

# Globalizing India

## Perspectives from Below

*Edited by*

JACKIE ASSAYAG AND C. J. FULLER



Anthem Press

Anthem Press  
An imprint of Wimbledon Publishing Company  
75-76 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HA  
or  
PO Box 9779, London SW19 7ZG  
*www.anthempress.com*

This edition first published by Anthem Press 2005.  
This selection © Wimbledon Publishing Company 2005;  
individual chapters © individual contributors.

The moral right of the authors has been asserted.

All rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise), without the prior written permission of both the copyright owner and the above publisher of this book.

*British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data*

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data*

A catalog record for this book has been requested.

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

ISBN 1 84331 194 1 (Hbk)

ISBN 1 84331 195 X (Pbk)

Cover illustration: [to be finalized]

Typeset by Footprint Labs Ltd, London  
*www.footprintlabs.com*

Printed in India

# MALABAR GODS, NATION-BUILDING AND WORLD CULTURE: ON PERCEPTIONS OF THE LOCAL AND THE GLOBAL

Gilles Tarabout

The term ‘globalization’ resists attempts at narrow definition. Although discourses on the subject appear to relate to something ‘happening out there’ (Harriss 2001), its meanings are so diverse that a single definition proves elusive. However Baricco (2002) suggests that despite problems both of definition and understanding, we nevertheless have little difficulty in being for it or against it.

This can generate strange worlds. Ulf Hannerz cites the example of the winning song in a 1987 national song contest in Sweden, which excited strong protests not because it was a calypso sung by a Finn but because for some people its refrain, ‘Four Bugg [a brand of chewing-gum] and a Coca-Cola’, represented ‘cultural imperialism’, a ‘cocacolonization of the world’ (Hannerz 1989). Thus globalization may be understood as a euphemism for US imperialism (Harriss 2001), while various cultural hybrids might go unnoticed. This aspect of globalization is generally condemned. Other aspects – for instance, the need for universal cultural values – are often seen as desirable without a contradiction being perceived. Thus in the issue of *Economic and Political Weekly* containing Harriss’s critique of the effects of economic globalization, we also find a debate about the right to disregard national sovereignty in order to safeguard monuments which ‘are part of a cultural heritage of humankind as a whole’ – in this case, the Bamiyan Buddhas (Hensman 2001). Reactions therefore vary according to what is globalized.

In a recent survey, Bengalis condemned policies of economic liberalization which were felt in India to be the effects of globalization, but at the same time

positively evaluated 'the free flow of information engendered through global media, albeit taking a critical view of the culturally inappropriate foreign influences' (Ganguly-Scrase and Scrase 2001, p.141).

Discourses on 'globalization' rely implicitly on various dichotomies: us and them (Toufique 2001), centre(s) and periphery(ies) (Hannerz 1989), and, of course, global and local (with a possible mid-term like 'the nation'). Arjun Appadurai has proposed a more subtle model for the 'deterritorialized' world we are supposed to live in. He interprets locality as a 'phenomenological quality', a 'structure of feeling' resulting from a teleology and an ethos (Appadurai 1996, p.181), and distinct from 'neighbourhoods'. Nevertheless, in this model and in less sophisticated ones, there are at least two recurrent risks. The first is to regard 'modernization' as the inevitable result of globalization, which would make theories of globalization the descendants of diffusionism (Barnard 2000: 168). The second, related risk, with which we are more concerned here, is the perception of relations between the global world and localities as unidirectional, the local being either passively modelled by the global or perceived in terms of its resistance to it. This view has been opposed by scholars of various intellectual traditions for obscuring the dialogic quality of world exchanges that lead to complex and changing forms of cultural hybridization.<sup>1</sup>

Within the general frame of this discussion, this chapter aims at illustrating how cultural interactions at the local level have a longstanding history in which local actors are precisely that: actors.<sup>2</sup> My case study of a village cult in South India, now also presented as theatre performance in the West, is an example of a passage to the global market resulting from a historically complex process where different mediations are required at different social levels. In such a process, the motivations and perspectives of the people concerned may continue to differ according to their respective social and cultural interests.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, individual experience at the village level may include representations of global values, giving rise to specific complexities and sometimes tensions.

More precisely, this study is focused on what Appadurai called 'the work of the imagination', that 'is neither purely emancipatory nor entirely disciplined but is a space of contestation in which individuals and groups seek to annex the global into their own practices of the modern' (Appadurai 1996: 4). My analysis will develop and illustrate this argument, by systematically linking representations and discourses to agencies. However, contrary to Appadurai's main argument, my emphasis will bear on historical continuities rather than discontinuities. I argue that cultural globalization as a representation has grown out of ideas about development, progress, modernity, and former universalisms that provoked in their time similar tensions about annexing 'the global' into individual and local groups' practices.

### **Teyyam as a Cult of and for Localities**

My case study is about a ritual known by the name Teyyam (or Theyyam).<sup>4</sup> *Teyyam* ('deity') is a village, family or caste cult celebrating localized deities. It is also called *teyyattam* ('dance of the deity') or *kaliyattam* ('play-dance'), as well as other names.<sup>5</sup> As part of the ceremonies, the god or goddess is incorporated temporarily in a male specialist who is said to be possessed and who speaks as the deity itself. Such deities are often, but not always, former human beings whose exceptional deeds, and typically an exceptionally violent death, have raised them to divinity.<sup>6</sup> They may be linked to a living lineage or caste, and usually have a territorial jurisdiction. Their cult can be patronised by any caste from Brahmans to ex-Untouchables. The deities can become incarnate in two kinds of specialists. During the year they may possess the regular priests of their shrines, often of the same or of a slightly different status from the patrons. At festivals (not necessarily the annual one), they become incarnate in specialized dancers, usually of a much lower status than the patrons. This latter manifestation, called also Teyyam, will be considered here.

At festival times the deity comes in its 'full form' – that is, its incarnation in the dancer will take an impressively spectacular form, involving elaborate make-up and costume, loud drumming, ritual recitation of divine deeds, various dance steps and sometimes a demonstration of fighting abilities. These are a public manifestation of the power of the divine presence, further demonstrated by the performance of superhuman feats. Some of the Teyyams, for example, roll on glowing embers, drink incredibly large quantities of alcohol, or tear apart with their teeth the dozens of live chickens offered to satisfy the god's hunger. The ritual violence of these cults is indicative of the kind of power that these gods are deemed to possess. They are highly dangerous, and all kinds of misfortune are attributed to their punishment or their desire to be recognized and thereby 'seated' in a shrine. But properly placated, the deities wield a highly protective power, so that people can ask them for favours, such as health, fertility, success and prosperity. Teyyams may also act as arbitrators in local disputes (land disputes, accusations of theft, etc.), and their judgements uphold the moral order.<sup>7</sup> All in all, teyyams are seen to provide their devotees with superhuman means to influence events.

These cults are still central to the religious and social life of millions of people in northern Malabar, the northernmost region of Kerala, mostly but not only in rural areas. They give meaning to the daily lives of their devotees and they are crucial in producing and reproducing 'locality' itself – lineages, castes, villages, groups of devotees – in the sense of a 'structure of feeling' developed, to quote Appadurai again, 'under conditions of anxiety and entropy, social wear and flux, ecological uncertainty and cosmic volatility, and

the always present quiriness of kinsmen, enemies, spirits and quarks of all sorts' (Appadurai 1996: 181). In a way, Teyyams are the incarnation of 'localities' at different social levels.

In the course of history, these cults have met with contrasting responses from different outside observers, commentators and mediators, representing, in retrospect, one form or other of 'the global'. As a starting-point, let us look at some comments written at the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>8</sup>

### **Meeting with the Colonial West**

The Teyyam ceremony was first described in 1901 by Fred Fawcett, then Superintendent of Government Railway Police, Madras, and Local Correspondent of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. He spent some three and a half years in Malabar, now the northern part of Kerala. Fawcett's description is part of his well-known account of the 'Nayars of Malabar', published in the *Bulletin of the Madras Government Museum* and regularly cited by later compilers. His writings in general show a keen sense of observation and a constant preoccupation with accurate ethnographic detail, typical of his explicit aim to be 'objective'.<sup>9</sup> As he put it, 'neither fancy nor beauty shall allure us from the dull path of precision' (Fawcett 1901: 265). This was coupled at times with the somewhat condescending attitude characteristic of other writings of the enlightened colonial elite. An example is his description of a Teyyam dancer after his performance, although he does not morally condemn the ceremonies he describes (p.261):

The poor old man who represented this fearful being, grotesquely terrible in his wonderful metamorphosis, must have been extremely glad when his three minutes' dance, preparation for which occupied all the afternoon, was concluded, for the mere weight and uncomfortable arrangement of his paraphernalia must have been extremely exhausting.

The comment is far from innocuous. Behind the concern for 'the poor old man' is a radical negation, bearing not so much on the religious dimension of the ceremony as on the 'irrationality' of the practice. The paraphernalia becomes an 'uncomfortable arrangement', and the spending of a full afternoon for 'three minutes' dance', a mere folly. The term that could best sum up Fawcett's impression, despite the claim to objectivity, would perhaps be *weirdness*, a word that appears in his text to qualify the 'human tumult busy in its religious effusion' (p. 265). This weirdness is attached, in his eyes, not only to the aspect of the divine figures he sees but also more generally to the conduct of the people following irrational religious practices. Speaking about

religion among castes considered to be of low status in Malabar ('the more uncultivated, the wilder races') he finds that 'this is almost entirely primitive in character; no more the cult of Siva or Vishnu than of Sqaktktquact' (p. 254). The 'weirdness' and 'primitive character' of Teyyam and related practices are explicitly described as part of a worldwide phenomenon, which the coloniser alone can embrace in his global and 'rational' eye, record in its details and eventually assign to his own world as exotic curios or weird tales.

### **Meeting with Christianity**

Fawcett's condescending detachment was not shared by all. Colonial officials' representations and values were not necessarily the same as those of evangelists, with their (global) missionary agenda. As late as 1944, V. William, a student of the United Theological College, Bangalore, wrote about Teyyam with the explicit aim 'to furnish the Christian Evangelists [...] adequate materials to start their reform in the light of the Christian Gospel' (William 1944, Preface: 30–1):

This is only a survival of the most primitive animistic belief in religion which Hinduism does not desire to see any more. There is no art or anything of cultural value in this cult appealing to the modern mind. The practices adopted in this cultus are hideous, monstrous, demonic and frightful when compared to the Bhakti cult of popular religion. Fear dominates in this cult and there is no place for love or personal devotion. Psychologically it does more harm than good to the worshippers. [...] Those who conduct the Theyyam are seeking more for their profit than for any religious good. The ignorant and the poor are made by this cult to keep themselves in their blindness. This is dehumanization and flagrant exploitation of human personality. These subhuman practices stunted the growth of personality to have any philosophical outlook. Morality and ethics which are the highest values in religion are not to be found in any of these cults. Thus these animistic primitive cults act as a break to the forward movement of culture or civilization or religion which become static and stagnant.

Apart from the anthem on primitive irrationality, a few themes appear in William's text which were not present in Fawcett's and which correspond to often expressed criticisms of local cults the world over: that they are superstitious, a cynical exploitation of poor ignorant people, devoid of any morality and ethics (which define religion according to an evolutionist, universalist view), and an obstacle to civilization, to the very notion of progress.

Such a charge should not be summarily dismissed as the mere expression of a Christian evangelist who assumes the burden of global morality and the 'forward movement of culture'. Besides the fact that Christians in general (an important minority in Kerala), and evangelists in particular, did exert some influence over the evolution of cults in India, directly or indirectly (Frykenberg 1988), it is worth remarking that William formulated his judgement after quoting 'Hindu' opinions. One, for instance, comes from a Mr. K. Kunhikannan, who wrote in April 1912 in the *Madras Christian College Magazine* about Malabar village gods (quoted in William 1944, pp. 28–9):

Probably few nations in the world ancient or modern, have been more superstitious, more credulous, more gullible than the hindus. It is a most significant and noteworthy fact that even at this distance of time, even in this budding 20th century, in an age of triumphant intellectual and scientific advance unparalleled in the history of the human race, many things which have been burned to ashes under the all-embracing fire of modern science and thought are still piously retained by the vast majority of hindus. [...] It is a very sorry spectacle to witness the hindus still worshipping the village gods and goddesses in the most hideous and superstitious manner. In my own place there is a 'Kavu' [shrine] where thousands of fowls and sheep are every year butchered for the propitiation of the supposed god or goddess. The sacred temple is literally transformed into a slaughter-house. Can any man conceive a more horrible and degrading way of worshipping the supreme Father of the Universe?

This is a local author who confesses with dramatic effect that in his 'own place', 'village gods' receive horrible cults in contrast to appropriate worship directed to 'the Father of the Universe' (the 'global' and the 'local' are also articulated in terms of divine figures!). While a Christian influence can be detected in these last words, the overall perspective is informed by ideas about modernity found everywhere at this time. But there is also a regional dimension, as the author implicitly relies on the longstanding Brahmanical aversion to animal sacrifice, which had found historical expression in various Indian religious movements, and was also emphasized in the reformist agenda of socio-religious and caste organizations from the early nineteenth century.

### **Reformists in Action**

Unlike other parts of India like Bengal or neighbouring Tamil Nadu (Frykenberg 1989), Hindu socio-religious reformers appeared in Kerala only

in the late nineteenth century, with the exception of a few isolated figures like Sri Vaikunda Swamikal (1803–51). Although the latter's activities were restricted to the southern districts of Travancore (Sarveswaran 1980), his advocacy of both social equality and religious reforms, such as the suppression of animal sacrifice, was already indicative of developments to come. From the 1860s, various caste organizations were founded in Kerala. One of their main aims was the consolidation and social 'uplift' of the community concerned, but they also promoted religious reform, and their own 'new elite' of journalists, advocates and medical doctors operated as social activists under the spiritual authority of a saintly figure.<sup>10</sup>

Mr P. N. Damodaran, a source quoted by William, was probably a member of this elite. He wrote in *Matrbhumi Weekly* of 15 March 1937 (quoted in William 1944, pp. 27–8):

Thirayattam or Theyyam is a cult found only in North Malabar. In English this can be called Devil Dance. [...] Thirayattam is destructive and is worth to be destroyed. The rowdyisms, inhuman and barbarous behaviours and immoral actions that are in and near the Kavus [shrines] and which are prevalent at the time of these festivals are innumerable and beyond description. When we understand that animal sacrifices, immorality and drunkenness are indispensable elements in this cult, this should not be suffered to continue even for a moment.

William considered this 'the opinion of every educated Hindu who only anticipated an extinction of this cult in the near future' (ibid.: 28). That he was misled in this particular conclusion is another matter. The fact remains that Theyyam, like other cults using animal sacrifice and alcohol, was the target not only of Christian evangelists but of Hindu reformers as well as new urban elites, including elites from communities practising these cults. This implied tensions at the local level about the kind of 'locality' sustainable in the face of a 'modernity' perceived as rational, moral and global.

The most important among these reformers, for this chapter, was Sri Narayana Guru (1856–1928). An exponent of spiritual wisdom advocating equality and tolerance, he summed up his message in the motto 'one caste, one creed, one god for man'. But in spite of the universalist tone of his philosophy, and of the general respect which he commanded even in far-away circles (he was well known to people like Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi and Romain Rolland), his activity was in fact restricted to uplifting the specific, local community into which he was born, the toddy-tappers. Toddy-tappers – Izhavas or Tiyyas – were at the time below the untouchability line, and were divided into many status groups. Through their capacity to

make use of new economic opportunities, their influential position in electoral politics, and the militancy of their leaders, the toddy-tappers were eventually able to gain increased social respect and, at the same time, became more united as a social group. The role of Sri Narayana Guru was decisive in this shift in public estimation. The suppression of animal sacrifice and the cult of deified human beings, such as Teyyam, were among the many reforms he advocated. As one of his hagiographers explains in a chapter entitled 'The Electric Shock' (Kunhappa 1982: 27):

In more than a hundred places, he unseated the gods whose names had associations with the killing of birds and consumption of liquor, replacing them by idols of Siva, Subramania and Ganesa and instituted *poojas* of the type performed in temples dedicated to them.

Similar 'universalising' processes (in terms of pan-Indian cults) were still taking place among the toddy-tappers long after the demise of the Guru (Osella 1993). Suppression was more radically, though never totally, enforced in the south of the State than the north, where Teyyam is practised, but the reform movement was also influential there. Since the local toddy-tappers, the Tiyyas, were and still are central to the practice of Teyyam, one of the aims of the movement was reform of such cults. The Tiyya elite began to organize itself in 1906 by founding the Sri Gnanodaya Yogam, 'Society for the Awakening of Knowledge' (Menon 1994 : 67). Soon after, Sri Narayana Guru himself came to lay the foundations of a Tiyya temple in which only 'pure' ritual would be followed. Prayer societies were also developed. As historian Dilip Menon puts it, 'The complex pantheon of shrine worship was in the process of reinterpretation, and a sharp division emerged between "brahmanical" and "non-brahmanical" deities, at least within the discourse of reform' (ibid.: 70).

The apparent unanimity in condemning Teyyam for its 'primitivity', voiced with various nuances by Christian evangelists, Hindu reformers and local elites, masked quite different purposes. For missionaries, what was at stake was conversion to the only rational and universal faith, Christianity. For Hindu socio-religious reformers, what was involved was the elaboration of purified forms of Hinduism, thought to correspond to universal values of the time (although their language was one of return to the origins). Members of the new local elite, on the other hand, while genuinely partaking of the ideals of religious reform, had their own, more immediate agenda, and saw universal progress with reference to a localized socio-political arena. What was at stake was the progress of their own community, and ultimately their own position as an elite.

In this interplay of global references and local relations of power, Teyyam cults did not do what was expected: instead, they prospered. Unlike a number of similar rituals in the southern regions of Travancore and Cochin, which disappeared or were conveniently euphemised, Teyyam cults, well entrenched in complex networks of rural power, were able to resist reformist campaigns and adapt at the same time to changing socio-economic conditions. What is more, from the 1940s onwards, Teyyam began progressively to undergo a complete redefinition in the public eye to the point that their spectacular figures have nowadays become emblematic of Kerala culture in tourist publications – Teyyam photographs make good cover pictures.

Let us look at the reasons behind this dramatic change, the seeds of which are to be found in new sensibilities developed at the same period when denunciations were at their peak. Between the 1930s and 1950s, three different kinds of people – Western artists, Indian nationalists and Kerala Communists – all with their respective global attitudes, contributed in different ways and for different reasons to these changes in sensibility, leading ultimately to a radical reconsideration of Teyyam and similar rituals.

### **Marxists in Action**

The specific development of the Communist party in Kerala enabled it to command mass support and eventually, led by its general secretary, the late E. M. S. Namboodiripad, it came to power in 1957 in the first general elections in the newly formed state of Kerala, following the reorganization of Indian States on a linguistic basis. Since then, Marxists in coalition with other parties have regularly headed the state government, alternating with Congress-led coalitions. In the 1930s the party was still at a formative stage around a small group of militants, but a new leftist sensibility was rapidly growing in the intellectual milieu of Kerala, especially among writers who favoured social engagement and who were to have a far-reaching influence in Kerala beyond Marxist sympathisers. Young writers like Takazhi, Kesava Dev and others were well acquainted with European and Russian literature and personally committed to a kind of social realism. They were concerned to portray the downtrodden, the destitute, thus creating new heroes who could never have found a place in earlier Malayalam literature. People born into low-status castes were thereafter no longer 'primitive' but 'oppressed' or 'repressed'. Short stories and novels from this new literature were widely read in a region where literacy was already comparatively high.

As a consequence, in the 1940s, Teyyam and certain other rituals involving spectacular elements came to be seen by some as a 'culture of the people', though in an ambivalent manner. On the one hand, entrenched as it was in

the rural structures of power, Teyyam was condemned for legitimizing the existing land tenancy relationships, and therefore for perpetuating a local 'feudal' order. On the other hand, it was possible to see the stories of past heroes which were at the centre of many Teyyams as epics of resistance against such an exploitative order, and Teyyam costumes, music, songs and dance as the expression of the creativity of the masses. World War II gave local Marxists the occasion to test some practical consequences of these views.

As long as the pact between Germany and the USSR was in force, the Indian Communist Party opposed the war as an imperialist war. When the Germans attacked the USSR, the Party, in 1942, labelled the conflict a people's war and decided to support it. As a consequence, its imprisoned leaders came out of jail and the party was temporarily able to operate freely. Its militants turned towards popular rituals and theatres as media of communication and propaganda in order to reach the widest possible audience. As Dilip Menon writes (Menon 1994: 176–7):

Folk arts were harnessed in the cause of anti-Japanese and anti-hoarding propaganda and the *ottan thullal*, *poorakkali*, *kolkali*, *teyyattam* [various Kerala rituals], all of these found patronage. In the aftermath of the depression, many of the less prosperous tharavadus [aristocratic houses of comparatively high-status castes, like the Nayars] had stopped sponsoring the *teyyattam* and other shrine performances. The leadership of the KCP [Kerala Communist Party], coming as they did from branches of the larger tharavadus, were in their element as patrons of the rural arts. Later in this decade, victims of police action would be lauded as heroes and martyrs, and many individuals incorporated within the *teyyattam* tradition of victims of injustice. Among the persons arrested in the fighting at Karivellur in 1946 was a *teyyattam* performer who 'used to dance Communism'.

Nowadays, instances of politicised Teyyam are still found, although they are certainly not the rule. This is particularly well documented in Wayne Ashley's work (1993), specifically aimed at understanding the 'recodings' to which Teyyam has been and still is subjected. Writing about a presentation of a Teyyam of the god Bhairavan (a violent form of Shiva) by a Marxist worker, in 1981, the author suggests that (Ashley 1993: 198):

Code subversion characterizes Kuttumath's performance. There is an explicit attempt to strip the ritual of its efficacy by demonstrating that it can be performed outside the temple in a non-consecrated space without priests or offerings. Kuttumath performs teyyam in a symbolic ensemble

which serves to undermine its conventional meaning and function. None of the appropriate purification rituals are performed; nothing is done to 'honour' the deity ; nor does the dancer become possessed.

The aim, according to another party worker, is to liberate people from their 'belief in fate', by encouraging doubt when people see that the dancer can complete the performance unharmed. But the dilemma for Marxists is that liberation should not create unemployment. As Ashley elaborates on his informants' discourse (*ibid.*: 202–3):

They feel that destroying the belief system and social relations which support the conditions for teyyam will put numerous performing families out of work. In their scenario for the future of teyyam its existence will be ensured within an emerging wage labour system. Money will replace birthright, privilege and obligation. Teyyam will no longer function solely as offering but will take another cultural path [...]. The stage will dominate over the shrine.

These perspectives, testifying to the complex imbrications between village gods and the proletarian cause (a supremely global project), probably could be seen as later developments in Marxist local thinking about Teyyam. In the 1940s, Party workers in Malabar had a more immediately instrumental approach. Nevertheless, the fact that they saw such a cult as an expression of 'people's culture', and as a form of communication endowed with artistic qualities, constituted at the time a decisive break with previous condescending or denunciatory attitudes. As a matter of fact, many subsequent Kerala folklorists, who have undertaken the patient collection and publication of Teyyam songs or the promotion of Teyyam at large, have been Marxist sympathisers.

### **Folklorists in Action**

In Western countries, too, decisive changes in aesthetics had taken place since the end of World War I. Dadaism, cubism and surrealism, explicitly influenced by 'local', 'primitive' arts, had swept away former definitions of beauty among artists and their public. 'Primitive arts', in particular, though still deemed to be primitive, had become beautiful. They were now Art, part of a renewed and extended definition of culture and testifying to man's power of creativity. As such, local in origin as they were, they became endowed with a strongly affirmed universalist quality, inasmuch as a Western urban elite was able to appropriate them according to its own views. This aesthetic revolution took some time to come about in the theatre, although Diaghilev's Ballets

Russes had already shaken some certainties. It was not until the early 1930s that Antonin Artaud, after witnessing performances of Balinese theatre during the Exposition universelle of Paris in 1931, issued two manifestos (1932, 1933) which, under the title *Théâtre de la cruauté*, called for a new approach to drama. Although at the time it had comparatively little impact, it nevertheless underwent a general evolution and influenced the way 'primitive' arts, including dances and spectacular rituals, came to be seen anew. This was to have an important legacy, to which we will return at the end of this chapter.

This period correlatively saw a revival in rural cultural studies in Western countries, leading to the organization of international folk dance festivals throughout Europe (Vienna 1934, London 1935, Stockholm 1939). A young Indian ethnologist studying in Oxford, M. D. Raghavan, witnessed such a festival in 1931, held 'in the picturesque grounds of Blenheim Palace in the county of Oxford', a 'magnificent display' which acted upon him as 'an eye-opener', impressing him (Raghavan 1947: i-ii)

with the great need for an alround [sic] revival of folk arts and of folk plays and dances here in India, where the advancement of rural studies is so vital to the welfare of her peoples.

Such a vocabulary, where valorisation and study of the local 'folk' was deemed to be in itself a tool for the betterment of India as a whole, was indeed new and anticipated developments which would take place only 10 or 20 years later. It was also to have direct consequences specifically for Teyyam. As far as I am aware, Raghavan was the very first to publish in English a eulogistic report about it in his booklet on *Folk Plays and Dances in Kerala* (1947), paving the way for the arrival of many folklorists. He was possibly also the first to denounce the expression 'devil-dancing' used formerly to denote Teyyam and similar rituals. According to him, this was 'scarcely appropriate to the sacred character of the performance' (*ibid.*: 3). His account (p. 23) emphasized the aesthetic characteristics of the cult (thoroughly negated by William, as we have seen):

The dancers who belong to the hereditary professional classes of spirit dancers get such a mastery in the art, scarcely surpassed in other spheres of folk life. It is a living art enlivened by appropriate music, the resplendent costume, the make-up and open air carnivals.

A page further, his state of mind is still more explicit (p. 24):

The diversity of deities and the variety of functions produce a rich and varied art. The decorative motifs are a study in themselves, disclosing as

they do an observance of stylistic canons and of forms of presentations indicating a long tradition of expression. The resplendent costumes and gorgeous colours harmoniously and artistically blended are a feature of the impersonation in North Malabar temples creating a rich pageant which stands supreme among the ritual art of South India, a pageant which is equalled, if not surpassed, only by the splendour of the Kathakali, which it so closely resembles. Every line and every symbol bespeaks tradition and a profound sense of design and method. The student of folk art and culture has much indeed to interest him in those displays and to ignore them or to dismiss them as of no moment is altogether to miss what really is a most alluring factor in the cultural, religious and social life of Kerala, a factor too which acts in some degree as a unifying force amid the diversities of Kerala society for the association between these annual festivals and the community is both sacred and intimate.

Instead of a being a mere particularizing force, folk culture becomes here a bond across parochialisms. The development throughout India of a similar sensibility led after independence to the multiplication of folklore studies and the valorisation of rural arts as unifying factors. This was taken up by nationalist actors who extended its significance beyond the local community.

### **Building the Nation**

One of the most significant events in the development of politico-cultural pageants in India in the 1950s was probably the introduction of folk dances to the official celebrations of Republic Day in New Delhi. From 1953 onwards, nearly every year, folk dances from different parts of India were included in the parade together with shows of military power, technological advancement and economic achievements. Moreover, in 1954, a Folk Dance Festival was instituted. As Prime Minister Nehru put it (cited in Vidyarthi 1969: 81):

The idea of several hundred folk dancers from different parts of India coming to Delhi brings home to them and to all of us the richness of our cultural heritage and the unifying bond which holds it together.

As Satish Deshpande noted, this was a period when development as an ideology was trying to ensure the mutual coherence of 'political legitimacy, cultural identity and class relations' (Deshpande 2001: 99). According to him, the Nehruvian years were an exceptional period characterized by '(relative)

inward orientation' (ibid.: 98) in India, as opposed to a more general perception of globalizing processes in earlier or later years. During this era, the rhetoric 'had seemed to issue an inclusive invitation to all members of the nation to come and play the role of the secular-modern citizen devoted to the task of nation-building', although this citizen 'turns out upon examination to be at once familiar and elusive – a modern middle-class subject who continues to claim the pre-modern privileges of community, caste, gender and region' (ibid.: 104). This voluntarism in building the nation was not without some condescension for 'old habits and customs'. Nehru, emphasizing the common obligation to build the nation, thus addressed a group of Gond dancers in 1955 (cited in Ashley 1993: 269–70):

I have seen your folk dances [...] and I have found them quite enchanting. [...] You should not think that you have to [give up] your songs and dances. They are not bad. [...] You have to bear one thing in your mind that whether you reside here in Bastar or at Delhi or in any other part of the country, we are all sailing in the same ship in the sea. [...] Therefore we all have to do our jobs in close cooperation and to forge ourselves and our country ahead to achieve progress and prosperity.

The account and analysis by Ashley (1993: 250ff) of a Republic Day parade held much later, in 1984, underlines how such celebrations combined symbols and emblems which instilled a sense of pride in Indian nationhood, diverse but united and therefore strong. Folk dancers were there to 'remind India of its roots in the soil', as a 1985 parade newscaster put it (ibid.: 259). This was possible only through a radical selection, at an early stage, of the traits in 'folk' practices that could be shown to an urban audience during the festival, or that could be adapted to the constraints of a street parade. Although in 1953 'a thousand folk dancers had stormed Delhi with their riotous colour and infectious rhythm' (Vidyarthi 1969: 74), it was not long before new sets of costumes were designed and new arrangements made with, at times, urban 'folk dancers' replacing village ones (Vidyarthi 1969: 82, who denounces such trends). This was part of a complete reconstruction of 'folk culture' in terms of Indianness and urban-middle class taste. As Ashley explains (Ashley 1993: 255–6):

Moreover, as government officials, dance critics, and theatre practitioners elevated the cultural forms of specific groups, especially tribals (adivasis), to national status, and linked them to a pre-existing primordial national identity, the state increasingly dominated their everyday lives, encroached upon their lands, and rationalized their cultural practices. In

the parade and Folk Dance Festival what proclaims to be a performative space wherein the 'tribal' and the 'folk' are held up as signifiers of an 'authentic Indian culture' is actually a post-colonial staging of the tribal – reformed and employed to stand for exemplars of national integration and harmony.

Ten years after Delhi, the Kerala government organized similar shows. The people of this state, formed in 1956, were yet to feel a common 'Kerala-ness'. In 1961 the government began to celebrate what was previously a rural (and quite feudal) festival, Onam, as Kerala's National Festival, which, for nearly two decades, has also been a 'Tourist Week Celebration'. Typically, the National Festival and Tourist Week includes street parades in the main cities, combining folk dances with decorated floats on various themes, and many Folk Arts Festivals in different venues in the main cities. Urban middle- and upper-class people, for the most part quite ignorant of the various rituals and performances practised in the different parts of Kerala, congregate at that time to witness rural 'folk' plays, dances and rituals staged in auditoriums.

The first involvement of Teyyam in such public celebrations seems to have been in 1960, when a group of dancers participated in the Republic Day extravaganza in Delhi.<sup>11</sup> Teyyam dancers participated again in many later years in this pageant, and were also at the opening of the IXth Asian Games in Delhi in 1982. They may have participated in the Kerala State sponsored Onam festival sometime before this latter date. In any case, by 1981 they were already so much part of the picture that half the photos in the programme distributed for the Tourist Week Celebration were of Teyyams. Similar photos were already illustrating the cover of a *Folk Arts Directory* published by Kerala Sangeet Natak Akademi in 1978, as well as the inside cover and first page of an official Public Relations Department publication about *Dances of Kerala* issued in 1980. This was definitely cultural respectability and recognition, and it has not ceased since.

We may note in passing an iteration of the iconic use of Teyyam at different territorial and cultural levels. Within North Malabar, festivals may gather Teyyams from different lineages, villages or castes, for which they act as their respective representatives. At the level of Kerala state, Teyyam can be an iconic marker of a restricted regional identity (i.e. North Malabar). For instance, Teyyams were used during a political demonstration in 1982, when delegations from different districts congregated in the streets of the capital, each one with a spectacular attraction: Teyyam was the one signalling the northern delegations. At the national level, in a Delhi parade or festival, the presence of Teyyam dancers represented the Kerala contribution to Indian culture as a whole. It is also mostly as emblems of Kerala culture that

Teyyams are presented in the more than 1,000 Internet sites which Google identified in September 2002, using the key words 'teyyam' or 'theyyam' (the electronic 'deterritorialization' dear to Appadurai has not invented this iconic use, but definitely provides it with wider possibilities). Lastly, at the international level, Teyyam was, for instance, one entry in the Year of India festival held in Paris in 1985, where it no longer represented Kerala as such, but India's folk culture.

Different social actors enable these changes at different levels of 'localities' to take place: journalists, dramatists, filmmakers, arts and crafts regional or national institutions, performers' associations, free-lance folklorists and academic scholars (Tarabout 2003). All these mediations, intricately interwoven, are necessary to build up a patrimonial reality and to pass from one level of 'locality' to another. In these shifts from village cult to regional or national heritage, and to theatrical performance abroad, drastic changes are operated by these mediators, not only in scale but in the very nature and meaning of what is performed: the power of a particular deity is no more the issue, while traditions of artistry are extolled at the cost of a complete reconfiguration of the practice itself. Such a transformation has often been termed 'commodification'.<sup>12</sup> But I think that this expression oversimplifies processes that are by nature multidimensional, unless 'commodity' is taken in an extended meaning implying, as Baricco (2002) underlined, that when we buy a brand 'we are buying a world', so that the work of the imagination is always there. This becomes apparent in the aims and role of the actors responsible for bringing Teyyam to public appreciation and enabling its circulation in the international market. What did they have in mind?

### **Scholars in Action**

M. D. Raghavan's pioneering folklore study, inspired by a preoccupation with the welfare of Kerala and India's people, was followed in 1955 by a short description about Teyyam in S. K. Nayar's classic study (in Malayalam) of folk dances and plays, and by a study published in 1956 by K. G. Adiyodi (also in Malayalam). But it was not until the end of the 1960s that studies on Teyyam, both in Malayalam and in English, enjoyed a spectacular boom.

C. M. S. Chanchera was probably the first to publish a full-length study of Teyyam in 1968, in Malayalam, which included detailed first-hand observations and a collection of Teyyam songs. It was followed by a short paper by anthropologist Joan Mencher (in English) and by papers and books by historian K. K. N. Kurup (English, Hindi and Malayalam) in the early 1970s. All three authors might be said to have had Marxist sympathies. More works were to come later, from different perspectives, including many books in

Malayalam by M. V. Vishnu Namputiri, the main authority on Teyyam today in Kerala, and the anthropological research and publications of Ashley and J. R. Freeman. This scholarly activity produced valuable collections of Teyyam songs and stimulated contrasting responses, many informed by a general perception that 'tradition' was on the verge of extinction.<sup>13</sup> In practice, some were instrumental in bringing Teyyam to a wider public both inside and outside Kerala, and in gaining access to a wider market than the one provided in villages. In this process, as we have already seen, Teyyam was an icon for various imagined communities.

K. K. N. Kurup, of Kozhikode (Calicut) University, is one example of a scholar actively promoting knowledge of Teyyam. He wrote two books in English (1973, 1977) that were circulated in folkloric and anthropological circles and made Teyyam known to non-Malayalam-speaking audiences in India and abroad. Soon Kurup became the man to meet for foreigners interested in the study of Teyyam (together with A. K. Nambiar, from the Drama School of the same University). Kurup also publicised Teyyam through a government-sponsored booklet in English (1986), in which he makes clear his reasons for promoting it, referring to both Marxist analysis and regionalist discourse (pp. 15, 29, 32):

The Tamil Sangam culture with variations still continue in this region. The dance of Velan had taken new forms and developed into the present-day cult of Teyyam over a period of 1,500 years. This uninterrupted continuity of the Sangam tradition makes Teyyam a prominent religious system of north Kerala. ...

The Teyyam ritual dance is exclusively performed by the male members of the traditional caste groups like Vannan, Malayan, Velan, Mavilan, Pulayan and Koppalan. These sections belong to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. They are the sole custodians of Teyyam art and dance. In that way it is the art of the depressed castes. Naturally they belong to poor economic background. As the artists belong to this particular social class, he [sic] commanded no status and position. ...

The social system which patronised this art form, kept the artist bonded and submissive. The rigid social system of a caste-oriented society did not encourage the all-round growth of personality of the artist.

Teyyam, potentially a classical art of ancient Tamil culture, with a universal appeal, was thus nipped in the bud because of the local social system (pp. 39, 42):

Although it incorporates some folk aspects, it is a developed art form and a systematic stylization had taken place in the course of its development.

[...] However, the Teyyam dance could not achieve the status of a classical theatre as its growth was arrested due to various factors of social, political and economic system of the region. Further, as the artists belonged to the depressed communities the status of the art form was belittled by a caste-ridden society. The classical arts like Kathakali had borrowed several aspects from Teyyam. There is a close resemblance between the Teyyam art and the Kathakali in make-up, costume, dance and musical instrument. [...] But the rural background and the position of the artists made the Teyyam an entirely different art of the poor, depressed and downtrodden.

Kurup's purpose in promoting Teyyam as art is thus manifold: to demonstrate that Teyyam is the true heir to ancient Dravidian culture, to suggest that it has the same aesthetic potential as classical art, and to denounce the social oppression that prevented it from fully blossoming. In this perspective, his cultural mediation is to be understood in connection with a complex work of the imagination, involving, for instance, ideas about progress that call not only for a better appreciation of the artistic heritage of Kerala, but also for the betterment of the socio-economic condition of the performers themselves.

### **Looking for Money and Consideration**

Kurup's booklet ends by echoing the preoccupations of a famous Teyyam performer, winner of an award from the Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi in 1975, who is said to have been the first 'to take the art form to different parts of Kerala and outside without ritual formalities as a theatrical performance' (p. 53–4):

There is no future for Teyyam art and artists. It is dying and in a moribund state. The existing society would spend Rs 10,000 for a festival, but Rs 10 only for an artist. The social changes and the modernity had adversely affected the art and cult. However, as an art form it is to be preserved and encouraged.

As a permanent official and teacher at the Teyyam Institute of Kodakkat (which Ashley helped to establish), this performer has encouraged Teyyam studies by foreign students. 'He finds that their involvement in this field had given encouragement to some native scholars to study and analyse this dying art' (p. 56). Locally, there have been negative perceptions about all these developments, however, which have provoked social tensions. One dancer from one of the five institutes recorded by Ashley in 1984 was banned from

performing in temples after his performance at the Delhi Asian Games in 1982 led to an accusation of ‘selling out’ Teyyam. As he said (Ashley 1993: 246–7):

I wanted [Teyyam] to be expanded outside of the temple. By opening an institute other castes can come and learn and it will be performed on a public stage. I want it to be appreciated on a mass scale. We want people to understand how difficult teyyam is to perform – and thus realize that we are not being paid enough.

There are thus several different factors contributing to what Ashley himself calls the ‘commoditization’ of Teyyam under the renewed forms of dance or theatrical performance. The possibility of staging Teyyam as an art form makes it a means for performers to raise their social and economic status, while still presenting in a dramatic way a rich array of ideological referents and purposes (for example, the valorisation of a ‘Dravidian culture’). With this aim in mind, new ways of staging what is still called ‘Teyyam’ have been elaborated so that it may qualify for inclusion in the general marketing of cultural goods. The staging is now devoid of so-called ‘ritual formalities’, alienating to contemporary urban taste, as they were to modernists early in the last century. This ‘sanitized’ version typically shows to advantage the drumming, the dance steps and gestures, and above all the costume and make-up, the whole being designed to last less than the usual two hours of Western shows. In this version ‘Teyyam’ has recently reached international audiences.

### **Meeting the International Public**

We may discern movement in two directions. In one direction foreigners come to the villages, in the other the villagers go abroad. The Ford Foundation has been engaged in a programme of support for ‘traditional cultures’ in order to respond to a perceived ‘crisis of values’ or ‘the eroding social and cultural coherence of the modern world’ (the Foundation’s words), especially in Third World nations (Ashley 1993: 306ff). This can be seen as another discourse on the negative effects of globalization.

In this way the Foundation helped to produce a folk festival organized by Kozhikode University in 1984 in Kerala, in which Teyyam was prominently featured both in the form of decorative items such as costumes at the venue entrance, and as staged performances. The festival took place in a village school, and the audience comprised local villagers, Indian and foreign scholars, photographers and artists. What is significant for the present discussion is that one of the university organizers explained that the purpose of such festivals was

'to re-establish the villagers' umbilical attachment to these elemental forms which have in many ways been impaired by changes of time' (Sankara Pillai, cited in Ashley 1993: 320–1). In other words, the local was to be rescued by going global. Urban-educated scholars and artists, helped by the external funding of a concerned global agency, were there to help unsuspecting villagers to recover their true local culture against the attacks of globalization.

There was an additional loop in this global reaction to the global, in that one of the guests was Peter Brook, engaged in the preparation of his version of the *Mahabharata* epic. He had already come to Kerala the previous year to witness a Teyyam performance arranged specially for him in a village through the mediation of folklorist and drama school teacher A. K. Nambiar. For Brook, Teyyam could have been a source of inspiration for theatrical ideas of Indian origin, to which he might have lent a universal dimension. As far as I am aware, however, he did not make use of it.

This leads us to the second perspective in which the Teyyam spectacle has caught the international eye. In a significant development, we find a photograph of Teyyam on the cover of a French book entitled *Atlas de l'imaginaire* (Gründ and Khaznadar 1996). The authors are directors of a well-known cultural institution in Paris, the Maison des Cultures du Monde, which regularly produces musical, dance and theatrical performances by companies from all over the world. It invited a Teyyam troupe to perform in the street during the French Year of India in 1985, and again in 1989 to stage a more complete show in collaboration with a theatre company, a feature repeated in 2003 during the Seventh Festival de l'imaginaire. J. Duvignaud, in the Preface to the *Atlas* (1996), says:

Away with your fads for the exotic, for tourism, for folklore ...! Since 1982 the Maison des Cultures du Monde has been responding to the open-ended invitation bequeathed by Antonin Artaud: to reveal the plentiful and fascinating wealth of festivals, games, rituals and performances by which men living on earth today represent themselves and represent their dreams ...

If this interpretation of Artaud's message seems somewhat eccentric, the reference to him is nonetheless not accidental. Producers and actors alike have tried in the recent past to take inspiration from his manifesto and to emphasize the physical and dramatic dimensions of theatrical shows. This has contributed to a recent interest in the study of rituals all over the world, treating them as forms of drama.<sup>14</sup> A recent development in this direction was the creation in 1995 by Gründ, Khaznadar and a few French scholars, under the aegis of UNESCO, of what claims to be a new academic discipline, 'ethno-scenology'.

Teyyam is well adapted for such a programme, and has contributed in its own way towards shaping it, but the perspective clearly differs from the one advocated by the Ford Foundation. Here, Teyyam becomes part of an international heritage of the imagination (as a matter of fact, a rather imaginative paper on Teyyam by F. Gründ appeared in 1989 in a magazine called *Internationale de l'imaginaire*). At the same time, this appraisal is made through a kind of romanticisation of ritual: for instance, the book quite complacently describes human sacrifice, an astonishing reversal of appreciation in contrast with earlier accusations of savagery. Actually, rituals are never shown on stage, but are merely evoked by commentaries in order to generate in the audience a kind of reverent awe that itself adds value.

### **Conclusion**

Discussions of Teyyam involve widely differing points of view expressed at different levels of society. Although Teyyam is still mainly a village cult, most of these discussions relate to notions of globalizing: 'primitivity', irrationality, the imagination, popular culture, cultural heritage, worldwide social and cultural cohesion, etc. Social influences are diverse. Colonial administrators, Christian evangelists, reformist Hindu saints, local caste elites, Marxists, nationalists, folklorists, anthropologists, dramatists – all have something to say about Teyyam. What should be stressed is that these various discourses have all implied interpretations of 'the locality', and conceptions about the relationship of the locality with what are perceived as 'universals'.

The discourses also imply contextual references to the identities that Teyyam is supposed to define: the nation, the region, North Malabar, this or that caste, a particular religious system, the villagers' true culture, Dravidian artistry, mankind's innate power of expression, or just individual professional practice. Even performers themselves are often aware nowadays of various global aspects while preserving Teyyam as a village cult. Behind obvious appearances, things might therefore be more complex. My analysis has had to distinguish between concepts that seem often to articulate with each other contextually. An example can be seen in one of many Kerala newspaper reports about Teyyam. In words that should strike a familiar chord by now, journalist K. K. Gopalalakrishnan writes (*The Hindu*, 6 March 1994: x):

Although it is only performed in the relatively neglected northern part of Kerala, theyyam is the foremost of the ritual folklore art forms of the State. Its prominence is always beyond the superficiality of a mere ritual because it combines the significance of social unity, harmony and mutual respect with the highlights of the cultural heritage and bewitching aesthetic sense of the people.

We find here a combination of many concepts that the analysis above has distinguished. The author continues: 'The general belief, especially of the local inhabitants, is that theyyams are representatives of Gods and demi-Gods.' A caption below a photo is shorter: 'The locals believe ... etc.' Most interestingly, this reference to 'the locals' is based on something unsaid. The author evokes a Teyyam performed in 'an old once very affluent landlord family', without revealing that it is his own – a revealing example of a 'self-exoticizing' process (Battaglia 1999, p. 125) resulting from an internalisation of the kind of material discussed in this paper. As anthropologist J. R. Freeman suggests (Freeman 1991: 169):

Thus, while my general impression is that the educated (particularly English-educated and urban) Hindus of northern Kerala are less likely to have belief or respect for teyyam-worship as a religious expression, it is also not unusual to find many, even among this group, who, at festival time, return to their ancestral homes or caste-shrines to participate in the rites.

Teyyam has now two intersecting realities: the cult (only in Malabar villages) and the staged demonstration (everywhere, including Malabar villages). In both forms it has been, and still is, a locus where contrasting meanings about the local and the global are projected, especially at the village level where all the various facets may be present. The connection between these meanings can imply a coexistence or, at times, an implicit misunderstanding. More often, it is a contextual shift. In some cases, too, it seems to rely on personal ambiguity and inner complexities, for in the work of the imagination at the individual level, the global world is within.

## Notes

- 1 See for instance Dumont 1985; Hannerz 1989; Assayag 1998; 1999; Racine 2001; Terdiman 2001.
- 2 This chapter is the outcome of various oral presentations (Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Paris, 1997; South Asian Anthropologists Group, London, 1999; London School of Economics, 2001). I wish to thank all the participants at these meetings for their comments. I also particularly thank C. Clémentin-Ojha and Mayuri Koga for their detailed remarks on an earlier draft. A related short paper for the general public has previously been published (Tarabout 1997).
- 3 For a detailed analysis of the mediations involved in the international 'marketing' of another South Indian ritual practice, and of matters associated with this development, see Tarabout 2003.
- 4 Because the region where it is still prevalent as a village cult is not an area of Kerala in which I have personally conducted research, I have to rely heavily on others' work – particularly that of anthropologists W. Ashley and J. R. Freeman – and on other

- available material. Fortunately, Teyyam figures feature as contemporary symbols of Kerala culture, so there is no dearth of documents for at least the last 20 years.
- 5 Documentation on these cults is constantly growing in Malayalam, the language of Kerala, and in English. In English, the reader may refer mainly to the works of Freeman (1991 [by far the most comprehensive account]; 1993; 1998); Ashley (1979; 1993); Ashley and Holloman (1990); Kurup (1973; 1977; 1986); Balan Nambiar (1993); Paliath (1995); and Koga (2003).
  - 6 Compare Blackburn 1985; see also Tarabout 2001.
  - 7 Compare Nichter 1977 for the cults of the neighbouring district of South Kanara, which present strikingly similar traits.
  - 8 As far as I am aware, reports from both administrators and travellers before the end of the nineteenth century are remarkably discreet on the subject, with the exception of a sixteenth-century description by Duarte Barbosa which might allude to a similar cult.
  - 9 Which required him to report in detail about physical characteristics – such as the maxillo-zygomatic index or the distribution of hairs on the chest – following the then current practices of physical anthropology.
  - 10 I use the expression ‘new elite’ here in a somewhat loose sense. What was new was their frequent English education, and the fact that their livelihood no longer depended on the land. In this they mostly differed from the rural elite, although they belonged to the same castes and sometimes even the same families.
  - 11 I thank Mayuri Koga for kindly providing me with this information.
  - 12 See for instance Appadurai 1986; Phillips and Steiner 1999.
  - 13 See for instance Balan Nambiar (1995), a Kerala artist who has documented Teyyam by taking photographs on a large scale, before it is ‘lost for ever’.
  - 14 See for instance Schechner 1983.

## Bibliography

- Anonymous (1978) *Folk Arts Directory*. Trichur: Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi.
- Anonymous (1980) *Dances of Kerala*. Trivandrum: Government of Kerala, Department of Public Relations.
- Appadurai, Arjun, ed. (1986) *The Social Life of Things. Commodities in cultural perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Appadurai, Arjun (1996) *Modernity at Large. Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Ashley, Wayne (1979) ‘The Teyyam Kettu of Northern Kerala’, *The Drama Review*, 23, 2: 99–112.
- (1993) ‘Recodings: ritual, theatre, and political display in Kerala State, South India’, unpublished PhD dissertation, New York University.
- Ashley, Wayne and Regina Holloman (1990) ‘Teyyam’, in F. R. Richmond, D. L. Swann and P. B. Zarrilli, eds, *Indian Theatre: Traditions of performance*. University of Hawaii Press; 131–65.
- Assayag, Jackie (1998) ‘La culture comme fait social global? Anthropologie et (post)modernité’, *L’Homme*, 148 : 201–4.
- (1999) ‘La “glocalisation” du beau. Miss Monde en Inde, 1996’, *Terrain*, 32: 67–82.
- Balan Nambiar (1993) ‘Tai Paradevata: ritual impersonation in the Teyyam tradition of Kerala’, in H. Brückner, L. Lutze and A. Malik, eds, *Flags of Fame: Studies in South Asian folk culture*. Delhi: Manohar; 139–63.

- (1995) 'Photographing Teyyam', *India International Centre Quarterly*, summer-monsoon 1995 (special number: *Kerala, Progress and Paradox*): 131–42.
- Baricco, Alessandro (2002) *Next. Petit livre sur la globalisation et le monde à venir*. Paris: Albin Michel/Milan: Feltrinelli.
- Barnard, Alan (2000) *History and Theory in Anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Battaglia, Debbora (1999) 'Toward an ethic of the open subject: writing culture in good conscience', in Henrietta L. Moore, ed., *Anthropological Theory Today*. Cambridge, Polity Press; 114–50.
- Blackburn, Stuart H. (1985) 'Death and deification: folk cults in Hinduism', *History of Religions*, 24, 3: 255–74.
- Deshpande, Satish (2001) 'From development to globalization: shifts in ideological paradigms of nation and economy in the Third World', in R. Melkote, ed., *Meanings of Globalization. Indian and French perspectives*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers; 98–114.
- Dumont, Louis (1985) 'Identités collectives et idéologie universaliste: leur interaction de fait', *Critique*, 456 : 506–18.
- Fawcett, Fred (1901) 'Nāyars of Malabar', *Madras Government Museum Bulletin*, III, 3: 185–322.
- Freeman, John R. (1991) 'Purity and violence: sacred power in the Teyyam worship of Malabar', unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania.
- (1993) 'Performing possession: ritual and consciousness in the Teyyam complex of Northern Kerala', in H. Brückner, L. Lutze and A. Malik, eds, *Flags of Fame: Studies in South Asian folk culture*. Delhi: Manohar; 109–38.
- (1998) 'Formalised possession among the Tantris and Teyyams in North Malabar', *South Asia Research*, 18, 1: 73–98.
- Frykenberg, Robert E. (1988) 'Fundamentalism and revivalism in South Asia', in J. W. Björkman, ed., *Fundamentalism, Revivalists and Violence in South Asia*. Delhi: Manohar; 20–39.
- (1989) 'The emergence of modern "Hinduism" as a concept and as an institution: a reappraisal with special reference to South India', in G. D. Sontheimer and H. Kulke, eds, *Hinduism Reconsidered*. Delhi: Manohar.
- Ganguly-Scrase, Ruchira and Timothy J. Scrase (2001) 'Who wins? Who loses? and Who even knows? Responses to economic liberalisation and cultural globalization in India', *South Asia*, XXIV, 1: 141–58.
- Gründ, Françoise (1989) 'Le Teyyam du Kérala', *Internationale de l'imaginaire*, 12.
- Gründ, Françoise and Chérif Khaznadar (1996) *Atlas de l'imaginaire*, Paris/Lausanne: Maison des Cultures du Monde/Favre.
- Hannerz, Ulf (1989) 'Culture between center and periphery: toward a macroanthropology', *Ethnos*, 3–4: 200–16.
- Harriss, John (2001) 'Globalization and the world's poor: institutions, inequality and justice', *Economic and Political Weekly*, XXXVI, 23 (9 June): 2034–7.
- Hensman, Rohini (2001) 'Religious sentiment and national sovereignty. Resisting Talibanisation', *Economic and Political Weekly*, XXXVI, 23 (9 June): 2031–3.
- Koga, Mayuri (2003) 'The politics of ritual and art in Kerala: controversies concerning the staging of *teyyam*', *Journal of the Japanese Association for South Asian Studies*, 15: 547–79.
- Kunhappa, Murkot (1980) *Sree Narayana Guru*. Delhi: National Book Trust.
- Kurup, K. K. N. (1973) *The Cult of Teyyam and Hero Worship*. Calcutta: Indian Publications (Indian Folklore Series No. 21).

- (1977) *Aryan and Dravidian Elements in Malabar Folklore: A case study of Ramavilliam Kalakam*. Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society.
- (1986) *Theyyam*. Trivandrum: Government of Kerala, Department of Public Relations.
- Menon, Dilip (1994) *Caste, Nationalism and Communism in South India. Malabar, 1900–1948*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Osella, Filippo (1993) ‘Caste, class, power and social mobility in Kerala, India’, unpublished PhD dissertation, London School of Economics.
- Nichter, M. (1977) ‘The Joga and Maya of the Tuluva Bhuta’, *The Eastern Anthropologist*, 30, 2: 139–55.
- Paliath, J. J. (1995) *Theyyam. An analytical study of the folk culture, wisdom and personality*. New Delhi: Indian Social Institute.
- Phillips, Ruth B. and Christopher B. Steiner, eds (1999) *Unpacking Culture. Art and commodity in colonial and postcolonial worlds*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Racine, Jean-Luc (2001) ‘On globalization: beyond the paradigm. States and civil societies in the global and local context’, in R. Melkote, ed., *Meanings of Globalization. Indian and French perspectives*. New Delhi: Sterling; 1–40.
- Raghavan, M. D. (1947) *Folk Plays and Dances of Kerala*. Trichur: The Rama Varma Archaeological Society.
- Sarveswaran, P. (1980) ‘Sri Vaikunda Swamikal. A forgotten social reformer of Kerala’, *Journal of Kerala Studies*, VII, 1–4: 1–10.
- Schechner, Richard (1983) *Performative Circumstances. From the avant-garde to Ramlila*. Calcutta: Seagull Books.
- Tarabout, Gilles (1997) ‘La mise en culture des rites’, *Cultures en mouvement*, 5: 40–3.
- (2001) ‘Ancêtres et revenants. La construction sociale de la malemort en Inde’, in B. Baptandier, ed., *De la malemort en quelques pays d’Asie*. Paris: Karthala; 165–99.
- (2003) ‘Passage à l’art. L’adaptation d’un culte sud-indien au patronage artistique’, in Y. Escande and J.-M. Schaeffer, eds, *L’esthétique: Europe, Chine et ailleurs*. Paris: Editions You-Feng; 37–60.
- Terdiman, Richard (2001) ‘Globalization and cultural studies: conceptualization, convergence, and complication’, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, XXI, 1–2: 82–7.
- William, V. (1944) ‘Devil dances of North Malabar (Thirayattam or Theyyam Tullal)’, unpublished dissertation submitted for the degree of Bachelor of Divinity, Bangalore United Theological College.