temple. But in 1939 the temple doors were thrown open to all the low caste people. Following this change, virtually all the priests went on a ‘strike’, which lasted until 1945.” This strike had a devastating impact on the priests. They became poorer, their
rights and privileges were greatly reduced.

In the 1950s, the priests’ tax-free lands were confiscated. In 1970, the DMK government went to the extent of abolishing the hereditary priesthood rights throughout the state of Tamil Nadu. The abolition Act was challenged in the courts and the damage to the priests was made minimal. This important event is a milestone in the relationship between the state and the management of temples in Tamil Nadu. Fuller says that it was the strong Dravidian movement in Tamil Nadu that led to this change. Fuller’s arguments and viewpoints throw light on many similar problems that can be examined in the Kerala context.

It emerges from Fuller’s work that democratically elected governments can bring about reforms in temple management practices provided the state action is preceded by social reform movements. The question of hereditary rights is inextricably linked with implicit claims of knowledge and power. This is especially so in Kerala where the temple ritual is controlled by Tantri Namboothiri. One of the important questions arising from Fuller’s work is the continuation of the hereditary monopoly of Brahmins in the sacred area in Kerala. The second is that, in Kerala, despite broad based social reform movements, state intervention reforming age-old temple management practices has not happened. These areas of temple administration require further enquiry.

II.2. Intervention by the state

Stella Kramarisch (1986) in her book *The Hindu Temple* describes the rituals and architecture of temples. The author has divided the temple into two distinct areas for the purpose of describing the design of architecture in temples. The sanctum sanctorum, and the areas immediately around it, form the divine or holy area. It is controlled by the manifestation of faith. It is the sacred area, which cannot be explained in rational terms. There is an outer ring for this inner ring in the temple. It consists of sculptural and architectural beauty, strength, etc. This area comes under the jurisdiction of the designer. This division contributes to the theory of sacred and non sacred areas within the temple premises. It forms the basis for the formation of the division in the management of temples namely sacred areas where religious and matters of faith are the determinants and a non sacred area where the finance and human resources are managed.
Kramarish’s work does not describe the extent to which the state can regulate these areas. The events and causes of state interventions in these areas are also not presented by the author. So it becomes necessary to survey the historical works pertaining to state interventions in temples and issues relating to such interventions.

Menon.A.(1995) in his monumental work The Cochin State Manuel portrays the socio-economic, political and cultural life of the erstwhile princely state of Cochin. The author’s study is based on both primary and secondary data including archeological and inscriptive sources. The author has described the wealth of the temples during the period of the princely states, and after the acceding of princely states to the Union of India. The author discusses levels of revenue and expenditure of the temples during different periods. The book provides valuable information regarding the state intervention in temples, the structure of management of temples, social and political developments around temples, and the role of monarchs in promoting temples during the pre-independent period in the erstwhile princely state of Cochin. Similar works focusing on Travancore and Malabar regions are to be examined.

Menon.A suggests that it was the wealth of the temple that was an important factor that enhanced the power of temple administrators who later became local chieftains and challenged the monarchs. The ruler of the Cochin State had to take over the temples from many local chieftains to control their growing power. Though Menon’s book is confined to the study of the history of the princely state of Cochin, it can be said that the rulers of the princely states had to gain control over the temples to retain their supremacy over the society and the economy of the land ruled by them. It is necessary to examine similar historical studies relating to the princely states of Travancore and Kozhikode (Malabar). To ascertain whether the democratically elected government also used the temple to gain an upper hand in society and in politics, after independence this study proposes to examine the relationship between the state and the temple management.

Pillai (1940) in his Travancore State Manual describes the various historical events and the structure of administrations that prevailed in the Princely State of Travancore. The Devaswom Department that existed in Travancore state since the 18th century was an important department. The History of the Devaswom Department, its structure, revenue earned, etc. are described in the manual. The Devaswom records like hand manual, letters
from officials, minutes of the meetings, royal proclamations, verdicts of the courts and literary works are the basis for the findings in the book. It has also referred to the legislations and resolutions adopted in the legislative bodies and Government orders pertaining to the Devaswom. A review of the manual provides a picture pertaining to the transition of Devaswoms into full fledged statutory bodies in the princely state of Travancore. The study is confined to a short period of hundred years of the princely state of Travancore. Historical events that led to the creation of Devaswom Department as a statutory body are to be examined.

Menon.S (1967) in his scholarly work _A Survey of History of Kerala_ portrays the history of Kerala from the ancient to the modern period. The construction of temples in Kerala and their evolutionary growth are described with the help of archeological records, letters and inscriptions. The contributions made by various castes in developing temples as places of worship are described. It describes not only the construction of temples by various rulers, but also the destruction of temples by invading armies. The influence of temples on statecraft is exemplified by Marthanda Varma’s dedication of his kingdom to the deity Padmanabhaswami. The dedication called ‘trippi danam’, points out Menon, helped in the long run to ensure the stability of the crown.

Menon.S (1967) gives inscriptional evidence of the building of many temples. The bhakti cult of different periods in the history of Kerala is presented in the book. The author has studied the impact of colonial rule in the relationship between the state and the management of temples. Many historical events like the takeover of the temples in 1811 and 1812 under the rule of Colonel Monroe in the Travancore and Cochin princely states provide valuable information to study the role of the princely states in shaping the relationship between the state and the management of temples during those days.

Menon.S (1967) says that each temple was managed by a managing committee, comprising mostly of Brahmins and was constituted for a fixed period. This committee was known as Sabha and its members were respectfully called Aryar, the noble ones. The daily management was the duty of the Potuval – the secretary appointed by the Sabha. The overall authority of the temple affairs was vested in the hands of an official known as the Koyilaathikarikal, appointed by the King.
The affairs of the temples were not left to the whim and fancy of the managing committee. There were strict rules and regulations framed on the basis of general consensus reached through elaborate discussions among the Naaduvazhis or local chieftains and the members of the Sabha. These were known as Kachams which meant an agreement or a contract. There were many such Kachams, and the most famous of them all is Muzhikulam Kacham. The Kachams were meant to ensure that those who misappropriate the temple funds would be punished, be they Uralaar (trustees) or Karalar (tenants). From this, it can be made out that norms and rules were arrived by consensus and day-to-day management was left to the committee. Rulers intervened only when consensus could not be arrived.

It is difficult to change the traditions practised in the sacred area. For instance, Paripoornan Commission Report (Paripoornan;2004) with regard to the selection process of priests (Shantis) of temples in Sabarimala, recommended that the selection of the priests should be entrusted to a five member committee comprising a judicial officer, Dewaswom Commissioner and the Thantris to ensure transparency in the selection process and to stem corruption. But the selection process continues to be conducted in the traditional way. The selection committee comprises of Thantri, Dewaswom board president, members of the Board and the Dewaswom Commissioner. The final selection continues to be in front of the deity on the first day of the Malayalam month of Thulam in Sabarimala in the same old way. The present endeavour is to find out whether the state will intervene and persuade the temple managements to adopt modern human resource management practices in the light of the recommendations of the Paripoornam Commission Report.

Managements of temples have to keep in mind that they have a responsibility to discharge towards those who have put their faith in the deity. Depending on the laws and policies governing them, some temple managements employ the temple resources to promote and maximize the well being of the whole society. For example, the Tirupathi Tirumal Devasthanam with an annual income of more than Rs 500 crore and more than Rs 50,000 crore corpus funds supports universities, colleges, old age and leprosy homes, dharamshalas, hospitals etc for the welfare of the general public. The present study aims to examine the types of organizations supported by temple managements by way of discharging the responsibility vested in them by the faithful.
Earlier there was reference to the sacred and non-sacred area in temple administration. It was also observed that Brahmin priests have monopoly control over the sacred areas and non-Brahmin forward castes are not permitted to administer the non-sacred areas. And, that the age-old traditional management practices continue to be practiced. Kerala has Christians, Muslims, Jews, and other religions besides Hindus. To find out if the healthy management practices adopted by other religious institutions other than Hindu places of worship have had influence on the state, which in turn has attempted to introduce them to and in Hindu temple managements. Rev. Dr. Jose Kuriadeth’s published thesis *Authority in the Catholic Community in Kerala* (1989) was perused. The scholar describes the evolution of the administration of churches and organizational structure of Catholic churches and different Christian places of worship in Kerala. Kuriadeth’s study reveals that churches are owned by the congregations only. Churches are not owned or managed by the state. Kuriadeth reveals that the Syro-Malabar church has hierarchy of the authority in the management of the church affairs. However, there is no reference to the fact that the state introduced the best healthy management practices of Christian places of worship to Hindu temple managements or vice versa. The current study tries to find out if some of the management practices of other religions were introduced to Hindu temple managements by the state.

II. 3. Classification of temples

*Temples of Kerala* (Jayashanker; 2000) is a monograph that gives an account of various aspects of temples in Kerala like temple management, priesthood and different forms of idol worship practised in each of the districts of Kerala. The book also describes the organizational structure of the temples and statutory bodies governing majority of the important temples in the state. The statutory bodies according to the author have a uniform structure, with nominated members in the boards at the highest level. And the government has the prerogative to nominate the members. The management of temples as organizations are categorized as major and minor, A B and C, and grade 1, 2, 3 etc based on revenue, number of poojas, ritualistic importance, and value of assets. Each temple management has an establishment section, and a temple section. Jayashankar states that Devaswom boards have registers with the list of temples as per the classification. From the book one can understand how temples are classified, the numbers of temples in each category and the organizational structure of the Devaswom boards. But what is missing in the study is whether
categorization of temples warrants different types of state intervention.

Temple Encyclopedia in Malayalam’ (Rajendran; 2000) states that there are both state owned and privately owned temples in Kerala. The state owned temples are under the Travancore Devaswom board, the Cochin Devaswom board, the Guruvayoor Devaswom committee, and temples under Hindu Religious and charitable Endowments Department. 60% of the temples are owned by individuals. The structure of organization is entirely different in both, whereas the income and expenditure pattern remains the same. The book explains management of the revenue, properties, allocation of duties to different castes and the role of the administrators in the appointment of the temple functionaries in different types of temples. The author states that there are three types of temples, namely temples whose origin is not traced, known as swayambhoo (Self-born); temples built by individual monarchs (Royal temples); and temples built by ordinary persons and/or social reformers like Sree Narayanana Guru. The book describes the names and surnames of castes that have monopoly rights over the employment in temples other than the priest’s position.

The criteria for state intervention in the management of temples has not been discussed in any of the works presented so far. It appears that caste plays an important role in work assignment in temples. From some newspaper reports it appears that caste related friction arises from time to time requiring state intervention—either the judiciary, or the executive, or in rare cases the legislature. This study will look into this aspect.

Vijayan, in his article on Sri Narayana Guru in the Mathrubhumi daily (14th April 2004:14) explains how the great reformer failed to change the practice of untouchability and the denial of temple entry to the untouchables. Vijayan observes that Sri Narayana Guru established temples in which non-brahmins were ordained to perform rituals and free entry to all castes without any restrictions became the norm. Many such temples like the Pazhashinikadavu temple at Kannur attract millions of devotees. It is important to note that when reforms are not accepted by society, there is space for initiating alternate systems. However the question is what prevents the state from implementing such reforms in temples owned and managed by the state which is enjoined to work towards a casteless society, equality and freedom by the Constitution.Extent of reforms which are socially accepted throws light on the politics of caste and religion in the state, which can be an important factor in the relationship between the state and the management of temples.
II. 4. Contribution of temples to State Economy

Ramaswami N.S (1994) in his book *Temples of South India* describes various features of the important temples in South India. Apart from discussing the architectural and sculptural aspects of temples that attract devotees and tourists, the author presents data on the number of temples and their contribution to the state’s economy by tourists who visit temples. The author states that Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh spend at least three times the amount spent by Kerala for improving transport, boarding and loading and other infrastructure facilities for the pilgrims. Though Kerala earns more revenue from temples compared with the other South Indian states, the State does not spend adequately on developing infrastructure facilities for the pilgrims and tourists. This is one of the aspects that the present study proposes to delve into.

The *Report of the Department of Tourism* (2004-2005, 2005-2006) presents data on the share of pilgrims visiting temples and the annual revenue to the state economy from temple tourism. As the contribution of the temples controlled by the state to the state economy is sizeable, the present study is expected to throw light on the political economy of the state-temple management relationship.

From the survey of literature, issues to be discussed in the study have been identified and it contributes towards the formulation of the research problem.

### III. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The issues identified for discussion in this study are: 1) stages in the development of temple worship that necessitated the establishment of temple administration, 2) the context, events and relations between stakeholders that necessitated state intervention in temples before independence and reorganization of states, 3) the social, economic and political dimensions of the relationship between state and temple management after independence and formation of Kerala state, and 4) the management practices in state owned temples.

#### III.1. Development of Temple worship

There were many stages in the development of temple worship in Kerala. Marar (1961) in his scholarly Malayalam work on the epic Mahabharata states that there is no evidence to believe that temples existed
during the pre-Vedic and Vedic periods in history (341). People started worshipping idols after the Vedic period (Rao 1988). Narayanan (1969) stated that temple worship originated in Kerala during the 4th century B.C. In Central and North India it was the Gupta dynasty which promoted temple worship in the 6th and 7th centuries B.C. (Rao; 1988:92). Though Narayanan (1969) traced the origin of temples in Kerala, he does not mention who built the temple during the period as Rao does in the case of Central and North India. The issue to be understood in this regard is the circumstances that led to the transition from the worship of nature to idol worship in the temple.

Rao’s (1998) description of the promotion of temples in North India in the 6th and 7th centuries B.C. is based on the historical data available from that region. The social, political and economic conditions that prevailed during the period are analyzed by him and he comes to the conclusion that it was the Brahmins and the Kshathriyas who promoted temples during the period. If Rao’s argument is applied in Kerala it is difficult to categorically state that temple worship was initiated by the Brahmins and the Kshathriyas. This is because Brahmins migrated to Kerala from the neighbouring states much later. Narayanan (1969) describing the social and economic conditions that prevailed during the period of the Chera dynasty explains that there is no evidence to believe that there were Brahmins in Kerala until the first century A.D. It is also stated in the study that Brahmins migrated to Kerala from other states including the far away state of Bengal (ibid:149). However the description of the author does not include the origin of Kshatriyas. Thus the point to discuss is if not the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas, who promoted temples in Kerala in the early stages of first and second century A.D.

Menon.P (1937) says that the emergence of the Malayalam language, and the growth and decline of Jainism and Buddhism in Kerala had an important effect on the social and religious life of the state. There were many Jain and Buddhist places of worship in Kerala (ibid:21). There is much historical evidence showing the existence of such places of worship from the 4th to 1st century B.C (ibid:22). Menon.P (1937) argues that some of the Hindu Temples in North Kerala resemble Jain Temples. However the author does not specify whether the Jain and Buddhist worship places were converted into Hindu temples. Menon.S (1996) explains that Kerala is a state where many places of religious worship such as Hindu and Jain temples, Buddhist Viharas, churches, mosques and synagogues were developed into pilgrim centres and centres of economic growth during the period of Monarchs (126). Thus a point to be discussed is whether Jainism and
Buddhism in the early part of A.D and places of worship of Christians and Muslims in the later stage influenced the development of Hindu temples and its worship practices.

Historical descriptions point to the fact that there are many stages which are not explained in the evolution of temple worship in Kerala. The discussions in the historical survey conducted by the scholars have not examined the rituals practised in temples in Kerala at different points of history. Madhavan (1985) explains the traditions practised in temples after 14th century A.D. He states that Kerala has a Tantri Namboothiri Namboothiri c form of worship in the state which is different from that practised in other states.

Under the Tantric system there are three layers of priests namely, Tantris (Controller), Melshantis (Head Priest) and Keezhu Shantis (Assistant Priest). The important difference with regard to the rituals in Kerala is the role of a special class of priests known as Tantris (ibid:249). They are Brahmins having hereditary monopoly right to control the rituals of those temples under their jurisdiction. They decide the form of worship to be practised in the temples. The priests who are in charge of the day to day rituals appointed by the authorities have to perform the worship under the direction of the Tantris. It is necessary to compare the system of worship in other states in order to understand and analyze the evolution of temple worship and administration in Kerala.

Fuller (2003) commenting on the system of worship in temples in Kerala says that it is a standardized system which is unique in India (47). Madhavan (1985) explains the influence of Namboothiri Brahmins over the monarchs in gaining control over rituals (143). It was during the rule of the Chera dynasty that the Brahmins got hereditary rights in temples (Narayanan (1969:72). The authors have not explained who controlled the rituals prior to the emergence of Tantris in Kerala and how standardization was introduced in the worship. So the issue to be discussed in this regard is the stage by stage development of rituals leading to its standardization. It is also necessary to understand the objectives and beneficiaries of standardization and its influence in the relationship between the state and the temples.
III.2. Context, events and stake holders that necessitated state intervention in temples before independence and the reorganization of states.

Menon.P (1937) holds that temples were regulated in the princely state of Cochin by the monarchs from the 16th century onwards (18). Many temples were taken over by the rulers in Cochin in 1772 (ibid:19). Similarly temples were taken over by the ruler of Travancore in 1912 on the advice of Col. Munroe (Pillai; 1940:172). In the region of Malabar, though temples were owned by individuals, all were regulated by the Madras Hindu Religious Endowment Act, because Malabar was a part of Madras province until the formation of Kerala state in 1956 (Remeshan; 2004:11). The history of Kerala witnessed many developments such as Mysorean invasion during the pre-colonial period. Menon.P (1937) cites events such as the formation of the Devaswom under the princely states, the Mysorean invasion resulting in the destruction of temples, the renovation of temples by monarchs, and the urbanization of areas around the temple as having necessitated state intervention in temple management. State intervention in some cases resulted in the standardization of rituals in temples.

Explaining the situation in Tamil Nadu, Fuller (2003) states that social reformers brought in many changes in the procedures of rituals and other practices. Other reforms include (Fuller;2003:147) making Tamil along with Sanskrit the language for worship in temples, abolition of animal sacrifice and the Devadasi system as forms of worship in temples. It is to be examined what prevented the government of Kerala from introducing reforms like those in Tamilnadu despite the SNDP movement in Kerala.

After 1947 and the formation of Kerala state in 1956, there was scope for the state to intervene in temple management and introduce reforms to give effect to equality and freedom principles enshrined in the Constitution. In neighbouring Tamil Nadu, after DMK came to rule in 1969, the hereditary monopoly of Brahmins in worship in Tamilnadu temples came to an end (ibid:146). Sanu (1987) says that though Kerala has produced great social reformers like Sree Narayana Guru, the state continues with the hereditary monopoly of Brahmins in the temples.

Fuller (2003) opines that social reforms in Tamilnadu were brought about by social movements. In Kerala the only reforms introduced were during the period princely state (Aiyer;1962:73) those reforms were the
abolition of animal sacrifice in 1926 and the removal of restrictions in temple entry for lower caste Hindus in 1947. The post-independent period in Kerala did not witness any reforms in rituals like ending the monopoly of Brahmans in performing worship. The difference in state temple relationship that exists in Tamilnadu and Kerala is an important matter to be discussed.

Prestler (1998) opines that the political and social conditions prevailing in the state reflect in the type of intervention in temples. The post independent period witnessed the formation of a democratically elected secular government replacing the monarchs in controlling temples in both Kerala and Tamilnadu. But the government of Tamilnadu had introduced many reforms after the formation of democratically governments. In Kerala the desisted from interventions holding the view that faith, religion and worship are sensitive issues and any intervention in it will lead to social disturbances. The issue for discussion is the state intervention in matters if faith especially in the context of India being a secular country. To analyze the issues regarding the state intervention at different points of history it is required to understand the events and contests in the history of Kerala with regard to the administration of the temples.

### III.3. Stake holders in state intervention

The sequence of events and the causes of state interventions from the beginning of the history of Kerala are required to be examined in order to understand the relationship between the state and the management of temples that existed at different stages of history. Such a study of events and causes of state interventions is also needed to compare the same with that of other states for analysis and conclusions. Since Menon.P (1937), Remeshan (2004), and Pillai (1940) do not present a complete sequence of events and process, it is necessary to investigate and identify those involved in the state intervention of temples.

Fuller (2003) states that the former rulers and many families owning temples lost control over the temples; after state formation, the legislations adopted by the state government to regulate temples benefited many private trusts in Tamilnadu. Many of the former rulers even lost their prominence in the society (ibid:39). If the state intervention in temples of Kerala is viewed on the basis of Fullers opinion there has to be many stake holders in Kerala too, who benefited or lost due to state interventions. The issue to be discussed in this regard are the types of stake holders (both gainers and
losers), causes of such state interventions, the role of stake holders at the
time of state intervention, the objectives of such persons in the management
of temples, their strength in society and the historical background that led to
their gaining of control of temples.

State intervention shifted the control of many temples from individuals
to the state (Fuller; 2003). The structure of the organizations managing
temples also changed due to state interventions. Pillai (1940) describes many
changes in the administrative structure of temples after state interventions
such as the formation of Devaswom Department. The formation of the
Travancore Devaswom board in 1947 is another example of the change in
the structure of the organization (Aiyer; 1962). The different organizational
structures and the management of Devaswoms that existed during the pre-
independence and prior to the formation of Kerala state is centralized to
understand the nature of stake holders of those temples.

### III.4. State and management of temples after formation of Kerala

The state intervention of taking over of temples during the rule of
monarchs in the princely states resulted in the formation of a separate
Devaswom department for managing temples. In the post independent
period the secular government is controlled by peoples from different
religious faiths. State intervention in temples by such a government has to be
examined in comparison with that of other countries.

#### III.4.1. Secular state and religion

Nayyar (2008) states that constitutional pledges and assurances of
secularism are not enough in countries like India (The New Indian Express,
18th May 2008:14). Comparing other countries to India the author states that
India is a secular country where all religions co-exist with equal
opportunities (ibid:14). Indian secularism is different from western concept
of secularism. In the west there are two types of secular countries. Countries
like England have an official religion for the state. But the society is modern
and secular (ibid:14). There is no religious influence in political decisions. In
countries like France, the constitution guarantees secularism, but French
society is not as secular as the English (ibid:14). Communal disturbances
happen in such countries when secular laws are implemented (ibid:14).

India and United States of America are secular countries by their
constitution (ibid:14). In American state there are no religious holidays. The state does not participate in any religious activity or support any promotion of religions (ibid:14). The political decisions are free from religious influences. Religion is absolutely a private affair of individuals.

The American Society is different from that of India (ibid:14). The state funds pilgrimages (Haj and Amarnath Yatras), religious festivals and also owns and manages temples. The religious interests of minorities and the majority are protected equally (ibid:14). There is no intervention in the places of worship nor in the worship practices of minority religions. On the other hand, the state bans animals slaughter as part of worship in some of the Hindu temples. The argument is, Indian secularism is stronger because it protects minorities from the imposition of the will of the majorities. The Indian constitution guarantees minority right to have their own places of worship, to establish educational and other charitable institutions. The issue is in Kerala, places of worship belonging to minority religious groups fall outside the ambit of state control.

Regarding the state-temple management relationship there are many important factors which limit the areas of state interventions based on the structure, size of and assets owned by temples. Stella Karmarish (1986) says that there are two divisions in the administration of temples namely sacred and non-sacred areas. It is necessary to understand the limitations of the state with regard to the extend of intervention in the sacred area of the temple.

III.4.2. Sacred area

The sacred area is that in which the idol is installed and where rituals are performed by the priest and his assistants - called sanctum sanctorum (Stella Karmarish; 1986). Madhavan (1985) states that the sacred area is the most important area in temples that is under the control of Tanthris, who are the principal priests who define rituals in temples. But both of them do not exactly specify the size or the spread of the sacred area. In Kerala non-Hindu devotees are not allowed to enter some temples for worship in the Sree Krishna temple at Guruvayoor, non-Hindus are not allowed. In the Ayyappa temple at Sabrimala all religious sects are free to enter and offer prayer but women are not allowed. Both the temples are state owned temples.

The Tantris of Sree Krishna temple at Guruvayoor and the Ayyappa temple at Sabrimala are authorized to control the sacred areas (Madhavan;
According to Paripoornan (2004) the Tantris have the authority to decide who are eligible to enter the temples. Fuller states that priests do not control the temples in Tamil Nadu unlike in Kerala. In all the temples in Tamil Nadu, devotees irrespective of their religious affiliations are permitted to enter the temple and the sanctum sanctorum and offer worship. The important issues to be discussed are - the restriction of entry, restriction of the right to conduct worship rituals, defining the areas of the sacred and profane.

The Brahmins monopoly in worships at temples in the state is an important issue to be discussed. The hereditary monopoly of the Brahmins in rituals in the temples owned by the statutory bodies of Kerala has to be examined in four different contexts.

1. Before the formation of Travancore Cochin states in 1947.
2. After the formation of Travancore Cochin states.
3. After the formation of Kerala state in 1956
4. After the enactment of HRE Act in Tamilnadu abolishing monopoly hereditary right of priests.

Narayanan (1969) has stated that king Kulashekhara of Chere dynasty has introduced the hereditary and monopolistic right of Brahmins conduct rituals in certain temples. The scholar has not mentioned whether it continued after the period of the King Kulashekhara. It is necessary to understand the role of monarchs after Kulashekhara of Chera dynasty in continuing of the practice of hereditary monopoly of Brahmins in temple rituals.

Madhavan (1969) says that the monarchs desisted from controlling the rituals and agreed to the suggestions of the Tantris. The study includes the discussions regarding various issues relating to the control of the sacred area by Brahmins and other forward caste. Fuller (2003) observes that Brahmins do not have hereditary monopoly over performance of rituals in Tamilnadu. There the worship is performed by those who are trained in rituals irrespective of their caste. What prevented the monarchs from changing these practices in Kerala has to be examined.

Paripoornan (2004) has reported that some of the priests though Brahmins are not properly trained in important temples like the Ayyappa Temple at Sabrimala. But he has not mentioned in his report any provision for appointing trained non-Brahmins priests in the temples owned by the
statutory bodies. Regarding the appointments the report has suggested that the state should have a common policy for appointing employees in both sacred and non-sacred areas. The issues regarding the appointment, training of priests and their welfare are noted for examination.

III.4.3. Non-sacred area

Temple being very important in the social and cultural life of Hindus, rulers built, renovated and funded temples (Prestler; 1979:17). Many types of state intervention like the take over of the temples by the Travancore government in 1811 had taken place (Iyer; 1962:47). State interventions in the non-sacred area had taken place in the three princely states - Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. Iyer opines that state intervention in non-sacred areas such as taking over of temples from the Ooralars – meaning individual owners or administrators, transferring temples to revenue departments, appointment of managing bodies and introducing legislations had affected many stakeholders adversely while the monarchs did not intervene in the sacred area - leaving it to decided completely by the Brahmins. The issues to be discussed in this regard are, identity of different stakeholders (both gainer and loser) - their strengths and historical background, reasons for state intervention, and the role of stakeholders at the time of state intervention.

In the Cochin state the rulers took over the temples in 1772 and 1812 (Menon A; 1995). The organizational structure or the compositions of the membership of the body maintain temples after the take over of temples in 1772 are described by Menon.A. The organizational structure of the temples owned by Devaswom under the ruler after 1947 is not described. The organizational structure of the Devaswoms in Cochin is the same as the Devaswoms in Travancore after 1947 (Jaishankar; 2000:140). The reasons for similarity in the structure of the Devaswom boards of Travancore and Cochin after independence require to be understood. The organizational structure of the statutory body in Malabar is different from that of Travancore and Cochin (Remeshan; 2004:14). These aspects require further study.

The survey of available literature points out the fact that the works of authors like Logan (1887), Pillai (1940), and Menon A (1995) provide data relating to certain periods only. Logan (1887) describes the organizational structure of temples in Malabar Devaswom from 1612 to 1817. Menon A.
(1995) explains the organizational structure of Cochin state from 1772 to 1812. Pillai (1940) describes the organizational structure in Travancore state. There is no one complete work about the organizational structure of temples in Kerala. Menon.A (1995) surveying the history of Kerala describes some of the important events that led to the formation of statutory bodies to manage temples by the monarchs after state takeover. The important point is that, the structure of statutory bodies managing temples in Kerala is not uniform throughout the state.

Looking at literature pertaining to Christianity, the other major religion in the state, Jose Kuniandeth's (1989) work describes the evolution of the administration of Catholic churches in Kerala. The scholar had stated that in Catholic churches, there is hierarchy of authority and scalar management chain (ibid:40). It is necessary to examine how far management practices of other religion influenced the thinking of the rulers who intervened in the management of temples and to understand the nature of relation between the state and the temple in Kerala is not uniform throughout the state.

F.W. Taylor observes that the organizational structure is complete only when it is clearly defined in terms of authorities and duties (F.W. Taylor;1991:312). The appointment, training and motivation of employees in an organization are important for achieving the objectives of the organization (ibid:313). Welfare measures of the employees, promotion, placements and transfers as well as fixing proper remuneration are important factors in running the temple organization with efficiency. The issue to be discussed is whether human resource management is given due importance in the management of temples in Kerala.

Shankaran Nair (1984) reported that there are more than four thousand regular employees employed in statutory bodies controlling temples in the state (Shankaran Nair Commission Report; 1984). This is in addition to those who are employed in the temples themselves. They are treated neither as Kerala state government employees nor as the employees of religious institutions (ibid:11). Paripoornan (1992) stated that, the human resource management policies of the Devaswom boards and other statutory bodies are not transparent. The report does not specify the policies and procedures adopted by the state for appointments and training of employees of the statutory bodies. In both the reports the issues regarding the human resources management practices are absent. It is important to discuss the
issues pertaining to procedures of appointment, promotions, provision of welfare measures to employees, methods of appointing the president and the members of the statutory bodies managing the temples, and the constitutional protection to Schedule Castes, Schedule Tribes, Other backward communities, and women if the state is directly or indirectly managing the temples.

The system of management of finances and assets owned by temples in Travancore and Cochin Devaswom boards have been reported unsatisfactorily in the report submitted by Justice Paripoornam in 1992. It points out that many valuable assets - land, building, precious stones, gold, silver vessels and jewellery and cash - with an estimated value of over rupees one thousand five hundred crores is managed by these bodies (ibid:14). Noting that nothing had been done since 1992 either to identify the lapses in the management of finances and assets nor to rectify the lapses. Paripoornam in his 2004 report recommended that lapses in the management of finances in the statutory bodies controlling temples be examined and rectified.

All the management practices should endeavor to uphold the faith of the faithful. Modern scientific financial management theories also prescribe that an organization, specially faith-based organizations, should prepare budget, install a scientific system of accounting, control cash and fund flow and publish the statements as required by the law of the country ( Koontz, 1991:14; Herrington Bryce: 1992). The High Court of Kerala gave a direction in 8th March 2001 to all the Devaswom boards and Guruvayoor Devaswom managing committee to publish their properly audited annual account statements (OP Number:12011-1998). The High Court order as well as the Justice Paripoornan report point to the fact that the financial management practices of these bodies are not transparent. An examination in this regard is necessary because temples are religious institutions where 'faith' is most important.

Temples are classified as public and private in Tamilnadu (Fuller; 2003:36). All the private temples in Tamilnadu are outside the ambit of state control ( Fuller;2003:47). In Kerala temples are not classified as they are done in Tamilnadu (Remeshan;2003:42,11). In the discussion regarding a common law for all temples in Kerala, Remeshan points out that private temple in Travancore and Cochin regions are outside the ambit of state control whereas such private temples in Malabar are regulated by the state (ibid:12).
Jaishanker (2000) has classified temples into state owned and private temples. Rajendran (2003) classified temples on the basis of the revenue and expenditure. Both have not explained how the Kerala laws classify temples for the purpose of regulating them. So it is important to understand how laws pertaining to Hindu temples classify them; in the absence of such classification of temples such as the criteria of classification, regulations applied for each type and the period of classification are to be examined.

### III.5. Contribution of temples to the economic growth of the state

From the available literature on the temples' contribution to the state economy, the role of the state in the development of the infrastructure for the promotion of worship emerges as an important issue. Ramaswamy (1994) states that the temples are important centers of tourism and the pilgrims visiting are both local, and from other states (34). Many foreign tourists also visit temples. The Kerala state tourism department conclusively states that tourism is one of the main sources of revenue for the state (Kerala tourism report: 41). Radhakrishnan says that the government's spending on the infrastructure growth like roads, transport systems, hotels and travel agencies for the tourists is proportionately lower compared to the revenue from tourism (Malayalam Manorama, 31\(^{st}\) March 2006:11). This assumes greater significance in the context of the report published by the state tourism department stating that the revenue from tourism accounts for 60% of the total revenue of the state (Kerala Tourism Report, 2006:19). Of this, revenue from pilgrim tourism forms a substantial portion.

The issue is whether the state is spending a sufficient share of the revenue from the pilgrim tourists for the development of the infrastructure required in around temples and pilgrim centers. In the relationship between the state and management of temple, it is important to understand the state’s role in providing facilities provided for the pilgrim tourists. The issues to be discussed for this purpose are the volume of devotees visiting the temples, the facilities available to them, contributions made by the devotees to the states economy and the share of expenditure on infrastructure as a proportion of the revenue.

There are 22,214 temples in Kerala in 2000 (Jayashankar;2000:43). They are important sources of employment in the state. More than fifty thousand persons are employed either directly or indirectly in these temples (The Hindu; 2004:11). Priests, administrators, temple functionaries and
officials for the management of temples are employees drawing regular monthly remunerations (ibid:11). The statutory bodies managing temples are potential establishments which can generate greater employment opportunities and contributing to the state’s economy. It is to be examined whether growth of employment opportunities are possible in the area.

The important issues identified for discussion in this study are:

1) Evolution of temple worship in Kerala. Starting from the beginning of worship of nature to current practices.
2) Establishment and growth of religious worship places at different points in the history of Kerala.
3) The intervention in the administration of religious places of worship: - the events and context of interventions, stake holders, areas of interventions and the results of such interventions.
4) The economic contributions of temples in the state.
5) Human resource and financial management in statutory bodies controlling temples.

IV. RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

The Indian constitution is committed to secularism. The constitution guarantees freedom of worship to all. The Indian model of secularism is different from that of the west. India believes in the state involving itself in religious activities and yet remaining secular. Religion based civil laws and holidays for religious festival are some of the differences between the secularism practised in India and the west. The state owning temple is another important difference in this regard. At the same time, the state does not own or manage non-Hindu (minority religious institutions) places of worship. This is done to protect the minorities from the imposition of majority will on them. Political parties in India exploit this and evoke Hindu religious sentiments on Government's regulation over temples in order to garner votes for electoral victories.

The study of the relationship between the state and the management of temples in Kerala assumes great significance. It can explain the role of the state in Hindu religious activities after the period of monarchs who were also the heads of Hindus during their period. This study aims at understanding the historical evolution of state's role in the administration of Hindu temples while remaining secular.
V. **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

In order to understand the historical development in the relationship between the state and management of temples, both the evolution of temple worship and the history of state intervention in temple administration are studied. The scope of such a study is very wide. It reveals sequence of historical and social events in the state and from which conclusion can be made regarding the nature of state intervention in temples matter at different points in the political history of the state.

This analysis aims at tracking areas of government intervention in matters relating to Hindu temples in Kerala. In the process the areas are divided into two categories namely the sacred and the profane (non-sacred) areas. This gives the scope for understanding the limitation of the government interventions in the temples. It widens the scope to understand the areas where the government can further intervene for the promotion for the welfare of the Hindu community without disturbing the secular fabric of the society. Another important scope of the study is that it gives an understanding of the contributions of the temples to the development of the state. And the role of the state in developing the infrastructure to make the pilgrimage fulfilling is an important area coming under the study.

The study gives an understanding of the employment potential of the locals around the temples. This examination gives an opportunity to compare the reforms introduced in the relationship between the state and the temple managements in Kerala with other states. The study widens the scope for further investigation regarding the impact of state regulation on the conventions and rituals practised in temples.

VI. **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

VI.1. **Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study are formed on the basis of the problems discussed above and consideration of two guiding principles for temple management, namely welfare of devotees and promotion of spirituality among the people:

1) To study historical development in the relationship between the state and the Hindu temples in Kerala.
2) To identify and track the areas of government intervention in matters relating to management of Hindu temples in Kerala.
3) To study the systems of accountability in a temple owned and managed by the state government.

**VI.2. Research Method-A case study**

In order to achieve the above objectives, the case study method was adopted. The Guruvayoor Devaswom was selected for the case study. The scope of both the sacred and the non-sacred areas are vast for Guruvayoor Devaswom. Among all the statutory bodies, Guruvayoor Devaswom has many clear historical documents, such as writing on copper plates and printed manuals. These portray events having bearings on the management of the temples under the state. There are many other documents, pertaining to revenue and expenditure of the temples, during different periods. Many literary and scholarly devotional works on Lord Krishna of Guruvayoor Temple, provide information on the study of the sacred area in the management of the temple at different periods. Moreover, the Guruvayoor temple being a great center of pilgrimage, the findings pertaining to it will have general relevance for the whole of the state of Kerala. All these factors were taken into account for choosing Guruvayoor Devaswom for the case study.

Guruvayoor Devaswom was owned and managed by the ruler of Kozhikode for many centuries. The princely state became a part of Madras Province in 1792, which was under the British residency. Many reforms were introduced in the administration of temples in the Province of Madras during the 18th and 19th centuries (Fuller;2003:176). One among such reforms was the state control over the funds of the temples. After the attainment of independence and the subsequent formation of the Kerala state in 1956, the administration of Guruvayoor Devaswom was brought under the control of the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment Department of the state. The temple was owned and managed by a private trust comprising of the Raja of Kozhikode (Zamorin) and the senior member of a Namboodiri family known as ‘Mallissery’ in Guruvayoor. In 1978, the temple was taken over by a statutory body known as Guruvayoor Devaswom Managing Committee. Subsequently the organizational structure of Guruvayoor Devaswom was changed in the late 70s.
By the new Guruvayoor Devaswom Act the temple was brought outside the ambit of Hindu Religious Charitable Endowment Act in 1978. Thus, the Guruvayoor temple has the unique distinction of being under the regulation of Madras state until 1956, Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment Department of Kerala State until 1978 and a separate statutory body there after. For this reason Guruvayoor Devaswom was selected for the case study.

Guruvayoor temple was the focal center of the temple entry movement in the princely state of Malabar (Kozhikode) (Rajendran;2000:215). Many social and political activities which led the state government to take decisions regarding temple entry by a proclamation in 1931 have taken place around Guruvayoor temple. Many court verdicts, like the Supreme Court decision regarding the appointment of priests in 1997 setting the precedent for other Devaswoms in the state, were in connection with the Guruvayoor temple. Such events having social, political, and legal implications provide the basis for understanding the nature of the relationship between the state and the temple managements in the state of Kerala.

VI.3. Sources of Data

VI.3.1. Secondary: Secondary data was collected from published sources and unpublished sources.

Published sources
The published sources are, Census, Publications of Tourism Department, publications of Devaswom Department, published research works of scholars, Publications of temples, reports of various commissions appointed by the state Government/High Court of Kerala, newspapers and periodicals.

Unpublished sources
The unpublished sources are Research Theses, Devaswom Hand Books, copper plates kept in temples, Inscriptions on the Temples, and in the Temple Premises

VI.3.2. Primary: Primary data is collected through interview guide. Members of the managing committee and employees of the temples/Devaswoms were interviewed for the study.
VI.4. Selection of Samples for the Case Study

Eight members of the managing committee were interviewed for the study. The employee strength of Guruvayoor Devaswom is 1500. Of these, 10% were interviewed.

VII. CHAPTER SCHEME

Chapter I

Introduction - This chapter includes literature review, statement of the problem, research methodology, objectives, significance of the study, chapter scheme, scope of the study, and Limitations of the study.

Chapter II

This chapter is divided into two parts. First covers the administration of minority religious institutions in Kerala; second covers the evolution of temple administration in Kerala.

Chapter III

This chapter focuses mainly on Guruvayoor Devaswom. As this Devaswom is owned by the state, the system of accountability is analysed. This chapter traces historically the areas of state intervention in matters relating to the management of the temple. The reasons for continuing the tradition and not implementing reforms in the sacred area in the temple are discussed.

Chapter IV

The last chapter summarizes the areas of state intervention in matters relating to the management of temples. The findings are discussed with regard to the limitations of democratically elected state government in implementing reforms in temple managements in keeping with the constitutional commitments and social changes.

VIII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Any research study is bound to have three- fold limitations. One is imposed by the scope of the study itself. Another comes from the limitations
of the researcher. The third limiting factor is that of the external circumstances.

i) The historical evolution of temple worship and state intervention in temple administration are not given exhaustive treatment in this study. In fact both the evolution of worship and the history of intervention are vast topics that deserve to be studied further. But this study merely hints at the need for similar studies connected with other religious traditions.

   The sample survey of the pilgrims may not reveal the real picture of the conditions that prevail. However it is designed with care to yield an adequate representation of the existing state of affairs.

   Treatment of the relation between the state and management of Guruvayoor temple is not exhaustive. But it was undertaken by way of explaining secularism adopted by the Indian Constitution.

ii) The researcher did not have direct access to the temple records of most of the temple. Even if access was granted, an exhaustive survey of the records would take several years to complete only what were considered relevant was examined.

iii) Some of the records are private and can be referred to only with the permission of the state cabinet. There was neither sufficient time nor were some of the records accessible. And, as it is not legally binding on the temples to maintain proper records of their income and expenditure, data was not available.

   All limitations are road signs for future research.