Introduction

The present is an age of decolonization. Thinkers and writers of the erstwhile colonies of European nations are trying their best to root out the last remnants of the imprints of years of subservient and subordinate positions and postings. The attempts at decolonization were started during the years of freedom struggle, organized and commenced by the peoples of different colonies. It was a question of possession--possessing the power to rule their nations by themselves. In other words, the freedom struggles were primarily meant for attaining political freedom. After attaining such a freedom, they have found that they are not completely free. The already-penetrated roots of coloniality and their influence and dominance upon the psyches of the peoples of former colonies are very strong and deep. The alterations and distortions effected by the dominant European powers have been now recognised through a series of deep and wide-ranging analyses and studies. Though the colonial rulers are physically absent in the new republics, their "spiritual" presence can be felt. The peoples of the former colonies have internalised most of the ideas and ideals propounded and propagated by the colonisers. The awareness of the ideology of colonialism is a post-colonial phenomenon. Ideology is something that cannot be understood and distinguished very easily. It is there in the air one breathes, so to speak. It is manifested in clothes, food and shelter. The language one speaks is full of the impresses of the dominant ideology. Two of
the definitions of ideology in Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary are a) "a systematic body of concepts esp. about human life or culture," and b) "a manner or the content of thinking characteristic of an individual, group, or culture." The ideology of the people of the hunting and food-gathering period is different from that of agriculture. The concepts and contents or the integrated assumptions and values of a matriarchal society are broken and displaced by those of a patriarchal one, when the latter tramples upon the former. The relatively powerless and "inferior" in every society are constrained to internalise the "logic" and "rationality," "truth" and "justice," and "goodness" and "beauty" of the discourses emanating from the centres of the dominant and "superior." Those who inculcate a particular ideology into the minds and lives of others may not be consciously aware that they are the flag-bearers of certain ideals and ideas which are foreign to the "other." The colonised people, that is, the "other," identify the ramifications of the alien ideology only later. The search for one’s national or native ethos or self-identity, initiated as part of the nationalist project, culminates in distinguishing the native and the foreign, the central and the marginal, the dominant and the other. The search for national identity results in the projection, foregrounding and privileging of alter/native figures and figurations. W. B. Yeats’s works give examples of such figures in the form of characters drawn from Irish native legends and myths. The dethroned deities like the Sidhe and the dispossessed queens like Cathleen are posted as part of an
alternative discourse to their counterparts in the dominant European imperialist discourse. Similarly the subaltern peasants and labourers like Koman and Raman and the dispossessed deities like Pootam and Kali in Edasseri Govindan Nair's works are a foil to the dominant Hindu discourse in Kerala.

The presentation and picturing of subalterns and the dispossessed can be seen as an outcome of the writers' consciousness that their motherlands have been occupying a victim or scapegoat position in relation to the dominant countries. Bernard Shaw has indicated the scapegoat position of Ireland thus:

Christian Europe never does anything that Christ told it to do; never concerns itself about Christ's teaching. It is enormously interested in Christ because of the fact that he was put to a very cruel death. He was crucified. Ireland has been crucified for centuries. (216)

Such a note forces one to think and discuss the various aspects of scapegoats in general and those aspects in relation to colonialism in particular. The concept of the scapegoat, in various fields and walks of life, has undergone transformation in course of time. The scapegoat is the most crucial part of the institution of sacrifice. As sacrificial and scapegoat rituals are usually referred to and understood in religious contexts the different implications of such ceremonies are to be discussed. Frazer has analysed the universal and anthropological aspects of
sacrifice and the scapegoat. *The Golden Bough's* sixth volume is exclusively devoted to a discussion of human and animal scapegoats in ancient Greece, Rome and other places. Sigmund Freud's analysis of totem and taboo relates sacrifice with the murder of the Primal Father and the ritual mechanism of the members of the community to wash away their sins. Murder is sin, but collective murder is a ritual act and is sinless. The ritual killing or sacrifice of the Father or his surrogate totem is followed by the ritual sharing or eating. Every member of the community partakes in the feast. The origin of the sacred communal feast is connected with sacrifice. Collective killing and communal feasting turn or transform the violent and sinful act of murder into a sacred affair or ritual, hence sinless. The Eucharist ceremony of Christianity and the communal sharing of what is at first offered to gods in various religious worships are metonymical or metaphorical transformations or translations of communal feast. Pondering over matriarchal societies, where the post of Primal Father is occupied by Primal Mother, one can see that the basic teleological assumption is fertility and the continuity of life. Freud's analysis of the Primal Father and His murder by the male members of the community highlights the problem of power struggle. The male members of the community who are jealous of the power and prestige possessed by the tribal leader or the Father plot His murder. Such an explanation, however, does not suit the Primal Mother and the sacrificial rituals associated with Her. She is the microcosom of the universe. She is generous as well as cruel. She is bountiful as
well as demanding. The bountiful aspects of the Universal Goddess are reflected in Countess Cathleen who appears as a charity woman and in Kali in "Kavile Pattu" who wounds her own head to draw blood and wash away the sins of mankind. The manifestation of the Universal Mother demanding sacrifices from Her subjects is seen in *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, Kali in "Kavile Pattu" [*Song in the Woods*], the Queens in *A Full Moon in March* and *The King of the Great Clock Tower*. The discussion of the female-deities who demand and receive blood-immolations from male-victims brings out a contrast between the two writers in terms of the thematic structure of their works. Edasseri’s "Kavile Pattu" [*Song in the Woods*] and "Poota Pattu" [*The Song of the Pootam*] delineate the diachronic and dual aspects of mother goddesses in the same works. The chorus in "Kavile Pattu" say that the mother goddess was used to cut the throats of thousands and drink their blood. The same goddess has become kind and considerate. Instead of wounding others, she resorts to self-laceration. She is presented as the sacrificer and the sacrificed. "Poota Pattu" also alludes to the past when the Pootam drank the blood of young men. But now she does not trouble any one. Yeats’s treatment of the same theme is different. The diachronic aspects of female deities are expressed in different works. The queens in *A Full Moon in March* and *The King of the Great Clock Tower* behead their suitors. The self-lacerating lady is seen in "Her Vision in the Wood." Both Yeats and Edasseri present identical patterns of motherland/martyr theme in their works which are imbued with the spirit of
nationalism and liberation movement. The presentation of the diachronic or dual aspects of female deities contains factors relating to female/male power struggle. As the resistance to foreign domination revived the mother/martyr theme, the revision or re-reading of myths, legends and works reveals the remnants and fossils of female/male power struggle. As the motherland/martyr theme is connected to territorial and political colonisation, male-heroes and female-scapegoats are related to ideological and social colonisation. Treating the "newly discovered" "dark" continents like Asia, Africa and the outskirts of Europe as the "other," European imperialist nations effected colonisation. Areas and spaces occupied by females were encroached upon by males and the "other sex" has been subordinated in all walks of life. The dominant male community finds and uses the females as convenient scapegoats. The dominant redirect their unsatiated violence and anger towards the other. Ideologies are framed, discourses formulated and signs generated accordingly. Rituals are reorganised with their patterns reversed when the societal structure changes from matriarchy to patriarchy. Regarding the origin of the custom of widow-burning or sati, Kosambi remarks that it developed from the suppression of matriarchal tradition as a warning or precaution against its surreptitious revival (80). The matriarchal practice of ritually sacrificing the male consort by the chief priestess or queen is inverted in sati. The sati custom is "a curious inversion of the older sacrifice" (80).

The present study is a re-reading or re-vision of the works
of Yeats and Edasseri, foregrounding the motif of sacrifice. Certain unanswered questions or unsolved problems in relation to victimisation are sought to be analysed here. The change wrought in Kali of "Kavile Pattu" is an instance. The socio-cultural reasons for the change—a cruel deity turning into a kind one—are discussed. The marginalisation of females and the peoples who worship mother goddesses is read as the basis of Kali's change. Terms like "love," "affection," "sin," "shame," "luck" and "truth" are placed in socio-cultural contexts. They are separated from the contexts in which the dominant have hitherto placed them. Such terms have been given a quasi-religious halo to mask their ideological teleology. The self-laceration resorted to by Kali in "Kavile Pattu" has been hitherto explained away as the mechanism of a mother or mother goddess to expiate the sins of her children or subjects. The universal existence of motherhood as biologically a sacrificial institution need not perhaps be questioned. But other factors should also be taken into consideration. Edasseri himself, along with two of his prominent critics, M. Leelavathy and P. Narayana Kurup, explicates the change in Kali as a positive evolution from cruelty to kindness. The change is likened to the sacrifice of Christ. But the poet's explication and those by the critics remain limited and thus unsatisfactory. The contradictions contained in the poem are pointed out by Thayattu Sankaran ("Edasseri Kanda" 88), though he does not provide a full-fledged socio-cultural analysis. According to him, the presentation of the goddess is not convincing (88). The picture of the cruel
deity bathed in blood wearing pendants of skulls evokes disgust. The same poem presents, in another part, a kind and considerate goddess who inflicts wounds upon her own body for the sake of her subjects. Such contradictory pictures mar the artistic effect, atmosphere, sentiment or mood of the poem (88). Comparing Edasseri's poem with George Herbert's "Sacrifice," the contradictions can be cleared. In the poem, according to Empson, Christ is at the same time a saviour who saves sinners from damnation, and a scapegoat who offers himself as sacrifice for expiating the sins of others. The problem in "Kavile Pattu" raises a series of questions related to the female/male power struggle, the entrance and appearance of male-heroes, the marginalisation of females, the re-appearance of mother-goddesses during the period of liberation struggle, and the post-modern or post-colonial reading of female subalternity.

The explanations given to the terms such as "sin," "shame" and "luck" in the dominant discourse are ideological and/or idealistic in the sense that they are silent regarding the socio-cultural origin of the customs which wash away sins, send away shame and bring luck. The practice of giving donations to discarded deities like the Pootam and dethroned queens like Cathleen ni Houlihan has clear socio-cultural or historical sources as origin. Donation is evidently related to sacrifice as its practice involves incurring a loss, and it is a metaphorical and metonymical transformation of ritual sacrifice. At the same time, the theme of donation in Cathleen ni Houlihan
and "Poota Pattu" is also related to the socio-cultural effects of colonisation. Another term used by the dominant for hiding socio-cultural facts is "spiritual." Norman Jeaffres and Knowland in their commentary on the collected plays of Yeats ascribe "spiritual poverty" (CCP 7) to the Irish. Countess Cathleen selling her soul is said to be the manifestation of Ireland's spiritual dearth. Famine being a significant part of the deep racial memory of the materially backward Ireland, such a phrase betrays imperial Britain's habit of turning a weak nation into a scapegoat. The appearance of the Countess as a charitable mother goddess has firm psychological and socio-economic grounds. A parallel may be cited, as interpreted by David Kinsley, from Indian legends regarding Maha Devi, the Great Mother Goddess. Irish oral tradition regarding the Famine also supplies firm grounds for the appearance of charity woman. The dominant discourse invariably remains silent on such historical facts or materialistic possibilities. Readings foregrounding material factors underline the moral responsibility of imperial European nations in making Ireland a poverty-stricken one. A subtle working of dominant ideology can be seen in the organisation of sacrificial rituals in Edasseri's poems "Bimbisarente Edayan" [The Goatherd of King Bimbisaren] and "Panimutakkam" [The Strike]. King Bimbisaran organises a ritual in which a number of goats will be immolated. The innocent, silent and weak goats are said to be "sinful." In fact, it is the King who is sinful. The sins of the King are transferred to the goats who are surrogate victims. The interpolation of the concept of sin mystifies the
members of the society in the sense that they will not question the King, whatever atrocities he may commit. His cruelties will be interpreted as the result of sins. The King's power will remain intact. The fortunes of the King and the misfortunes of the subjects will be viewed as the outcome of bliss and sin. The practice of rituals on the basis of the concepts of virtue and sin is a subtle or oblique way of maintaining and strengthening the power and privileges of the dominant. The textile owner in "Panimutakkam" organises a long retreat and ritual. It indirectly indicates that the poverty of the labourers who are on strike is the outcome of their sins. Here also ritual, as a part of the signs generated by the dominant ideology, works to mystify the members of the society. In foregrounding or projecting imaginary "spiritual" causes for misfortunes, materialistic reasons or causes are hidden from the view.

Metaphorical and metonymical transformations of sacrifice and scapegoat as found in the works of Edasseri and Yeats are sought to be read here in the context of global colonisation and the resistance to it. Yeats has been assigned a prominent position among major British poets. So the analysis and discussions on his works usually place them in an English context. The method adopted in this study is different. Yeats is seen as an Irish writer. Besides the discussion of themes of sacrifice and scapegoat in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial contexts, his works are used as forming a convenient
context for explicating the works of Edasseri. They are read with the intention of mutually illumining each other. Some of the problems in Yeats's works are explained by placing them beside similar issues in Edasseri's works. Comparing Yeats and Edasseri, one can see that, in a sense, Yeats is relatively a more "privileged" writer. As he wrote in English, his works have been subjected to wide-ranging studies. The purpose of this study is to make possible new readings on this Irish writer in relation to an Asian or "third-world" writer. The colonial problem and the general backwardness of Ireland and Asian countries like India, and the State of Kerala to be more specific, vindicate such a comparison. Belonging to Kerala, a "backward" state in relation to the Indian Union and writing in the Malayalam language which is spoken by hardly thirty million people, Edasseri is hardly heard by the world. Most of the works selected from Edasseri for discussion are narrative poems, which are also dramatic in the sense that they contain speeches as well. The poetic dramas of Yeats get more space in the discussion here as they give enough room for analysing the motif of sacrifice. Thematic as well as "formal" similarities justify the comparison of Edasseri's dramatic narrative poems with Yeats's verse dramas. Of the different aspects of sacrifice and scapegoat, only those immediately connected to the worship of mother goddesses are discussed in this study. The two prominent narrative poems by Edasseri-- "Kavile Pattu" and "Poota Pattu"-- deal with such a theme. Most of the verse plays of Yeats also are read in this way. The worship of female deities is still a
living tradition in India, especially South India, of which Kerala is a part. And the figure of Chinnamasta, as explained by David Kinsley, supplies the various aspects of the worship of the mother goddess. So the primary models for this study are taken from India. D.D. Kosambi's *Myth and Reality* and David Kinsley's *Hindu Goddesses* look at Hindu legends from a socio-cultural perspective. Walter Beltz's study on Semitic gods, *God and the Gods*, has also a similar socio-historical orientation. The basic argument concerning the origin and existence of sacrifice and the general and universal observations regarding it in almost all walks of life follows, to a great extent, the epoch-making work *Violence and the Sacred* by Rene Girard. Since violence cannot be denied, sacrifice as an institution has existed as a mechanism of the individual or society to divert violence and transfer it on to a convenient scapegoat, with the least possible danger to themselves. And keeping the mechanism sacred, the secrecy of its effect is assured. This central idea of Girard's *Violence and the Sacred* runs throughout this study.

Since the works of Yeats and Edasseri constitute the primary source material for this study, the findings of social historians such as Kosambi, Ranajit Guha and Kinsley are not sought to be called into question. Instead, their remarks are supported and supplemented by the evidences found in the works of Yeats and Edasseri. The interpretation of such evidences follows the path initiated by Kosambi:
Primitive elements survive in all religious beliefs shared by any considerable number of people. The prayer "Give us this day our daily bread" is substantial enough to the greater part of the world's population. It could not have originated before the late stone age, for nothing like bread was known earlier. The idea of prayer to God the Father could also not have been conceived earlier than the pastoral age, in the food-gathering period when the Mother Goddess was predominant. (1)

The analyses of *The Herne's Egg, At the Hawk's Well, A Full Moon in March, The King's Great Clock Tower, "Kavile Pattu," "Poota Pattu"* and others follow the above method. The chronological order of the publication of the works is not considered as reliable evidence since the evolution of the writers' creative consciousness does not come under the purview of this largely theme-centred, not author-oriented, study. Another parameter used to limit the frontiers of this study is supplied by Ranajit Guha who has this to say regarding the dominant readings related to Indian nationalism:

The historiography of Indian nationalism has for a long time been dominated by elitism—colonialist elitism and bourgeois-nationalist elitism. Both originated as the ideological product of British rule in India .... Elitist historiography of the colonialist or neo-colonialist type counts British writers and institutions among its principal protagonists, but has its imitators in India and other countries too. (1.1)
Such elite-ideological explanations and quasi-religious interpretations are brought into discussion but they are subjected to a rigorous re-vision and re-reading. Ranajit Guha adds:

Parallel to the domain of elite politics there existed throughout the colonial period another domain of Indian politics in which the principal actors were not the dominant groups of the indigenous society or the colonial authorities but the subaltern classes and groups constituting the mass of the labouring population and the intermediate strata in town and country—that is the people. This was an autonomous domain, for it neither originated from elite politics nor did its existence depend on the other. (4)

The subalterns are not properly re/presented in the dominant reading. They are far from being completely destroyed or rendered ineffective by the intrusion of colonialism. The sub/altern signs and discourses, always subversive, have continued to operate vigorously in spite of the colonial. An objective of this study is to read such subaltern and subversive signs and discourses, and hence the discussion of Edasseri's "Panimutakkam," "Kudiyirakal," and "Puthenkalavum Arivalum." But the placing of such works beside those of Yeats has certainly posed problems. For example, the question of eviction as it comes up in Edasseri's "Kudiyirakal" [Eviction]. The landlords used to allow the peasants to reside in and cultivate parts of the land, on rental and non-rental bases or on lease. When the
lords were displeased, the peasants were cruelly ousted, their huts and other meagre belongings burnt and destroyed. On some other occasions the crops the peasants had cultivated with hard labour were confiscated by the landlords. Eviction and crop-confiscation were thus a striking feature of the feudal agricultural society in Kerala. Such atrocities were also a feature of Irish land history:

The Irish landlord simply took his rack-rent and the tenant had to do everything. No matter how many improvements the tenant left those were taken by the landlord. There is cultivated land which you may see in Ireland; you will see it on the coast of Galway Bay: stone fields.... It has often happened in Ireland. Some unfortunate man has gone and cleared away the stones from a place of this kind with his own hand and turned it into a little holding. The moment he had done that the landlord came down and charged him rent, and if he could not afford it he turned him out. (Shaw 221)

Large-scale evictions were effected in Ireland during the years 1845-52. "The getting rid of the small holders was a necessary precondition for the establishment of capitalist farming. Small tenants were 'cleared'" (Jackson 248). As described by Edasseri, the evicted peasants or tenants had sentimental attachment to the pieces of land they occupied. A similar attitude was also perceivable in the case of Irish peasants. Jackson remarks: "The significance of this development was multiplied by the sentimental attachment felt by the Irish peasantry for their
localities of origin" (248). Under the circumstances it is surprising to note that Yeats's works are singularly silent regarding eviction. But it does appear in a symbolic and oblique way as in the case of dispossessed deities like Cathleen ni Houlihan. A similar absence or silence is notable in Edasseri's works. The female/male struggle, a prominent feature of Indian legends and myths, as noted by Kosambi (2-3), is not directly expressed in Edasseri's poetic rendering of native legends and myths. The gap is filled in by bringing in the readings of Kosambi and Kinsley. Yeats's poetic plays such as At the Hawk's Well and The Herne's Egg, however, open the possibility of reading female/male power struggle.

As has already been noted, the comparison of the works of Yeats and Edasseri is attempted here largely on the basis of thematic resemblances. The discussion of the various assumptions behind sacrifice and scapegoat is necessitated by Yeats's question in "Parnell's Funeral" : "What is this sacrifice?" (CP 319). And the chapter titled "What is this Sacrifice?" ends with the question raised in Edasseri's "Varnakuppayam": "Should the deity be the scapegoat/If the idol worn out defies identity?" (Kunkuma Prabhatam 24). Kali in "Kavile Pattu" is such a deity. Beginning with the analysis of that poem, the second chapter deals with the theme of mother goddess and male-victim. Yeats's A Full Moon in March, The King of the Great Clock Tower, "The Cap and Bells" and similar works provide a comparative context for Edasseri's "Kavile Pattu." The Pootam in "Poota Pattu" used to
receive blood immolation in the past. So is the case with the lady in "Her Vision in the Wood." The Queen in The King of the Great Clock Tower beheads her lover instead of her consort, the King. The presence of a surrogate victim is a sign of the Queen's decreased power, as a result of patriarchal intrusion. Kosambi remarks: "Patriarchal intrusion did not immediately abolish the sacred king's death by sacrifice, even in Greece. A surrogate was first sacrificed in place of the hero, and then perhaps symbolic puppets or totem-animals substituted" (80). "Kavile Pattu," "Poota Pattu" and "Her Vision in the Wood" present diachronic aspects in the sense that the mother goddess-figures in them show the traces of the sacrificer and the sacrificed. How the cruel killer-deity turned into a kind and self-wounding scapegoat is the most prominent and pertinent problem projected in "Kavile Pattu." Hence, the discussion on the conflict between patriarchal and matriarchal systems also begins in the same chapter. Two plays by Yeats--At the Hawk's Well and The Herne's Egg--are analysed. The presence of a bird-deity at the centre--Herne and Hawk--and a priestess's super/vision over the region in both plays expose a female-centred system. Male-heroes, Congal and Cuchulain, come to break the system. They want to desecrate even the remote and woody havens ruled and resided by queens and priestesses. The successful broad/cast of male ideology depends upon the demystification of the hitherto safeguarded female legends. The secrets of the Hawk's Well and the Herne's Egg should be discovered.
Of the dual aspects of mother goddesses--sacrificing themselves and sacrificing others--, the former is connected to motherhood. Yeats describes the self-sacrificing aspect of mothers as the "honey of generation" (CP 244). The goatherd in Edasseri's "Bimbisarente Edayan" asks: "Is there any end for the delusions of mothers?" (Ek 578). Such a sweet delusion contributed to the continuity and survival of human life more than anything else. The facets of motherly sacrifices as exemplified by Yeats's works are dealt with. The analysis of "The Ballad of Moll Magee," "A Cradle Song," "The Song of the Old Mother," "The Heart of the Woman," "Leda and the Swan," "Blood and the Moon," and "The Mother of God" is followed by a detailed discussion of The Countess Cathleen. The portraiture of the Countess combines and contains certain features of a self-sacrificing mother, a charity woman and a bountiful mother goddess who appears in times of need. Yeats's ideas on self-sacrifice crop up during the discussion. Coming to Edasseri's works, which are held to be "the epic of motherhood" (Narayanan xxi), the mother figures in "Poota Pattu," "Bimbisarente Edayan" and "Kavile Pattu" are analysed. The discussion on the extension or expansion of the possibilities of motherly sacrifice leads to Jean Franco's reading of "the resistance of the 'mad women' of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina" (503-515). Mothers in "Poota Pattu" and "Kavile Pattu" go in search of their missing children as do the mothers in Plaza de Mayo.

Freedom movements in Ireland and India inspired writers to
revive the mother goddess/male victim theme. Sentiments of liberation struggles against the British domination worked out a transformation of the theme. The motherland is identified as a mother goddess who demands the blood of young martyrs or freedom fighters. The analysis of Yeats's "Easter 1916," "The Secret Rose" and "The Rose Tree" follows this pattern. Edasseri's "Vandippinammaye," "Palippin Matavine," "Chantuvum Otenanum" and "Bharata Puzha" are also analysed on the basis of the motherland/martyr theme. The immediate problem of wresting political freedom from the British is the prominent note in the works discussed in this chapter, the next one being the recapitulation of female subalternity as inscribed in the dominant male discourse. Commencing with the female victim-figures in the folklowers of Ireland and Kerala, this part of the study discusses Yeats's Deirdre and Purgatory and Edasseri's "Varadanam," "Vivaha Sammanam" and "Pengal." Deirdre and the heroines in "Varadanam" and "Vivaha Sammanam" raise their protest against male hegemony. The heroines in Purgatory and "Pengal" are passive and silent sufferers. The taboo of Chastity, the most effective weapon that male discourse employs to denigrate females, comes up as a recurring problem in the discussion of folklore and the works of Yeats and Edasseri. The next chapter of this study concentrates on the imprints of centuries of successive colonisations effected in Ireland and India. A number of native deities, though marginalised and dispossessed, still exist in Ireland and Kerala. After an introductory analysis of the attempts by Yeats and Edasseri to forge an anti-colonial discourse, the chapter leads
through certain observations by social historians to a reading of Yeats's *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, *The King's Threshold* and *The Land of Heart's Desire*. The interpretation of *Cathleen ni Houlihan* brings "Poota Pattu" into the comparative context of the privileged settlers and the marginalised wanderers. The note of marginalisation and underprivilegedness leads to the analysis of Edasseri's "Puthenkalavum Arivalum," "Panimutakkam" and "Kudiyirakal." Subaltern peasants and labourers who are subjected to the landlord's cruel and inhuman treatment figure forth in the above works.

The general aim of this study is, thus, to identify and foreground figures of sacrifice and figurations of victimisation in the works of two writers who were born and brought up in two British colonies. Even before the advent of Britain, these regions, Ireland and Kerala, had been subjected to different colonisations. Their subject or victim position has left its imprints upon the ethos of the Irish and the Keralites. Such imprints are decoded from the works of Yeats and Edasseri who were very particular in reviving their motherlands' native ethos before the "Fall." The impresses of colonisation upon religious, socio-economic and gender levels are discussed in the present study. The mother goddesses and such native deities who were offered sacrifices at city centres were sent away into wild and unattended regions. The natives became dispossessed and wretched. "Womankind," who had been used to sacrifice their consorts, were degraded into the scapegoats of "mankind."
Edasseri and Yeats present certain diachronic aspects of this historical process as they reveal the traces of pre-colonial and post-colonial periods. Aspects of pre-colonial days are read from allusions to legends and myths. The days after the colonisation are directly expressed as references to various aspects of post-coloniality. The various aspects thus expressed directly or obliquely are connected by the motif of sacrifice, in one way or the other. Collins Standard Dictionary defines motif as the main element, idea etc., especially a theme, or subject that is repeated with various changes. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary explicates motif as a usually recurring salient thematic element in a work of art. It is a dominant figure or central idea. J.A. Cuddon, in Dictionary of Literary Terms, explains motif as one of the dominant ideas in a work of literature; a part of the main theme. It may consist of a character, a recurring image or a verbal pattern. All the chapters of this study show that the works under discussion are connected by the recurring motif of sacrifice.