Chapter 4

GENERATIONAL CONFLICTS IN THE NOVELS FATHERS AND SONS AND THALAMURAKAL
-A COMPARATIVE STUDY BASED ON THE TWO NOVELS

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CHAPTER 4

GENERATIONAL CONFLICTS IN THE NOVELS FATHERS AND SONS AND THALAMURAKAL: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Introduction

Aspiring mind of a reader will always try to assess a particular work of art as well as to compare it with another one. This particular aspect of reader’s mind sets the foundation for comparative literature. In most general terms, comparative literature aims at bringing together two or more works of literatures on the same platform in some significant sense. It does so by the way of comparing them to each other and thereupon bringing out common point of value and specificities which give them their distinct character. Such a comparison is meant to bring out some useful perceptions concerning some important aspects of human nature and society. Therefore, when some works appear to be characteristically similar, the differences following a comparative study of them may reveal some altogether new facets of each works. The same thing happens when a comparative study succeeds in highlighting the underlying similarities between works which are also instructively different. It is widely believed that the renaissance, which took place in Europe during fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, had contributed so
much to the field of literature, and the discipline of comparative literature is just one among such contributions.

The word *renaissance* stands for the cultural zest and utility which has been created through various generations of different countries in Europe. The industrial revolution and the advent of printing technology have widened the horizons of various possibilities in the field of knowledge dissemination. This paved the way for various liberal works being translated into many other languages. The progress that took place in the field of mass communications during the twentieth century cut short the geographical distance between different nations. All these above mentioned aspects helped the readers mind to cross the boundaries of countries in the pursuit for other literary works.

Comparative literature is the literal diligence which reaches beyond the limits of language and nation. “Comparative literature is the study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country, and the study of the relationship between literature on the one hand, and the other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts, philosophy, history, the social sciences, the sciences, religion etc.”\(^{107}\)

The two novels, selected for this study, *Fathers and Sons* and *Thalamurakal* belong to two regions which differ much in geography as well as in social situations. Though geographically situated in between Europe and Asia, Russian people keep up a cultural identity of their own. The Russian language which possess centuries old rich cultural heritage, is a prominent Slav language included in Indo-European family of languages. From nineteenth century onwards, Russian language and literature was able to influence other languages and literatures of the world in many ways. *Fathers and Sons*, penned by one of the pioneers of Russian realistic novels, Ivan Turgenev, is a novel written in the background of social movements which happened in Russia by the second half of nineteenth century. In the barbarous feudal society of Russia under Czar Emperors; it was by the middle of nineteenth century that the new thoughts and quests gained momentum. The clash between two social views formed as part of these quests is the main theme of the novel. As the name stands, two generations of Fathers and Sons engage themselves in debates throughout the novel.

The novel *Thalamurakal* belongs to an entirely different situation. Malabar, situated in the southern most part of Indian subcontinent is a region which possesses much different cultural features in comparison with Russia. The renowned Malayalam writer O.V. Vijayan wrote this novel in the backdrop of two centuries of social changes in Malabar. Malabar, which was under Madras presidency during British period and later under Kerala post
independence, has a peculiar social history. The time period from the middle of eighteenth century to that of twentieth century when the Indian social phenomenon called caste system was strong with all its regional peculiarities is blooming in the novel. The story of survival of different generations of a backward class family as per caste divisions is depicted in the novel.

In comparison with Russian language, Malayalam, which linguistically belongs to the Dravidian family, is a language with a short literary history. The two novels are published in two different languages linguistically in two different eras. *Fathers and Sons* was published in 1861 when novel was started becoming popular as a literary genre. More than hundred years later *Thalamurakal* was published in the last years of twentieth century when serious changes occurred in human (social) relationships and technical development.

At a glance, the two novels seem to have different plots and social backgrounds, but if subjected to a deep study, it can be well understood that the two novels share many features in common. As a realistic novel, it is true that *Fathers and Sons* is much related to the real life of the period it was written. Regarding *Thalamurakal*, the writer himself had made clear that is a work with many autobiographical elements. In that sense it is clear that it is closely related with real life for a long period.
4.1 Feudalist theme:

Though the two novels belong to different eras and situations, it is noted that both were written on social backgrounds with feudal features. The social structure called feudalism has many national as well as regional peculiarities in each region. Historians have already pointed out the differences between feudalist models of India and Europe:

“The significant change from centralized view point was due largely to the emergence of a new politico-economic structure, which dominated north and later South India, which can broadly be termed feudalism. The use of this term has been contested since the type of feudalism in India during these centuries was not identical with the feudal system in other part of the world.”108

While European feudalism has developed in relation with economic production models, Indian feudalism is entwined with caste system related work distribution. Russian feudalist society had some differences from European feudal models. Though feudal situations in European countries underwent many changes, till the declaration of the Emancipation of serfs in 1861, officially feudalism legally sustained in Russia, while differences like

these persisted, there were many things common for all feudal societies. For that reason, possibilities of comparison of these two works written in feudal background are vast and wide.

Through the two generations in *Fathers and Sons*, the conflicts between different views raised during nineteenth century Russia entered into the new level of social development; i.e. from a feudal structure to more capital oriented society. Whereas the transformation of Malabar society from caste based feudal structure to colonial modernity are portrayed in *Thalamurakal*. The novel also pours into the reader specific/ peculiar experiences of Malabar which reaches into colonial modernity though follows feudalist social structure.

The downtrodden serfs, who led a worst life under the centuries old feudal order of Russian society. By the middle of the century, a major change occurred in the social condition of Russia. During this transition period, two streams of social views were emerged which later become a determinant factor of the future course of Russian society. The theme of the novel *Fathers and Sons* is emerged from these two different social views. The characters Kirsanov and Bazarov of the novel is representing the two streams of thoughts during the age of transition from outdated feudal social system into more developed capitalist system of social relations. At the same time, the changes in the feudal system of Malabar are being depicted in the novel
Thalamurakal. A transition from caste based feudal system into colonial modernity was happened in Malabar. Perhaps, the European society may be totally unknown to such a shift. This change is much evident when the story of the novel moves from the eighteenth century to second half of the twentieth century.

4.2 Narrative Style:

Comparative literature comprises not only the evaluation of similarities between two literary works but disparities are also part of it. Though the two novels part of this study here are different in story and plot, the possibilities of comparison are more. The novel Fathers and sons, is full of dialogues between different characters, and author introduce the events in a chronological manner. From the beginning to the end, Turgenev has applied the style of continuous development of plot structure. The novel Thalamurakal moves ahead in a different style altogether. Instead of presenting the story chronologically, O.V. Vijayan narrates the history of different periods of Ponmudi Tharavadu jumping the time order. Throughout the novel Thalamurakal there are instances of sudden twists/turns in time that, while narrating the story of one generation the novelist is seen returning to old periods often. This style is seen in the second chapter of the novel.

“Is the story over Granma?” the child Chandran asked

“Over”.

Twenty years later... Twilight in Hongkong, people returning homes in haste’.’

Chapters of the novel as well transgress the time order. In the third chapter, novelist narrates the story of Appukkaranaavar who had lived in the eighteenth century, but by the Fourth chapter, it reaches the childhood of Chandran, one of the last generation members from twentieth century. Instead of arranging events in chronologically, Vijayan is seen entwining different eras.

Here, the present research work is comparatively analyzing, in what ways conflicts between two or more generations are evident in the two novels Fathers and Sons and Thalamurakal. The phenomenon of ‘conflict between generations’ is appearing in the novels of Ivan Turgenev and O.V. Vijayan in different manners. In formulating common outlooks of a generation corresponding social situation have a great role. Each generation faces different social situations in human history. For that reason, views of each generation will be different. Conflicts like these, between different views are as old as human history. Diversities in social outlooks and stands and their mutual ideological conflicts amidst the people of two generations are often pictured here in the novel Fathers and Sons. The two different schools of

thought appeared in Russian society of 1850’s have also much influenced the characters in the novel. The rise of a new generation which tries to look at the world in their own ways and which denies all previous views in search of new ways, enters into a serious conflict with the previous generation. The chief characters of the novel Bazarov, Pavel, Nickolai and Arkady are representatives of two different generations living in the same period. Their diverse thoughts are coming into conflict. As the title stands, often it becomes the portrayal of ideological clash between fathers and sons. It is the entry of the character Bazarov as a spokesman of a new generation who denies all old ways and existing institutions giving the novel extraordinary aura. All the characters in the novel are representatives of a specific era in the forerun of Russian society. As a realistic novelist, Turgenev has copied his contemporary Russian society with unusual expertise.

In Thalamurakal, the phenomenon of conflict between generations appears in a different way. Unlike in Fathers and Sons, here the characters of two generation are not coming into conflict. Instead, the discords between generations are let out through different generations of a big family. O.V. Vijayan completes Thalamurakal with characters that have cut new paths of their own disapproving the stands of former generation. Characters of five generations of different time periods often appear in the novel. It is through many generations from Krishnanammavan of eighteenth century to the members of last generation, Theodor Vale Vagner, novel gets completed.
While comparatively analysing the portrayal of conflicts between generations in the two novels, what chiefly comes is the difference in expression. Debates between Pavel and Bazarov form an important part of *Fathers and Sons*. Debates between Pavel who represents the father’s generation and their outlooks, and Bazarov who raises the thoughts of new generation are evolving as debates between two generations. It is in the same way, discussions between Arkady and Nickolai are considered.

On the other hand, Krishnanammavan in the *Thalamurakal* is studying Sanskrit violating the rules and tradition of his former generations. It is at a time when casteism of 18th century is at its apex; Ezhava Krishnanammavan is studying Sanskrit which is prohibited for low castes. He is challenging traditional laws through his actions. While the discordance between generations is appearing through mutual debates in *Fathers and Sons*, that phenomenon is appearing through the actions of different characters in the novel *Thalamurakal*. As the title stands, the plot of the novel passes through many generations.

A writer’s creative work will be a reaction to the world he lives. In that sense, novels written in two centuries cannot be analyzed with same yard sticks. It is a difficult task to compare *Fathers and Sons* published in the middle of nineteenth century and *Thalamurakal* published towards the last of twentieth century. *Fathers and Sons* is a best example for earlier realistic
novels. Realistic novels in Malayalam language have come out by the influence of western realistic novels. Influence of Russian writers is also seen in Malayalam writers. Modernism appears in 1960s as a continuation of realistic trends in Malayalam. O.V. Vijayan was a pioneer in the new writing trend in Malayalam. *Thalamurakal* is written in a social situation much strange to the European or Russian society. The novel *Thalamurakal* shows the features of modernist novels which penetrate deep into interpersonal conflicts. During modernism

“Malayalam novel is passing through different levels in the structural evolution of novel from ‘incident-oriented’ characters to ‘character-oriented’ incidents.”

4.3 Bazarov and Chamiyarappan—Comparing the inner conflicts:

The plot in *Fathers and Sons* revolves around the character of Bazarov. The new and different outlooks of young generation develop through the arguments of this character. In the Vijayan’s novel, it is understood that the plot does not develops around such a central character. Unlike the plenitude presence of Bazarov in Turgenev’s novel, one cannot find a character in *Thalamurakal*. At the same time, Chamiyarappan attracts special attention as an important character in *Thalamurakal*. Though there are

many limitations in comparing Bazarov and Chamiyarappan, being the chief characters in two novels, there are some possibilities too.

Throughout the novel *Fathers and Sons* Bazarov embodies nihilism. Ivan Turgenev is the first to use the term nihilism in any literary genre. What the writer intends with nihilism is coming out through the character Arkady “who approaches everything from a critical point of view.” Nihilism is a materialistic attitude which developed as an idea in relation with Russian new generation of 1850s. It has inseparable relation with the development of natural science. In short, it is a materialistic stand in connection with scientific rationalism. Bazarov is supporting and following this stand. Though nihilism as a term is used in Russian social milieu even before, in a literature, it was introduced through the character of Bazarov. If Bazarov is nihilist, the chief character of *Thalamurakal* Chamiyarappan is rationalist. He enters into rationalism abandoning the traditional believes. The atheist scholar Ingersoll who challenged God to sneeze has inspired Chamiyarappan. It is part of the social development in which newer ideas including nihilism have started influencing Russian society after 1850s.

It is his surrounding that led Chamiyarappan to rationalism. The common fact between these two characters is that both are subjected to self

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conflicts being in between their own new thought and their existence as common man. Nihilism and extreme scientism prompt Bazarov to deny all emotional aspects of human life. Not only arts and literature, the nihilist in Bazarov deny all romantic aspects in man-woman relationship. In the second part of the novel, the novelist presents self conflicts experienced by Bazarov as a human. Acquaintances with Odintsova make much change in the former stands of the young nihilist. Bazarov, who has considered man-woman relationships only in physiological levels, has to understand the romantic aspects of human life through his own experience. With a nihilist’s scientism on one side and a common man’s emotions on the other, Bazarov is getting into self conflicts.

Chamiyarappan is facing the same self conflict in a different way. Chamiyarappan who converts to Christianity to escape from the caste backwardness and later into rationalism when the former does not solve his identity crisis is not often able to overcome the traditional believes and complications of daily life. That is why Chamiyarappan says this “I have no enmity now. Even if no God, I pray for my children.”112 Amidst these conflicts, though Chamiyarappan declares himself free from rationalism, the novelist is not leaving him from his ‘rationalist’ address. Chamiyarappan is reaching into self conflicts between the traditional believes, followed by his

former generations, and his new school of thought of rationalism. Here, the nihilist Bazarov and rationalist Chamiyarappan are facing the same internal conflicts.

Throughout the novel, Bazarov is appearing as the representative of the new generation who fight against the spokesmen of former generations. Bazarov is a character who has cut his own path questioning traditional beliefs and existing social situations. Throughout the novel, Bazarov challenges old religious concepts about the origin of man, aristocratic concepts about social structure and romantic beliefs. Equipped with his knowledge of natural science and scientific truths, this young nihilist is confident in his ideas and likes to make his own path. His objective is to question and throw away all believes of his previous generations.

Chamiyarappan is also doing this in another way. He is selecting his own lone path. By leading a procession of low-castes to Kalpathi Street where only Brahmins can enter, Chamiyarappan is protesting against the discriminatory and suppressive structure of the traditions. It is Chamiyarappan’s revolutionary decision to opt Christianity demolishing the frame works of Hindu religion sunk in the whirlpool of caste system. Later his abandoning of faith itself and becoming atheist and communist sympathizer can be seen as his symbolic revolt against the rules of former generations. It is understood that Bazarov and Chamiyarappan are living in their respective
social situations deconstructing the traditional believes and social frameworks of their former generations. There is no doubt that Bazarov and Chamiyarappan are two different links in the age old phenomena of conflicts between generations.

4.4 Minor characters of the two novels—A comparative analysis:

In comparing two literary works, comparative analysis of their characters is an important part of study. Though written in different eras and cultural backgrounds, the characters pictured in *Fathers and Sons* and *Thalamurakal* can be compared and contrasted. Though there are many differences in characters of Arkady in *Fathers and Sons* and Chandran in *Thalamurakal*, there is a possibility of their comparative analysis. Arkady is a character, who in the beginning of the novel stands like a shadow of the Bazarov and later takes his own way. Arkady, who appears as a fan of Bazarov’s nihilist views, sharply criticises the stands of old generation. He introduced his friend Bazarov to his father and uncle with pride. In the novel, it is he, who introduces the word ‘nihilism’ to others. In the second part Arkady is seen distancing from Bazarov. Though there are little differences of opinion between them, it is Arkady’s affair with Katya that is completely distances them. Arkady is not ready to reject the emotionality in man–woman relationship. Later he is not ready to disapprove completely arts and literature. Towards the end of the novel, Arkady is thinking about a family life with
Katya. Though there are changes in his extreme nihilist radical thoughts, Arkady is not ready to avoid Bazarov’s thoughts completely. Yet Arkady is withdrawing at last from the path of Bazarov who led him into a new thought.

Chandran in *Thalamurakal* is a character having similarities with Arkady in some sense. The entry of Chandran in the novel is that of a boy who objects to his grandmother’s believes. Chandran takes the footsteps of his grandfather with the lessons he learnt from him. Chandran joins the communist movement, thanks to the influence of his grandfather Chamiyarappan on him. Though Chandran actively participates in regional party activities, he cannot blindly embrace the policies of the Soviet Union. He distances from the communist party, which praises Soviet invasion in Hungary. After reaching Hongkong he turns to armament trade. There are some similarities between Arkady and Chandran, since towards the end of the novels, they disown the ideologies they once followed sincerely.

Arkady becomes a nihilist owing to the influence of Bazarov; similarly, Chandran becomes a communist under the influence of Chamiyarappan. Towards the end of the novel, for their own reasons these two characters withdraw from the radical idea that once they followed like worshipers. Yet Arkady is not ready to deny all of the Bazarov’s views. He distances from Bazarov for his personal reasons. The same thing is seen in Chandran. He does not completely rejects Chamiyarappan’s believes. He does
not deny the idea of communism, but criticizes its practices and failures in adopting local perspectives.

Two much similar characters of Ivan Turgenev and O.V. Vijayan are Arina Vlasevna, the mother of Bazarov in the novel *Fathers and Sons* and Devaki Amma, the wife of Chamiyarappan in the novel *Thalamurakal*. When new thoughts and debates challenging the traditional believes rise throughout the novel, Vlasevna and Devaki Amma cling to traditional believes. The novelist has portrayed Anna Vlasevna realistically. All the characteristic features of a nineteenth century average Russian housewives are seen in her character. Vlasevna turns her face from the discussions for changes in Russian society at a time when such discussions are at their apex. The novelist himself tells about her as a woman who should have lived 200 years ago. The thoughts and stands of nihilist and scientism sympathiser son have not influenced his mother by any means. Unlike her husband she is not ready to accept liberal thoughts. Her prime concern is the happiness and well-being of her husband and family.

Like the women of remote Russian villages of that time, she too believes in all superstitions and traditional customs. Vlasevna, who is not ready for engaging into direct debate with other characters in the novel, is a character with features opposite to that of the characters of the new generation. Devaki Amma in *Thalamurakal* is a character showing similarities
to the characteristics of Vlasevna. The former is a woman who believes firmly in traditional believes, customs and rituals. She is an ardent believer in Rama and could not stand rereading of Ramayana and judging Rama’s deeds on modern rational parameters. That is why when her grandchild Chandran tells he does not like Rama, Devaki Amma says, “child, contempt of Rama is a sin.”

Devaki Amma cannot accept her husband’s rationalism. Chamiyarappan’s denial of tradition, conversion to Christianity and lastly his move into rationalism did not affect her. More than anything, she wishes the wellbeing of her husband and family. Without any doubt, Arina Vlasevna and Devaki Amma are two characters with similar features, who cling to traditional believes without trying to get along the discussions about new changes and thoughts.

While comparatively analysing the novels Fathers and Sons and Thalamurakal, it is important to note that in both the novels the new generation raise serious questions of the faiths and believes of their previous generation. The characters of young generation rebel against old traditions and practices.

As an important religion in Russian society, Christian beliefs have much influence over Russian people. Bible verses concerning man’s origin have staunch support in Russian society. “God created man in his image” is such a Bible verse. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them”\textsuperscript{114} But the medical student Bazarov challenges centuries old Christian religious belief. Bazarov who is much interested in natural science while explaining frog’s anatomy to students declares the statement which can create great consequences: “I’ll cut the frog open... since you and I are just like frogs, except that we walk on two legs.”\textsuperscript{115} By comparing the anatomy of man and frog, Bazarov is trying to establish that the physiologically we all creatures are similar. He endorses Darwin’s Theory of evolution of species and refutes the religious concept regarding human origin.

Here, it should be noted that novel \textit{Fathers and Sons} is published at a time when science was entering into a new phase all over the world. Charles Darwin’s \textit{Origin of species} was published in 1858. Darwin’s theories were challenging traditional religious beliefs. It is noted that Turgenev’s novel and Darwin’s books were contemporary. Though it was a period when scientific


thoughts were not accomplished, Bazarov challenges the believes of earlier generation and religion with his limited knowledge. In the similar manner, the character Chandran in the novel *Thalamurakal* is seen questioning centuries old religious believes. Being set in Indian background, objections against Hindu faith are coming out through the child Chandran. For centuries, Hindus have been considering epic Ramayana and its hero Rama with divine halo. Epic books including Ramayana are later subjected too many rereading in the light of Renaissance and new studies. On the basis of these rereadings, Rama is considered as the symbol of upper class and Aryan Dominance. By killing Shambooka – the shudra for the ‘sin’ of doing *Tapas* (penance), Rama becomes imposer of oppressive Brahmanical ideology and protector of the discriminatory *Chathurvarnya* system. These studies interpret this act of Rama as his being against low-castes gaining knowledge. Chandran is getting this new thread of knowledge from his friend Chelli, a young Cheruma boy. On the basis of this knowledge, Chandran is saying “I don’t like this Rama”\footnote{Vijayan, *Thalamurakal*. Kottayam,: DC Books, 1997 p. 1}, when his grandma compels him to recite Ramayana. Chandran defies the faith of his grandma who for long has prayed Rama as God. Though he is still a very young boy he tries to destroy the image of Rama with his newly acquired rationality. And thus raise challenges to traditional religious believes. In a sense, by questioning believes of earlier generation,
Bazarov and Chandran are doing similar action. These two characters are standing against the centuries old religious believes in their respective societies.

4.5 Class-Caste divisions in the novels –some observations:

Another common peculiarity in the two novels is regarding the social set up in which their plots are constructed. Though in different modes, the characters portrayed in the novels are divided on the basis of socio-economic condition. In Fathers and Sons which has depicted Russian social structure this division is in the form of class whereas in Thalamurakal written in Malabar background, it is in the form of caste.

The widower Nikolai in Fathers and Sons is a member of noble class of the society. Nikolai is living with his house maid Fenechka, a lower class representative in the society. They have a son from their relationship, but Nikolai is not ready to marry Fenechka legally because in the Russian society of that period, a man of noble class with higher status in the society marrying a girl of low class is not an action matching their social status. This feudal thought is deep set in Nikolai too. Thus he is not ready to marry Fenechka. Arkady, the representative of new generation but is objecting to this traditional feudal way. Arkady is taking such a decision in the light of new knowledge and progressive thoughts. He is arguing for the marriage of Nikolai and Fenechka abandoning the old practices based on feudal values.
Similarly, the discrimination between human beings can also be seen in *Thalamurakal*. As part of the peculiar social phenomenon called caste system, members of higher castes and lower castes cannot befriend each other or eat together. It is in such a social situation of eighteenth century, the characters in the novel Bhavadrathan Namboothiri and the low caste Ezhava Krishnan Ammavan raise a question mark on the old practice by enjoying friendship and drinking coffee together. Rairu Nair is looking at this friendship with anxiety. It is the Bhagavat Gita verse “racial mixing, cannot be done” which is prompting him to think so. In Bhavadrathan Namboothiri’s opinion, “If the Gita verse ‘racial mixing cannot be done’ is right, then Kalki has to murder all Namboothiries going for ‘Baandavam’. “\(^{117}\) Sarcasm is seen in these words of Bhavadrathan Namboothiri. In these ways, the two novels have portrayed in different situation the two groups which cannot stand together on the basis of class and caste. If it is class in *Fathers and Sons*, in *Thalamurakal* it is part of caste. The portrayals of new generation who try to overcome these divisions are a common feature of these two novels. Bhavadrathan Namboothiri and Arkady are representatives of the new generation.

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\(^{117}\) Vijayan OV. *Thalamurakal*. Kottayam: DC Books, 1997 P.236
4.6 Nihilism and Communism:

Another common feature in the two novels is the presentation of ideologies nihilism and communism as the thought of new generation. Though nihilism and communism are different, primarily both of them have a materialist orientation towards life. Nihilism is considered as a stepping stone in the development of Marxism to a complete ideology. In *Fathers and Sons*, nihilism is presented as a much influential thought in the second half of nineteenth century Russian society. At the same time, O.V. Vijayan has presented communism connected to the Twentieth century Malabar life. In a literary work, the term nihilism is first used in *Fathers and Sons*. Turgenev’s most powerful character Bazarov is a nihilist. Bazarov is introduced in the novel as “who approaches everything from a critical point of view.”

Nihilism rejects all views in the existing society. Not only that, nihilism has played the foundation for more radical thoughts raised later in Russia including Marxism. Coming to the novel *Thalamurakal*, communist thoughts are becoming an ideology influencing a generation. There are a group of characters in the novel arguing “Russia should come. Russia should come” waiting for communist revolution. The chief characters in the novel

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Thalamurakal Chamiyarappan and Chandran are active in communist party. The novelist depicts how and why communism is losing its essence as an ideology in its practical form. According to the author, the Indian Communist Party is losing its identity by blindly imitating Soviet Russia. If in Fathers and Sons, Turgenev is projecting the limitations of nihilism through the life of Bazarov, O.V. Vijayan, through Thalamurakal is pointing to the limitations of communism in Indian context. There are similarities in the presentation of nihilism and communism as ideologies in the two novels.

4.7 Inner conflicts of the two authors:

It can be seen that, the tension or the struggle within the author is being developed as the tension of both the novels. Struggle of Vijayan in the areas of casteism, tradition, spirituality, atheism, communism and humanism have appeared as the tensions of the novel Thalamurakal itself. Such tensions are apparent in Thalamurakal unlike his previous works. The shift of the author from a communist sympathizer to a spiritualist and the tension faced along with the shift are being pictured in a different manner. It can also be seen when Vijayan addresses the particular subject of Casteism. The author points, different efforts- religious conversion, power, capital and knowledge- are not a solution of casteism in real. The tension experienced by the character Chamiriyappan amidst of traditional believes and modern logic is a tension of the author itself.
Though not in the same way like OV Vijayan, Ivan Turgenev also experienced the tension while addressing the social tensions and the same can be seen throughout the novel *Fathers and Sons*. Turgenev wrote the piece in the canvas of two ideological lines which split the intellectual sphere and social sense into two. Turgenev as a writer, experiences the tension of the split up of social sphere of Russia of nineteenth century as *Slavophils* and *Westerners*. Though considered as western sympathizer, Turgenev yet cannot become a true hearted revolutionist. At times, thoughts put forward cannot be opposed. There are many attempts to equalize the character Nickolai with the novelist. In this sense, it can be said that Turgenev was taking a middle path. Problems experienced in between the western culture and traditional Russian values are apparent throughout the novel. The tension between the characters representing two generations is manifestation of the tension experienced by the author within himself. Towards the end of the novel, the two generations are moving towards a consensus to accept each other. And it can be understood as the solution worked out by the author himself. In this sense, though even in two different situations, it is clear that the struggle and tension experienced by the two authors are manifested in the novels *Fathers and Sons* and *Thalamurakal*. In other words, the tension of the authors is becoming the tension of the novel itself.
4.8 Character analysis of Bazarov and Chamiyarappan

Yevgani Bazarov in *Fathers and Sons* and Chamiyarappan in *Thalamurakal* are two characters of different habitats. These characters, throughout the novels, are going across extreme experiences of strife and tensions. As in material life, these characters are experiencing intense inner conflicts too. Both the characters have indivisible relationships with development of plot of the novels. As such, for the adequacy of this study, it is essential to analyse Bazarov, one of the best characters of Ivan Turgenev and Chamiyarappan—a distinct of all the various characters introduced by OV Vijayan.

**Bazarov**: The Plot of the novel *Fathers and Sons*, from the beginning till the end, revolves around the character of Bazarov. Though generally it is estimated that it is the clash between two generations, while analysing deeply Bazarov is seen alone on one side and all others are on the other side. Many a discussions were held among Russian Intellectuals regarding the portrayal of the character Bazarov.

Bazarov’s character, who denies every existing thing, is a symbol of the social dissatisfaction of nineteenth century Russia. Though personally Turgenev disagrees to extremity it might be this dissatisfaction underlying in the society that have prompted the writer to paint his Bazarov in such a radical way. In the first half of the novel, Bazarov appears as a nihilist who
questions all social structures. He catches other’s attention after arriving in Marino with his friend and fellow student Arkady. Arkady introduces Bazarov to others as a nihilist – as a person who sees everything with critical eyes. It was first time in the history of world literature, a nihilist character is portrayed. In that sense, Turgenev was introducing a new outlook through Bazarov. Pavel and Nickolai consider Bazarov as a strange character in their aristocratic eyes. Pavel and Nikolai represent the Russian upper class of 1840s, who believe themselves as progressive. They are always suspicious in Bazarov’s ideas.

Bazarov, who engages himself at times in experiments and observations, is against existing theories, as according to him the past and present of Russia have no relevance for the future of Russia. He doesn’t believe in anything which is not proved scientifically and substantially. It is with this scientific knowledge that he is establishing that the anatomy of humans and frogs are same. Thus he questions the centuries old Christian religious concept about human origin. At time Bazarov becomes a scientific arguer and a mechanical materialist. As he denies all emotional aspects in human relationship he shrinks into a medical student who approaches man only physiologically. This nihilist, who denies all the romantic elements in man-woman relationship, says that the basis of such relationship is hormonal changes.
By disapproving poetry, literature and art, Bazarov becomes a true ‘mechanical’ materialist. He argues that a chemist is twenty times useful than a poet, art has no significant contribution in the development of human civilization. The novelist does not agree with Bazarov’s attitudes towards art and literature.

Bazarov, who believes that the duty of his generation is to destroy all existing structures, denies all philosophies. Novelist asserts the historical role of Bazarov by stating that the duty of the new generation is to make the ground clear for the new changes, to turn upside down the degenerated social structure. Bazarov’s optimistic belief that their succeeding generation will take on the responsibility to create a new social structure represents author’s faith in the future of Russia.

Bazarov gives no importance to emotional relationships in his life and believes only in scientifically established facts. In one sense, it is through the ordeals called experiences in his personal life he is able to accept love and romance. Bazarov’s encounters with other characters of the novel, especially with Odintsova, make him a complete man.

By the second part of the novel, noted changes are happening in the nihilist nature of Bazarov. Acquaintance with a widow called Odintsova is making substantial changes in his approach and understanding of women. Bazarov who once denied all emotional aspects of man-woman relationship is
undergoing inner conflicts. The nihilist thought on one side and a common man’s emotions on the other are leading Bazarov into conflicts. In the light of his new unscientific experience he has to withdraw partially from his previous nihilist stands. To an extent, the affair with Odintsova helps him to correct the negative attitude he had regarding the emotions like love and romance. He is able to realise his parents’ love towards him. Bazarov changes from a narrow rational arguer to a much better sensible personality and from a mechanical materialist to a progressive thinker, who looks into matters thoroughly. Nevertheless, he stands firm on his previous stands regarding Russian society and its future.

The generation of fathers believes in the intellectual philosophy of Slavophils and they are proud of Russian heritage and tradition. They deny western thoughts and rationalism. Bazarov has an affinity towards western scientific thoughts especially those progressive ideas coming from German thinkers. Here we have to consider that the influence of German philosophers from Hegel to Karl Marx in nineteenth century was there worldwide. He can be considered as one of the first literary characters developed on the foundation of the recently developed materialist philosophy.

Ideologically Bazarov has to disagree even to his father. The radical philosopher in Bazarov is not ready to accept the liberal progressive ideas of 1840s. Even on his death bed, Bazarov does not escape to religious thoughts.
Nonetheless, for the sake respecting his parents’ feelings, he agrees to Christian unction rituals.

Bazarov, on his deathbed, expresses his wish to see Odintsova. The last meeting of Bazarov and Odintsova is the most heart touching part of the novel. Through this meeting the novelist is presenting the self-correction of Bazarov who had once denied all the emotional aspects of human being. Actually, by death Bazarov is not failing in life, but is completing a stage in the quest to man’s completeness.

The character Bazarov is formed when scientific and materialist thoughts were in their initial stage of development. In this respect, Bazarov’s character is a kind of literary experiment. Through Bazarov, the realistic novelist Turgenev was creating a character by amalgamating few of the new ideas of the western philosophy. The discussions raised by the character of Bazarov in the social spheres of Russia shows the social relevance of the character.

**Chamiyarappan:** The character Chamiyarappan is developed taking inspiration from author’s grandfather Chami. He is a strong character present throughout the novel *Thalamurakal*. He is living in twentieth century as the head of one of the different generations of Ponmudi Tharavad. The varied experiences and identity crises of the members of the earlier generations of Ponmudi Tharavad have influenced the personality of the character of
Chamiyarappan. Like many others of Ponmudi Tharavad, he too is facing the identity crisis in terms of caste based inferiority. In the first pages of the novel itself, there are instances showing his different personality. The image of Chamiyarappan changing from Ezhava identity to Christian belief and then to rationalism is mentioned in the beginning of the novel.

From the efforts of his predecessors to overcome caste based inferiority, Chamiyarappan is taking a radical path. Chamiyarappan, who leads the procession against caste discrimination through Kalpathi Street, prohibited for low castes, becomes a symbol of Renaissance movements in Malabar. Perhaps while predecessors of Ponmudi Tharavad were trying to overcome their backwardness with isolated efforts, Chamiyarappan is trying to connect such efforts as part of social movements. Chamiyarappan has to face torture from Brahmins for leading the procession through an area prohibited for people like him. As a reaction to it, Chamiyarappan responds by abandoning the Hindu faith. He also abandons his name after converting to Christianity and becomes Theodore. When he realises that Christianity too cannot demolish caste frameworks, he is mentally abandoning his new faith too. Now his attention turns to rationalism. He was enchanted towards the atheist scholar Ingersoll, who questioned the existence of the God. His grandchild Chandran too follows his path. Young Chandran was critical of various malpractices of Hindu religion. At a point, he questions what sin is in criticizing Rama.
Chamiyarappan who joins workers movements from Nationalist movement and later shifts to communist party is linking himself with social movements of Malabar. Novel witnesses different internal/self conflicts Chamiyarappan is getting in while challenging the tradition with his life.

Though a rationalist, it is by this self-conflict Chamiyarappan believes that he is experiencing the burden of sins of his former generation. Though Chamiyarappan became a rationalist to deny tradition and his Ezhava identity, he is not able to do so often. It is thus he is saying “I have no enmity now, even if there is no God, I pray for my children.” Vijayan presents the portrait of Chamiyarappan with his inner conflicts and despondence.

Chamiyarappan withdraws from the party when he realises that his nephew/son-in law’s employment in British government will be a burden to the party. Even then, he is following party’s ideology. The new generation party workers cannot but realise this mobility of Chamiyarappan’s mind. He too is not able to accept the communists of new generation. While the legacy of Ponmudi family is losing gradually, Chamiyarappan is often seen like the captain of a sinking ship. It is with pain he learns, that Manikora, the representative of migrants, approaching to capture the Ponmudi’s property. He is also not able to accommodate the new culture imported by the migrants

from Travancore. He looks at the migrants and their culture with fear and suspicion.

Having no confidence in his own son, Chamiyarappan regards his brother’s son Gopalan as the future of Ponmudi Tharavad. Thus he sends Gopalan to Glasgow for higher studies. Chamiyarappan is a character who travelled long distances through the lessons of his own experience. To escape from the caste inferiority he experienced like his ancestors, he creates his own ways. Though going ahead in such new paths, the roots of his tradition is obstructing him. Chamiyarappan’s character is full of contradictions throughout his life. Even when the new generation communist party workers abandon him, he is standing firm in his faith in communism.

Chamiyarappan has searched for his identity in many ways like protest against casteism, congress activism, atheism and communism. These quests led him to a terrible situation. The complications of life, is at last making Chamiyarappan mad. He had lost control over his mind. Chamiyarappan can be estimated as a different character of Ponmudi Tharavad who by destroying the frameworks of tradition and former generations traveled in his own paths. Through Chamiyarappan O.V. Vijayan portrays a character full of contradictions. The contradictory moods and experiences of human life are let out through the character of Chamiyarappan.
As part of the comparative study of the novels *Fathers and Sons* and *Thalamurakal*, analysis of the chief characters of the two works, Bazarov and Chamiyarappan is very significant. These characters, who are representatives of different social situation and eras, have personal peculiarities. Similar as well as contradictory traits in the personalities of both the principal characters had been analysed in the present research thesis. Both the characters, Bazarov and Chamiyarappan revolt against the old believes and existing social practices; they take refuge in new foreign ideas. They both are unaware of shortcomings of the new ideas that they embrace. The characters are different in the sense that Bazarov’s anger is directed against feudal structure of the society but Chamiyarappan accuses religious and caste structure for his miseries.

On a close reading of *Fathers and Sons* and *Thalamurakal*, two novels representing two different cultures and period of time, it is obvious that there are many differences between the two. But these two novels share certain peculiarities transgressing the barriers of language and culture. Although, being novelists representing two different generations, they were in confrontation with their own time. They could present the tension between generations which is a recurring phenomenon in the history of human civilization.