

അഞ്ചാം
കേരള ചരിത്ര
കോൺഫറൻസ്
പ്രബന്ധങ്ങൾ

THE RUFFLED TIMES IN HISTORY

എഡിറ്റേഴ്സ്
മനോജ് ടി. ആർ., ബിജു ആർ. ഐ.

PROCEEDINGS OF
Vth INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON
KERALA HISTORY



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From Image to the Sound: An Early History of Malayalam Cinema till 1947

Ms. Jincy S. R.

Kerala has its own great tradition of arts. The influence of folk art and culture is visible in the culture of Kerala, and the large repertoire of folk arts form an integral element contributing to the rich and varied structure of our cultural fabric. Surprisingly, the traditional art forms of Kerala had a visual appeal. The shadow puppetry, Tholpavakkoothu of Kerala was a best example for it which exhibited at festivals of village temples. In India there prevailed many kinds of shadow plays with much popular appeal, which effectively exploited the possibility of light and shade using leather cutouts and puppets of gods and goddesses accompanied by live instrumental as well as vocal music¹(Endnotes). Usually, the stories from the mythology were presented in the shadow dance. Thus much before the arrival of cinema, the people of Kerala were familiar with moving images on the screen.

The legacy of Kerala's visual culture may have been helped to the origin and development of cinema as a new medium of expression. Moreover Malayalam cinema has its own existence and is one of the most popular arts enjoyed by the mass. Hence cinema has contributed much to the social and political development of Kerala society.

Malayalam Cinema: Early period

Following the screening of the Lumiere moving pictures in London in December 28, 1895, cinema became a sensation across Europe and by the very next year the Lumiere films had entered into India. The first cinematography exhibition in India took place on July 7, 1896, by Lumiere brothers, Louis and Auguste at Watson hotel, Bombay². Thus cinema reached into this subcontinent which was under the British rule. After the exhibition in Mumbai, travelling showmen conducted shows at various parts of India in temporary tents³. Soon after, indigenous attempts were started in different parts of the country.