CHAPTER I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1. PROBLEM FORMULATION

1.1.1. Introduction

In the history of confrontation between the "Simple" and "Complex" cultures, few are the instances where the former is treated by the latter with the dignity and respect it deserves. The one aspect of the simple culture that has been transformed through cultural contact is its symbolic dimension. Even though the attitude of the 'Civilized' has been altered considerably on the discovery that it has absorbed many aspects of simple cultures the condescending treatment continues till today. Fewer are the attempts, if any, by the high traditions to dialogue on equal terms with simple cultures, though the interaction between the great tradition and little tradition have been going on for a long period of time, particularly in the East. Speaking of the primitive absorption into the Indian high culture Kosambi says, the present day Gondhalis professional caste dance was originally the dance of the aboriginal tribes known as Gonds. The absorption must have been taken place around A.D. 1100; but the connection is now forgotten (Kosambi 1972:49).
Within the same world view of the East which has incorporated several folk cultures if this was the treatment, then the result would be disastrous when a complex culture with a different world-view such as the West broke into the life of a pre-literate culture. When the West 'discovered' the tribals in the East, they thought it their ardent duty to 'civilize' them and the end result was in many cases they were compelled to adopt to a great extent the way of life of their masters. The approach was not one of tolerance, but aggressive assimilation through change of religious symbols prejoratively known as conversion. The attitude of the West of that time is summarised in the words of Karl Barth. Quoting him Radhakrishnan (1940:341) says: "he brands non-christian religions as foes of Christendom, which must in no circumstances 'howl with (those) wolves'. A true Christian's response to other faiths must be an intolerant No!" Though the theological stance sounds so horrifying the practice was tempered by human experience and diplomatic wisdom and this is adequately illustrated in the centuries long presence of the West in the Indian subcontinent.

1.1.2. Religion and Culture

Change of religious symbols, voluntary or forced should be viewed as a serious anthropological
phenomenon, Clifford Geertz (1973), Paul Tillich (1968), Muilder (1967) and many others speak of religion as the substance of culture. Religion has a twofold relationship with culture. In its visible institutional aspects religion may be viewed as one segment of culture, alongside others, such as the family, the economic order, political organization, aesthetic expression, systems of communication, and the like. Religion has a second and more profound relationship to culture. It is a dimension of each of the other major aspects of culture, whether or not this dimension is institutionally expressed or even acknowledged. Ploughing a field, harvesting a crop, hunting game, rearing a family, governing a clan – these are all religious. It is commonplace in studies of primitive or preliterate societies to note how religion pervades all parts of culture. (Muilder in Feaver and Horosz [ed]: 1967:468). In different words Paul Tillich (1968:42) also says the same: "Religion as ultimate concern is the meaning-giving substance of culture, and culture is the totality of forms in which the basic concern of religion expresses itself. In abbreviation: religion is the substance of culture, culture is the form of religion."
1.1.3. Culture, Symbol, Myth and Ritual

According to Geertz (1973:89) [culture] "denotes a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life.

Symbols are the interlacing element in both religion and culture. Symbols are the store-house of meaning as far as religion is concerned, and for culture, symbols are the expression of 'humanness' as well as the vehicle of distinguishing traits of humanity. "Meaning can only be "stored" in symbols: a cross, a crescent, or a feathered serpent; such religious symbols, dramatized in rituals or related in myths, are felt somehow to sum up, for those for whom they are resonant, what is known about the ways of the world, the quality of the emotional life it supports, and the way one ought to behave while in it." Geertz (1973:127). "Religious symbols do exactly the same thing as all symbols do namely, they open up a level of reality, which otherwise is not opened at all, which is hidden. ...Religious symbols open up the experience of the dimension of this depth in the human soul." (Tillich, 1968:59).
Human beings attach very great importance to symbolic expression in their day to day life. Even in such situations as untouchability, caste suppression, poverty and misery, men and women celebrated their life through symbolic expression and revelled in mythological extravaganzas. We are told, that "even in the most desperate of "historical situations" (in the trenches of Stalingrad, in both Nazi and Soviet concentration camps) men and women have sung ballads and listened to stories, even giving up a part of their meagre rations to obtain them: and these stories were but projections of the myths, these ballads were filled with "nostalgias"" (Eliade, 1961:19).

Human history is shaped by the myth of paradise and symbol of Utopia. "The Republic" of Plato, the City of Eternal peace of Kant, The Classless Society of Marx, The Omega Point of Teilhard Chardin, The Absolute State of Hegel, State of Nirvana of Buddha, Rama Rajya of Gandhiji, The Kingdom of God of Jesus are all the vision of Paradise and Symbol of Utopias of the "end times".

It was the dream of Paradise that was the force that compelled kings to organize military expeditions for power and honour: for the Europeans to circumnavigate the globe in control of pearls and spices; for the Arabs to spread their dynasty in
search of gold and diamonds; for the Nazis to attempt to evolve a superior Ariyan race; for the communist revolutions in Russia and China, and for the scientific revolutions of the modern world. All through history, the myth and symbols, inspired people at all levels of civilization (Eliade, 1952:19).

Rituals have been a variable store house of energy for the human beings to draw at will. The annual festivals in the temples, the pilgrimages to the pilgrim centres, undertaken with great painful sacrifice, the Ramzan fast and penance, Friday 'Jumma', the regular attendance of church liturgy, are all feeble expressions of a profound need of humans irrespective of creed and race. As man is a symbolic animal, a myth making animal, he is also a ritual performing animal.

1.1.4. Change of religion of Pulayas of North Malabar

The Pulayas of North Malabar, considered to be one of the lowest untouchables, changed their religion into christianity during late thirties. Myth, Symbols, and rituals, the basic units of religion, that have such decisive influence in shaping the world-view and particular behaviour patterns of the Pulayas have also changed. The resulting transformation of behaviour patterns is an
interesting area for anthropological inquiry particularly since the pulayas are very rich in their religious and artistic traditions.

It is a well-known fact, that tribals in India are progressively inducted into the caste system for religious as well as political reasons. The Pulayas of North Malabar is an example. According to government records they were considered to be tribals until they have been declared officially as caste in 1974 during the time of National Emergency. In their practical life, the Pulayas of North Malabar have already been considered as a caste along with other untouchable communities of the State. Pulayas all over the state are considered to be one of the, perhaps the lowest, untouchable caste in the respective region. Kossambi (1956) names those tribals in transition as Tribe-caste section of the Hindu caste-structure. In this thesis we are treating the Pulayas of North Malabar as a caste group, mainly because the thin layer of distinction between caste and tribe has been dissolved due to their age-long association to and absorption into Hindu caste-structure.

The Pulayas of North Malabar are very rich in their cultural life. It is expressed in their performing art, a form of religious worship, called
theyyam. Theyyam is a form of worship consisting of special combination of rituals and art forms: dance and drama. Manifestations of spirits in subhuman animate and inanimate beings, and legendary figures of great valour, extraordinary powers and endowments, are appeased and honoured. This is done by dressing up in the intended form of their respective effigy (kolam) and performing artistically according to prescribed rites and rituals, developed through folk traditions.

The theyyam celebration has a central place in the life of the Pulayas. They find meaning for their aspirations and hopes, success and failures, sorrows and disappointment, joys and happiness in the theyyam. It is through theyyam that they appease the deity, find material and spiritual gains, face danger of life, bring calamity and destruction on the enemy; in short significant event in the life of a Pulaya is celebrated either with the theyyam dance or in the context of it.

The first group of twelve belonging to such culturally rich caste got baptised by Fr. Peter Caironi in 1938. According to the informants, particularly Mr. Thomas Kapiar, who is the only surviving member of the first twelve who got baptised, Fr. Caironi, an Italian Jesuit priest, was invited by the people to start the Mission. Later,
four other Italians and Indian priests joined him to help out in the expanding Mission. Today there are about twenty thousand pulaya christians in this area, and the mission is known as "Chirakkal Mission".

The christian pulaya's (CP) break with their original culture was total and the separation was ensured under mortal sin. The insulation was so perfect that the present generation of christians know practically nothing about the customs and practices of their hindu ancestors. They are even ashamed of their original culture that they have left behind. The Christian Pulaya have internalized all the prejudices and misunderstandings of the foreign missionaries who had little or no knowledge about the great symbol system that is theyyam.

What the CP got in exchange is the symbol systems of a very conservative type of catholicism. The Vatican, the power-centre of catholicism, being in Italy and so supervised directly by the 'Roman Curia' the Italian catholicism tends to be uncompromisingly conservative, in the sense that it has the least openness toward accepting the meaningful symbols of other cultures. What can be observed in the Chirakal Mission is a 'Little Italy', as far as the christian symbols system is concerned.
Not many symbols have been accepted from the rich complex symbol system of Hindu pulayas. (HP).

1.1.5. Studies on Conversion

There are many studies in the realm of religious conversion. Picket (1933), Pathak (1967), Fidelis De'Sa (1975), C.J.Godwin (1972), K.N.Sahay (1978) are some of them. But so far not many studies viewed things from the perspective of religious symbolic change and its effect on the world view and the behaviour patterns. Sahay's study on the conversions of the tribals is, perhaps, the most significant study in India. He too merely makes a passing reference that Christianity is a carrier of western culture and civilization. He doesn't develop this point and rests content quoting Frazier (1957), Roy (1931), Sanyal (1962) to say that through the change of religion the culture changes and the change of culture results in personality changes. In the conclusion of his study on the tribal Christians of Chotanagapur he says: "With conversion, the old faith in the Sarna religion changed and the new Christian faith was introduced. But a change in religion, the focal aspect of culture meant vast sociological implications which further led to corresponding changes in festivals, village organization, rites-de-passage, social and personal life, dance, dormitory
and sex life, economic round of life and intra-
relations within the tribal community”
(Sahay:1978:479). Sahay stops with this observation.
He has not gone into the reasons for the change of
world-view and the consequent change in the
personality.

1.1.6. The Problem

The central problem for investigation, therefore, is: what happens to a people, of pre-
literate community and to their world-view and
behaviour patterns when its symbolic structure
undergoes a change on account of conversion into a
religion (Christianity) which is considered to be a
carrier of western culture? When a group of pre-
literate people undergoes change into a religion of
western world view (Christianity) why does their
original world-view and behaviour patterns change?
How did they (the community) integrate new symbols of
christian religion in their life and work? In order
to investigate this central problem it is necessary
to inquire into: (1) the uniqueness of the pulaya
religious symbols system, particularly the leading
one, the theyyam; (2) The difference among the
pulaya religious symbol systems and the christian
religious symbol system. Religious symbol systems can
be defined as that religious whole which consists of
the basic religious units such as myth, symbols and
rituals and their interrelations.

In order to throw light on the query, a comparative analysis of the two religious symbol systems (the Hindu and the Christian pulaya) is undertaken. The comparative analysis focuses on: (1) what aspects of religious symbol system underwent changes affecting culture and world view of pulayas; (2) the nature of change of culture and world view (3) its effect on the behaviour patterns of the Christian pulayas as a community.

Another major area of investigation is the motivation for the pulayas to convert themselves to Christianity. Did the religious symbol system provide any impetus for social protest against the oppressive caste-system and later conversion to Christianity? What symbolic energy was generated by the conversion to protest against the oppressive caste system of which they were originally a part?

1.1.7. Justification of the Problem

As we have seen there are several descriptive studies on the effect of conversion on the socio-political-economic life of the people, but so far, there are no studies, which inquire into the effect of change of religious symbol system on the world view and the consequent change in their behaviour.
This is a multi-disciplinary study, which explores the role of religious symbol system in shaping the world view and behaviour patterns in a situation of religious conversion.

So too, there are indeed, many discrptive studies of the religious symbol system, the theyyam dance. Kurup (1973, 1977), Chandore (1978), Raghavan Payyanad (1979), Vishnu Namboodiri (1981, 1983) are some of them. No anthropological analytical study has been undertaken on the symbol system, that is theyyam. Ours is an exploratory basic analysis of the religious symbol system of the pulayas of North Malabar in particular and the hindu and christian symbols in general.

The general impression of the educated hindu is that low caste hindus and tribals change their religious affiliation when enticed by the economic benefits offered by the so called missionary religions. Most of the communal tensions today are fanned by the antagonism arising out of this impression. It will be interesting to discover that at least in some cases, the motivating force is not necessarily economic benefits rather, the sheer social suffocation the untouchables felt within the unjust caste system. This new knowledge may prevail over the hindu religious leaders to look into the caste base of the religious organization over which
they preside.

This growing communalism segregates people to their communal iron cover and they thus become more hostile to one another. The spirit of religious dialogue and the openness to see common ground for cooperation in mutual respect, is diminishing day by day. Our approach to study the different religious symbol system through anthropological methods assumes paramount significance in this special situation of growing communal tensions in the multi-religious context of India.

About fifty years ago Max Weber (1930) said capitalism will not develop in India due to the particular Indian mentality. Weber may have been proved wrong, but his insight is penetrating. The symbol systems have a decisive role in the economic development of a culture and on its modernization. It is important to know in what way Indian religious symbols contributed to the formation of the special Indian mentality.

1.2. THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

1.2.1. Definitions of Concepts

The three main components of the religious symbol systems chosen for comparison are: Religious
rituals, Religious Symbols, Religious Myths and their effect on the world view and behaviour pattern of the people

Religious Rituals

According to the encyclopedia of Religion (1987), "although it would seem to be a simple matter to define ritual, few terms in the study of religion have been explained and applied in more confusing ways."

There are antropologists who defines 'ritual' as "culturally defined sets of behaviour". Edmond Leach (1968:524) According to him, ritual is synonymous with human symbolic behaviour, regardless of its explicit religious, social, or other content. Under the perview of this definition we can discuss the ritual significance of even scientific experiment.

There are others who treat ritual same as religion. Robert Horton (1979) uses ritual to label religion as such, as in "ritual view of life" or "ritual man in Africa". Many modern theories of religion are in fact primarily theories of ritual, and studying the literature on either topic would introduce us to the other.

Another meaning of ritual which is commonly used by psycho-analytic and the like is the nonrational or
formalized symbolic behaviour of any kind (is distinguished and "ritual," as distinct form pragmatic, clearly end-directed behaviour that is rationally linked to empirical goals. Here ritual is contrasted to "science" and even to common sense. Religious rituals are equated with neurotic compulsions and its symbols to psychological complexes or genetically linked archetypes.

There are anthropologists such as Clifford Geertz (1973) and Victor Turner (1977), who are interested in the explicit religious meaning of ritual symbolism, and who point out that ritual acts do endow culturally important cosmological conceptions and values, with persuasive emotive force, thus unifying individual participants into a genuine community. Here ritual assume a definitive meaning and other than "psychological dynamics" or "merely social reference".

Such an approach comes closest to that taken by the scholars in history of religion and phenomenology of religion. According to Mircea Eliade (1961), for example, "ritual arises from and celebrates the encounter with the 'numinous', or 'sacred', the mysterious reality that is always manifested as of wholly different order from ordinary of 'natural' realities. Religious persons seek continual contact with those realities, and to flee or to transform the

Etymologically the word ritual is derived from *ritus* which has the Indo-European root, *Ri*, meaning "flow" or rhythm. Cosmic *Rita* is that which sustains the Universe. It is, therefore natural, that the religious performance that keeps the rhythm of the Universe, is named ritual.

Rituals can be defined as the formalised behaviour patterns, methods of communication, verbal and non-verbal, necessary for the establishment of relations among members of a group or between groups; for, the relations among organisms of any kind are governed to a large extent by the forms of communication, both expected and required. (Paterson, in Amaldoss, 1979:46). According to Nancy Munn (1973):

I define ritual as a generalized medium of social interaction in which the vehicles for constructing messages are iconic symbols (acts, words, or things) that convert the load of significance or complex sociocultural meanings embedded in and generated by the ongoing processes of social existence into a communication currency. In other words, shared socio-cultural meanings constitute the utilities that are symbolically transacted through the medium of ritual action" (Nancy Munn, in Honigmann (ed), 1973:580).
We accept for the formulation of our working definition the insights of Clifford Geertz (19730) that ritual arises from the culturally defined cosmological conceptions and values, and it generates certain emotive forces and thus unifies the celebrating people into a community. We also accept the understanding of Rudolf Otto and Mircea Eliade (1961) that rituals transform the banality of ordinary life supplying "archetypal nostalgias" and Amaldoss (1979), that ritual is a formalized way of communication.

Rituals (working definition)

It can be defined as the formalized behaviour patterns, method of communication verbal and nonverbal, with reference to a transcendant power to create an experience of unity necessary for the sustenance of relations among the members of a religious community and also individual relaxation through community exercise.

Life Ritual

In the religious practices of HP and CP we see two important rituals, the theyyam and the Eucharist respectively. They play a decisive role in their ritual life. We, therefore, name them as life rituals. It can be defined as that ruling ritual on
which hinges all other rituals of the community.

Rite

The rite can be considered a form of symbolic communication. It is a pattern of ceremonial conduct expressing the religious life of communities and establishing a relationship with a reality which transcends deeds and words. The rite has a unifying effect. It counteracts tendencies towards anomie for it creates a 'we' feeling and has the power of identifying the individual with the group (carrier 1960: in Amaldoss 1979:46).

Ceremony

Ceremony is a ritual performance linked with social status.

Religious Symbols

The symbol is spoken of in relation to the sign. Let us, therefore, first define sign. Signs are denotative, they stand for, or point to, a specific object, event or person. There are therefore, a clear means of recognition (Thomas Fawcett, 1970:14). Signs should not be ambiguous in any way. They should indicate precisely and
specifically. In order to achieve this, there should be one-to-one correspondence between the sign and that which is signified.

Signs are not intrinsic symbols, they have to be learned to be read. Signs deal with objects in a precise and specific manner, it is a language of scientific method. Signs do not 'get inside' the objects they signify.

Sign is a product of a group of people who share a common heritage, interest and same world view. Signs are a social phenomenon arising out of the life and work of a society and having validity only within that society (Fawcett, 1970:15).

Etymologically, symbol comes from a Greek word meaning 'to throw together' (sym—together, ballein—to throw). So it carries precisely the meaning which Levi-Strauss tries to convey by the term 'bricolage', something which a handyman 'puts together' (Jyothi Sahi, 1980:18).

The functional meaning of symbol too is derived from Greek, in which it denoted such tallies as the two halves of a broken coin which were exchanged by contracting parties, or any token which established a person's identity such as a soldier's badge or watchword.
"Symbols are not created but born out of life". They do not come into being as a result of man's creative imagination. The symbols of darkness, light and water, for example, were given to man with his existence in the world. Symbols appear to be built into man's experience. As such Man's symbol making capacity is universal, and certain symbols too are universal (Fawcett, 1970:28).

Symbols have a capacity to speak to man of many things. Unlike the one-to-one relation of sign to reality symbols have a one-to-many relationships. True symbols are always capable of new application and evocative of new insights. Water, for example, confronts man in his existence in many different ways.

The significance of a symbol is not unlimited. It has both flexibility and constancy. "The 'multiple signification' is bounded by the natural qualities of the symbol. A symbol operates because it bears a relationship with that symbolized" (Fawcet, 1970:29).

Every symbol opens up levels of reality for which non-symbolic expression is inadequate. The 'opening up' is a two-sided function, namely, reality in deeper levels and the human soul in special levels (Tillich, 1968:57).
Religious symbols do exactly the same, they open up a level of reality, which otherwise is not opened at all. "We can call this the depth dimension of reality itself, the dimension of reality which is the ground of every other dimension and every other depth, and which therefore, is not one level beside the others but is the fundamental level, the level below all other levels, the level of being itself, or the ultimate power of being. Religious symbols open up the experience of the dimension of this depth in the human soul" (Tillich, 1968:59).

Paul Ricoeur (1974) defines symbol as: "any structure of signification of which a direct, primary, literal meaning designates, in addition, another meaning which is indirect, secondary and figurative and which can be apprehended only through the first."

We recognise the close similarity with sign and symbol as pointed out by Thomas Fawcett (1970). We also accept the insight of Paul Tillich (1968) that symbols open up levels of reality. By opening up the depth dimension of reality (the sacred realm) religious symbols unleash a psychic energy which can be used for destructive purpose as well as for positive action for socio-cultural change. Hence our working definition of religious symbol is as follows:
Working Definition of Religious Symbols:

A religious symbol is that which points to something other than itself and participate in that which it points to and which opens up layers of meaning and releasing some form of energy for socio-cultural action.

Religious Myth

The English word myth is from the Greek 'muthos' which just meant a tale, or something one uttered, in a wide range of senses: a statement, a story, the plot of a play. Muthos in its meaning of "myth" is the word for a story concerning gods and superhuman being. "A myth is an expression of the sacred in words: it reports realities and events from the origin of the world that remain valid for the basis and purpose of all there is. Consequently, a myth functions as a model for human activity, society, wisdom and knowledge." (Paul Ricoeur in Encyclopedia of Religion, 1987:Vol.10:261).

Both myth and history are narratives, that is to say, arrangements of events into unified stories, which can be recounted. But myth is thought to be a narrative of origins, that which have taken place in the primodial time, a time other than that of
everyday reality; history is a narrative of recent events, extending to include events that further in the past, but always situated in the human time.

As symbol is in contrast with signs, myth has been treated in relation to history in the past. The assumption was that history refers to incontestable facts, historical means real and therefore true. Myth was supposed to be about the world of fantasy; mythical signifies nonhistoric, thus fantastic, imaginary, unreal. Myth reminds us of fairy tales and legends of heroes. Myth was thought to belong to the world of fantasy and fable whereas historical consciousness belong to the world of reality (DeSa, 1984).

Myth is understood in modern times in terms of world view; myth is the horizon of understanding the world-view. The fundamental direction of experiencing the world belongs to the mythical level. Myth provides us with the ultimate reference point for truths. Myth opens up our own levels of reality supplying us a direction as well as a reference point. "Myth thus serves as the ultimate reference point, the touchstone of truth by which facts are recognized. Myth, when it is believed and lived from inside, does not ask to be plumbed more deeply, i.e., to be transcended in the search for some ulterior ground: it asks only to be made more and more
explicit, for it expresses the very foundation of our conviction of truth" (Panikkar, 1979:88f).

Like symbols, myths reveal the levels of reality for which non-symbolic expression is inadequate. (see chapter V)

From our discussion of various definitions of myth, Paul Ricoeur (1987), Panikkar (1979) three aspects of myth emerge. They are: (1) myths are quasi stories concerning gods, superhuman beings and origins of the world. (2) These are models for human behaviour and also the horizon of understanding world view. (3) Myth opens levels of reality both in the perceiver and perceived. Hence our working definition of myth: It is quasi history which serves as the horizon of perceiving reality as it opens up different levels of reality and functions as models for human behaviour.

Myth, Ritual and Symbol

Myth is one of the three forms of religious expression: Sacred speech (myth), sacred acts (cult rituals) and sacred places and objects (symbols). Myth can be expected to elucidate the entire religious life of a community, shedding light especially on the ritual acts and sacred objects.
Behaviour Patterns

Freud assumes two kinds of psychic energy, Libido and aggression. The source of libido is narcissism and of aggression, Oedipus complex (guilt). Spratt (1966) argues that for the West dominated by the patriarchal system of family, the guilt out of Oedipus complex is very high and the general nature of the personality is characterized by aggressive traits. In the Hindu personality the dominant factor is libido, love for the self, therefore, the inward directed aggression is weak.

"Broadly, as between Hindu and European, these two psychic forces are interchanged. In Europe the punitive (aggressive) personality type is normal, the narcissistic exceptional; in India the narcissistic type is normal, the punitive exceptional." (Bracket mine) (Spratt, 1966:6)

What is said above doesn't mean that the narcissistic type is not inclined to aggression. They can be easily provoked to violence and aggression. "The narcissist, though little inclined to unprovoked aggression, may be provoked to aggression more easily than the punitive...In the home, in business, in sport, in public life, Hindus are conspicuously quarrelsome, and street riots must be more frequent than in any other country. But such violence is
normally unorganized." (Spratt, 1966:52). Speaking about the hindu violence Dhirendra Narain (1957:49) says: "It would appear that of all the Asian peoples, the Hindus are perhaps the least inhibited with regard to aggression". In short, the aggression of the West is more inward directed and permanent in nature. Whereas the aggression of the East is more outward directed and ephemeral in nature.

According to the source of psychic energy and the world view the patterns of behaviour also changes. We accept the definition of Zehner (1959) for world view: the conscious or unconscious underlying assumptions of perceiving realities."

Basically agreeing to the psycho analytic school we hold that the religious symbol system too supplies a psychic energy which defines two world views: East and West and corresponding patterns of behaviour. Eastern religious symbolic system generates psychic energy which is very similar to narcissistic. Eastern Behaviour patterns: can be defined as the cluster of behaviours monitored by Eastern world view for which the psychic energy is derived from Eastern religious symbol system. Similarly for the Western symbolic system generates psychic energy which is similar to punitive. Western behaviour pattern can be defined as the cluster of behaviours for which the psychic energy is derived from Western symbol system. and
Outward aggression can be defined as the aggressive behaviour for which the psychic energy is generated from the status reversal leading to critical consciousness and is ephemeral in nature.

Inward aggression can be defined as the aggressive behaviour for which the psychic energy is generated from 'status affirmation' leading to guilt consciousness and is permanent in nature.

1.3. Theoretical Frame

1.3.1. Religious Rituals

For the comparison of rituals of two communities we take Theyyam, the HP life ritual, and the Eucharist, the CP life ritual. We use the theory of Performance expounded by Victor Turner for the indepth analysis of theyyam as well as the eucharistic rituals.

1.3.1.1. Theory of Performance

Theory of performance (Turner, 1979:62ff) says that as man is a sapient animal, a toolmaking animal, a self making animal, a symbol-using animal, he is, no less, a performing animal, Homo Performans, not in the sense, perhaps, that a circus animal may be a
performing animal, but in the sense that man is a self performing animal, his performances are, in a way, reflexive, in performing he reveals himself to himself. Performance is a unit of social process.

Van Gennep (1960) is the father of processual analysis. He has analysed the society as a "social process". He derived this insight from the cultural custom known as "rite of passage". Victor Turner (1977) agrees with Van Gennep that the entire social system or "field" is an "integral processes".

Social drama is an empirical unit of social process. Victor Turner defines, Social dramas as unit of an harmonic or disharmonic social process, arising in conflict situations. Social dramas have four main phases of public action. These are: (1) breach of regular norm-governed social relations; (2) crisis, during which there is a tendency for the breach to widen; (3) redressive action, ranging from personal advice and informal mediation or arbitration, to formal juridical and legal machiners, and, to resolve certain kinds of crises or legitimate other modes of resolution, to the performance of public ritual; (4) the final phases consist of either the reintegration of the disturbed social group, or of the social recognition and legitimation of the irreparable schism between the contesting parties.
There is a structural relationship between these phases and cognitive (thought) affective (feeling) and connative (will) component of our experience. All the three components will be present at varying degrees at each phase of the social drama.

The basic stuff of social life, the performance (particularly the cultural performance), "the presentation of self in everyday life" which is derived from redressive phase. Self is presented through the performance of roles, through performance that breaks roles, and through declaring to a given public that one has undergone a transformation of state and status, been saved or damned, elevated or released. There are two types of performances: "social" performances (including social dramas) and "cultural" performances (including aesthetic of stage dramas).

The self-revelation in performances can be in two ways: the actor may come to know himself better through acting or enactment; one set of human beings may come to know themselves better through observing or participating in performances generated and presented by another set of human beings.

Public reflexivity essentially takes the form of a performance. The languages through which a group communicates within itself are not, of course,
confined to talking codes: they include gesture, music, dancing, graphic representation, painting, sculpture, and the fashioning of symbolic object.

Social dramas have a "liminal" or "threshold" character, in the sense of manifesting what is hidden. The opaque surface of regular, uneventful social life becomes transparent through social dramas. Performance too is liminal. During the performance anything may take place as it is a time when all norms of day to day life are relaxed. It is a time of enchantment, to shed all inhibitions and controls, to be what the community is, and thus what each person is. Performance is a time when creativity abounds, potentiality escalates for the inhibitions that stifle creativity are kept to a minimum. For the creative cultural change performance is imperative. "Liminality may also be full of experiment and play. There may be a play of ideas, play of words, a play of symbols, a play of metaphors... One might say, without too much exaggeration, the liminal phenomena are at the level of culture what variability is at the level of nature" Turner (1977:90).

In every major social formation there is a dominant mode of public liminality. In simpler societies it will be the sacred or ritual performance, in other complex societies, the carnival or festival, and in advanced societies, the film.
The ritual performances of simple societies can be classified into two: Life-crisis rituals and calendrical rituals. These two rituals are liminal in nature, as are all other performances. The life-crisis rituals are characterized as rituals of status elevation, in which the ritual subject or novice is being converted irreversibly from a lower to a higher position in an institutionalized system of such positions. Calendrical rituals, usually of a collective kind, in which, at certain culturally defined points in the seasonal cycle, groups or a categories of persons who habitually occupy low status positions in the social structure are positively enjoined to exercise ritual authority over their superiors; and they, in their turn, must accept with good will their ritual degradation. Such rituals are described as rituals of status reversal. They are often accompanied by robust verbal and nonverbal behaviour, in which inferiors revile and even physically maltreat superiors (Turner, 1977:167).

Other Important Studies on Rituals

We are aware of anthropological giants who have dealt with symbol systems of various cultures. To name some of them Marcel Mauss (1956), Robertson Smith

The studies of Mary Douglas are more or less in the same vein as that of our investigation. Her book Natural Symbols is particularly close to our study. Summarizing the purpose of the book she says; "This present book is an essay in applying Bernstein's approach to the analysis of ritual. It will help us to understand religious behavior if we can treat ritual forms, like speech forms, as transmitters of culture, which are generated in social relations and which, by their selections and emphasis, exercise a constraining effect on social behavior" (Douglas, 1978:42). In her study of rituals the main concern is, "that perception of symbols in general, as well as their interpretations is socially determinant" (p.27-28). She proceeds to illustrate this point through comparison of primitive religions from the ethnographic reports and christianity of her own social system (p:30-35).

Though there are seeming similarities, our investigation differs in three areas: (1) Ours is a study of a single caste (2) It is the study of a single caste at two periods of time when they changed
their religion from caste to Christianity, (3) the
Christianity of our investigation in this case is
very unique in the sense that its symbol system did
not emerge from its social structure but was
imported and controlled from outside. In fact, our
investigation implicitly questions the basic
assumption of Mary Douglas.

1.3.1.2. Application of Theory of Performance to HP
and CP Rituals

This is a calendrical ritual. Its annual
celebration is determined by lunar calculations.
Theyyam is celebrated in the life crisis rituals and
as an offering. All the theyyam, celebrations in
general practice the specific characteristics of
ritual celebration known as ritual status reversal.
The potten, the unique theyyam of pulayas, displays
the highest degree of status reversal by the
manhandling of the authority and using the most
repugnant and abusive language.

It is thought, that the ritual of status
reversal is a psychological mechanism to air the
pent-up unconscious resentment towards the
oppressors. Simple society has found its ways
keeping its social hygiene, and in the process it
produces a kind of energy to protest against the
unjust structure. Our field experience shows that the
ritual of *status reversal* is a two-edged sword. While it reaffirms the social structure it also generates a symbolic energy by creating a critical consciousness to protest against the very social system.

Critical consciousness can be defined as the consciousness that always looks into the causes of events and actions by raising the why question. Social protest can be defined as that action of a person or a group against an injustice social or personal, the psychic energy for which is derived from the critical consciousness, in the sense of becoming aware of the causes of social injustices, through various means: intellectual clarity, direct experience, legislation; and ritual celebration particularly in the case of simple people.

The mode of communication in *theyyam* is mainly nonverbal. Except for the chanting and singing the only verbal communication is the sporadic utterances of blessings by the *theyyam*.

*Theyyam* rituals as well as the organization of the whole celebration is very fluid. The celebrant of highest authority is the eldest of the clan; his memory is the 'final word'. It can fade according to age, thus the ritual celebration provides itself some amount of dynamism. One can notice variations in different celebrations of the same *theyyam*. Within
the ritual structure of the same celebration there is lot of room for variation and change

In sharp contrast to the theyyam ceremony, the ritual celebration of the Eucharist which is the life symbol of CP is an everyday celebration. Sunday celebration is obligatory for all the members. Parallel to the status reversal, the symbolic system of Eucharist is an exercise in status affirmation. Status affirmation can be defined as the religious symbol system which is prescribed by the priestly authorities and imposed on the believers in the name of God and through the exercise of which the latter is made to feel that they are inferior to the former and submit to their authority by creating guilt for being non-priestly. It is basically a symbol system for submission of participants. Moreover it builds up tension within the individual, by creating sense of guilt for sin and submission to the will of God.

The mode of communication is mainly oral, rhythmic movements being minimum. Mostly the priest uses symbolic gestures, and the participants are reduced to the level of onlookers.

The Eucharist is a very short ceremony designed to suit the hurry of a fast moving society. It is a highly organized ritual system celebrated according to rigidly adhered to rules laid down by the
religious authorities. The symbol system, therefore, is very static and frozen.

1.3.2. Archetypal Analysis of HP and CP Religious Symbols

HP symbols are analysed in comparison to CP symbols. We have attempted a two tier analysis of the theyyam symbols. First, the religious archetypes both in hindu and christian symbols are subjected to analysis at two levels. The HP symbols are enumerated with special emphasis to theyyam and the christian symbols of CP. Archetypes here has the Jungian sense: all human beings possess similar inborn tendencies to form certain general symbols, and that these symbols manifest themselves through the unconscious mind in myths, dreams, delusions and folklore. Jung has substantiated his theory by adducing evidences of general symbols of wise old man, earth-mother, divine child, the self, god, the sun, the animus and anima (idea of man in a woman and vice versa), the number four, the cross, the mandala, the tree, the heroes and many others. These occur as a matter of experience constantly in myths and dreams, and therefore must have some general collective origin.
In the first level of archetypal analysis, the field data shows that HP use spontaneously archetypal symbols which are ecological in nature in its wider sense. Does their oneness with nature in symbol and life have an effect in their behaviour pattern?

Ecology is understood here in two ways: Scientific ecology and metaphysical ecology. Scientific ecology is a branch of biology concerned with the interactions among organisms and between organisms and their environment. Metaphysical ecology is a way of approach.

On the other, ecology can be regarded as a method of approaching problems, and as supplying a metaphysics that applies to far more than living systems. In this sense, ecology has application to academic disciplines and even to political and moral matters... we can label this non-biological notion of ecology metaphysical ecology and contrast with scientific ecology" (Andrew Breman, 1988:31)

We take ecology in its metaphysical sense in our archetypal analysis on the pulaya symbol system. From the field data it is clear that pulayas show great eco-sense and it permeates their entire life including the spirit world. Does the metaphysical sense of ecology (cosmic world-view) of pulayas have any effect on their behaviour pattern? (VII)

In the second level of archetypal analysis, theyyas is treated as a mandala symbolism, particularly in the context of Jungian finding that
mandala as an archetype of individuation. Individuation can be defined as the process of realization of the desired end of an organism. Mandala in the broad sense can be defined as any spiral or circular patterns which have an assumed centre, such as a curve, a disc, a globe, ball, wheel, a circular array of troops, a district or a province. An investigation is undertaken with a view to find out the effect of participation in theyyam celebration on the behaviour pattern of the HP. (VIII)

In the second tier, the theyyam symbols are subjected to a comparative analysis in the context of East and West world-view. By East we mean the religions which either owes its origin to India or are profoundly influenced by Indian religions. The Eastern symbols include the symbols of HP, symbols of other theyyam performing sects, folk symbols and the symbols of Hindu high tradition. Under the Western symbols, the symbols of CP and the symbols of Christianity in general. The field data shows that the East is more feminine and West, more masculine. Naturally, then, the HP is distinguished by Eastern patterns of behaviour and the CP, by the Western behaviour patterns. (IX)

Psycho analytic schools have come to the
conclusion that the East is more passive whereas the West is more aggressive (Spratt, 1966).

1.3.3. Structural Analysis of the myths

In the realm of myth, our comparison is mainly between theyyam myths and Christian myths. The theyyam myths are enumerated and subjected to critical structural analysis. Christianity lacks myth in the real sense, it has only historicised myths (Watts, 1968; 66-67). Does this different understanding of myth by HP and CP have any effect on their behaviour patterns?

Our purpose is not to prove any hypothesis but to propose the following: The symbol systems of East and West espouse two different worldviews: East and West. The East is more imaginative, unitive, cosmic, mythic, intuitive, feminine and outwardly aggressive, whereas the West is more rational, dualistic, personal, historic, discursive, masculine and inwardly aggressive. The persons and community who follow Eastern symbol system tend to show behaviour patterns defined by outward aggression and those who follow Western symbol system show behaviour patterns defined by inward aggression. As a particular case HP will show outward aggression and CP, inward aggression.
The Specific Hypotheses are:

1. The cultures and persons that practice ritual of status reversal in their ritual celebrations will promote critical consciousness leading to social protest than those whose rituals celebration is of the nature of status affirmation, which promotes guilt and resentment towards authority. (IV)

2. The symbolic energy derived from status reversal leads to social protest, through critical consciousness. (VI)

3. The persons and culture that follow basically spiral designs (madala patterns) develop, feminine, intuitive characteristics as against the persons who follow linear designs (cross) who develop masculine rational characteristics.

4. The culture that follows models derived from myths, create mythic, cosmic, unitive patterns of behaviour; whereas the culture with historicized myths create scientific, rational, dualistic patterns of behaviour.

1.4. METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Our approach to the problems is
multidisciplinary and comparative. The symbol system of a simple primitive culture (HP) is compared to those of the complex culture of (CP), the Christianity. To facilitate a simultaneous comparison of the symbolic genres of simple culture with complex culture, the approach of comparative symbology, proposed by Victor Turner (1979), is employed, as a general approach. Three other approaches: Psychological, History of religion, Historical Structural approach, are used within the general frame of comparative symbology to ensure indepth analysis of symbols and myths.

Our fundamental assumption of symbol system is Philosophico-Anthropological. The proponents of philosophico-anthropological approach say, "Man, as an embodied spirit, cannot live as man, learn, act express himself communicate with other, except through symbols. His own body is the primordial symbol. Thus whatever he does becomes symbolic (Amaladoss, 1979: 47).

Most of the classical anthropologists would say, "Religion is the form of culture"; whereas modern anthropologist like Clifford Geertz (1973) Victor Turner (1967), Paul Tillich (1968) would hold: "The form of religion is culture". We tend to agree with the latter for our study on religious symbol system.
1.4.1. Comparative Symbology

Comparative symbology briefly means the comparative study of symbols of primitive and complex societies. It is, therefore, narrower in scope than semiotics and wider than symbolic Anthropology. Semiotics is the study of signs in language and semiology is the study of signs in general. Symbolic anthropology takes into account only ethnographic materials; whereas comparative symbology includes symbolic genres of so-called "advanced" civilizations, the complex large-scale industrial societies. The concern of comparative symbology is the relationship between symbols and concepts, feeling, values, notions associated with them by users, and interpreters. Its data are mainly, activities combining verbal and nonverbal symbolic actions, such as ritual and drama (cultural genres), as well as, myth, epic, ballad, the novels and ideological system (narrative genres). They also include nonverbal forms, such as miming, sculpture, painting, music, ballet, architecture.

If these are the data of comparative symbology how is it different from semiology? The distinguishing element of comparative symbology is its emphasis on the diachronic, interpretative aspect of the investigation. In other words, the role of
of the investigation. In other words, the role of the verbal and nonverbal form of cultural and narrative genres in the social process. Ritual performance, for example, forms a distinct phase in the social processes whereby groups become adjusted to internal changes; and ritual symbols become a factor in social action, a positive force in action for change.

In comparative symbology, symbols acquire a special meaning in the sense that symbols as a social and cultural dynamic system shedding and gathering meaning over time, and altering in form; they are not isolated entities untouched by the time factor. Along with symbols, specialized elements of complex societies such as philosophical, theological, and formal logical systems are also taken care of.

In sum Comparative symbology is the study of the expressive genres of simple and complex societies, taking into account their influence on the social process in the movement of time.

Comparative symbology justifies our inquiry by providing a method to conduct a comparative study of the symbol systems of simple and complex cultures at the same time. Secondly, the insight that rituals of a complex society can become atemporal, logical, rigidified and frozen with little or no relation to
the cultural process, helps us for the analysis of Christian pulaya symbols as well as Hindu pulaya symbol. It does not provide us with a comprehensive analytical tool to inquire into the complex structure of symbol system. Thus our total frame of approach is comparative symbology, within which we have to take recourse to other methods to look at the symbol systems from different angles, and they unveil the interrelations of different components and their functions, in maintaining the social structure and cultural process.

1.4.2. Psychological Approach

The next approach to inquire into the symbol systems of HP & CP is the psychological approach. For the depth psychologists the unconscious is the source of all dreams, symbols and myths. "From a certain point of view, we may say that the first systematic analysis and exegesis of these "alien" worlds, of the unconscious from which the symbols and the myths arise, were effected by Freud" (M. Eliade, 1960:11). For Freud the nature of symbol was always sexual. "Freud saw all symbols, whether in dreams, myths, or art, as primarily sexual in nature, and also as being a generalised expression of a particular object. Caves, pits, bottles, chest, and similar objects were said to represent the female"
organs (e.g. the chest of Deucalion in the Greek myth), water to represent the process of birth (e.g. Moses found amongst the bulrushes of the Nile), pencils, umbrellas, swords and other pointed objects represent the male organs, while queens, kings and other figures of authority represent the mother and father figures (J.A.C. Brown, 1979:44).

In the psychology of Jung, C.G., the personal unconscious (in the Freudian sense) is only a relatively insignificant fraction of the total marks of unconscious material. That which lies below the personal unconscious is known as collective or racial unconscious, since it contains the collective beliefs and myths of the race to which the individual belongs. The deepest levels of the collective unconscious are the universal unconscious common to the whole of humankind, and even it would appear, to man's primate and animal ancestry. According to Jung, behind every particular symbol there lies an archetypal symbol. He moves from a particular to the generalized idea of symbol as against the theory of Freud. "Behind the particularised mother's womb lies the archetypal womb of the Great Mother of all living; behind the physical father the archetypal father, behind the child the "puer aeternus"; behind the particular manifestation of the procreative sexual libido lies the universal creative and
recreative Spirit" (Brown, 1979:44).

In our study we make extensive use of the idea of archetype and the unconscious, the insights of Jung and Freud. The complex configurations of religious symbols are separated into archetypal units employing a psychological approach. The correlation between the behaviour pattern and the symbol system have already been established by the very definition of behaviour pattern. Our effort here is to show the link between the archetypal symbols and the behaviour pattern. The correlation between the behaviour pattern and theyyam and mandala, and the consequent effect on the participants towards individuation are totally derived from the theory of collective Unconscious and the Archetype. In defining the religious archetypes too, we have drawn heavily from the Jungian insight of Archetypal symbolism. In short, for the interpretation of the theyyam symbols and to establish their integral relation to behaviour pattern we depend almost totally on Jungian insights.

1.4.3. History of Religion Approach

A well-known approach to the study of the religious symbol is that of the History of Religions. Its most eminent representative is Mircea Eliade. History of religions is the English equivalent of
Religious-wissenschaft, which is not easily translated into English. In the broadest sense of the term it includes not only history but also the comparative study of religions and religious morphology and phenomenology (Mircea Eliade, 1969:1, foot note.1). One generally understand history of religions or comparative religions, to mean the integral study of the religious realities, that is to say, the historical manifestations of a particular type of "religion" (tribal, ethnic, supernatural) as well as the specific structures of the religious life (divine forms, conceptions of the soul, myths, rituals, institutions; typology of religious experiences). These preliminary precisions are not at all intended to circumscribe the field or to define the methods of the history of religions.

The word "history" sometimes leads to confusion, for it can equally well mean historiography (the act of writing the history of something) and simply "what has happened" in the world in writing the history of a religious phenomenon (sacrifice among the Semitics) we are not able to show everything in a chronological perspective of order. The special task of history of religion is to study the religious facts as such, that is, on their specific plane of manifestation.

What distinguishes the historian of religions
from the historian as such is that he is dealing with facts which, although historical, reveal a behaviour that goes far beyond the historical involvements of human beings. Man in his totality is aware of other situations over and above his historical condition; for example, he knows the state of dreaming, or of melancholy, or of aesthetic bliss, or of escape, etc, and none of these states is directly historical, although they are as authentic and as important for human existence as man's historical existence is (Eliade, 1961: 33)

History of religion is different from historical ethnology. Historical ethnology may demonstrate the relation of one symbol to certain cultural cycles, or cultural complex; yet its objective is not to reveal the deeper meaning of all these religious phenomena, or to illuminate their meaning, and to place them in the general history of religions. In the last analysis, it is the role of the historian of religions to synthesize all the studies of particular aspects of symbols, and present a comprehensive view which shall be at once, a morphology and history of this symbolic phenomenon. In short, the mission of the history of religions is to integrate the results of ethnology, psychology and sociology (Eliade, 1951: XIII).

Through the psychological approach we have come
to know that there are archetypes, and more specifically religious archetypes, in the human collective unconscious. It is the history of religions approach that helped us indentify the religious archetypes in HP and CP religions. As any religious symbol system there are a conglomeration of religious symbolic morphemes. Morphemes, in the sense as the basic unit of the religious symbolic morphology. It is these morphemes that are common to HP and CP religions, which we compare in our study. We, then, generalize these comparison for the East and West symbolisms.

1.4.4. Historical Structural Approach

Ferdinand, de Saussure, the father of modern linguistics described semiology as a science which studies the life of signs in the heart of social life. It described what the signs consist of and the laws that govern them. Language, for example, is such a system of signs expressive of ideas (Amaladoss, 1979 : 38).

The structural analysis of myths by Levi-Strauss (1968) is a successful application of semiological insights to myths. Structural analysis of myths can be described as a particular case of semiology in
anthropology.

Myth is one of the four modes of communications. The others are: economic exchanges, kinship exchanges, by means of women and languages, together with its music and rhythmical sounds. Just as the elements of language—sound or phonemes—are meaningless in isolation, the elements of myth—the individual narrative, the persons or objects—are meaningless in themselves, and only take on significance through their relation with each other. But it is not the formation of mere narrative as such that is significant, rather it is the underlying structure of a language that gives it significance as a means of communication. "The variant versions of a myth may show changes in the surface meaning but the structure and basic relationships will often remain constant...Yet this significant structure is usually, in tribal societies at least, an unconscious one which does not prevent it from reflecting popular preoccupations with social or seasonal contradictions" (Kirk, 1971:42-43).

Levi-Strauss maintains that the content of the myth is irrelevant. Within a myth, a structure can reveal itself at different levels, or by means of different codes.

The central characteristics of all myths is the
mediation between two polar extremes. Polar extremes means briefly that the human brain has two hemisphere: right and left. The functions of right hemisphere are more imaginative in nature, whereas the left, more rational. Thus we get the binary oppositions or polar extremes such as male and female, raw and the cooked, linear and spiral etc. The functions of the myths, Levi-Strauss holds, are to solve the problems created by the binary oppositions which is man's very essence. "Mythical thought always progress form the awareness of opposition towards resolution" (Kirk, 1971:44)

Mary Douglas (in Leach (ed), 1967). Kirk (1971), Runciman (1969) and Paul Ricour (1963) and some others have difficulty in accepting the claims of Levi-Straussian approach in toto.

Their main objections are: (1) If the myth-language analogy is valid, then myth, like language, will convey messages distinct from their own structure (2) All myths cannot be reduced to the algebrical formula which he has proposed (3) Levi-Strauss repudiates the approach of Durkheim, by which myths reflect the collective 'representations' or ideas, of the social groups, but strangely enough he keeps finding that the message conveyed by the myths embodies the concerns and the difficulties of social
or economic life (Kirk, 1971, 43-46). (4) He exaggerates the binary analysis and proposes that, as the only mode of analysing myth and (5) Levi-Strauss's idea that all myths mediate contradiction has been disproved (Kirk, 1971: 79f).

We have named it the historical structural method, because, the myth contains not only the structure of human mind but it reflects the social situations at different periods of time, enshrining thereby the history of the people.

1.5. METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

A basic explanatory, comparative inquiry requires indepth treatment of the variables, and accordingly we have chosen (1) observation and (2) Interview as the methods of data collection.

1.5.1. Observation:

Both symbol systems have been subjected to three years observation in three terms of six months duration. Every year the festival season of the hindu pulayas last six months starting from november of every year. What is observed mainly is the theyyam celebrations of the hindu pulayas and the religious ceremonies of the christian pulayas. And also their life cycle ceremonies which are mostly
We have employed both participant and non-participant observational techniques for the data collection. The observer dressed like one of the crowd, ate and slept on the dusty floor like the people and thus tried to experience fully the process through which a participant in the village theyyam festival go through. In certain situations, to test the response of the people to a stranger, the observer revealed his identity as a research student and observed the festival as an honoured guest of the organizers. The response of the crowd was quite positive all the time barring one or two incidents where the observer was accused of collecting material to be sold to the foriegners to make money. All observations are done in uncontrolled natural settings.

1.5.2. Interview

The researcher depended very much on non-directive interviews for collection of data especially of the past. With the independence of the country and the consequent abolition of untouchability, a swift change in the social structure of the pulaya community has taken place, catalysed by the threat of conversion to the
Christianity. This has the necessary consequence on the theyyam celebration too. In depth interview of the older people was the only means to get to the idea of the social structure and cultural system of the people at the time of conversion into the christian religion. The researcher was lucky enough to interview the only surviving member of the first twelve who got baptised and became christians in 1938.

The data was recorded by writing down what has been observed then and there, and also taking down the interview responses. The simple people by and large felt happy when I recorded what they have spoken. To record some of the theyyam song, a tape recorder was used. Photography was extensively used in recording the theyyam dance, despite occasional resentment from the crowd.

The observer was also lucky to get a place to stay in the very place where the first conversions took place fifty years ago. This facilitated the contact of important persons easily, and so the people were very cooperative.

1.5.2.1. Purposive Selection of the Informants:

The selection of the informants were mostly done with the theyyam dance in mind. The
knowledgeable people who can speak and communicate, happened to be associated with theyyam dance and ritual. When efforts were made to contact other people they shied off, suggesting the name of either the tantrī or the kolakaran (the theyyam dancer). As the study involved the symbol systems of fifty years ago, there was also a natural elimination of the younger persons in favour of the old and the experienced.

In contacting the right persons of the area, it took almost an year to come to know the people who can speak with certain authority on matters like theyyam and other rituals and customs.

1.5.3. Analysis of Data

The data was analysed under the three aspects of the symbol system: rituals, symbols and myths. Each of these elements are subjected to three different types of theoretical treatments. Keeping ritual the element that threads them all together. The ritual is analysed using the theory of performance in two chapters. The "collective unconscious" and the archetype proposed by Jung is employed first, to analyse the symbols themselves and secondly to establish the close relation between symbol system and the behaviour patterns; and it is done in three chapters. The analysis of myths are undertaken in
1.5.4. Reporting

The reporting is mainly descriptive in style, supported by photographs and a few charts sketches and maps. As it is a study of an ancient, well-established subculture and a local specialized art form, the greatest difficulty in reporting was finding English equivalents for many of the vernacular terms. The Malayalam terms are so numerous in the reporting that we have added a glossary at the end of the thesis. As any ethnographic study tends to be, the volume of materials to be condensed in a thesis was so much that for the sake of brevity, we have had to sacrifice many details.

1.5.5. Organisation of the Thesis

Chapter - I is the introductory chapter mainly consists of four parts - formulation of problem, theoretical framework, approaches and methods of data collection.

Chapter - II is a short narration of the ethnography of the HP and CP.

Chapter - III is a description of the pulaya theyyam symbols. A detailed description of different theyyam
makeup is undertaken from head to foot with special emphasis to the head and facial make-ups.

In Chapter IV theyyam rituals are analysed using the theory of performance expounded by Victor Turner.

Chapter V is an investigation of theyyam rituals and myths as an expression of social protest.

Chapter VI is an analysis of pulaya conversion as a protest movement and the resultant new challenges of CP.

In Chapter VII is an archetypal analysis of HP and CP symbol systems are undertaken.

Chapter VIII analysis theyyam symbols in the light of mandala symbolism and its effect on the behaviour pattern.

Chapter IX deals with the effect of symbols on the world-view and thus on the behaviour pattern of HP and CP.

Chapter X is the concluding chapter. Foot-notes, glossary and bibliography follows the concluding chapter.