

## **Abstract**

**Vol. XVI, No.2, 2002**

### **Political Sociology of Advaita: Shankaracharya and Vivekananda**

M.V.S. Koteswara Rao, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Nagarjuna University, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh – 522 510, India, recalls the social and political ideas of Vivekananda and compares his ideas with that of Sankaracharya, two distinguished Advaitins. According to the author, Vivekananda, by proposing quite different ideas, occupies a special place in the history of Indian political philosophy. In India inhuman practices and abuses of status by birth were justified and were vehemently perpetrated in the name of god, religion and moksha. Vivekananda reinterpreted the Advaita philosophy and proposed a revolutionary alternative social and political programme. Therefore, he deserves a notable position in the realm of the political sociology of India. The paper briefly presents the political ideas and their relation to the social structure until the emergence of Sankaracharya. The social philosophy of Sankaracharya and the social and political philosophy of Vivekananda are also examined.

### **European Contact and the Material Culture in Kerala**

K.V. Joseph, Honorary Fellow, Centre for Development Studies, Prasantha Nagar, Tvpm – 695 011, India, believes that material culture is an arena in which the contact with Europe could make a powerful impact on Kerala. Though elements of European material culture are widely diffused in Kerala, the process of acculturation seems to have been on a limited scale until towards the middle of nineteenth century, the period reckoned as the end of the pre-modern era the history of Kerala. The paper explores how the key parameters involved in the acculturation process like the receptivity of Kerala society in diffusing cultural elements from outside, the extent of contact between the Europeans and the Keralites, and the nature of the congeries imported from Europe interacted with each other during the pre-modern period and the impact of these in Kerala.

## **Impact of the Economic Reforms on Industrial Labour in India**

Beena Nayar, Lecturer in Economics, Government Arts College, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India, and P.N. Sreekumar, Trainer in Management Sree, TC 17/207-II, Poojappura, Trivandrum – 695 012 examine the impact of economic reforms on labour in India. The authors argue that consensus is lacking regarding the impact of the reforms. For the optimists the reforms have had certain positive effects. But there are people who highlight the growth in unemployment and poverty as the key effects of these reforms. The restructuring of fiscal deficits has led to the cutting of government's capital expenditure, widening the gap between demand and supply for infrastructural services. The change in the policy under the agenda of reforms has forced the firms to adopt new strategies, namely, acquisitions and mergers, change in the capital structure in favor of equity, consolidations and collaborations, out-sourcing and sub-contracting and technological strategies. These responses, nevertheless, deeply affect labour. The paper is an attempt to find out the effects of the corporate responses on labour and it brings out a number of facts.

## **The Golden Jubilee and Beyond: Reflections on the 'Profession'**

N. Jayaram, Professor and Head, Department of Sociology Goa University, Goa – 403 206, India, writes that the Golden Jubilee in the life of any professional association is a great occasion for celebration. This is particularly so in the case of the Indian Sociological Society (henceforth, the Society) considering that not many associations survive that long, and even if they did, their functioning is seldom characterised by stability of structure and smoothness of functioning as experienced by the Society. Being the sole and undisputed All-India professional body of sociologists, the Life Membership of the Society has increased manifoldly: To date there are 2,112 Indian life members of the Society, 161 foreign life members, and 60 ordinary members. Besides, several state level sociology associations have emerged during the last three decades, and six of them are affiliated to the Society. The Society's record of functioning as a democratic body has been impeccable. More importantly, the Sociological Bulletin, the official organ of the Society, despite some stray years and administrative difficulties, has maintained regularity, and to its credit has no backlog. Few other social science professional associations can claim such an envious track record.

## **Gender and Occupational Structure**

Antony Palackal S.J., Department of Sociology, Loyola College of Social Sciences, Thiruvananthapuram – 695017, Kerala, India, notes that studies conducted on the occupational structure of industrial societies, particularly in the 1980s, have brought out the dimension of gender as a central feature of the social division of labour, despite the fast changing labour process and occupational character of the contemporary society (Murgatroyd, 1982; Delphy, 1984; Ross, 1985). A general survey of these researches reveals that: (1) Within the sphere of formal, paid employment there remains a high degree of segregation by sex and most jobs are considered better suited for one or the other sex (for instance, Receptionist, Nursing, Private Secretary for women); (2) As a general rule, women are clustered in low paid/status jobs invariably in all the industrial societies; (3) Dual standards are employed in determining the class positions of men and women in the social hierarchy; that is, in the case of men it is their occupation, and for women, it is the class position of their husband/guardians; (4) Discriminatory relationships are borne by women and men to the labour market. For instance, the household work of women which has potential exchange value is treated only as a product of use value.

## **Where Do You Go to Grow Old?**

Krista Sandrelli, Department of Psychology, University of Calgary, Res: 620 Silvergrove Dr. NW Calgary, AB, Canada, T3B 3J7 points out that as we move through the 21st century, placement and care for the aged is emerging as a primary concern. The expectation that adult children or grandchildren can successfully attend to the growing needs of their elderly kin, merits further exploration. Although this is a customary role in some eastern cultures, the west has not followed suit. Prior to World War II, multigenerational households were common, but this was due to an economic struggle and shortage of housing at the time; consequences of the Great Depression. Presently, it is imperative that the aging population be addressed as to where their placement is in society, when they can no longer independently care for themselves. “Given the current economic situation and changing social trends, some speculate that in the future formal caregivers will replace informal family care providers” (Karner, 1998: 70).

## **Sexual Health of Urban Slum Dwellers in Kerala: A Survey**

R. Sooryamoorthy, Department of Sociology, Loyola College of Social Sciences, Thiruvananthapuram – 695017, Kerala, and K.A. Emmanuel, Loyola Extension Services, Thiruvananthapuram – 695017, Kerala, report that subsumed under the term sexual health are a number of issues. Sexual health informs the type of sexual relationships one would like to have with others, to keep oneself free from sexually transmitted infections (STIs), to choose when and by whom one would like to get pregnant or have children, and not to cause or be caused physical pain, mental stress or hurt through sexual relations. In order to be sexually healthy, one needs to know about the consequences of sexual relations and therefore be responsible for making his/her choices in sexual relationships. The possible consequences include pregnancy, STIs, HIV/AIDS and changes in the relationships with the partner. At the same time, one has to be aware of contraception and methods that make him/her safe from the consequences of sexual relations.