CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The addition of a new dimension to national politics by student political activism has compelled many to closely scrutinise this phenomenon and bring out the various backdrop factors which generate it. While in the Asian African countries the students remained the very central element in the anticolonial struggles, in the United States they kept themselves in the forefront of the civil rights movement and, also in the campaign against the Vietnam war. But even before, in the revolutions of 1848 in Germany and in Austria, in Czarist Russia and in the East European countries students spearheaded various revolutionary movements and were the torchbearers of modern ideas of liberty, socialism and equality of opportunity. While student movements are deemed important among the various social movements, student organisations, indeed, recruit students into active politics and socialise them. It is this fact of political socialisation and its consequences which form the focal point of this enquiry.
Hypothesis: The task of this research endeavour is to verify the hypothesis that 'student organisations are the leading agents of political socialisation in Kerala'. But in order to give a firm theoretical basis to the work, the phenomenon of student organisation has to fit in suitably. The concept of political socialisation allows scope for various agencies to operate like the family, the school, the peer group, etc. The contention is that student organisations have got a peer group basis. The peer group operates as a powerful agency of influence among students who form a category as such. It has been amply proved by researches conducted in the West that the values one holds are very often the values of one's peers. This fact also is being examined.

Student organisations are secondary groups and they also work as agents of political socialisation. The membership of a secondary group provides a person very good apprenticeship for dealing with relationships in the political world. In the context of political participation the members of the group equip themselves with the skill, information, and predispositions that are necessary for it. Student organisations which are

political groups of young men are established for the purpose of disseminating political values and as such carry on intentional manifest political socialisation.

Methodology: The methodology adopted includes the historical and the analytical. Student activism and student movements in most countries form part of their history. Student power comes into the open during periods of crisis and students have played a crucial role in the anticolonial struggles. Efforts have also been made in this work to study the phenomenon of student political activities rather analytically. For this purpose a questionnaire was prepared and supplied to the students so that their attitudes and aspirations could be more clearly understood.

In addition to all these a number of books written by eminent authors like S.M. Lipset, Philip Altbach, Almond and Powell, S.P. Varma, Herbert Hyman, Lucian Pye and Sydney Verba, Peter Merkl, Jerome Skolnick, Kenneth Keniston, Paul Knott, N.E. Balaram, A.K. Pillai, C. Narayana Pillai and EMS Namboodiripad have been consulted. The articles written in the leading Dailies of Kerala, and periodicals, and editorials of newspapers have also been studied. Moreover, pains have been taken to interview a few leading personalities who were in the
limelight of the student movement in yesteryears, and also those who are very much in the field even today. Several libraries were also made use of like the Kerala University Library, the Department of Politics Library, Kerala University, the AKG Centre Library, the Kottayam Public Library, the St. Thomas College Library, Palai, and the Mar Thoma College Library, Thiruvalla. The entire thesis consists of six chapters. The first chapter is the introduction. Here the subject is generally introduced and the need for studying this new phenomenon is emphasised. The second chapter deals with the concept of political socialisation and thus gives the study a theoretical basis. In the third chapter a survey of student political socialisation and its course in Kerala since the early beginnings is done. The fourth chapter deals with elections and representation of students on the various student bodies. This is actually a consequence of political socialisation among students. The over impact of political socialisation is examined in the fifth chapter, and chapter six, the final chapter, contains a summing up of the findings of the whole work.

The aim of undertaking this work is to bring out the role of the student organisations in creating political awareness among students in the highly literate state of Kerala. Kerala is where even school students are
politically active. It has also often been said that student politics has hindered educational progress in the state. It is a matter of common knowledge that many of the political leaders of today were student leaders when they were in schools and colleges.

**Students and Politics**

Student organisations as we find them today in Kerala are of quite recent origin, with a history of only four decades or so. But this does not mean that Kerala students were not politically conscious at all before the 1950's. On the contrary there is enough of evidence to show that they have been politically active from the beginnings of the present century and the Quit India Movement of 1942 formed the apex of the student movement in Kerala as was elsewhere in India. The All India Students Federation and the Students Congress were in existence even before 1956 when Kerala became a political unit in its present shape. The student movement which had a nationalist tradition lost its focal point and got disintegrated after the dawn of freedom. In fact, a transformation in the student movement in Kerala could be found after 1947. There has been no unified student movement in Kerala after independence and the movement came to be increasingly politicised.
It is very interesting to see how the various student organisations sponsored by the state's political parties behave on the basis of a set pattern -- they flourish and split, engage in strikes and demonstrations depending upon the fortunes of their parent political parties. They have also been affected by the socio-economic compositions of the state's population and the level of political instability for which Kerala is well known. But before embarking upon a detailed study of the subject it will be better to have a look into political activism of students elsewhere. Though student activism has ancient roots, the study of such behaviour is a recent phenomenon. It is the contemporary events in the developed as well as the developing countries which have persuaded political scientists to concentrate on the study of student politics. The activities of students could not be neglected or pushed aside when the processes of modernisation and political development were studied.

Great men who were witnesses to the significant events of history like Thomas Hobbes, Luther, Frederick Engels, Marx, Lenin all had noted the importance of this section of the society and they had also a word of caution to add. Hobbes had underlined the importance of disciplining the universities and teaching the students to
obey the laws of the King. Martin Luther who was intensely supported by the students, was forced to check them to prevent them from going too far in their protest against the Pope and the Emperor. Engels too had noted that the students were unwilling to submit to the discipline of adult groups and the leaders of the revolution, and in a letter to Marx complained that Russia's revolutionary students might emigrate to Western Europe and corrupt the proletarian movement there. Similarly Lenin who himself first joined the revolutionary movement while a university student was disturbed by student indiscipline and reminded the students that even revolutionary politics required compromises and retreats. Coming to India, the father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi, was very well aware of the role which students could play in getting freedom for India, but had constantly advised students to remain disciplined and uphold moral values. Jawaharlal Nehru advised students to study politics and be conscious of the political happenings in the country and cautioned them not to unnecessarily involve in it. He told them to spend their time in quiet study and hard work.\(^2\)

Student activism of our days is not simply a reemergence of the traditional patterns of protest against the adult world. The contemporary student movement varies considerably in goals and functions. This fact has to be borne in mind when one sets out to analyse political activism among the students.

Student movements are said to be transitory in character, and this is the reason why scholars in the past were reluctant to study about it analytically. It is also said that students by themselves cannot bring a revolutionary movement to fruition, they can only be catalysts for political action.

Revolutionary movements very often look forward to the students for support because by their very nature they are full of idealism and zest for action. Thus C. Wright Mills, an eminent author saw in the intellectuals and students a major potential mass base for new revolutionary movements. The Marxists, even though they seek student support for their programmes and policies do not consider students as independent social forces. Rather they have been viewed as vacillating, unreliable, petit bourgeois elements who shift with the prevailing ideological winds. Whatever the viewpoints be, it is a certain fact that they can play a significant
role in national politics. Student demonstrations and movements played a vital role in the overthrow of Peron in Argentina in 1955, the downfall of Peroz Jimenez in Venezuela in 1958, the successful resistance to Diem in Vietnam in 1963, the massive riots against Japan-US Security Treaty in Japan in 1960 which led to the resignation of the Kishi government, the anti Sukarno movement in Indonesia in 1966, the downfall of Ayubkhan in Pakistan in 1969 and the massive movement for liberalisation in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

To be true to facts it is to be said that a majority of the students are not having this revolutionary attitude. The majority of the students in all countries are politically quiescent and moderate in their views. Left wing students are in a minority in all the countries. In most countries the vast majority of students are apolitical and endorse the moderate or even conservative parties.

Very often the campus conditions, provide the background for students political activities. Of course, their family background and socio economic status are crucial but they become background factors once they come into contact with their friends in the college. The academic ecology, the social environment in which a
student happens to find himself by virtue of his choice of university or academic field is more important than his class origins. In the developing countries since students are drawn from a wide variety of sections, there is no 'sense of community' among the students. In the case of India this is a true finding.

The Berkeley student rebellion in the University of California (1964) and the French Student Revolt (1968) were both the 'student protests' against campus conditions, the authoritarian nature of the University and its maladministration. But both of them failed in so far as they could not develop themselves into successful revolutions. The student leaders in the United States and France concentrated on issues rather than ideology. The Berkeley rebellion flowered into the 'Free Speech Movement'. But freedom of speech was not enough, rather they wanted to have freedom of action. That was why when the University administration called a meeting to hear an address on the situation in the University by the University President Clark Kerr, the rebel leader Mario Savio seized the microphone in an attempt to take over the meeting. It was the contention of the students that the

modern university should be run by the students and the professors. They also felt that the colleges and universities had become servants of the 'financial industrial and military establishment'.

The French student leaders who seemed to be upholding George Sorel's theory of direct action aimed at a change of government in France. They attacked the inequality in the educational system of France. Religious divisions, regional, linguistic, caste, racial and tribal differences too severely inhibit the growth of a unified student movement. The various student groups are locked in conflict here. The demands made by the university on the students also increase the possibilities for political participation and the creation of a political climate on the campus. Thus the examination system is a key factor determining student political activism. In India students are required to take the final examinations only at the end of the year and this gives them a lot of free time to indulge in political activities.


Students are attracted towards student organisations and consequent political activities for yet another reason. Young people particularly students join organisations because they have just left their families, their home town or friends and are anxious, disoriented and lonely. They find in organisational life a sense of commitment, purpose, and high intimacy and this is a kind of replacement for the lost collectivity.

Student organisations can be divided into two categories for analytical purposes — transgressive groups which are directed against the authority structures of their societies and traditional groups which socialise their members into their role as conventional citizens of the society. A further distinction can be made among transgressive student movements. Some of them are concerned with changes in basic social 'values', while others are concerned with affecting the norms. In other words, the former is devoted to the conceptions about ultimate ends, and the latter deals with the means to attain the agreed upon social values.

Having made such a distinction it is to be pointed out that in the underdeveloped countries movements

6. Ibid., p.xxiii.
concerned with value change are more prevalent. They are also very strong in these countries. In this regard Talcott Parsons and S.N. Eisenstadt have suggested the need to look at the magnitude of the differences between the values of the adult and youth generations in the varying types of societies. Such value differences is one of the causes for generational conflict, and these differences in value perception are greater in developing societies and relatively minor in the developed societies.⁷

Opinions about the place of politics in the university are inherently related to the concept about the larger society. There is one school of thought which says that students must involve in politics since universities themselves must be agents of change in a society where social evils and injustices abound. The other school is of the opinion that a university is a house of study and not a house of politics. While the former school is constituted by extreme leftists (or extreme rightists) the latter is formed by moderate conservatives and liberals. The conservative students consider student politics as unnecessary and undue interference with studies.

⁷. Ibid., p.xxiv.
The leftist students on the other hand feel that they have a duty to take part in politics, and the political and academic roles ought to be integrated. They consider the university to be a modernising agency. From this it becomes clear that leftist students will mobilise more students on the campus than the moderates or the rightists. In recent years more attention has been given to student activism of the left in many countries. Rightist activism has not attracted much attention as it did during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Extreme nationalism and antisemitism characterised student activism of the right during the inter war period and naturally Nazism had great appeal in the universities in Germany.

Towards a Theory of Student Protest

It is a generally acknowledged fact that campuses of higher education are passing through a phase of transition and turmoil all over the world. Many explanations have been given for student protest by social scientists. Thus Beck and Dougus (1970) base their explanation on the outlook of people in general, which has undergone a drastic change because of the explosion of knowledge in
all the aspects of human life. Moris (1976) observed that it is not only explosion of knowledge but the intervention of new knowledge which has put strong constraints upon the old traditional values of moral ethics and intra-personal relations. For Poppom (1965) "the man has become open and secrecy and control have become myths in social life". But Rollwin and Sini (1973) feel that man has become more inquisitive and demands the immediate solutions of even ultimate problems. This group of social scientists feels that campus unrest is the byproduct of change in outlook and status of man in the social system and therefore the enlightened organisations have become the victims of this phenomenon. 8

The old explanations of student unrest were adequate in those days, but not now. It is for this reason that new explanations are being offered to understand this universal phenomenon. There is no point in declaring a 'war against the young'. Many reactions to student unrest spring primarily from fear, anger, confusion or envy rather than from theoretical analysis. There are two theories gaining widespread acceptance now in the West.

They are (1) "The Conflict of Generations" which might be termed the 'Oedipal Rebellion' put forth by Lewis S. Feuer, and (2) The Theory of Historical Irrelevance stated by Zbigniew Brzezinski and Daniel Bell.9

The explanation of Oedipal Rebellion considers student protest as the hatred of fathers and the older generations. Student idealism is simply a 'front' to hide their destructiveness. The explanation of historical irrelevance asserts that students' rebellion springs from the unconscious awareness of some students that society has left them and their values behind. The students find that the society is moving towards a new era where robots and computers will decide everything. Romanticism and Humanism are lost values. Thus while the former theory considers psychological reasons as the basis for student rebellion, the latter considers sociological reasons as the compulsive force behind student protest.

But an expert on student movement Kenneth Keniston is of the opinion that these two theories are rather inadequate. He has cited several other reasons like the large number of people under 30 in the world today.

Naturally they have come to demand a share in policy making or programme planning. Similarly in the modern society 'adolescence' is accepted as a distinct stage of growth. It was not so in the olden days when after childhood which ended at 6 or 7 the person was integrated into adulthood. He was supposed to work like the adult in the medieval world. There is "in general, an intimate relationship between the way a society defines the stages of life and its economic, political and social characteristics." 10 Again, by giving proper education to our children are we not producing a class of citizens who can critically evaluate happenings in society.

What students throughout the world share is a mood of protest against the existing system and not an ideology. Some societies are fast passing into a new post industrial society ('technectronic' in Brzezinski's words). Naturally old values and old emphases disappear and students may be protesting against this. They oppose the "technologisation of man". They are seeking values like romanticism and humanism.

The students want to bring about a moral revolution in the society. Therefore they want their universities to be participatory, and the universities should give the leadership in social transformation. Instead of ideology the students have a mood. But they do not have a theory of society. They therefore turn to Marxism, which had already brought about a revolution in society. Student rebellion is now fundamentally hostile towards all authorities, unless in the earlier days when students were hostile only towards particular authorities. The big names of the present day student radicalism -- Mao Tse Tung, Fidel Castro, Che Guevera, Frantz Fanon -- are remote in space or dead. It is their anarchic element that appeals to the radical students.

A distinctive feature of a democratic society characterised by rapid population growth and constricting resources for development may be termed as the 'politics of scarcity'. The university is a selective institution in a world of scarcity. Therefore the opportunity to attend the university is considered as a first step into a less constricted future. Even though the student radicals know that they live in a world of scarcity they are entranced by a vision of plenitude. They are opposed to competition and the scarcity which necessitates it.
They oppose authority and tradition. Basic in all this is the view that every human being simply by virtue of his humanity is an essence of unquestionable, undiscriminatable value with the fullest right to the realization of what is essential in him.\textsuperscript{11}

About the role of the university also differences of perception exists. On the one hand, it is said that universities are centres of innovation and scholars are expected to challenge the traditional truths of their fields, and on the other, these are considered as schools with faculties of teachers and thereby forming a part of the socialisation process of the society. The university, mainly speaking, performs a socialisation function -- giving training to students in socially useful skills. It is the professional schools which are essentially concerned with this socialisation function, and the liberal arts subjects are devoted to scholarly innovation. Naturally transgressive student movements which are directed against authority structures are more common among liberal arts students than among the students of the professional schools such as Engineering, Medicine, etc.

\textsuperscript{11} Edward Shils, 'Dreams of Plenitude, Nightmares of Scarcity', in S.M. Lipset and Philip G. Altbach, op. cit., p.16.
There can be conflicts between the values of the university and the values of the society. When we speak of a university we have more or less a similar model in mind whatever be the type of society. The norm of academic freedom is basic to a university. The university by its very nature is universalistic and meritocratic even in societies which are not universalistic and meritocratic. This being so the chances for conflict of values between the university and society are great in authoritarian societies and relatively small in developed democratic societies. ¹²

All these distinctions have been brought forth to enable us to understand the ideological commitments among students. The ideological concerns of the student organisations of the developing countries reflect their interests in value changes in the context of their societies. These organisations oppose traditional values and the forces that stand in the way of economic and social progress. In the western countries the tension between social values and political ideals are not so deep. Even the so called radical student organisations are not attached to formal ideologies. It is pragmatism and a preoccupation with specific issues which characterise student activism in the West.

¹². Ibid., p.xxiv.
Orientation Towards Youth

But along with the above mentioned factors and their mutual relationship one should have an idea about society's orientation towards youth in order to understand the significance of student politics. Many societies treat youth and especially student youth in a special manner. Much tolerance is shown towards them and student revolutionaries when they violate the norms and laws of society are given only mild punishments. This tolerance is due to the fact that university students are usually the children of the 'elite', and students become a privileged lot. The elite finds it difficult to give severe punishments to its own children.

It is also said that student activism is the expression of the need of the youth to have a separate culture of its own. Youth wants to make its presence known and it wants to maintain its identity. The importance of the university today as a centre of research and development has also increased its political role, and naturally students who are caught in the midst of politics find it important to express their opinion.
The university is not looked upon as a completely autonomous institution in a developing country, and pure scholarship is a luxury which few societies can afford. In short, the complex nature of the modern society, coupled with needs of development make the university the centre of political agitations.

There are certain other factors also which govern the phenomenon of student politics like the political values of the country's intellectuals, the relationship between intellectuals and students, the type of political institutions, etc. In many societies intellectuals and students feel that they are at the top of the society and therefore they must be the leaders of social change. They try to remove the obstacles to such changes. Students are to be called as 'apprentice intellectuals' and they follow their professors especially in their views about society. The student indiscipline in India is linked with the bad working conditions of the faculty among other things.

Student political patterns are also decided by the amount of political stability. As Edward Shils pointed out the great wave of protest in 1968 occurred in countries which had significant governmental crises.13

13. Ibid., p.xxx.
In Latin America student activism has been stimulated by lack of political stability. The greater amount of political stability prevailing in the Scandinavian countries has evidently discouraged student activism there.

Confrontation politics is characteristic of societies where adequate channels of communications between authorities and students are absent. When the adult power structure ignores student political groups they turn to demonstrations and agitations. Student youth becomes easily frustrated when their demands are not immediately met. This is the case even if adequate channels of communications exist. The only point of relief in such cases is that student unrest will tend to be a temporary phenomenon. Stable democracies do not normally come across long term student unrest which are destructive.

The rapid expansion of education and the increase in number of students have made matters worse. Education is no more confined to the elite class. The emergence of large student populations has made student activism more easy. It is easy to mobilise students to organise protest demonstrations.
These are some of the vital aspects of student political activism. Student organisations are born in the midst of these factors and they perform certain functions also. They have become a force to be reckoned with playing a potential role in shaping student attitudes in their formative years and a part of the political process of the society. They are also looked upon as power centres. Student organisational activities have enabled students to get representation in administrative bodies, to secure voting rights and earn several other concessions. At the same time organisational activities have emboldened them to engage in vandalism and hamper educational progress. It has also produced several career politicians in many states.

Student Movement

Student movements one of the important social movements originate in the environment of colleges and universities and under favourable conditions it can make itself a strong political and emotional force. They arise from a duality of emotion -- they are founded on generational struggle and also upon altruism.
By generational struggle or generational conflict is meant
the aggression against elders. Usually children coming
from middle class families have got the guilty feeling
that they are living on their father's money. They know
very well that university life is the last preserve of
comradeship which most students will know in their life
and after this they are going to face the world of
competition. Thus student movements can be considered as
a desperate protest against the adult world.

Students are also led by feelings of altruism since
they want to help other sections of people who are
suffering from social injustices.

Student movements have got a psychological origin as
Lewis S. Feuer points out, and that is why a destructive
fate hovers over their evolution. He makes this point by
analytically studying three important student movements in
modern Europe -- German, Russian and Bosnian, and claims
that student movements have been the "most irrational
force in modern history".14 It is very difficult to judge
them in a scientific way because they are tied up with the
most cherished emotions of the youth. It is also doubtful

14. Lewis S. Feuer, 'Patterns of Irrationality' in Paul
D. Knott, Student Activism, W.M.C. Brown Company
whether these movements have contributed anything to human history. They had been the most irrational force in history partly because they attach themselves to other movements like labour movements and colonial movements in an altruistic spirit, and partly due to their nihilistic tendency like destroying public property and defeating the elders. Student movement in due course becomes an 'amoral' force and the student leaders try to justify various types of dishonest practices. It is said that all student leaders in modern history like Karl Follen (the first student leader of modern times), Nechaev Mario Savio and Mark Rudd have been exponents of amorality. It is also to be noted that not a single outstanding work of political thought has ever emerged from the student movement.

If student movements have got a psychological origin student subcultures develop where there is a sharp disjunction between values and expectations embodied in the traditional families and the values and expectations prevailing in the occupational sphere. The greater the disjunction the more self conscious and oppositional will be the youth culture.\(^{15}\) Families are by definition

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particularistic, ascriptive, diffusive and the occupational sphere is universalistic, impersonal, achievement oriented and functionally specific. In other words, there is incompatibility between the trends in the family and the trends in the larger society. The increasing rationalisation of student life, bureaucratic control, unavailability of coherent careers are all responsible for the emergence of the student movement. The birth of student movement is also a consequence of the opportunities for prolonged interaction available in the university. The type of peer group and organisational relationship of the students will determine their level of politicisation. The political activists will make the best use of peer group relationship.

Who is a student activist?

A student activist can be defined as a student who acts together with others in a group, is concerned with some ethical, social, ideological issue and holds liberal or radical views. Here it is important to make a distinction between political activists and the culturally alienated students, because both are generally considered

as student dissenters. But then this is a distinction not so much applicable to Indian conditions as to the American campuses. While the political activists accept the basic social and political values, and believe that demonstrations are effective in mobilising public opinion and exerting political pressure, the culturally alienated students go against the socially accepted norms of behaviour.

Talking about the sources of political activism, it must be said that there is no single factor as such but various complex and interrelated sources are present. The social class, academic achievements, explicit value satisfaction with college along with situational, institutional, cultural, and historical factors determine student activism. The student protestor is today very much sensitive to historical trends and events. The events which take place in other parts of the world act as a catalyst for his activism. The TV and other communication facilities help him to be informed. He has also developed a responsiveness to these developments. The students of Kerala protested against atrocities committed by the Chinese government on protesting students at Tiananmen Square in 1989. They also protested against
the American led allied action against Iraq in the wake of the Kuwaiti aggression labelling it as an imperialist war.

Students live in the same society where adults live. They too are influenced by the society's events and culture. Affluence, education, and technological innovations have changed the environment. In such circumstances it is good that the field of student dissent is dominated by the politically active. If and when they withdraw from the field, the culturally alienated will take control of the situation which will be highly dangerous.

In the opinion of Kenneth Keniston moral issues are at the heart of student revolt. He says that there are three stages in the moral development of man -- egocentric, a premoral stage; conventional, goodness and badness depending on current standards of the community; and ethical, meaning a person setting his own standards for judging goodness and badness. In the last stage which Erik Erikson calls as the 'ethical' stage, the individual begins to realise what is good and what is bad. Such independent judgement is the result of one's own enlightenment, is not based upon community's standards.

17. Ibid., p.37.
As far as the students who are educated are concerned, they are knowledgeable enough to make such judgements resulting in an ethical outrage very often. Students thus protest against social evils and social inequalities. They become even violent to make their presence felt and their opinions heard. Morality is translated into a moral urgency to restructure society and they even infringe on the rights of others.

Scholars have very often made a distinction between the 'classical' student movement and the 'new' student movement. Historically the phenomenon of revolutionary student movements has been primarily a feature of transitional societies, i.e., societies which were witnessing the breakdown of old values of the agricultural societies and the emergence of modern values which were the result of industrialisation. It considers youth rebellion as natural, inevitable and idealistic. Every country has its own version of the saying. "He who is not a radical at twenty does not have a heart, he who still is one at forty does not have a head". But conventional wisdom neglects the fact that widespread student movements do not occur at all times and places and also they do not exhibit the same characteristics and orientations everywhere.
But if student movements are peculiar to transitional societies what about the American university campuses where they flourish? The answer is that even the American society is transitional in nature, but of a different one. While the educated youth in the transitional societies (developing countries) experience the irrelevance of traditional religious, prescientific, authoritarian values for modernisation, educated youth in the advanced countries feel the irrelevance of commercial, acquisitive, materialistic and nationalistic values in a world that stresses human rights and social equality.

The dimensions of student protest must be understood as part of a world wide phenomenon. The student protest now involves a wider range of campuses and a wider range of students. The scope and range of contemporary student protest make old explanations inadequate. A recent study commissioned by the United Nations had said that those in 12-25 age group now number 750 million and will total a billion by a few years. At that time the study predicted, "Youth of the world will begin to predominate in world affairs". This prediction makes it clear that

world opinion is going to become increasingly the opinion of the world's youth and generational conflict will assume new proportions. In the words of the Cox Commission report on the Columbia disturbances: "The ability, social consciousness and conscience, political sensitivity, and honest realism of today's students are a prime cause of student disturbances".19 The present generation of young people in our universities is the best informed, the most intelligent and the most idealistic. They are also the 'most sensitive to public issues and the most sophisticated in political tactics'.

Student movements, today are revolutionary in nature and demand basic social changes. This is so with the movements in the advanced West also. Students were very much active in the right wing movements that led to the rise of fascism in Western Europe during the 1930's. They were then concerned with the defense of tradition and order only.

If student movements are characteristic of transitional societies, they are also reflective of technological, cultural, and economic changes that require new forms and mechanisms for distribution of

19. Ibid., Chapter 5.
political power. Students find political authorities as agents of the status quo. The established elites continue to represent the traditional culture and they refuse to share power or redistribute power. So in the eyes of the students the existing political order is unsatisfactory and therefore the emergent ideology of the student movement is populist, egalitarian and romantic.

Student movements in several parts of the world do not bear the same characteristics. While in Latin America and Asia they continue to function as part of a relatively long tradition of student activism, in America and the West the movement has emerged in response to a different set of problems and issues. Despite the differences among student movements in developed and underdeveloped countries, a process of mutual influence is discernible. For instance, the American white student movement was inspired in its early stages by student uprisings in Japan, Turkey and South Korea. The increasing cross fertilisation and mutual inspiration occurring among student movements is the outcome of improvements in communication facilities, the influence of the mass media, and the opportunities available to the students for international travel.
Student activists have of late been giving up their old approach of accepting and acting within the framework of generally accepted values and embracing the politics of radicalism and confrontation. There are scholars who opine that disruption and destruction are the very aim that students have in their mind. They want to weaken the authority of the university and the government instead of promoting reform. The confrontation tactics adopted by the students of America are aimed at arousing the moderates to action, to educate the public, to train the youth in tough methods, etc. Ayn Rand while discussing the various aspects of the Berkeley Rebellion, California University 1964, opines that it was Immanuel Kant who divorced reason from reality and ever since his descendants have been working hard to widen the breach. When reason is ignored in any situation physical force will try to take its place. As a result, student protest in many American campuses have become instances of political confrontation.

Student activism is considered as a response to situations in which student opinions have been ignored. Students have resorted to militant measures because of the lack of effective representation for the expression

of their grievances. It is plainly clear that where "normal channels" for participating and influence are underdeveloped, political action tends to take place outside those channels. The result is that student activism is misunderstood and instead of concentrating on the substantive issues, the 'style' of protest becomes the focus of concern of all. A distant governing body may call for order on the campus with threats of punitive action. Under these conditions the university will only drift further and further away from the possibility of constructive changes.

Student Movement in India

Various opinions have been expressed regarding student movement in India. There are those who doubt the existence of such a movement in India. For example, Edward Shils says: "For there to be a movement and not just a frequent uproar, there must be something like a doctrine or set of beliefs. Doctrines and movements are about systems and institutions, not just about occasional and particular grievances".21 He continues to say that

only when the society or broader governmental authority is seen as an integral part of a continuous set of disturbances can there be a movement in any meaningful sense of the term. Student indiscipline in our country focuses on political objects, but the focus does not persist. The disruptive violence resorted to by students focusing on, political issues has no ideology. It is a 'one shot affair'. It is a simple fact that student agitations in India do not seek reforms. They also do not have long term goals. The students attack the Vice Chancellor, but never agitate to cut short his powers, or they attack the police but do not seek a change in police procedures. The rebellious students have no regard for existing authorities because they are corrupt and inefficient. The authorities try to get away from student problems rather than solving them. The net result is that student agitations fail to become a student movement which is aimed at changing the system.

Although the above arguments contain grains of truth it is not a correct estimation to say that there is no student movement in India. The fact seems to be that students have been caught in a whirlwind of rapid social change. India's problem is not student indiscipline, corruption or party politics -- it is the deeper problem
of social change. Let it be recalled here that student movement in the country came into being as a part of the national movement and the Quit India movement of 1942 can be considered as the apex of student activism.

In his comparative study of two Indian universities (the Ravi Shankar University, Raipur and the Punjab University, Chandigarh), S.L. Sharma comes to the conclusion that nearly 50 per cent of activists in both the universities maintained contacts with the local politicians thus lending support to the popular impression regarding the indulgence of adult politicians in prompting student protest. Another finding by the same authority is that student protest is in part a function of student politics. It is at the same time not a function of ideological politics. The collusion between student power and political parties seems more a case of pragmatic politics, or politics of opportunity rather than ideological politics. This is the reason why student protest stays here at the level of student activism and fails to become student movement. 22

In another survey conducted by a research scholar at Benaras comprising local universities, 100 students were interviewed, and as a result two findings were made. They are first, parents cannot be held responsible for the actions of at least 70 per cent of the student leaders. It also became evident that students could not be weaned away through their parents, through the parent-teacher associations, etc. The survey also makes it clear that 71 per cent of student leaders have a rural background. What follows as a finding is that student unrest is a reflection of student's inability to adjust to the new urban culture. Students who come to urban centres bypass parental authority and falls into the hands of new peers. 23

In the opinion of another writer Prof. Swarup no single framework of student protest can be set forth in India unlike in western countries because the nature and forms of protest vary at different levels. This is because students are affected by the process of modernisation. He delineates four currents in the Indian social situation:

(1) A small group of students from educated families who love Pop music, and wear unconventional dresses.

(2) "Progressives" like the Naxalites who feel that the communist doctrines have been betrayed by the so-called communists.

(3) The highly 'intelligent' and sensitive group which rejects ancient values and embracing liberalistic and humanitarian ideas, and

(4) The sons and daughters of elite political leaders and bureaucrats who are highly conscious of their status and also wanting to establish their status through agitations. This group joins the large number of first generation learners from rural areas and poor families. 24

Whatever it is, education, unemployment, and youth produce an explosive mixture in our country. The unemployed youth with little skill and no opportunity or capital for economic activity turns to political entrepreneurship. Political entrepreneurship is a better means to status and power than economic entrepreneurship.

24. Ibid., pp.155-56.
It is perhaps interesting to consider some other classifications of student youth in India. Thus S. Vasudev writes of the 'female' as interested only in fashion, marriage, and the home and not at all interested in politics. The 'males' he divides into three categories. The 'haves' consist of the decaying feudal class who are out of power but who are trying to reattain power but only occasionally jumping into politics. Then comes the business class uninterested in politics until its particular family business is affected by government policies. Then again the new rich class who may be called as the sons of the establishment who see politics as a shortcut to money, comfort, and luxury. The 'shuttle betweens' are the intelligentsia, the careerists who drift between faith in democratic or socialist government and Naxalism. 25

The student youth of India has been divided into four groups by Joseph Di Bona. These groups are the (1) 'violents' who believe that a revolution here and now and it is they who blow up banks and burn schools. (2) 'Cop outs' the hippies and drug addicts who are not bothered about social welfare (3) 'workers', the elected

student leaders who work through the existing machinery, and (4) 'Drones' who are interested in only passing the examinations and getting jobs.\textsuperscript{26}

An analytical study of student political orientations in our country will not be complete without a mention of the present day domestic politics. It is a self-evident fact that there is close links with the student leaders and local politicians and this relationship is almost always guided by pragmatic considerations. Politicians here engage in horse trading and gives false promises. Students see MLA's and MP's defecting and changing their stand so often, and they try to imitate these leaders or reject the entire system. Such an attitude, either of imitation or rejection is likely to raise the pitch and temper of campus politics. Similarly, the decisions of the central and state governments have been decisions of expediency. One comes across strange combinations of political parties, strange bedfellows in state and national politics. What is important for a political party now, it seems, is to bargain from a position of strength. Here students are a valuable asset for a political party -- students, demonstrate their strength by agitating. Combined with this distorted view of politics,

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., p.158.
the economic stagnation, rising unemployment, and corruption has created a situation of anarchy and lawlessness among students.

It is useful to see how authorities react to student unrest. There are those who say that student movements never succeed while there are others who are of the opinion that they must be physically subdued by the police. Again, there are those who try to bring about genuine reforms. In their attempt to find a solution to the problem of student unrest some have made a distinction between the moderate mass of students and the small minority of revolutionary students who create trouble on the campus. Finally, there are a few who try to flatter and appease the students, as there are some who align with students to fight others. Thus reactions to student unrest vary as one notices above.

What is attempted here in this thesis is to find out the role of student organisations in political socialisation as far as the students of Kerala are concerned. But in order to systematically analyse this role one must have an idea about the basis of student political orientations, the nature of student movement,
the particular problems presented by the socio-economic conditions, the types of students, etc. This is why the above general description of student political activism became necessary.

The students of Kerala also share the characteristics of students elsewhere in India. There is a feeling that Kerala's educational field is comparatively free from the general crises faced by India's educational system. But this is not correct. Perhaps the only reason for some relief is that Kerala has a high rate of literacy (90.59 per cent).27 It is also to be specially stated that Kerala has a comparatively large number of educational institutions. As elsewhere here also there is no unity among students and no cordial relations between the teacher and the student. Consequently, there is fall in moral standards and also fall in educational standards in the state's educational field.

The politically conscious student community therefore feel it necessary to act as a corrective force. They consider it as their duty to fight the corrupt practices in the field of education. They oppose the commercialisation of education. In other words, they feel

the importance of effecting reforms in the educational system of the state. Moreover, the students know that they have to protect their rights like representation on university bodies and the various concessions which they enjoy. Parliamentary democracy works on the assumption that the people are politically conscious, and no doubt students form a sizable section of the population. It is only natural then that they must also be politically conscious and aware of happenings in the political field. So it automatically follows that the organised student community shall work to preserve its rights and to implement reforms in education. In other words, student organisations are necessary and natural in the present set up.

Students when come together discuss among other things politics also. Most of them are influenced by their peer's political opinions. This likemindedness and similarity of views when combined with the urge to reform society leads to the establishment of student organisations.

In Kerala students had played a key role in the freedom movement. After independence they began clamouring for educational reforms. From the 1960's onwards they began to play an active role in state politics. In the foregoing chapters an analysis is made of the working of the student organisations in the background of Kerala's coalition politics. Student political activities have also been influenced by the social and economic conditions prevailing in the state. Except during the Emergency period in 1975-1977 they have been very much active and they even supplied a Chief Minister for Kerala. Students could also gain representation in the university bodies. Student politics had also crossed its limits exhibiting nihilistic tendencies. It has hit educational reforms in the state. But on the whole it could exhibit a definite pattern and a continuous course which makes it worthwhile to undertake a study of this new phenomenon.