

FORMATION OF KERALA SOCIETY AND CULTURE

STUDY MATERIAL

B.A. HISTORY

VI SEMESTER

CORE COURSE

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UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

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FORMATION OF KERALA SOCIETY AND CULTURE

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UNIT-I

INTRODUCTION

Kerala, regionally referred to as Keralam, is a state in the south-west region of India on the Malabar Coast. It was formed on 1 November 1956 as per the States Reorganisation Act by combining various Malayalam-speaking regions. Spread over 38,863 km² (15,005 sq mi) it is bordered by Karnataka to the north and north east, Tamil Nadu to the east and south, and the Lakshadweep Sea to the west. With 33,387,677 inhabitants as per the 2011 census, Kerala is the twelfth largest state by population and is divided into 14 districts. Malayalam is the most widely spoken and official language of the state. The state capital is Thiruvananthapuram; other major cities include Kochi, Kozhikode, Thrissur, and Kollam.

The region was a prominent spice exporter from 3000 BCE to 3rd century. The Chera Dynasty was the first powerful kingdom based in Kerala, though it frequently struggled against attacks from the neighbouring Cholas and Pandyas. During the Chera period Kerala remained an international spice trading center. Later, in the 15th century, the lucrative spice trade attracted Portuguese traders to Kerala, and eventually paved the way for the European colonisation of the whole of India. After independence, Travancore and Cochin joined the Republic of India and Travancore-Cochin was given the status of a state. Later, the state was formed in 1956 by merging the Malabar district, Travancore-Cochin (excluding four southern taluks), and the taluk of Kasargod, South Kanara.

Kerala is the state with the lowest positive population growth rate in India (3.44%) and has a density of 819 people per km². The state has the highest Human Development Index (HDI) (0.790) in the country according to the Human Development Report 2011. It also has the highest literacy rate 95.5, the highest life expectancy (Almost 77 years) and the highest sex ratio (as defined by number of women per 1000 men: 1,084 women per 1000 men) among all Indian states. Kerala has the lowest homicide rate among Indian states, for 2011 it was 1.1 per 100,000. A survey in 2005 by Transparency International ranked it as the least corrupt state in the country. Kerala has witnessed significant emigration of its people, especially to the Gulf states during the Gulf Boom during the 1970s and early 1980s, and its economy depends significantly on remittances from a large Malayali expatriate community. Hinduism is practised by more than half of the population, followed by Islam and Christianity. The culture of the state traces its roots from 3rd century CE. It is a synthesis of Aryan and Dravidian cultures, developed over centuries under influences from other parts of India and abroad.

Production of pepper and natural rubber contributes to a significant portion of the total national output. In the agricultural sector, coconut, tea, coffee, cashew and spices are important. The state's coastline extends for 590 kilometres (370 mi), and around 1.1 million people of the state are dependent on the fishery industry which contributes 3% of the state's income. The state's 145,704 kilometres (90,536 mi) of roads, constitute 4.2% of all Indian roadways. There are three existing and two proposed international airports. Waterways are also used as a means of transportation. The state has the highest media exposure in India with newspapers publishing in nine different languages; mainly English and Malayalam. Kerala is an important tourist destination, with backwaters, beaches, Ayurvedic tourism, and tropical greenery among its major attractions.

KERALA AS A GEOGRAPHICAL ENTITY

Kerala has had the distinction of being an independent geographical and political entity from the early days. Its unique geographical position and peculiar physical features have invested Kerala with a distinct individuality. The land of Kerala comprises the narrow coastal strip bounded by the Western Ghats on the east and the Arabian Sea on the west in the southern part of the Indian Peninsula. Paradoxical as it might seem, this geographical position has helped to ensure, to some extent, its political and cultural isolation from the rest of the country and also facilitated its extensive and active contacts with the countries of the outside world. A study of the geographical factor in relation to Kerala history assumes special significance. Here we are going to know the more important physical or geographical features of the land like mountains, rivers, backwaters, wind and climate. We shall also try to find out the influence exerted by each of these factors on our history and culture.

GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS:

The geographical factors that have influenced and moulded Kerala culture may be classified into the following:

1. Position, location and shape of the state
2. Mountains, Hills and Passes.
3. Rivers, backwaters and the sea.
4. Climate, Fauna and Flora.

1. Position, Location and Shape.

Kerala is situated in the extreme south west corner of the Indian Sub-Continent. The land of Kerala comprises the narrow coastal strip surrounded by the Western Ghats in the East and the Arabian Sea in the West. Kerala comprises three natural divisions. They are:

- A. The High land – The Western Ghats constitute this region
- B. The Low land – it stretches along the coastal plain in the West
- C. Mid land – in between the High land and the Low land. It is rich in agricultural products.

Now, let us see how this peculiar position and division influenced our History.

Kerala was free from invasions, which shook North India through centuries because of her insular position. This enabled the growth of peculiar social institutions like the Marumakkathayam in Kerala. It was a hindrance for friendly contacts with the North. It took longer time for north Indian religions to penetrate in to Kerala than foreign ones. It enabled Kerala to evolve its own styles of art, architecture and sculpture like Kathakali and Kudiattam. However this did not prevent intellectuals like Sankaracharya to propagate his philosophy outside Kerala. It was not a hindrance to the Chola, Vijaya Nagar, Mysore and other South Indian powers to raid the Kerala territory. It did not prevent Tamil, Kannada and Tulu languages to influence our dialect and writing languages.

2. Mountains, Hills and Passes.

The Sahya Mountains which form part of the Western Ghats is the main mountain range in Kerala. It influenced our History in more ways than one. It provides the 'body' to the state of Kerala. It protected the state from political invasions that hit South India till the 18th century. It guards the eastern frontier. In this sense, Sahya range may be called as the Great Sentinel of the East. It safeguarded the territorial integrity of the land. It was the source of most of the rivers of Kerala. It provided mountain passes for traffic between Kerala and neighbouring states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The forest in the Ghat is a source of wealth to the state. Some of the peaks important from the political and religious points of view are situated in the Western Ghats. The Anamudi peak (8841) in the Ghat represents the highest point in India-south of the Himalayas. The Agastyakutam, the southernmost peak in the Western Ghats figures in the popular legend of Agastya.

The Hills are so many in Kerala. From Ezhimala in the north to Mahendragiri in the South, we have innumerable hills. Among the hills, mention may be made of Vavvimala, Vatamala, Puralimala, KalladiKotan, Nelliampathy, Pothundi, Anamala, Elamala, Peerumedu, Sabarimala, Ponnudi, Agastykutam and Aruvamozhi. These hills have influenced our history in more ways than one.

Ezhimala was the seat of a flourishing kingdom during the early centuries of the Christian era. As it is jutting in to the sea, it was a well known land mark for ancient mariners. The Puralimala was the headquarters of Pazhassi Raja for a long time and is hailed as the 'Aravallis of Malabar'. The Brahmagiri in Wayanad is important as Thirunelli temple is located here. The Sabari hills are famous for the Sastha shrine, one of the most important centers of Hindu pilgrimage in the state. The Malayattur hills is famous as a centre of Christian pilgrimage associated with St. Thomas.

3. Passes/Gaps.

As you know, the mountains provide a number of passes/gaps to facilitate contacts. There are a number of mountain passes in Kerala which influence our History. **The Palakkad Gap** is perhaps the major one with its enormous width of 36KMs. Through it, the South West winds bring pleasant moist air and grateful showers to the thirsty plains of Coimbatore. Through it, many a stream from the higher mountains find their way to the Arabian Sea. The gap is of great economic value to Kerala and Tamil Nadu. **The Tamarasseri and Perambadi gaps** promote contacts between Kerala and Karnataka. They have also served as routes of invasion. The Perambadi gives access to Coorg while Tamarasseri provide access from Wayanad to Mysore. **The Bodinaykannur pass** in the Travancore area (Central Kerala) connects Madurai with the High Ranges. Through the **Kamban pass** was transacted most of the trade from central Kerala

(Todupuzha). The **Aryankavu** pass gives easy access to Tirunelveli. The Tamils used this route for most of their raids and trade to South Kerala. The **Arambadi pass** (Aruvamozi), though presently situated outside Kerala is crucial. Early man with his microliths entered Kerala through this gap; This route had been the highway of traffic between Kerala and its eastern neighbours. Many raids and invasions, the last being that of Chanda Saheb in 1740 had taken place through the Arambadi. Numberless battles had been fought in this region. The Arambadi – Kottar region is rightly called the cockpit of Kerala.

4. The Sea, Rivers, and Backwaters.

The Arabian Sea has been a permanent geographical factor in our History. In fact Kerala has been the gift of the Arabian Sea. Kerala depended for its prosperity on the sea and the sea borne trade. The Jews, Christian, Muslims and Parsees came here following a sea route and first landed here. The Europeans anchored at Kerala coast. The Portuguese were the first in this endeavour followed by the Dutch, French and the English, all followed a sea route to reach Kerala and landed on the Kerala coast and built their settlements here. The Arabian sea had been the field of activity for the Kunjalis, the Admirals of the Calicut fleet. The imperialists first set their foot here and met with their first rebuff here. The commercial and cultural contacts that Kerala has had in the past immensely benefited the princes and peoples of Kerala. The extensive sea coast of Kerala has provided a number of harbours both in the ancient and modern times. In ancient times we have such ports as Muziris, Tyndis, Barace and Nelcynda. In medieval times we have Kollam, Kozhikode and Kodungallur, and in modern times we have Kochi, Alapuzha and Ezhimala. If Kerala was isolated from the rest of India by the mountains, she was opened to the rest of the world by the sea.

Rivers of Kerala.

There are 44 rivers in the state – 41 west flowing and 3 (Kabini, Bhavani and Pampar) east flowing. The state is rich in water potential, but no long rivers. The major rivers are Nila (Bharata puzha or Perar), Periyar and Pampa; Kunthipuzha, Chandragiri puzha, Korapuzha and Chaliyar. The rivers perform a two-fold function. They provide uninterrupted water transport through the length and breadth of the state. They add to the land area forming backwaters and ports. They make the land fertile and the country prosperous. Inland trade has been mainly through the rivers. They are arteries of trade and communication. The harbours at the mouth of the rivers provide safe anchorage to ships. Kerala Rivers have been the cradles of early civilisations. 24 out of the 32 Brahmin settlements are on the banks of rivers. A number of historic and religious temples and churches are situated on the banks of rivers. Most of the literary and artistic forms originated on the river valleys.

The rivers have influenced our political and military history. The Periyar flood of 1341 made Muziris useless for trade and brought in to existence the Vaipin Island. The flood of 1789 in the same river forced Tippu Sultan to abandon his further conquest of Thiruvitamkur. Several places of historical and cultural importance are located on the riverbanks. We have Chittur, Palakkad, Thiruvillamala, Pattambi, Thirunavaya and Chamravattam on the banks of Bharatapuzha. Ayiramalai, Malayattur, Kaladi, Aluva and Kodungallur on the banks of Periyar; Aanmala, Sabarimala, Chengannur, Maramon, Edathwa on the banks of Pamba.

It was on the rivers that major hydro-electric and irrigation projects were constructed in modern times. The hydro-electric projects like Pallivasal, Sengulam, Peringalkuthu and Sabarigiri have quickened the industrialization of Kerala. The irrigation project like Peechi, Malampuzha, Periyar Valley became, to adapt the words of Pandit Nehru, centre of modern pilgrimage.

A Note on Nila River.

The Nila river, popularly known as Bharatapuzha and Perar is the most important river systems in Kerala. It has a unique position in the annals and antiquities of Kerala. The Nila Valley was the cradle of civilisation in Kerala. For the people of its basin this was the very basis of their cultural and historical heritage. There were a number of prehistoric settlements on its banks. Nila basin formed the first layer of tribal settlements. The second was the Aryan settlements. The Brahmins have four important settlements on its banks (Panniyur, Sukapuram, Thirunavaya and Ponnani). There was an interlinking of Nila and Kaveri; and at one end was Pampuhar and at the other Ponnani. The interlinking of Kaveri and Nila is substantiated by Agnihotri legend.

The contribution of Nila to the Socio-religious and cultural life of Kerala cannot be under estimated. On both banks of the river, there are famous temples like Tirunavaya, Sukapuram, Panniyur, Tripangode, Thiruvillamala, and Kalpathi. Nila nurtured Malayalam, Sanskrit and Tamil literature. Innumerable literary souls lived on the banks of Nila. Ezhuttachan who lived in Chittur and Tirur. Kunchan Nampiyar on Lakkidi, Puntanam, Melputhur, M.T. Vasudevan Nair on Kutallur, Akhithem in Kumaranallur, Urub, Cherukad, (P.C. Kuttikrishnan), Olappamanna Nambutheri, Balamani Amma, Kutty Krishna Marar, Kaikulangara Rama Warriar, P. Kunhiraman Nair - a glorious line of distinguished literary souls who stretch up to our time. The economic side of the river, settlement patterns, resources of the village, village structure, trade and commerce, emergence of exchange systems, urbanization rural, semi urban and urban areas to be identified to fully assess the impact of the Nila on our History. In fact, Nila has been the blood of our blood and salt of our salt, the life and breadth of Kerala.

Backwaters.

Running parallel to the seacoast, Kerala has a chain of lagoons and backwaters. They provide communication between the different parts of Kerala. The more important of the lakes of Kerala are Vembanad, Ashtamudi, Bakel and Kumbla. The Vembanad Lake; its name came from the ancient kingdom of Venpolinad. It is the largest lake in Kerala extending from the south up to Kochi. On its banks are situated Vaikkam, a famous Hindu pilgrim centre, Alleppey, Quilon and Cochin famous ports. The Sasthamkotta Lake is the one and the only one fresh water lake in Kerala. The Azhis in the state like Azikkal, Chettruvai, Neentakara, Kochi, Kodungallur and many bays like West Hill provide safe anchorage to ships.

Climate, Fauna and Flora.

There was a diversity of climate in Kerala. Kerala alone has the two monsoons-Edavapathi and Thulavarsham. Thus we get rainfall both from the south west and north east monsoons. We have an average rainfall of 116", average temperature of 81° and an average humidity of 82°. The abundance of rainfall enabled the people to choose agriculture as their main occupation. Agriculture, as often said, is a gamble in the monsoon. The variations in climate and seasons had their impact on vegetation and agriculture. The two main crops-Virippu and Muntakan-were dependent on rain fall. The climatic factors have influenced our History also. The epoch making discovery of S.W. monsoon by Hippalus, the Egyptian pilot in 45 AD facilitated the direct sea voyage from the Persian gulf to Kerala. The climatic factors also condition the military operations in Kerala (e.g) Tippu's retreat due to Periyar flood in 1789. The monsoon has caused floods in rivers. It was the monsoon who saved the Cochin Raja and his Portuguese allies from the Zamorins attack in 1503.

The fauna and flora has made Kerala 'the God's own country'. The forests of Kerala are rich in woods, animals and birds of rare varieties. In ancient times, Kerala seems to have exported the elephant, the peacock and the monkey to the west. It also exported aromatic plants, spices, ivory, teak and coir. It was the demand for spices, especially the Black Gold (pepper) that brought the Europeans to Kerala, leading to the Da Gama Epoch of Asiatic History. Kerala is rich in mineral resources and white clay and graphite deposits. Kautilya refers to River Churni from where pearls are found. The fertile soil has facilitated the growth of agricultural villages. In short, geographical factors have influenced our history deeply. It is one of the eyes of Kerala History.

Settlement Pattern.

The physical features of Kerala have contributed to settlement patterns. Kerala is a thickly populated state. Kerala has had a continuous settlement pattern with each settlement bordering up on the next settlement. Forest areas, waste lands, water reservoirs and streams form part of the settlement. The charter grant testifies to this pattern. Houses are built in the centre of the plot and not in clusters as seen in other parts of India. Thus a village consists of a number of house sites around which there are gardens and food crop areas (Elas or Patasekharams) held by the villagers.

River valleys were the cradle of these settlements. Most of the Brahmin settlements in Kerala are found on the banks of rivers like Churni, Nila, Korapuzha and Pampa. The settlements were called Ur and Cheri, the former belonging to the Brahmins and the latter of the common man. There was no separation or demarcation between the settlements of the upper and low castes. Brahmin and non Brahmin. The fisherman community has however their settlement in the coastal region. (Tura) while the tribesmen had their settlements in the highlands; the artisans lived near the temple (Teruv). The Christians and Muslims lived as part of the village settlement and had their churches and mosques in the villages.

SOURCE MATERIALS

Sources are the raw materials to reconstruct the past. Here we shall describe the vast range of source materials available to rebuild and reinterpret the history of Kerala. We shall begin with a critical survey of the legendary or traditional sources, then pass over to a discussion on archaeological and literary sources with special emphasis on monumental, inscriptional, and numismatic evidence. The Sources of Kerala History may be classified into **1. Traditional and non- traditional 2. Primary and Secondary 3. Literary and Archaeological.**

Traditional Sources.

The traditional sources are those derived from legends, traditions, myths, puranas. They include (a) Legendary accounts of the origin and evolution of Kerala Society. (b) Traditions, both oral and written of the heroes and events of Kerala History. (c) Sthalapuranas or place legends of localities. (d) Kshetramahatmyas regarding the origin and functions of the Temples. (e) Keralolpathi and Keralamahatmyam are the two legendary works regarding the early history of Kerala. Athula's Mushakavamsa Kavya gives a semi-legendary semi factual account of the Ezhimala Kings. The accounts of Joseph Kathanar, a priest from Kodungallur gives a contemporary descriptions of the existing legends on the origin of Kerala and the growth of Christianity. (f) Don Gonsalves, Bishop of Kollam (17th C) has written a book 'Historia de Malavar' giving information on the origin and growth of Kerala people, their customs and traditions. (g) Granthavaris are yet another form of traditional history.

Non- Traditional Sources.

The non-traditional sources include archaeological evidence epigraphy, numismatics and literary sources. They are classified into primary and secondary sources. **Primary Sources** are those evidences that directly signify a historical event or situation. They range from relics of specific events and personalities to materials remains of the past. Archaeological monuments, epigraphs or inscriptions, edicts, cadjan records, coins and seals belong to this category. **Secondary Sources** are mainly indirect evidence supporting and using primary sources. They are mostly written sources. Written histories, accounts of travellers, manuals, Gazetters, monographs all comes under this category. The information cited in the secondary sources are to be checked with the evidence from primary sources. Researchers are mainly concerned with primary sources.

Archaeological and Literary Sources.

A convenient classification of sources is archaeological and literary. Archaeological sources are classified into monuments -historic and pre-historic – inscriptions and coins. Literary sources are further classified into indigenous and foreign.

DISTRIBUTION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Archaeology is the handmaid of history. It is often a reliable guide to the historian. The archaeological sources of Kerala history may be classified into three divisions- Monuments, Epigraphy, and Numismatics.

Monuments relate to pre-historic and historic periods. Archaeological relics and monuments found in Kerala are of inestimable value for a study of the history of Kerala. The pre- history of Kerala comprises the various stone ages when man was nomadic hunter. Kerala, as such, has no Palaeolithic period. It is excluded from the palaeolithic map of India because of two reasons. The state has not yet yielded any palaeolithic. Though palaeoliths are absent in Kerala, the availability of trap rocks suggests that Kerala became the abode of man in the Neolithic period. Any Artefacts found in the riverbeds of Palakkad by the team from the Deccan College, Pune reveal the existence of a palaeolithic settlement in the area. The chief monuments are the megalithic monuments of pre-historic times and Archaeological monuments of the historic period such as temples, churches mosques, Synagogues, palaces, forts and historical sites.

Temples are of two types – rock cut cave temples and structural temples.

(a). The rock-cut temples of Vizhinjam, Kaviyur, Kallil Trikkur, Irunilamkode and Thiruvegappura are the earliest temples of Kerala. Scholars describe a Buddhist or Jain origin to these temples. While the Kaviyur temple shows traces of Chera carvings,

Vizhinjam shows traces of Pallava style. The Kallil temple is one of the finest Jain monuments in Kerala while those at Ambalapuzha (Karumadi) shows Buddhist leanings. These temples might have originated a little later than the early Pallava Temples.

(b). The Structural Temple began to emerge from the ninth century onwards. The temples of historic importance in this category are those situated at Thirunavaya (NavaMukunda), Thrissur (Vadakkumnathan), Thiruvanchikulam (Siva), Thiruvananthapuram (Padmanabha), Tirunelli (Perumal). The Trivandrum, Thiruvallam and Vizhinjam temples represent Dravidian style. The temples famous for their mural paintings and woodcarvings are those of Guruvayur, Trissur, Ettumanur, Harippad and Thiruvalla. The normal structural temples with Srikovil and Mantapa became widespread by the 11th Century.

Indigenous Kavus or shrines demonstrate the local tradition, art and culture. eg. Valliyurkavu (Wayanad district). The churches, Mosques and synagogues are also important from the historical and artistic points of view. The churches of Udayamperur and Kanjur bear evidences of indigenous and foreign styles of architecture. Udayamperur was the venue of the historic synod while Kanjur church has a lamp donated by Shakthan Thampuran and also a mural painting. The churches of Mulanthurathi and Chepad have mural paintings. The Catholic churches on the Kerala coast show traces of Portuguese style. Vasco-da-gama was buried at the St. Francis church, fort Cochin.

The Mosques at Matayi, Kasargod and Kodungallur are of great historical interest. The Muchuntipalli at Calicut and the Cheraman Masjid at Kodungallur are the most ancient and shows the influence of indigenous architecture. Of the eight **synagogues** in Kerala, the white Jews synagogue of Mattanchery has the rare distinction of possessing the Jewish copper plates other synagogues are situated at Mala, Parur and Chennamangalam.

The Palaces and forts are of later origin than the temples. The Palaces of Makotai and Kollam are things of the past. Among the existing historical palaces of Kerala, the most notable are the Dutch palace (not built by the Dutch, but by the Portuguese) at Mattancherry, the Krishnapuram palace at Kayamkulam and the Padmanabhapuram palace at Thucklay (Tamil Nadu). They are best specimens of Kerala style of architecture and have mural paintings of inestimable value. The Kovilakams of Pazhassi Raja, Kadathanad Raja, Nilambur Raja and the Samutiri are also of importance. The houses of the Nair & Nambatri Chieftains like Kavalappara, Desamangalam, Kollenkode, Pumulli are also notable.

The important forts are built by the Europeans and a few others by the local Rajas. The Portuguese built the Pallipuram fort (Aykotta) in 1503, St. Angelo in Kannur, Fort manual at Kochi and Kottappuram at Kodungallur. Aykotta is the oldest surviving European structure in India. The Bednore Naiks built the forts at Bekal, hosdurg, Kumble and Kalnad; (Chandragiri). Haidar Ali built the Palakkad fort in 1766. The English built the

Tellicherry fort. The remnants of the Vattakotta, of Marthanda Varma, (the Nedumkotta). Travancore Lines of Dharmaraja, Udayagiri fort of D'Lannoy, the Chaliyan fort of the zamorins etc are also seen.

Historical Sites.

A few historical sites which are of interest are the Cheraman Parambu (Kodugallur), Thrikkanar Mathilakam (Kodungallur), Karikode (Ernakulam), Kottaparambu (Kozhikode), Kappad, Mananthavady, (pazhassi) in Wayanad, Kottakkal (Kunjali Markkar) and Lokanarkave in Badagara. The first two are associated with the Cheras, the second with the Zamorin, third with Vasco-da-gama.

Pattanam Excavation

Pattanam is a landlocked rural hamlet located in the *Periyar Delta in Ernakulam district in the southern Indian state of Kerala. It is located 2 km north of North Paravur, 9 km south of Kodungallur and 25 km north of Kochi. Pattanam, a name which means "coastal town", has ancient origins. It is said to have been first occupied around 1000 BCE and continued to be active till the 10th century CE. 4 m thick soil of this village conceals the ancient maritime history of the world. The recent archaeological excavations undertaken by the Kerala Council for Historical Research [KCHR] at Pattanam suggests that the legendary seaport Muziri Pattanam, better known as Muziris, could have been located at this small village.*

Mucciri Pattanam was situated where *Periyar River was cleft into two. The word Mucciri means Cleft Palate and Pattanam, a name derived from Prakrit and Pali, means coastal town in almost all Indian languages. Thus this place got its name Mucciri Pattanam.*

It is not clear however, why Mucciri Pattanam ended its activities as a major trade port around the middle of the 14th century CE. One theory attributes it to a great flood of 1341 that caused the change of *the Periyar River. This resulted in the shifting of this centre of commerce to other areas like Kochi and Kozhikode.* Following this Muciri Pattanam went into a slumber for many years. Slowly even its position was forgotten. But the name lived, through writings of ancient mariners and records, through many centuries.

The search for the legendary town *Muziris on the Malabar Coast had been focused on the northern banks of the Periyar river, basing on the literary evidence from Sangam literature and Periplus of the Erythrean Sea, among others. But nothing had been found to identify Muziris.*

In 2004, Dr. K.P. Shajan, a geoarchaeologist, put forward the hypothesis that the legendary seaport of *Muziris*, which was a bustling trading centre during the early historic period between the first century BCE and the fifth century CE, could have been located at Pattanam. To substantiate this hypothesis he had the following evidences.

A branch of the *Periyar River*, called the *Periyar Thodu (Periyar canal)*, runs close to Pattanam. Satellite imagery, clear geological evidence, indicated that the *Periyar river delta lies on the southern side and the river could have flowed close to Pattanam*. Moreover, the residents of Pattanam regularly used to find a large amount of broken pottery shards and ancient fired bricks while digging the ground. These evidences indicate that the *Periyar River could have flowed close to Pattanam about 2,000 years ago and Pattanam is the ancient port town Muziris*.

Archaeological Excavations

The site for archaeological research at Pattanam (10°09.434'N; 76°12.587'E) covers about 45 hectares. Due to habitation activities it is a “disturbed” site; some parts are partially destroyed due to sand quarrying. The site seems to have been first occupied by indigenous population around 1000 BC and continued to be active till the 10th century AD. The AMS 14C analysis of the charcoal and wood samples from the Iron Age layer and wharf contexts have determined their antiquity as first millennium BC.

The multi-disciplinary and multi-seasonal archaeological research at Pattanam from 2007 undertaken by the Kerala Council for Historical Research (KCHR) is a pioneering initiative in the history of Kerala Archaeology. British Academy (BASAS) recently accorded recognition for the formation of an international research group based on Pattanam.

Square copper coins (on one side an *elephant and on the other bows and arrows*) had been found at the site. These types of coins were issued in the beginning of Christian era. At the same time there is lack of evidence to show that the artifacts unearthed at Pattanam came specifically from Rome. It is necessary to get information that these are connected directly to Italy.

Excavated antiquities include Chera coins, Amphora, Terra Sigillata, and Cameo Blanks made of semi-precious stones and stone and glass beads in large quantity. Remains of brick structures made of burned bricks were also found there. A wharf context with a six m dugout canoe made of *anjili* wood and bollards made of teak wood and a large quantity of botanical remains were found.

Excavations 2010

Findings: Antiquities of small size - beads of both semi-precious stones and glass, pendants or lockets cameo blanks, coins, (predominantly early Chera coins, with symbols of elephant, bow and arrow) objects or fragments of objects made of iron, copper, lead and rarely gold, and sherds of Indian and foreign pottery, A broken rim with Brahmi script. This is the first pre-firing pottery inscription finding at Pattanam. Enormous quantity of local pottery of the early Historic Period, which is dated between first century BC and 4th century AD, showing that this was the peak activity stage of Pattanam.

Excavations 2011

The excavations at Pattanam, the ancient port city of Muziris sheds new light on the life and times of the ancient Kerala. The finds this year include iron and copper nails, *Roman glass*, Chola coins, terracotta and semi precious stone beads.

Archaeology and Criticism

Former Director of *the Tamil Nadu State Archaeology Department R. Nagaswamy is of opinion that it is not yet time to identify Pattanam as Muziris. Kodungallur also is to be excavated before coming to a conclusion. Archaeology requires a lot of evidence before arriving at any conclusion.*

LOCATING MEGALITHIC SITES

A series of megalithic monuments have been discovered from different parts of Kerala. Most of them are found erected out of large block of stones as funerary edifices. Hence they are associated with the cult of the Dead. The important megaliths found in Kerala are the Dolmens, Cists, Menhirs, Kutakallu, Toppikkallu and rock cut chambers. The important megalithic sites of Kerala are Edakkal, Kuppakkolli, Marayur, Sinturuni, Porkalam and Eyyal. Edakkal caves contain interesting carvings and inscriptions. Researches done by the Deccan college, Pune have revealed stone artifacts on the riverbeds in Palakkad. Kerala megaliths are ascribed to the period 10th BC to 1st AD.

Megaliths are monuments built of granite rocks erected over the burials. The uses of megaliths have corresponded with the use of iron and the Black and Red ware pottery (BRW). Hence megaliths belonged to the **Iron Age culture**. The origin of the megalithic burials can be traced back to the passage chamber tombs. Kerala megaliths are developed from the passage chamber tombs. This was followed by the rock cut chamber tombs, porthole cists and umbrella stones. These chambers are found scattered in many places in Malabar. Cist burials with pot holes are found in Marayur and other parts of Idukki district. Porthole cists are also found in Porkkalam. The cap stones are found concentrated between river Nila and Periyar.

The antiquity of the Megalithic culture of Kerala and its relations with other cultures else where are points of debate. As Kerala megaliths show a close resemblance with those of the Deccan, Scholars suggest an iron using people from the south as its makers. Anthropologists suggest that the megalithic builders were a people of Mediterranean origin who came to the west coast by sea, entered south and spread northward. However H.D. Sankalia relicts the new by stating that both chronologically and culturally, the European megaliths are found far removed from its south Indian counter part.

Sankalia has expressed the view that the megalithic builders of Kerala represent a fairly and well established social organisation. They dug irrigation tanks indicating the prevalence of agriculture. However evidences of agriculture are limited to a few ploughshares. But it is doubtful whether they knew the plough technology. Hence it seems that they adopted paternalism and noniadic life with some amount of subsistence farming. It has been suggested that Kerala megalithic builders were hunters. The use of metals seen in burial sites indicates contact with other places and some sort of exchange. Numerous iron weapons point to frequent wars and plunder. There were wars between tribes and even within tribes. It is also suggested that the iron using cultures subjugated the earlier Neolithic societies. In course of time, the tribes transferred themselves from hunting and pasturism to agriculture.

Most of the megalithic in Kerala seems to be the developed South Indian megaliths. Megalithic sites are found scattered, but a few were clustered as near Edakkal caves where 200 megaliths are found in 1500 acre ground. The discovery of microliths from Calicut and Cochin shows that Kerala had become the abode of man as early as the Neolithic age. The pre-historic caves scattered all over Kerala show that their makers were familiar with tools and implements of iron. Babington has mentioned two caves in Kannur while Sewell recorded 160 premetive caves in Malabar. According to Y.A. Sharma, these caves were the remnants of Buddhist and Jain influence in Kerala.

DISTRIBUTION OF INSCRIPTIONS

Epigraphy is the study of inscriptions. It is the most precise and reliable sources of Kerala history. Compared to the Tamil country, Kerala can boast of a very limited number of inscriptions. For the early period, we have to rely chiefly up on Tamil Brahmi inscriptions. The Pallava-Pandya-Chola inscriptions of the 7th-8th centuries mention the Cheras. Inscriptions are found in abundance from the 9th century.

Inscriptions are found mainly in temples, forts and palaces of Kerala. They are dated in Kali, Kollam, Parthivapuram and Puthuvaipu eras. Their language is Tamil, Malayalam and sometimes Sanskrit. Their script is Vattezhuthu, Kolezhuthu, Brahmi and Devanagari. They provide dates, symbols and astronomical details. Inscriptions furnish valuable materials for the reconstruction of the dynastic history of various kingdoms. They throw light on the political, social and cultural life of the people. They give us insight into the working of local assemblies, management of temples, tenant-lord relationship, organisation of agrarian settlements, functioning of trade-corporations and the working of ancient educational institutions. They also indicate the emergence of an agrarian society. They help us to solve many a puzzle in Kerala history.

There are about more than 150 inscriptions discovered and deciphered relating to Kerala History so far. Their full texts and translations have been published in such works as the Travancore Archaeological series (TAS) 1910, annual report of the Cochin Archaeological Dept (1927), Rama Varma research institute but later scholars like Dr. Sundaram Pillai, Gopinath Rao, K.V. Subrahmanya Ayyar, Elamkulam and Dr. M.G.S. Narayanan tried to unravel the mystery behind Kerala inscriptions.

Important Inscriptions.

The historically important inscriptions of Kerala are associated with the Ay kings, Cheras of Mahodayapuram, Rulers of Venad, Kochin and Kozhikode. Besides a few temples, churches, mosques and synagogues have their inscriptions of historical value. A few of such inscriptions are the following: -

1. Terisappally copperplate-Ayyan Atikal-Venad 849 AD
2. Paliyam copperplate-Vikramadithya Varaguna-Ay 885 AD
3. Parthivapuram inscription-Karunandakkan-Ay 866 AD
4. Mampilly copperplate Vallabhakotha-cheras 973 AD
5. Jewish copperplate Bhaskararavi-2nd chera 1000 AD
6. Syrian copper plate-Viraraghava-cochin 1225 AD

Chera Inscriptions.

The vazhapalli inscription of Rajasekhara (820-44) is the earliest epigraphical record of a Chera king to be discovered from Kerala. The Chokur inscription of Kodaravi (917 – 947) contains the earliest. The Avittethur inscription refers to the Kadamkottu Kacham. The Jewish copper plate of Bhaskara Ravi Varma (1000 AD) was issued to Joseph Rubban, the leader of the Jews. It records the grant of 72 proprietary rights to Joseph Rubban the leader

of Jews. It included the right to Anchuvannam and Manigramam. The inscription bears evidence of the policy of religious toleration followed by the rules of Kerala. The Thazhakkad church inscription of Rajasa Khera records the grant of certain trading rights and privileges to ten Christian merchants—Chathan Vatukan and Iravichathan of Manigramam. The Ramaswarath Koil inscription (1102 AD) mentions the shifting of the capital from Mahodayapuram to Kollam by Rama Varma Kulasekhara.

Inscriptions of the Ays.

The Huzur of Karunanthadakkan (857–885) is the earliest inscription in South India found dated in the Kali era. It throws light on the working of ancient salais or Vedic colleges. **The Paliyam Copper plate of Vikramaditya Varasuna** (885-925) records the grant of an extensive landed property to the Buddhist of Srimulavasa Vihara by the ruler. It also alludes the Chera raid on Kerala by Parantaka Chola. The Parthivapuram grant gives information about the building of the temple. It is important as it mentions for the first time Kanthalur Salai.

Venad Inscriptions.

The Teresappally Copper plate of Ayyan Atikal Tiruvatikal the Venad ruler is the first dated inscription (849 AD) of Kerala epigraphy. It describes the gift of a plot of land to Teresappally and also trading rights over Kollam Nagaram by the Venad governor. The grant was received by Mar Sapir Iso. It was given in the presence of the representatives of the state and the guilds. It mentions Manigramam and Anchuvannam. The inscription points to the subordinate status of Venad as a feudatory of the Perumals. It also shows the commercial importance of Kollam. It throws light on the provincial administration as it mentions the local assemblies like the Arunuttavar. It points the system of taxation prevailed in the kingdom. Moreover the grant reveals the policy of religious toleration followed by the chieftains of Kerala. It is the most important royal gift to a religious institution recorded in our history.

The Mampalli plate of Vallabha Kotha (974 AD) of Venad is the first available record dated in the Kollam era. It helps to determine the chronology of the Kerala kings. The other important inscriptions relating to the Venad rulers are Cholapuram and Suchindram inscriptions of Kotha Kerala Varma, Kilimanur records of Aditya Varma. Villayani inscription of Vira Ravi Varma and the Manalikkara inscription of Ravi Kerala Varma.

Inscriptions of the Cochin Rajas.

The Perumpadappu Swarupam (Cochin royal family) had a few inscriptions of historical value. The Syrian Copper plate (Viraraghava Pattayam) of 1225 issued by Viraraghava, a ruler of Perumpadappu royal house is the most important one. It confers on the Christians

of Kodungallur a number of privileges and rights. The Christian merchant Iravi Kortanan was conferred the title 'Loka Perumchetti' (The great trader) and also the over lordship of Manigramam. **The Paliyam Copper Plates** records the agreement between the Cochin Raja and the Dutch. E. India Company. It was dated in the Puthuvaipu era.

Inscriptions from Temples, Churches, Mosques etc.

The temples, churches, mosques, synagogues of Kerala have inscriptions of historical value. **Temple records:** The important temple records of a general nature are the Thiruvilla copper plates. Vadakkumnathan temple records and Kumaranallur temple records. The temple records of Guruvayur, Kozhikode Tali temple are also of historical value. The Thiruvilla copper Scrolls mention several institutions and customs of Kerala. The Thrissur Temple records testify to the ascendancy of the Namputiris. The Pattazhi copper scroll (1796 AD) throws light on the temple administration in the 18th century.

Church & Other Inscriptions:

Of the Church inscriptions, mention may be made of the Pallavi cross inscription from the Kadamattam Church & Kottayam Valiyapalli. From Kerala mosques, we have such inscriptions as the Arabic inscription from Matayi mosque. The synagogues too have yielded epigraphic evidence. The Jewish copper plate record of Bhaskararavivarma (1000 AD) from the white Jew synagogue at Mattancherry and the Chennamangalam record in Hebrew dated 1265 AD are the most important in this category.

Inscriptions from outside the State.

There are number of stone inscriptions and copper plates relating to Kerala found from outside the state. They are **1.** Asoka's Rock Edict II (GIRNAR) is the earliest epigraphical record found from outside Kerala. It mentions the ruler of Kerala as Keralaputta. **2.** The Aranattumalai inscription from Karur in Tamil Brahmi character mentions three Chera kings and provides valuable clue to Chera genealogy. **3.** The Chalukya inscriptions of the 6th and 7th C. refer to the subjugation of Kerala by the Chalukyas. **4.** Similarly the Chola and Pandya inscriptions (Anamalai) throw light on the Chola raids. The Thiruvilangadu plates of Rajendra Chola refer to the Chola raids on Vizhinjam. **5.** A number of records have been found from Kanchi, Srirangam and Poonamala relating to the exploits of Ravi Varma Kulasekhara. Thus inscriptions are of inestimable value for the reconstruction of the history of Kerala.

Palm Leaf.

When the stone records began to disappear by the 15th century, Palm leaf and cadjan documents replaced them. Temples, palaces and Tharavadus began to yield a number of records (As Kavalappara, Desamangalam). Most of the records are land deeds Karanams.

Paper records.

The Paper records are also of great value to the historian. The factory records, Tellichery Consultation, Pazhassi records etc are valuable. The records and diaries of fort St. George, the Dutch records and the memories, correspondence and travelogues of the British are also valuable as source materials for the re-construction of history.

NUMISMATICS

Numismatics is the study of coins which are interesting and at times an intriguing sources of History. It is of great value in reconstructing the history of our land. The coins contain dates, symbols and legends, which furnish valuable due to the historian. Ancient Kerala coins bear neither date clue or legend. No Chera coin with the bow emblem have been found so far. The Venad coins bearing the emblem of the elephant are found. The chronograms in the coins indicate public events of importance and hence are valuable. Coins are also valuable to know the nature of commercial transactions in Kerala. They also reveal the nature of social and economic formation in different periods of history.

Coins of different types are discovered from various part of Kerala. We have the earliest known indigenous coins in India the punch marked coins. They are found from Ankamali, Eyyal, Mala and other places. Roman coins have been discovered from Kurumbranad, Eyyal, Edamaruku, Niranam, Pala and other places. The collection from Eyyal contains 13 gold coins. 71 Roman Dinorus extending to a period of more than a century. The abundance of Roman coins indicates the prevalence of trade. Coins are used as both treasure and ornament. The foreign coins of the caliphate are discovered from Kothamangalam. The Ceylonese coins—Ezhakasu coins issued by Cholas (Anaichu), Pandyas, Madhura Sulthans (Tulukakasu) are also found in Kerala.

The history of Kerala Coins goes back to Parasuram who issued a gold coin called Rasi and arranged for its circulation. Kaliyugarajan was the name of another coin prevailed in ancient Kerala. The Cholas issued Rasi, Anaichu and Panam, the Madurai Sultans issued Tulukasu. From the 9th Century onwards, we have such coins as Pon, Achu Panam, Kasu, Tiraman, Alkasu, etc. The Kolathiri and the zamorin issued their own Panams. The Travancore Rajas issued the gold coins Ananta Narayanan and Ananta Varahan Panams. The Cochin Raja issued the Puthan. The coins of the Ali Rajas contain figures and dates in the Hijira era. In the colonial era we have the Dutch copper coins, Paranki Varahan, Ikkaeri Honnu, the Mahe Panam, Surat Rupee (English) and the company rupee. Tippu invasion brought Sulthan Kasu to Malabar. Literary works like Unniachi charitam and inscriptions like Vazhappilly refer to some of these coins.

LITERARY TEXTS

The literary sources are of two kinds - indigenous and foreign. The indigenous sources are chiefly found in Sanskrit, Tamil and Malayalam languages.

Sanskrit Works.

Sanskrit works are of immense help in the reconstruction of the ancient & medieval history of Kerala. The early Sanskrit works like the Aitareya Aranyaka refers to Cherapada. Ramayana mentions Kerala and also Murichipatanam. Mahabharata mentions a Kerala king who supplied provisions in the Kurukshetra battle. The Sanskrit grammarians Patanjali (2nd C. BC) and Katyayana (4th BC) were familiar with Kerala geography, but not Panini (7th BC). Kautilya mentions river Churni. The Puranas and Raghuvamsa make mention of the land of Kerala.

For the age of the Perumals and after we have Sanskrit plays and poems yielding historical material. They became source not by themselves, but through the Attaprakarams composed for performance in the temples. Their performance reflected contemporary social values. The dramas of Kulasekhara demonstrate Kerala as a separate political unit during that period. The Sankaranarayaneeyam (869 AD) help us to determine the chronology of Sthanuravi. The Mushakavamsa throws light on the early history of the Mushaka dynasty, besides the Chola raids and also of Srimula vasam. The Siva Vilasom mentions the rulers of the Cochin royal house. The grammatical work Lilathilakam refers to the rulers of Venad. The Suka Sandesa and Kokila sandesa mention important pilgrim centres of Kerala. Such works give a glimpse of local tradition and customs of the period. The Chataka Sandesa refers to the shifting of the capital from Padmanabhapuram to Trivandrum. The Balamarthanda Vijayam deals with many historical events connected with the rulers of Travancore.

Tamil Works.

The Tamil literary works of the Sangam Age provide valuable information of the life of the people in the early centuries of the Christian era. They reflect the picture of a settled society. The sangam anthologies comprises 2381 poems by 473 poets. Of the sangam works, the most valuable for the historian of Kerala are the Pathittupattu, Akananuru, Purananuru and Nattinai, besides the two epics Cillappadikaram and Manimekhalai. The Pathittupattu is a group of 10 poems each in praise of a Chera king by a poet. It is the most valuable work for the reconstruction of the political history of early Kerala as each decade of the work eulogises the achievements of a Chera king. Akananuru is a collection of 400 poems on love and romance dealing with matters Akam (Heart). Purananuru is another collection of 100 poems dealing with Puram (external) matters like war and diplomacy. The Kuruntokai and Nattinai also yield some historical

information. The Muthollayiram refers to the Chera capital Vanchi. Of the post Sangam works Silappadikaram deals with the exploits of Chera Chenkuttavan. Besides being the story of Kovilan and Kannaki, this work of Elanko Adikal, (the Chera crown prince) is considered as the Bible of the Kannaki cult. It mentions Kunavayirkottam, the Jain centre and corroborates the evidences from Roman writings. Manimekhalai of Sathanar continues the story of the early epic, as its heroine is the daughter of Madhavi. The celebrated songs of Auvaiyar, Paranar and Kapilar deal with Kerala life and society. The hymns of Nayanars and Alvars mentions some of the holy shrines of Kerala. The Perumal-Thirumozhi of Kulasekhera Allwar gives information of the Chera kingdom, besides the spread of Vaishnavism. The Thiruvaimozhi of Nammalavar gives details of the Vaishnava shrines of Kerala. The Periya Puranam of Sekkilar describes the story of Cheraman Perumal.

Malayalam works.

Literary works in Malayalam are available from the 12th C. They may be classified as Sandesa Kavyas, Manipravalam works, Ballads or Pattukal. **Manipravalam** is a mixture of Malayalam and Sanskrit. This form of literature was the predominant trend during the medieval period (9th-15th C. Among the numerous types of Manipravalam works, those written as eulogies to Devadasis are historically valuable. Among them the Unniachicharitham and Unnichirutevi charitam contain detailed accounts of the Devadasis and throw light on the political and social life of Kerala. The latter is of particular significance as it describes Kurumatsaram, the struggle of the two Brahmin villages. The Unniacharitham describes the early history of the Cochin royal family. The celebrated Unnunilandesam is the most important from the historical points of view. It is written in the form of a message from Aditya Varma the prince to his sweet heart Unnunili. The work draws lively sketch of medieval Kerala and also the wars and achievements of Venad rulers Anantapuram varnanam also gives glimpse of local traditions and customs, besides giving a description of Trivandrum and Kantalur Salai. Chandrotsavom throws light on the social and cultural life of the age. It portrays the life style of the upper classes, besides several customs and ceremonies. The Sandesa Kavyas in general give geographical features of Kerala and portrays the life of the people.

The pattu form of literature is the genuine literary form in Malayalam. To this category belongs the works of Ezhutachan (Kilipattu), Cherusseri (Krishnagatha), Puntanam (Janappana), Vatakkal Pattukal, Thullal works of Kunchan Nampiyar, the moplal songs of the Muslims, Kalyana pattukal of the Jews etc. **The Patappattu** (War Songs) describes the conflict between the Zamorin and the Cochin Raja and the intrigues of the Portuguese and the Dutch. They corroborate the official records. **The Mamankam Kilipattu** describes the events during the reign of Manavikrama and also a description of the Mamankam festival. **The Chaver Songs** like the Kandan Menon Pattu and the

Ramacha Panikker pattu deals with the exploits of Valluvanad hero. There are also ballads describing the exploits of Kerala Varma Pazhasi Raja, Marthanda Varma, Raja Kesavadas, Kunjali Marakkar and Tipu Sulthan, which corrects British records.

The Thullal Works of Kunchan Nambiar allude to several social customs prevalent in the 18th C. They reflect the changes that were taking place in contemporary society. The structural aspect of Kerala society including caste, occupation, economic activities, polity and the cultural impact of the Europeans are all well portrayed in the Thullal songs. **The Margam Kilippattu**, Kalliana pattukal, Palli pattukal of the Syrian Christians, the Moplah songs of the Malabar Muslims and the Jewish wedding songs also yield historical and sociological material. The Margam Kilippattu reflects the St. Thomas tradition. The Thiruvavangur kilippattu mentions Thomas of Cana. **Folk songs** constitute another major untapped source. The songs associated with Theyyam, Thira and other local art forms are a mine of information for social history.

FOREIGN ACCOUNTS AND CHRONICLES

The description of any country and its people by foreign observers is always valuable as they corroborate and supplement the indigenous sources. The accounts of foreign travelers on Kerala may be classified as those of classical Greek and Roman, Chinese and Arab and European.

The celebrated **classical writers of Greece and Rome** who make mention of Kerala are Megasthenes, Pliny, Strabo, Ptolemy and the anonymous author of the Periplus. The Greek ambassador Megasthenes (4th B.C.) refers to the Chera kingdom and also to the port of Tropina in his work *Indica*. Pliny (1st C.) in his *Natural History* refers to the ruler of Kerala as Calobotras while Periplus mentions him as Kerabotras. Ptolemy's (1st A.D.) *Geography* mentions Karoura as the capital of the Cheras. These writers give detailed information about the thriving trade between Kerala and the Roman Empire. The Peutinger Tables (225 – 250 A.D.), a set of maps copied from the frescoes of Rome reveal a prosperous Roman settlement at Muziris. The *Lazuntium* mark *Cosmos Indico-pleustis* (6th A.D.) had the earliest reference to Kollam and the Christians (*Topographia Indica*). The Roman geographers supplement the Sangam literature.

Chinese accounts.

The Chinese accounts of Wang Ta Yuan and Ma Huan yield historical information. Hieuen Tsang the Chinese pilgrim seems to have referred to Malabar as Molokuch, the land of hills. Wang Ta Yuan provides eye witness account of Ezhimala and Calicut (description of the barbarians of the Isles). Ma Huan a Chinese Muslim merchant (15th C. A.D.) gives an interesting description of the port and town of Calicut and its people. He is the first foreign traveller to mention Kochi – its rulers and people.

Arab and Persian writing.

The Arab travelers and geographers give us valuable information of Kerala society from 9th C onwards. The first notable Arab writer is Sulaiman, the merchant who gives a description of the Kollam as the most important port in India touched by the Chinese ships. Ibn Khurdabbeh, another Muslim writer mentions Malabar coast as a centre of export of rice. The Arab writers of the 10th century like Ibnul Faquib, Ibn Rusta, Abu Zaid and Masudi repeat the statements of Sulaiman. Alberunian, illustrations Muslim traveller of the medieval period is the earliest writer to call our country as Malabar. IDIRISI gives information of the coastal towns of Malabar. Other travellers like Al Kazwim and Rashiuddin refer to Kollam, Kolathunad and Mt. Eli respectively. Ibn Batuta who visited Calicut more than seven times gives us valuable accounts of Calicut, its King, people and port. He mentions Kollam as one of the finest cities of Malabar. The most objectives of all the Arab writers, Batuta's account is more reliable than of his predecessors.

European Travellers.

The European Travellers began to visit the country from the 13th century. Benjamin of Tudela, a Jewish traveller from Spain gives information of Kollam. The first major traveller was the Italian Marco Polo (Venice) who traveled through Kerala to China (1294 A.D). He gives picturesque details of the country, its people and natural resources. His description of Mt. Eli is of particular interest. John of Monte Corvino, the first Roman Catholic missionary to China records the Commercial predominance of the Muslims of Kollam. Friar Jordanus (1324) also gives useful account of the land and its people. In his work 'Mirabilia Descripta', Friar Jordanus mentions the extensive trade in spices, the prosperous Christian community and the policy of religious toleration of the Malabar rulers. He was the first foreign account of Marumakkathayam. Nicolo Conti, an Italian traveller (1440 A.D) mentioned the flourishing trade in ginger, pepper and Cinnammon at the port of Kollam. He was one of the earliest writers to mention Kochi. Abdur Razzack a notable non-European writer has testified to the predominance of Malabar trade with the Arabs. Athanasius Nikitin (1468 -74) the Russian traveller describes Calicut.

Foreign literary sources speedily increase as we come to the Portuguese period. For the Portuguese period we have the commentaries of Albuquerque, the book of Barbosa, travels of Varthama and Pyarde Laval. They throw light on the life of the people, trade activities in the ports and related matters and also of the state of affairs in the kingdom. The letters of the Portuguese missionaries of Kerala, historia de Malabar by Gon Salves, the full text of the Synod of Diamper are other Dependable sources. For the Dutch period we have the memories of the Dutch administrators of Kerala like Van Rhee, Nieuhoff, and the letters from Malabar by Visscher, accounts of Tavernier, Foster and above all Hortus Malabaricus giving information on the Flora of the Malabar Coast. For the British period we have the Tellicherry consultations (26 vols.) The report of the joint commissioners of Malabar, Buchanan's 'journey' and the land of the Perumal's by Francis Day and the notes of Mateer.

Literary sources became abundant when we come to the modern period. With the publication of a number of contemporary accounts, biographies, novels, plays. The publication of periodicals and journals ushered in an era of exhaustive study. The archival collections provide and the Valuable sources. The reports of the Archaeology Dept are also available. The compilation of such works as the Travancore Archaeological series (1910-39) (TAS), Rama Varma Research Institute bulletin (RVRIB) annual reports of Epigraphy, Kerala society papers (1928-33), annual reports of the Archaeological survey of India (ASI) are useful for the reconstruction of the history of Kerala.

Place Names.

The study of place names help us to know the history of a particular area. Geographical unities are given names on the basis of geographical peculiarities like presence of rivers, lakes and mountains, forts, places and markets. Thus we have a number of place names ending with Kad (Palakkad, Mannarkkad, Chavakkad) Kulam (Ernakulam, Kunnankulam) alluding to the existence of forests and ponds. The existence in a region is indicated by reference to Kode (Kozhikode, Azhikode) similarly Angadi and Chanta indicates market place (Parappangadi, Meenchanta). The elevated regions are indicated by such words as Poyil, Meethas and Medu and elevated garden lands by Parambu. Habitation centres are indicated by Cheri and Ur. Existence of custom centres are shown by Petta and Chungam. Place indicated Pally denotes Church or Buddhist educational centre. A careful study of place names of a region could indicate the type of habitation, economic activities, political importance, social and cultural features of a region.

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL TRENDS

You are already familiar with the word History as something related to the past, dealing with the achievements and failures of man. History traces man's growth from barbarism to civilization. But historiography is something different and distinct. It is also History, but with a difference. Its subject matter is historians and historical writing. It is concerned not with what history is nor how to write history, but how history has been written.

The evaluation of the historical works in the form of historiography as a separate branch was started in the 19th century Europe. The historiographical studies in India was initiated during the colonial period which became more rigorous in the 20th century. Still, no serious efforts were made in Kerala to evaluate the works of the yesterdays writers, apart from scanty attempts done here and there. Even these attempts were done not to make a serious evaluation of the works, but to draw information. Here an attempt is done to familiarize the students of history with the earlier works pertaining to the history of Kerala.

EARLY HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS:

Mushaka Vamsa Kavya.

Mushaka Vamsa Kavya, a Sanskrit poetical work written by Atula, the court poet of Srikanta, the Mushaka king of Ezhimala. It was composed in the 11th century. It describes the history of the Mushaka kingdom from its foundation to the time of Srikanta, the patron (11th C.) Divided into 13 Sargas, Mushakavamsa describes in detail the chronology, genealogy and history of the Mushaka kings. It also refers to the establishment of cities and temples, conduct of wars, suppression of revolts, marriage alliance, rule of succession and the king's patronage of arts and letters and religion. The Kavya is important as the earliest survival of an independent work of dynastic and regional history in Sanskrit literature produced almost a century before Kalhana's Rajatarangini. It is also valuable as a source book for the reconstruction of Kerala History. It is worth as proof of a native historiographic tradition. The author of this work, Atula may be regarded as the Morning star of Kerala Historiography.

Ballads.

The Northern Ballads (Vatakkann Pattukal) deal with the exploits of medieval heroes and heroines. They give us interesting glimpses of the social customs and institutions of medieval Kerala. The Thacholi vallads describe the fortunes of Thacholi Othenan while the Puthuram Pattukal narrates the adventures of Aromal Chekavar. Just like that of the Northern Ballads, we have the Southern Ballads. They include the prayers to God and certain historical subjects. The important Southern Ballads are the Anchutampuram Pattu and Iravikutty Pillai Pattu. The former is about the internal problems of the royal family of Travancore during the 16th century and the latter is about the hero Iravikutty Pillai, the minister to the King of Travancore, who had fought heroically against the army of the Madurai Naiks at the time of their attack against Travancore during the 17th century.

Granthavaris.

Granthavaris are sets of documents. They deal with transactions in temples and royal households. The Mathilakam record is one such document. It relates to Padmanabha temple, Thiruvananthapuram. We have also Kozhikode Granthavari, which relates to the Zamorin. There are records relating to Vanneri Illam, Peruvanam Temple Pattazhi temple and Nilampur Kovilakan. Documents of feudal chieftains like Kavalappara Nair and Paliath Achan are also to be included in this category. The Payyannur Pattola describes incidents in North Kerala.

USE OF TRADITIONS AS A SOURCE

We, Keralites, have a history as ancient as those of Egypt, China, Babylon, Greece or Rome. However we have no such historians as Herodotus or Thucydides, Livy or Tacitus or Sou-ma-chin. What our forefathers have taught and learnt as history is nothing but legends and myths and traditions. We have such legendary works - Keralolpathi and Keralapazhama.

Keralolpathi.

Keralolpathi is the traditional work dealing with the history of Kerala. It is a prose work in Malayalam, believed to have been written in the 16th century. It has been accepted until recently as the main source of information for the history of Kerala. It has three sections dealing with the Parasurama's creation of Kerala, rule of the Perumals and the wars and achievements of the Zamorins. It also deals with the theory of foreign Perumals, partition of Kerala by the last Perumal and the rise and growth of the Naduvazhis. It propounded the theory that the land of Kerala originally belonged to the Brahmins and it was a gift of the God, God's own country.

Kerala Mahatmyam.

Kerala Mahatmyam is a Sanskrit work written in verse. It forms part of the Brahmandapurana. It consists of 2217 couplets grouped into 100 sections. It was written in the form of a conversation between Garga and Yudhishtira of Mahabharata fame. It deals with events and personages belonging to an early period. However, it was composed only in the 18th century. It mentions the settlements of the Kankanis in Kerala from Goa.

As sources of history, both these works have not any real value. These works were composed by court poets and have as their aims (i) the glorification of patrons and dynasties and (ii) support to orthodoxy. They deal with events and personages supposed to belong to early periods. However, they are not contemporary works giving valid historical facts. They abound in historical inaccuracies, improbabilities and anachronisms. William Logan rejects the work as "a farrago of legendary nonsense". According to him, Keralolpathi had the only aim of securing to the Brahmin castes unbounded power and influence. To K.P. Padmanabha Menon, Keralolpathi is a "ill digested and uncollated collection of different versions huddled together in confusion". Further it has no chronological accuracy as it refers to events of a dateless past or that happened long ago (Pandu) and thus refers to a single Age. While the earlier Mushakavamsa has verse as the medium. Keralolpathi adopts prose. Atula's work resembles more Raghuvamsa while Keralolpathi that of the Puranas. While Athula deals with the history of a single dynasty, the author of Keralolpathi deals with the history of a Desa, a region. The real value of the

work lies in the fact that it contained the native Hindu view of history, the native historiographical tradition. They are valuable as a mine of half forgotten native usages and customs. "In the absence of trustworthy first hand evidence tradition may be accepted as ground work of history".

The traditional sources have been until recently the mainstay for the re-construction of Kerala history. We have several localised tradition for the origin of temples, Churches and mosques. The traditions of Parasurama, St. Thomas, Cheraman Perumal, Thacholi Othenan, Pazhassi Raja and Kunjali Marakkar are some of them. Most of the traditions have been recorded in medieval times, although they might have been part of the folk tradition even earlier. Parasurama Tradition exist all along the west coast, carried by the migratory movements of the Brahmins. His identify is still to be settled. We have more concrete evidence regarding the social formations of the 32 Brahmins settlements. There is no evidence of the same in Keralolpathi. However we have evidence from inscriptions to support Keralolpathi statements of Tali, Kazhakams and Perumals. We have no evidence regarding the partition of Kerala by the Perumal. But this may indicate the rise of Natuvazhis of Kozhikode, Kolathunad and also the growing influence of Islam. In fact, works like Keralolpathi have been composed only after the 16th century based on local traditions, and vested interests might have incorporated the Parasurama and other traditions in them. Although we cannot reject outright the traditional songs as fiction and legend, we have to use structural analysis in unravelling the reality inherent in the sources.

HISTORICAL WRITINGS IN THE MODERN PERIOD:

Manuals.

From myths, legends and traditions, from historical Kavyas and treatises, we may now pass over to the second stage of Kerala historiography – that of manual writers and court chroniclers. The earliest work in this category is Kerala Pazhama of Hermen Gundert. It deals with the history of the Portuguese power in Kerala from 1498 to 1531. K.P. Padmanabha Menon's Kochirajya charitram (1868) gives a continuous description of the history of Cochin for the first time. Shankunny Menon's History of Travancore (1878) is the earliest of the regular historical works in English. Logan's 'Malabar Manual' (1887) is another landmark. Nagam Aiyya's Travancore State Manual (1906), and C. Achuta Menon's Cochin State Manual (1911) are also remarkable. The Malabar District Gazetteers by Innes and Evans (1908) and T.K. Velupillai's revised edition of Travancore State Manual are also to be mentioned. The early manuals suffered from two glaring defects. They aimed at the glorification of the patron's dynasty. They further tried to support orthodoxy.

William Logan.

Logan was very different from the early manual writers. Logan compiled his 'Manual of the District of Malabar' (2 vols 1887) at a time when Malabar was already under the grip of the British. Hence, unlike the earlier writers, he has no need to glorify the ruler's dynasty, but to champion established order under centralised authority. His administrative experiences (he was the District Collector of Malabar) enabled him to have an easy access to sources and to have an on-the-spot-study of events and personalities.

Logan's Manual is an official one and contains all important details of the district of Malabar. It describes the geographical features, fauna and flora of the district, its religion, customs and manners of the people. And above all the history of the region - traditional history as well as 'History from other sources'. It is an authentic historical work on the region. Logan consulted important foreign accounts on Malabar and showed keen interest in folklore and folk life. His manual reflected contemporary society. It also adapted and incorporated informations from geology, anthropology, archaeology, and economics. It is unique as it included for the first time not only political details but also social and economic. Logan provided a detailed study of the Nair territorial organisation of Kerala. He traced the colonial rivalry and British Supremacy from contemporary writings. Although a British administrator, he never missed an opportunity to point out the errors and omissions of the British officials. Logan was the first writer to view the moplhah outrage as originated from agrarian discontent. In short, Logan's Manual is not just a compilation of the available materials. His wide knowledge; administrative experience and sympathetic understanding of the land and its people made it a monument of his erudition over a century in this land. His manual remained a model and inspiration to his successors and became the basis of later studies on Kerala.

Gazetteers.

Gazetteer literally means a geographical index or a geographical dictionary. They contain detailed information on all aspects of life – physical, historical, political, economic and social. They will be a real aid and guide to administrators and scholars and will also serve as a source of authentic information on the history and life of the people of a cities, towns and districts of the country. The Kerala Gazetteers Department, which has republished the "History of Travancore", is engaged in the compilation of Gazetteers. The District Gazetteers of Trivandrum, Trichur, Kozhikode, Kollam, Ernakulam, Palghat, Kannur, Kottayam, Allapuzha and Malappuram have been released. The pioneer venture of the preparation of the state Gazetteer of Kerala was undertaken by the Department in 1984. The Gazetteer by its nature provides all with the knowledge of the rich heritage of Kerala. It has an important role in educating public opinion and thus strengthening the foundations of our national life. The first and second volumes of the State Gazetteer of Kerala have published. They are conceived and devised in such a manner as to serve as an invaluable information covering various aspects of life in the State.

Pachu Muthathu.

Among the early works on Kerala History, the foremost is ‘**Thiruvitamkur Charithram**’ written by Pachu Muthathu in 1867. The work is remarkable as it made an extensive use of source materials like the Granthavaris, writings of officials and local ballads. His concept of history is reflected in his writings. To him History is a truthful explanation of the character and the good deeds of great men, and also of landed properties. History shall confine to truth and nothing but truth and provide an explanation of truth.

Shankunny Menon

The work of Shankunny Menon – **A History of Travancore** published in 1878 is the next milestone in the growth of Kerala Historiography. The presence of British power and the spread of English education necessitated the writing of history books in English language. Menon’s work fulfilled the need of the hour. In projecting Travancore rulers to limelight. Menon tried to highlight the greatness of Travancore sovereigns to the English people. His book is notable for the following:

He consulted all available documents of history like govt records, cadjan leafs, copper plate inscriptions from different parts of the country like Trichy, Kovai, Tanjore and Madras. He prepared himself notes and authorised others to collect information. He too treated history as history of kings and dynasties and concentrated on political events & personalities. However in the absence of concrete evidences, Menon depended upon legends and traditions. In spite of these, his work is the earliest of the regular historical works in English.

K.P. Padmanabha Menon

K.P. Padmanabha Menon was the harbinger of this new trend. He was the first historian of Kerala to distinguish history from myths and legends. He made a distinction between Traditional History and History from other sources. To him, history is based on truth and documents are essential to corroborate the facts of History. Although he inherited the passion for History from his father Sankunny Menon, the son’s outlook was different. Menon’s outstanding works were Kochirajyacharithram (1912), Marumakkathayam committee Report (1908) and History of Kerala (4 vols). His Memorandum and Report on Marumakkathayam are based on extensive research and has intrinsic value as historical documents. His Kochirajyacharithram is the first of its kind, the first historical work in Malayalam giving a continuous narration of regional history. However his monumental work was History of Kerala and he compiled it at a time when there was no formal state of Kerala as such. It was written in the form of notes to Visschier’s Letters from Malabar’.

K.P.P. Menon has brought new dimensions to historical studies. Hitherto history of Kerala is history of kings and dynasties lacking in social outlook. Menon was the first to appreciate history as the record of human cultural evolution. To him, history was enquiry. Menon was the first to use records as basic documents of History and discarded myths and legends. Moreover, he had an integrated vision of Kerala. His age was not ripe for writing an integrated history of Kerala, but Menon had the vision and the talent and he collected materials for such a stupendous task in future. Menon also stressed the need for interdisciplinary approach to explain historical problems. He provided the starting point for Elamkulam and others. He strode like a colossus along the paths of Kerala historiography.

Elamkulam P.N. Kunju Pillai

Prof Elamkulam P.N. Kunju Pillai, as you know, began the tradition of historical writing from where K.P. Padnabhamenon has left. He brought a vast change in the historiographical outlook on Kerala history. Although not a professional historian (he was a linguist), his researches spread in to the entire range of Kerala history. His most important works include *Annathe Keralam*, *Keralacharithra Irulatanja Etukal*, *Chila Keralacharithra Prasnangal*. A collection of his Malayalam articles were translated into English under the name *Studies in Kerala history*. His works are the result of scientific study of all available linguistic literary and inscriptional evidence and throws new light on many a dark period of Kerala history. For the first time, we have a connected chronological history of Kerala from the Sangam to Portuguese period. He brought to light the Sangam age and the Aintinai concept. He lighted the torch and showed us the classical age of the Perumals of Mahodayapuram from the 9th to the 12th centuries AD. Temple was recognised as a dominant institution in medieval Kerala. Elamkulam also took up the study of the socio economic history of Kerala in a systematic way. He brought forward new hypothesis regarding the chola invasions, the Chera capital, Kolam era, matrilineal succession and the origin of land lordism and Brahmin domination. On the whole he initiated the scientific study of Kerala history with the help of inscriptional evidence.

Sardar K.M. Panikkar

K.M. Panikkar was an internationally famous historian from Kerala. A diplomat turned historian, Panikkar was prolific writer and had to his credit more than 100 works. Though not a professional or practicing historian Panikkar had a rare and imaginative vision of history. He was not a specialist and his works covered almost all aspects and periods of history-geopolitics. Asiatic history, ancient and modern India and of course Kerala history. Some of his most important works are *Survey of Indian history*, *Asia and western Dominance*, *history of Kerala*. He was first a Keralite, then a moderate nationalist, a geo

politician and an Asianist. A non-practising historian, history was his past time. He gathered materials for his projects on Kerala history from Portuguese and Dutch archives and brought such works as *Malabar and the Portuguese*; *Malabar and the Dutch*. In these works, Panikkar saw Kerala as a whole, at a time when the movements for a united Kerala were gaining ground. He also penned two historical novels on Kerala – *Paranki Patayali* and *Kerala Simham*, the former a socio-historical piece set in the history of Cochin and the latter on Pazhassi Raja, the valiant fighter against the British, in short, K.M. Panikkar strode along the huge span of history like a colossus, but with imagination and insight.

Contemporary Writings.

Based on the new source materials, attempts were made by present historians of Kerala to reinterpret and reconstruct the history of Kerala. While the early historians gave predominance to legends and myths, the new historians tried to discard them and write history on scientific lines. They also tried to adopt an interdisciplinary approach by taking materials from sociology, anthropology and the like. Moreover they are trying to give a theoretical framework to historical problems with the motto 'no theory, no history'. While early historians gave precedence to political events and dynastic history, the present trend is to focus on social formations and cultural evolution. Valid historical theories are used to interpret historical data. New tools of analysis are used and new interpretations are adopted. Moreover an attempt has been made to bring Kerala history and historiography into the national stream.

The most outstanding historians are A. Sreedhara Menon, who co-ordinated the works of Elamkulam and brought the first popular history of Kerala as early as 1967, Prof. M.G.S. Narayanan who brought new dimensions and interpretations to the ancient and medieval history of Kerala, in such works as *Perumals of Mahodayapuram*, *Aryanisations of Kerala*, *Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala* and *the story of Calicut*. A host of scholars have adopted the Marxian interpretation of history. They include K. Damodaran, EMS Nambudiripad, Monographs were brought on various aspects by scholars like Robin Jeffrey (*Decline of Nair Dominance in Kerala*), Burton Stein (*South Indian Temples*), Stella Kramisch (*Kerala Architecture*) Dr. K.K.N. Kurup (*Kayyur Riot*, *Pazhassi Samarangal*). Subaltern studies, micro & macro level studies, studies on peasant movements, Dalits, folklore, Primitive arts were being undertaken. There were a few sociological and anthropological studies – those of Thurston, L.K. Ananthakrishna Aiyar, L.A. Krishna Aiyar, and A. Aiyappan – Among the historians of a general nature. New dimensions and new interpretations, new concepts and theories are brought to explain many a vexed problem in Kerala history. Many unexplored areas are brought under study and new lights have been thrown on many a dark corner of Kerala history.

UNIT-II

EXPERIENCING STATE

PERUMALS OF MAHODAYAPURAM

A new epoch in the history of Kerala began in the 9th C. AD with the establishment of the second Chera kingdom and the rule of the Perumals. The rulers of the kingdom were called as the Perumals or at sometimes as Kulasekharas. They were an illustrious line of kings and ruled over Kerala from 800 AD to 1124 AD. They had founded their capital near the ancient city of Vanchi, close to the old harbour city of Muciris or Muziris, the present day Kodungallur. It was called Makotai or Mahodayapuram in Sanskrit works, Muziri by travellers and Muyirikode in inscriptions. Built around the great Siva temple of Tiruvanchikulam, the only pilgrim centre of the Saivaite Nayanars in Kerala, Mahodayapuram became a great metropolis, the seat of the Perumals who revived the glory of the early Cheras of Makotai and hence are called as the later Cheras and their kingdom as second Chera kingdom. They were used to be called Kulasekharas as the founder of this dynasty seems to be one Kulasekhara. "With the rule of the Kulasekharas of Mahodayapuram, Kerala emerged in the full limelight of history as the distinct political and cultural entity" The revival of the Chera kingdom in the 9th century may be regarded as a by-product of the Aryan Brahmin settlement and the symptom of the socio-political dominance that they had established.

The foundation of the Chera kingdom and the rule of the Perumals have to be linked with the growth of an agrarian society. The Brahmin settlements of Kerala were aided and supported by the local Naduvazi's (Chieftains). It resulted in the growth of a new social and economic relation which is quite unsuitable for the existing tribal social order. The distribution of Brahmin settlement and their interaction with one another created a situation of a 'state within a state' or a system outside the purview of tribal polity. A new form for political authority was the need of the hour. The Perumals were invested to fulfil this role-i.e. to ensure the consolidation of the Brahmins as land owners, ritual authority over the people. The new land owners were to be brought under the political control of the new rulers.

Chera Chronology:

There were 13 kings belonging to this kingdom. Their chronology is a puzzle to historians. Scholars like V.K.R. Menon, Gopinath Rao and K.A. Nilakanta Sastri consider Sthanu Ravi as a contemporary of Aditya Chola. Epigraphists like Ramanatha Aiyar suggest a time bracket (300 – 1102) to the Cheras. Prof. Elankulam suggests that the Kulasekhara was a hereditary title and also the name of the first king. However MGS Narayanan says that there was no Kulasekhara as the first ruler and he propounds a time bracket (800 – 1122). The date of Sthanuravi is the sheet anchor of Chera chronology and the Teresappally copperplate was executed in the 5th regional year of Sthanuravi.

IMPORTANT RULERS

Kulasekhara Alwar (800-820 A.D).

He is regarded as the first ruler of the 2nd Chera kingdom. He started his rule around 800 AD. The exact date of the commencement of the Perumal rule and its founder are points of debates among historians. Although 'Cheramanar' is mentioned in the Pandyan inscriptions, there is no reference to his name or details. He is described as the ruler of Kolli, the master of Kudal, the ruler of Kozhi and the overlord of Kongu regions. He styled himself as the lord of Mahodayapuram and the 'Crest Jewel' of the Chera dynasty.

He is identified with Kulasekhara Alwar, the celebrated Vaishnava saint. He was attracted to Vaishnavism by Nammalvar himself. It is believed that Kulasekhara left Kerala on a pilgrimage visiting Srirangam, Tirupathi, Ayodhya and other places and finally settled down at Brahmadesam in the Pandya kingdom where he died at the age of 67. A profound scholar in Sanskrit and Tamil, he sang several devotional songs praising Vishnu in the form of Rama and Krishna. The Bhakti cult found its sublime literary expression in his *Mukundamala* in Sanskrit and *Perumal Tirumozhi* in Tamil. The latter consists of 105 verses and forms part of the *Vaishnavaita Divya Prabandham*. The verses on Rama in this collection are particularly fascinating. Hence Kulasekhara Alwar is said to have anticipated Kambar, the author of Tamil Ramayana. His teachings and verses constitute a major influence in the development of Vaishnavism in Kerala. He is also credited with the authorship of three dramas in Sanskrit - *Tapati Sam Varanam*, *Subhadra Dhananjayam* and *Vischinnabhishekam* and also a prose work by name *Ascharya Manjeri*. A versatile genius this Kulasekhara is one of the greatest figures in the history of Vaishnavism.

Rajasekhara Varman (820 – 844 AD).

He was the second ruler of the second Chera kingdom. His reign is significant in Kerala epigraphy as we have an important inscriptions related his period. The Vazhappilly copper plate as it is called is the first epigraphical record of the Cheras. It was significant that the Kollam era came in to vogue in Kerala during the reign of Rajasekhara. The great Advaita philosopher Sankaracharya seems to be a contemporary of this Chera ruler.

Rajasekhara Varman is often identified with the famous Saivaite saint Cheraman Perumal Nayanar whose story is narrated in the Tamil work *Periyapuramam*. According to *Periyapuramam*, the Perumal was born as the son of a Chola prince and a Chera princess at Kodungallur. With no ancestral throne to look forward to, the young prince spent his boyhood at Thiruvanchikulam and is said to have obtained many miraculous powers. However, he was installed on the Chera throne by his uncle. The new ruler established friendly relations with Pandyas, the Pallavas and others. Later he went on a

pilgrimage to Chidambaram and Tiruvarur. Sundaramurthi, the great Saiva saint conceived a great liking for him and became his inseparable companion. The young prince continued his sojourn and finally reached Madurai where he was well received by the Pandya king. Visiting other shrines of S. India, the Perumal returned by way of Perur, Palani and Thrissur to Kodangallur where he rebuilt the temple of Tiru Vanchikulam. A great exponent of Saivism. Cheraman Perumal alias Raja Sekhara is associated with the partition of Kerala and the Cheraman sword.

Sthanuravi Varma (844 – 885).

Sthanuravi Varma, the third of the Chera line was one of the most outstanding rulers of Kerala. He figures in the Teresapalli copper plates (849 AD), which was issued in the 5th regnal year of Sthanu Ravi. Hence the date of Sthanuravi is helpful for the reconstruction of Chera Chronology. The date of Sthanuravi is the sheet anchor of Chera Chronology. A contemporary of Aditya Chola, Sthanuravi had cordial relations with the Cholas. He helped them in their fight against the Pallavas as is evidenced from the Tillaishtanam inscription. With Sthanuravi began a period of Chera-Chola friendship which lasted for a century and a half. The Cholas gladly accepted the Chera friendship and cemented their friendship with a matrimonial alliance. Like his predecessor Sthanuravi was a patron of Saivism. A liberal patron of astronomy his court was adorned by Sankara Narayana. Sulaiman the Arab merchant who visited the kingdom had testified to the economic prosperity of the land.

Successors of Sthanu Ravi.

Sthanu Ravi was followed by a number of successors. Ramavarma was a patron of Yamak Kavyas and Masudi the foreign traveller visited Kerala during his reign. By the time of Godaravi, the Cheras had become an imperial power (?) and the stage was set for the Chera-Chola conflict. Bhaskara Ravivarman's reign is significant for (i) the beginning of the Hundred years war and (ii) Jewish copper plate grant Vira Kerala was associated with Manimangalam inscription and Rajasimha with Tazhakkad Church inscription. He was followed by Bhaskara Ravi III, Ravi Varma and finally by Rama Varma Kulasekhara, the last of the Perumals of Mahodayapuram.

Chera-Chola Wars

The Age of the Perumals witnesses an epic struggle with the neighbouring Chola monarchs. The conflict lasted for about a century and produced far-reaching results in the history of Kerala. This conflict is sometimes referred as '**Nuttantu Yudham**' or **Hundred years War** by Prof. Elamkulam and others. The Chera Chola confrontation is part of the 'old three cornered game of Dravidian politics'. The immediate provocation for the War

was the granting of political asylum to Mara Varma Pandya by the Cheras. Another cause was the absorption of the Ay Kingdom in the Chera Empire. Thus Trivandrum became a part of the Chera kingdom and Vizhinjam the old metropolis of the Ays became the southernmost port and fortress of the Chera realm. The strengthening of the defences of the kingdom by the Chera was not liked by the Cholas. The loosening of the bonds of sympathy between the two was already there.

The Cheras had maintained cordial relations with the Cholas during the time of Sthanuravi and after. This lasted for more than 1½ century. The Cholas who were just rising to power were glad to receive any and every help that they could get. They cemented their friendship by marriage alliance. Rama Varma's daughter was married to Parantaka Chola. This alliance secured the neutrality of Cheras when the Cholas had to fight against the Pandyas. Thus almost throughout the 10th Century the relations between the Cholas and the Cheras retained a superficial cordiality. However under Godavari, the Cheras had become an important military power in the South and the so-called cordial relations broke down. A Chola raid had already taken place under Parantaka who invaded North West Kongunadu, Indukotha retaliated by sending the Chera army to recover Nanjinad. The death of Parantaka (955 AD) gave peace for the next 30 years.

The reign of Bhaskara Ravi Varma (960 – 1012) witnessed the beginning of the prolonged conflict. When Raja Raja Chola attacked Kandalur Salai, the ancient seat of learning, it was the prelude to the momentous conflict. By a bold diplomatic move, Bhaskara Ravi secured the support of the financially well and commercially important Jewish community and started preparation for the struggle. However Raja Raja won a great victory over the Cheras in 999 AD and struck a blow at the Chera prestige by conquering Kottar, Kanya kumari and practically the whole of South Travancore. In the course of these expeditions, he captured Vizhinjam, 'the permanent abode of the Goddess of victory' (thus says Tiruvilangadu plate), destroyed the city of Kollam and stormed the strong fortress of Udagi. His attack on Kandalur earned for him the title "Kandalur Salaikalam Arutha Mannan, Rajaraja Tevar". The battle seems to have been a skirmish, which gained a few square kilometers of villages and rice paddy fields to the Cholas. The newly subdivided provinces were formed into a separate administrative division called Rajaraja Pandinadu. However by the time of Rajendra Chola, the Cheras had reconquered South Travancore and sent an army to Ceylon against the Cholas. So Rajendra had to conquer back Ceylon and in 1019 AD he sacked Vizhinjam and Kandalur. The Chola forces advanced to the north and a decisive battle was fought to capture the Chera capital of Makotai. No battle in India has been more disastrous to the Vanquished'. It is believed that Bhaskara Ravi Varma I was either slain in this battle or fled to Santimadvipu.

The war with the Cholas continued under Vira Kerala (1621-28). In 1028, Rajaraja came to Kerala and won several victories. The Manimangalam inscription (1046 AD) records that Vira Kerala was seized barbarously executed by being trampled to death under the feet of the state elephant. The Chera power suffered eclipse for more than half a century. The succeeding rulers acknowledged Chola hegemony, though Bhaskararavi III and Ravi Varma (1043-82, 1082-90) made sustained efforts to regain their lost freedom. A war of liberation ensued, resulting in the recovery of Vizhinjam and Mahodayapuram rebuilt. Hence Kalathinga Chola had to start a fresh to subdue the Chera strong holds.

Ramavarma Kulasekhara (1090 -1102), the last of the Perumals of Makotai started a war of liberation. He rallied under the Chera banner all patriotic forces. The Chera army was transformed itself in to suicide squads (**Chavers**). "It was an epic struggle for independence". During the long war that followed, Mahodayapuram was burnt and it became a city of ruins. Consequently Rama Varma was forced to shift his headquarters from Mahodayapuram to Kollam where he marched against Kulothunga Chola and defeated him and the latter was forced to retreat towards Kottar. This marks the virtual end of Chola domination over Kerala. Thus Rama Varma was able to turn the tide of war in favour of the Cheras and to him goes the credit of giving the first fatal blow to Chola imperialism.

Results.

The prolonged war with the Cholas weakened Chera power and paved the way for the rapid disintegration of the Chera kingdom. Kerala lost political unity after the so called Hundred Years War. The war led to the rise of new principalities. By the 12th Century, Kerala was split up in to a number of petty kingdoms. Precedence was eventually taken by the ruler of Eranad who established the kingdom of Calicut under the title Zamorin. A few years later, a Chera king appeared in Kollam and established the Venad kingdom. Following their example, many Naduvazhis declared their independence and founded kingdoms. The Chera Empire was mortally wounded. Communications and cultivation had been interrupted. Foreign trade collapsed, Kodungallur was abandoned.

It led to far reaching economic, social and cultural changes. It led to an enormous increase in the influence of the Namputiris. In the exigencies of the War, Janmi system took shape in Kerala; The Makkathayam system gave way to Marumakkethayam. The system of Kalaris and Chavers sprang up. It led to a decline of foreign contacts of Kerala. The disappearance of the centers of learning and the neglect of temples led to a stagnation in the field of culture. In short, the old order gradually changed and a new epoch of the Naduvazhis was ushered in.

Decline of the Second Chera Empire

The disintegration of the second Chera kingdom had taken place during the 12th Century. This had been attributed to two main factors. The continuous Chera Chola war resulted in the disintegration. The Chera Chola conflict weakened the Chera power and a central authority was rendered difficult. The story of the Hundred Years War is not tenable. The Cholas only conducted intermediary raids over parts of Kerala. The Cheras later accepted the overlordship of the Cholas. The raid of Kulothunga Chola was confined only to the southern extreme of Kerala and could have effected the rest of the kingdom.

Tradition attributes the decline to the partition of the kingdom by the last of the Chera rulers. The Cheraman legend has it that the last Perumal viz. Cheraman partitioned his country and there after proceeded to Mecca to embrace Islam. The Cheraman story is not tenable. There is nothing to show that the Perumal exercised absolute authority of the land in order to divide the kingdom. Perumal held the position at the apex of a complex system of land relations and thus could be sustained only in so far as the land relations required it.

The disintegration had taken place due to the factors associated with the growth of agrarian society. The spread of Brahmin settlements, rise of new temple Sanketams, growth of the Naduvazhis and their association with local chieftains, overseas trade and its impact on the fortunes of the governing class, role of the local assemblies in preserving the agrarian order – these and other factors were linked to the Chera disintegration. In fact the weak central authority of Cheras was replaced by the stable local authority of the Naduvazhis who became the centre of the new agrarian order.

Administration.

The administrative set up of the Perumals was in conformity with the classical Hindu political style. It adopted the best features of the Mauryan polity in several and Chola system in some respects. The inscriptions of the time provide valuable evidence of the administration. Monarchy was the prevailing form of government. The Perumal was at the head of the administrative hierarchy. He bears such royal titles as the Perumal. Manukuladitya, Kulasekhara, indicating Sanskrit influence. He also bears the title Keraladhinatha, overlord of Kerala and Mahodayapura Parameswara, the lord of Mahodayapuram. He came to the throne by patrilineal system of inheritance, the eldest male member ascending the throne. He is the fountain of honour and justice. He is the leader both in war and peace.

The Perumal ruled the country with the help of four Brahmin ministers called *Tali Adhikarikal*. They resided in the four great temples of the city as officials. The four Talis functioned as the leaders of the 32 Brahmin villages and functioned in an advisory capacity to the Perumal. The four Talis were Mel Tali, Kizhtali, Nediatali and the Chengapurathutali. They consisted of Taliyatiris or representatives from the four villages of Muzhikkalam, Ayranikulam, Irinjalakudu and Parur. The four Talis were called Kazhakams. The Talis did not perform any administrative functions for the Perumals. The crown prince was usually appointed as the Koyil Adhikarikal, the royal representative. His duty was to control the feudatory governor. As the government was more or less feudal, so the administrative machinery was simple. The Aryan Brahmin settlements had formed into a theocratic oligarchy, wielding real power behind the throne. The Perumal had his authority constrained by the Brahmin settlement and the hereditary chieftains of Kerala. There existed the feudal system of contracts and Charters accompanied by the delegation of governmental rights and responsibilities. Thus apart from military and police, Perumal's authority was based on traditional or customary authority. The important officials of the kingdom were Adhikari (executive officer), Patanayakan (commander in chief), Kizh Patanayakan (second in command), Mathilnayakan (Fort officer) Tiyamalvan (police officer) and Thiruvaikelpa (the officer who took down the oral orders of the Perumal). Besides there were royal astrologers, physicians and body guards, who followed their master in death and in life.

Although the Perumal was the overlord of Kerala, (*Keraladhinadha*) he did not administer the entire kingdom directly. For administrative convenience, the kingdom was divided into a number of **Nadus** (provinces). Each Nadu had its own hereditary or nominated governor known as the Naduvazhi. Thus the great feudatories were the hereditary governors of the 14 Nadus into which the kingdom was divided. The 14 Nadus were Kolathunadu, Purkizhnadu, Kurimbranadu, Eranadu, Valluvanadu, Kizhmalainadu, Vempolinadu, Venadu, Odanadu, Nantuzhinadu, Munjinadu, Kalkarainadu, Nedumporayurnadu and Polanadu. In time of war, the feudatories were called to the capital for counsel and assistance. They led their own contingent of soldiers in battle. None of these governors seem to have an independent status as they were generally appointed by the Perumal. The Naduvazhis were controlled in their domains by local assemblies called Munnuttavar and Arunuttavar, besides the Koyil Adhikari from the centre. These local assemblies seem to have a decisive voice in the administration of the Nadus. Each Nadu was subdivided into a number of Desams under a Desavazhi. The Desavazhis were controlled by the local kuttams. The lowest territorial unit of the kingdom was the Kara. It was under the control of village Panchayats

Big towns like Makotai and Kollam had special assemblies of their own. Makotai enjoyed all amenities of civilized life and was protected by high fortresses on all sides. It had extensive Pathways and imposing palaces, although no trace of the palace of Makotai exists today. It was found in ruins even in the 16th Century by the author of Kokasandesha. However, a court astronomer of the 9th century states that great halls of audience, high mansions and an observatory were part of the royal complex. The city was divided into divisions such as Senamukham (Cantonment), Kottakkam (Inside the fort), Gotramalleswaram Kodungallur and Balakrideswaram; we find poetic accounts of the city in the Periya-Puranam (12th c.). The high tower of the city is mentioned in the Viraraghava plates. The Jewish copperplates reveal that the settlement of the Jews and the Christians were located near the harbour Muchiri. The surviving relics and records show that the city was planned conforming to the classical Karmukha (bow shape) type mentioned in textbooks on town planning and architecture.

The Chera kingdom had a well ordered system of law and justice. Elaborate arrangements were made for the maintenance of law and order. There was a regular penal code. The common punishments inflicted were fines, imprisonment and death penalty. Those who were sentenced to imprisonment were sometimes sold as slaves. Those who mismanaged temple properties or funds were dismissed from service.

The epigraphic records of the age give us an idea of the tax structure of the kingdom. The land tax was the main source of income. It is called as Patavaram. It was fixed as 1 / 5th of the total produce of the land. Of this one-half goes to king (Kopatavaram) and the other half to the Desavazhi (Pathipatavaram). The Brahmin settlements paid a lump sum in gold or paddy every year in return for the protection they enjoyed. A major share of income came from fines paid by culprits for economic and social offences. The customs dues from the capital city went to the Perumal, but those from other cities to the respective Naduvazhis. The Perumal had his own royal estate called Cherikkal. It included all the forests and lands under his ownership. Other major sources of revenue are Talaikkanam, a kind of professional tax imposed on ladders used for climbing trees, Menippon, a tax levied for weaving gold ornaments, Polippon, a kind of sale tax. Taxes were also levied on people who wanted to thatch the roofs of their houses. The toddy tappers had to pay Kudanaazhi, a pot full of liquor. From women labourers a special tax was collected (Mulavila). There are also references to such tolls as Pakutham, Ulku, Thulakkooli etc in the inscriptions. The income derived from selling criminals as slaves constitutes another source of revenue. Those who keep slaves had to pay Alkasu to the govt.

The Perumals had a well equipped army and navy. He had a capital force (Maulasainya) consisting of 1000 Nairs under Patamal Nayar (Captain). Each of these captains had 10 soldiers (Chekons) under his control. Similarly the Naduvazhis had 300, 500, 600 or 700 soldiers under them with the same type of organisation. These feudal forces raised from the cultivating classes were used for protection of property and supervision of local administration. To consider such bodies to be democratic assemblies is far from the truth. Epigraphic records clearly state that they formed an organised militia characteristic of the feudal age. The groups of nair and Thiyya soldiers known as Changatam might have risen out of such bonds. There were also chavers, a suicide squads who made their first appearance in the course of the Chola Wars. There were military gymnasiums (Kalaris) to train the youths in the art of warfare. The Perumals also had a navy which cooperated with the army in times of military operations. The Chola inscriptions testify to the effective role of the Chera navy in times of war.

Brahmin Settlements

Kerala Brahmins were called as Namputhiris who were one of the predominant elite communities of Kerala. Though few in number, the Namputhiris have wielded great power and influence throughout our History. Here we shall ponder over their migration and settlement in Kerala. In the course of the analysis, we shall look in to their antiquity, culture and influence. From where they came, where were they settled in Kerala, the influence exerted by them on the ruling community, what impact they made on the social and cultural history of Kerala.

Spread of Brahmin Settlements

Advent of Nambuthiries.

The advent of the Namputhiris was a slow and steady process spreading over several centuries from 3rd BC to 12th AD. It finally ended in the final submission of the local population to the superior intelligence and administrative skill of the Namputhiri Brahmins. It was carried out in a subtle manner not by the force of arms, but by the arts of peace. An advanced alien culture finally swept away the old tribal society.

Nature of Aryanisation.

The advent of the Namputhiri Brahmins is not an isolated movement. There are four views regarding their advent to Kerala. 1. Military Conquest: William Logan has viewed the arrival of the Namputhiris due to military conquest of the tribal population by the superior Brahmin. 2. Caldwell and K.P. Padmanabha Menon suggest superior intelligence as the force behind Aryanisation. 3. A third view regards the Aryan Brahmins as refugees of

Muslim onslaughts on North India. The Aryans were forced to leave their original north Indian abode and crossed the Vindhyas and finally settled in the South.⁴ However, the real motive behind Aryanisation was agrarian technique. The Brahmins were 'land hungry' and they migrated to the South carrying with them Hindu culture in its embryonic form. Later, they established temple oriented villages and began to dominate the whole land. In this process, the Namputhiris functioned as exploiters and agents of a higher civilization. In course of time, they became localised and began to play the role as trader counselor, priest, ambassador, poet and moralist using his skills in language, astronomy and polity to his own advantage. The present day historians are keen to accept this economic interpretation, discarding the theories of military conquest, refugee theory and superior intelligence.

Date of Migration.

The date of Aryan migration is a much-discussed one. The land of Kerala was known to the North from very early times as is evidenced from Puranic references. Asokan edicts, Greco-Roman accounts, Tamil Brahmi cave label inscriptions etc. The Sangam anthologies allude to the presence of Brahmins in the courts of local chieftains. Some of the poets were Brahmins. Chellur, the earliest Brahmin settlement was a centre of Vedic religion during the Sangam Age. Hence Aryan influences were at work in Kerala society even during the early centuries of the Christian era. The Kadamba interregnum witnessed the settlement of the Brahmin immigrants in Kerala. By the 6th, 7th and 8th centuries, the process continued as is evidenced in the Panniyur Chokiram factions, representing Vaishnava Chalukya and Saivaite Rashtrakuta conflict. During the age of the Perumals, the settlement continued to grow and multiply. The vazhapilly inscription suggests that the village was an Upagrama of Thiruvalla, the Southern most and greatest settlement of the Brahmins in the 9th Century. By the 8th, 9th Century, Brahmin settlements had come a vital force in society. This has been one of the causative factors for the emergence of the second Chera kingdom. The power of their settlement was expressed through the king's council (**Naluthali**) at the Chera capital.

The Routs.

The Brahmins who came to Kerala adopted either a Western or an eastern route. Most of them had chosen the Western route from Aihole (Ahichatra) of the Chalukyas to Saurashtra, Konkan, Tulu regions and finally reaching North Kerala. Others followed the eastern route beginning from Kalinga, Andhra, Vijayanagar and Chola countries, finally reaching Southern Kerala. A sea route from the mouth of the Indus to Gujarat and from there to Kerala is also suggested.

Identification: There were originally 32 Brahmin settlements in Kerala. Of the 32, settlements, 10 were in between Perumpuzha and Karumanpuzha, (Perumchellur, Chokiram and Panniyuru, Thrissur and Peruvanam). 12 settlements between Karuman Puzha and Churni (Irinjalakuda, Avittaputhur, Ayiranikkulam and Muzhikkulam, Kuzhur, Chengamanad and Uliyannur) and 10 between Churni and Pampa (Kumaranallur, Thiruvalla, Kaviyur and Niranam). Almost all the 32 settlements were identified; 22 of them have yielded inscriptions and 03 are mentioned in literary works' 6 comes down to this day with their temples and settlements; and one remain unidentified.

Basic Features.

These settlements have certain basic features: Most of the settlements were located, placed, situated on the banks of rivers and on the fertile plains. (9 in Pampa. 13 in Periyar and 5 in Churni). They were essentially temple centred and temple was synonymous with Brahmin settlement. They had become a vital force in society. A few settlements are found in clustered groups. The concentration of these settlements on river beds is based on the type of soil for paddy cultivation - up on which the Brahmins depended. The spread of Brahmin settlement could be related to the origin and extension of paddy cultivation. The emergence of a Brahmin settlement signified the growth of a new society based on exploitative social relations. Brahmin settlement emerged with the help of the Naduvazhi who gave them lands and settled them.

Impact of Aryanisation.

The Namputhiris, as the representative of the Aryans, made a deep and profound impact on early Kerala society and culture. In the **social sphere**, they introduced the caste system on a casteless society. After securing the support of the ruling and trading classes, they created and popularised the myth of superiority of the ruling classes over the toiling class. The social status of a person came to be determined as the basis of occupation. There was a corresponding decline of the status of women. The regulations framed by the Namputhiris resulted in many social evils of later days such as Sambandham, Devadasi system, Smartha - Vicharam etc. In the **economic field**, Aryanisation paved the way for the evolution of landlordism (Janmi system) in Kerala. The Parasurama legend was incorporated to strengthen the economic position of the Namputhiri. The legend of Parasurama originated in Surparaka (Gujarat), moved along with the moving people, Kerala being the last link in the chain of Brahmin migration. Keralaolpathi legend designed to glorify the Naduvazhi shows that it was a matter of honour for the chieftain to grant lands to the Namputhiris. The control over **Brahmaswams and Devaswams** enabled them to control the entire land area. This led to the rise of landlordism in Kerala.

In the **religious sphere**, the Aryan influx leads to the decline of Jainism and Buddhism on the one hand and the rise of Hindu temples on the other. In the process, old Buddhist and Jain shrines were either demolished or converted as Hindu centers of worship. Non Aryan practices, deities, rituals and worship were adopted. Temples with Sanketams became a force to be reckoned with. In the **political field**, the Namputhiris began to yield enormous influence. They became counsels of the kings. The 'Perumals of Kerala' owes their rise to power to the Namputhiris. In the **cultural sphere**, the Namputhiris made a profound impact. They founded Salais to impart education. To Sanskrit and Malayalam languages, the Namputhiris contributed a lot. They were experts in philosophy, and medicine, and astrology and astronomy. Their influence is profound in Malayalam script and language. (Arya Ezhuthu). Some of the drawbacks of Aryan impact is the increased rigidity of the caste system, the deplorable condition of the lower classes, the exploitation of the landed gentry etc.

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY.

The Age of the Perumals witnessed the triumph religions in the Pre-Perumal period began to acquire a position of pre-eminence among the religions of Kerala. The triumph of Hinduism was the natural corollary of the Aryanisation of Kerala. Hindu religious activity received a great impetus under such figures as Shankaracharya. Kulasekhara Cheraman Perumal and Prabhakara. While Sankara and Prabhakara influenced the elite of the society, Kulasekhara and Cheraman influenced the masses by evolving and popularizing the Bhakti Cult. The Bhakti Cult in turn led to the establishment of Hinduism as the moving religious force in the country.

The progress of Hinduism had its immediate impact in the rise of temples and temple arts to a place of importance in the religious and cultural life of the people. The Nayanars and Alvars inspired the foundation of a number of Siva and Vaishnava shrines in Kerala. The construction of structural temples received a fillip from the Perumals and the merchants. Strict rules and regulations were enacted for the conduct of temple affairs and the administration of Temple properties. As the temple was the nerve centre of all cultural activities, temple arts also came to be developed. New festivals like Onam, new art forms like Koothu and Kutiyattom were instituted. The institution of Kuthampalam and the emergence of Devadasis may be ascribed to this period. Art and Architecture also developed. The temples were provided with prolific stone and wooden sculptures. The mural paintings in the temples of Tirunanthikara and Tiruvanchikkulam had its origin during the age of the Perumals.

There was considerable progress in the field of temple architecture and sculpture. In the absence of granite of high quality, there was no development of sculpture peculiar to Kerala. The cave temples and structural temples of the 9th Century exhibit the Pallava and Chola styles. In sculpture too, there was an imitation of the Pallava and Chola figures. A few Dwarapala figures at Kaviyur and Vizhinjam, a Dakshinamurthi figure at Irunilamcode, a few Vishnu idols in ruined temples and several dancing scenes at Thrikkodithanam and Kulasekharapuram testify to the maturity of sculptures and their artistic vision.

SANKARACHARYA AND ADVAIDA PHILOSOPHY

Sankaracharya is the greatest philosopher India has produced since Gautama the Buddha. This great Advaita philosopher gave a great impetus to Hindu religious activity during the Perumal age. A younger contemporary of Kulasekhara Alvar and an elder contemporary of Cheraman Perumal, Sankara lived in the 8th-9th Century (788 – 820 AD). He was born as a Namputiri Brahmin at Kaipill Iellam in Kalady on the banks of Periyar. The full details of Sankara's life are not known, but a few landmarks are available. His father Sivaguru died when Sankara was five years old. His widowed mother Aryambal had sent him to Bhattarmana and Udayatungeswaram. But Sankara was not satisfied with the system of Kumarila and Prabhakara. His sensitive mind was pained at the sectarian controversies that degraded religion. Burning with a passion to discover the truth, Sankara declined King Rajasekharan's offer of gold and position. He left Kerala at the early age of 16, to undertake a pilgrimage to all centres of Hinduism. In the course of this itinerary, he came in to contact with Govindapada. After knowing the four cardinal truths from the Guru, Sankara went to Benares where he discovered the truth that he had been seeking. That which is experienced through the senses is not real: "That alone is real which remains unchanged: while one is awake, asleep or dreaming, and which is found in all, from the highest Brahmin to the lowest ant". In the light of this discovery, Sankara wrote a commentary on the Brahmasutras.

Now Sankara started on his Dig Vijaya. Proceeding to Prayag, he met Kumarila-Bhatta and then Mandana Mishra (at Mahishamati). Later he proceeded to Srisaila, Gokarna, Mookambi and Sringeri. At Sringeri, Sankara built his first mutt called Saradapitha. Returning to Kerala, he met the Perumal and continued his journey visiting Rameswaram, Madurai, Jambreswaram, Chidambaram and Kanchi. At Kanchi he laid the foundation of Kamakotipitha. Then he moved to Tirupati, Vidharbha and Karnataka. In the course of these journeys, he defeated Mandana Mishra, the Bhairavas, Virasaivates and others. Proceeding to Saurashtra, he established the Kalikapith Math at Dwaraka. Proceeding to Ujjain he won over the Karmavadis and Madhyamika Buddhists. He also visited Assam and Nepal, Kosaala, Anga and Vanga and founded the Vimalapith Math at Puri.

Having won all rivals, Sankara planted the banner of Vedanta in the temple of Saraswathi at Kashmir. He defeated the followers of Kanada with their atomic philosophy of Gautama of Kapila, the formulator of the Sankhya System of Buddha's teachings of Kumarila Bhatta and Prabhakara, the Jains and the Pashandas. Finally Sankara ascended the throne of Universal Learning at Kashmir and established the Jyothirpith madh at Badarinath. Returning to the land of his birth Sankara died at Thrissur at the age of thirty-two. Sankara propagated his philosophy of Advaita Vedanta. The cardinal point of this philosophy was that there is nothing real in this world except Brahman, the all pervading cosmic force. Sankara looked up on the human soul as part of the Brahman and all material objects as mere illusions or Maya. The Advaita Vedanta has its roots in the Upanishadic teachings. Advaita reconciles the Puranic religion with the great truth of the Upanishads.

Sankara was a great reformer of Hinduism. He gave the organisational set up to Hinduism. He borrowed some of the popular features of Buddhism like monasticism. He laid the foundation of a strong Brahmanical papal organisation by setting up four Hindu Madhs in four corners of India - Badari in the north, Sringeri in the South, Puri in the East and Dwaraka in the West. In Kerala too he founded four Mudhs at Thrissur. The first Presidents of these Mudhs were his principal disciples. To propagate his teachings, Sankara organised a regular body of missionaries (Sanyasins). His ideas were carried to Europe by Max Muller in the 19th century and by Vivekananda to America in the early 20th century.

Sankara was a remarkable devotional poet as well as a perceptive commentator of the classic religious texts of Hinduism. In his works, he developed the doctrine of Advaita Vedanta with its monotheism. He was also responsible to establish the pre-eminence of the Namputiris and in doing so solidified the pyramidal structure of the caste system. To the historian, Sankara's religious reforms are more important than his philosophy. His teachings provided the intellectual basis to Hinduism. The mudhs he founded provided Hinduism with an effective organisational framework. It provided Hinduism with a machinery to protect it, a fortress to guard it. Sankara is great in all respects. As a poet he is yet to be surpassed in the sublimity and music of his effusions: As a linguist par excellence, he has no parallel; as a debater, he was invincible. As a thinker, he even surpassed the Buddha. The genius of Kerala for cultural synthesis found its expression in the philosophy of Sankara". His was an attempt to reconcile the best elements of Hinduism and Buddhism. Sankara has been the manifestation of a movement for religious revival. One sees in him a youth on fire, an intrepid debater, a shrewd political genius, a calm philosopher and a mystic.

BHAKTI MOVEMENT AND LITERATURE

The Bhakti Cult was one of the major ideological features of the emerging society of South India during the Age of the Perumals. The Perumals, unlike their predecessors in the Sangam Age were dedicated Hindu devoted to Vishnu and Siva. Absolute devotion to the Supreme God was considered the major means to attain personal bliss and the devotion came to be concentrated around the emerging temples. Hindu gods like Vishnu and Siva were the objects of devotion.

The Bhakti movement brought the cultural transformation of South India in many ways. It replaced or absorbed the popular cults in general and the Tinai – centred ritual forms in particular. It provided the ideological framework for the growing authority of temples and also new forms of worship and ritual. It helped in decreasing the influence of Buddhism and Jainism in South India. It helped in the establishment of the authority of the temples over the rulers.

Impact of the Bhakti movement in Kerala.

Some of the growing temples of Kerala were transformed into Saivite or Vaishnavite centre of worship. Thus 13 Vaishnava Divyadesas are mentioned as located in Kerala by Nammalvar. Tirumangai and Kulasekhara Alwar. The Saivite centre of Vanchi was praised by Cheraman Perumal and Sundaramurthi Nayanars. The identification of the Perumal with God is another indication of the influence of Bhakti. The Perumal is confined the suffix 'Deva' and granted prolonged life, ruling several hundred years. The Perumal is identified with the temple religion.

The Bhakti cult produced a vast literature and art forms of devotion. Apart from single works like Mukundamala and Perumal Thirumozhi, it produced Tevarum and Nalayira Prabhandham. It also quickened the spread of Itihasa and Purana stories. Ramayana and Mahabharata and the Puranas got several adaptations in regional languages in (Kambar, Tulasidas and Ezhuttachan) later days. The art forms like Koothu and Kudiyattam were being conducted to popularise puranic stories. The Margi tradition of the Sanskrit art was confined with the indigenous Desi form to make the enactment comprehensible to the people.

There were other variants of Bhakti. The Jain and Buddhist adapted idol worship in their temples and worshipped the Buddha, Thirthamkaras, and Padmavathi. The offerings associated with them also shows elements of Bhakti. Local cults like Ayyappan and Mahayakshi are mentioned in Tiruvalla inscription. This suggests the absorption of local traditions and cults. However it is a misnomer to regard the Hindu religious stir of the period as a revival or renaissance. There was no rebirth of Hinduism, but only stagnation. What happened was not revival, but the establishment of Hinduism as the predominant religion of the land. The triumph of Hinduism was chiefly due to the works of the Bhatta. Sankara and Prabhakara, Cheramen Perumal and Kulasekhara Aivar.

MEDIEVAL TRADE

The foreign travelers like Sulaiman and Masudi who visited Kerala in the 11th Century have testified to the economic activities and the consequent financial soundness of the kingdom. The economic prosperity was mainly achieved from the extensive foreign trade with West Asia and China. The hill products from the Western Ghats carried down by the many rivers to natural harbours readily secured a market in West Asia and Europe. A number of Jewish, Christian and Muslim traders exploited the situation to their own advantage. As they possessed much wealth in gold, the native chieftains were prepared to overlook differences in faith and race and extended to them a warm welcome.

Kerala had a flourishing overseas trade with China during the period. China purchased articles like pepper, ivory, cinnamon, teakwood and pearls from this part of the country. They sold fishing-nets, procelain goods and silks. The Chinese introduced trade articles such as Cheenavala, Cheena Bharani and Cheenachotti and Cheena Otam, articles which exist even today.

A remarkable feature of the age was the pivotal position occupied by the mercantile corporations and merchant guilds in the socio-economic life of the country. The most important of such merchant guilds were **Manigramam, Anchuvannam and Valanchiyar**. Manigramam was an association of merchants who transacted in Diamonds. Anchuvannam was a body of merchants who traded in five different commodities. Valanchiyar was an organisation, which carried on overseas trade. Inscriptions record the existence of such guilds. Manigramam is mentioned in the Chola inscription as a unit of Disai Aiyirathi Ainuttuvar, an international merchant network. Manigramam is mentioned first in Teresappalli copper plate where it is referred to as one of the Karalar of Kollam. The Panthalayini inscription, Thazhakkad Church inscription, Irinjalakuda inscription, Viraraghava Pattayam (1225) Payyannur Pattola (14th C)-all mention Manigramam. These records indicate that their activities spread to a vast area from Kollam to Ezhimala. From the Teresapalli copper plate, It may be inferred that Manigram was an organisation of the Christians as Sapir Iso was a Christian. Anchu Vannam is also mentioned for the first time in Teresappally inscriptions. Along with Manigramam, it was the Karalar of Kollam. Jewish copper plate mentions Joseph Rabban, the Jew as the leader of Anchuvannam. The origin and development of this corporation is unknown.

These trade corporations functioned actively and contributed to the economic prosperity of the land. Even in the public life of the kingdom, they played a very important role. Their leaders like Mar Sapir Iso and Joseph Rabban came to the rescue of chera kings in times of war. Their status as leaders of corporations received official recognition from the ruler. They were not only exempted from taxation, but were granted many privileges, which they enjoyed in hereditary succession.

Kerala inscriptions mention a number of other guilds such as Nanadesikal, Nalpathennayiravar, Patinenbhoomi, Disai Ayirathi Ainnuthavar and Patinettu Pattanatter. Nanadesikal and Valanchiyur were mentioned in the Eramam inscription of Bhaskararavi. Patinenbhoomi is mentioned in the Peruvemba inscription. Alathur and Thazhakkad inscriptions refer to Nanadesikal and others. The Pantalayini inscription mentions Nalanjiyar. These guilds might have acted as itinerant units crossing the Western Ghats to the major ports of trade and producing centres. They formed into large caravans as a protective measure. Temples were the major nodal points for the activities of these corporations. They were the largest consumers for the products.

There was frequent interaction of Kerala merchants with other parts of the world. They made offerings to various temples in Tanjavur, Arcot and other places. It is recorded that a merchant hailing from Makotai built a Vishnu temple at Pagan (Burma). These show the migration of people from Kerala as members of the mercantile corporations. As much of the trade transactions were through immediate exchange, the use of coins was restricted. The major medium of exchange was Dinaram. Donations to temples were made in gold. Gold was exchanged for land also. Kalanju and Kanam were the normal measures of gold. Kasu, Achu and Palankesu were coins referred to in inscriptions.

It was a feudal society with a graded hierarchy with hereditary occupations and well defined duties and responsibilities that existed during the period under review. Proprietorship of land was closely related to political power and administration. In this period, Kerala was chiefly a land of agricultural villages. The scattered Brahmin settlements were better organized and more prosperous than the villages. The pyramidal structure of tenants, sub tenants, artisans, and serfs remained the same as in the Brahmin village. The tenants were expected to pay all sorts of dues to the land lord like Alkasu (slave money), Manayira (roof tax), Menippon (capitation fee), Iravucoru (to maintain a soldier), Talaivila (head price). They have also to pay customary dues like Onanel (Onam Dues), Patayani nel (dues for military tournament), skilled workers have to pay professional tax. The toddy tappers had to pay Talaikkanam and Enikkanam for the right of using the fether and the ladder. The oil mongers had to pay Kutanazhi. The merchants paid Ulkku (sales tax). There was also Pakudam (vehicle tax), Tulakkuli (weight tax), Thattarakuly (for godowns), Pantalkanam (for temporary sheds). Additional taxes were to be paid to erect ornamental arches and additional storeys. The state collected taxes even for wearing turbans, carrying palanquins, procession lamps and instruments for music. There was the universal system of Kazhcha.

A peculiarity of the social system of the period is the Marumakkathayam system of inheritance. There existed serfdom and slavery in Kerala. The references to slave trade (Alkasu) among the dues paid by merchants point to the prevalence of the system. There were several instances of the untouchables bought and sold along with land and as part of the land. The Brahmin settlements which possessed large areas of arable land occupied a pre-eminent position in society. The temples formed the new centre of social life and culture.

ARAB AND CHINESE TRADERS

The accounts of foreign travellers who visited Calicut during the reign of the Zamorins give us valuable and interesting glimpses of the trade relations at Calicut port, Ibn Batuta, the earliest of them to mention Calicut describes the city as one of the greatest ports in Malabar where merchants from all parts of the globe are found. The African traveller, in particular, mentions the large fleet of Chinese merchant vessels that lay anchored at the port. Ma Huan the Chinese merchant describes Calicut as a great emporium of trade frequented by traders from all over the world. Adbur Razzack described Calicut as a perfectly secured harbour which brings together merchants from every city and every country. Precious articles brought from Zansihar, Abyssinia and other countries were found in the city. Nicolo Conti (1444) and Athanasius Nikitin (1468-74) alludes to the rich trade in pepper, ginger, cinnamon and other spices at Calicut. Varthema (1503-08) describes Calicut at great length and confirms the view of earlier writers.

Calicut became one of the nodal points for long distance trade under the Zamorins. During the period (11th to 15th C). Arab and Chinese traders were frequenting Calicut and other ports of trade. They exported pepper, ginger, cardamom and cloves and several medieval plants from Malabar. The Arabs controlled a major part of overseas trade with the west from Calicut. A number of Arab traders came to Calicut and settled there. Merchants from Baghdad flocked to this port of the country. From the Muslims a strong merchant class developed. They operated mainly from Calicut, Pantalayini, Puthuppanam, Valapattanam and Matayi. They erected mosques for worship such as Muccunti Palli. The extent of Arab trade is portrayed in a number of Arab sources from Sulaiman to Ibn Batuta (9th to 14th C).

The presence of Chinese merchants in Calicut is also alluded to by medieval travellers. Wang Tuan, a Chinese merchant visited the Coast (14th C) and left a description. Zheng Ho, another sailor travelled to West Coast during the 15th Century and came to Calicut in 1407. Ma Huan the Chinese merchant who visited Malabar during the 15th C gives details about the coastal trade. He records that pepper was grown for

commercial purposes. Kerala exported pepper, cardamom, coconut and arecanut to China and imported silk, porcelainware, copper, mercury, tin and lead from China. Copper and Bronze vessels used in palaces, temples and Taravadus came through trade with China. Calicut also served as the centre for re export trade, for articles brought from China to Arab countries and vice versa. Trade was conducted in money terms. It was fixed in the presence of the royal representative, local merchants and the foreign traders. The royal agent at Calicut had a direct say in the conduct of trade.

Creation and Assimilation of New Knowledge

The medieval period witnessed the creation of new knowledge and its assimilation. The necessary atmosphere was already prepared for the creation and assimilation of new knowledge during the perumal period. Evidences are available to show that the perumals had maintained a court that had scholars of different types who had made significant contribution for the growth of knowledge. The spread of Sanskrit language provided necessary uniformity to the assimilated knowledge. After the disintegration of perumal kingdom, creation of new knowledge was decentralized to the provincial and local areas.

The greatest contribution of medieval Kerala to the knowledge system of the world was in the fields of mathematics and astronomy. The Kerala School of astronomy and mathematics was a school of mathematics and astronomy founded by Madhava of Sangamagrama in Kerala, South India, which included among its members: Parameshvara, Neelakanta Somayaji, Jyesthadeva, Achyuta Pisharati, Melpathur Narayana Bhattathiri and Achyuta Panikkar. The school flourished between the 14th and 16th centuries and the original discoveries of the school seems to have ended with Narayana Bhattathiri (1559-1632). In attempting to solve astronomical problems, the Kerala School independently created a number of important mathematics concepts. Their most important results series expansion for trigonometric functions were described in Sanskrit verse in a book by Neelakanta called *Tantrasangraha*, and again in a commentary on this work, called *Tantrasangraha-vakhya*, of unknown authorship. The theorems were stated without proof, but proofs for the series for sine, cosine, and inverse tangent were provided a century later in the work *Yuktibhasa* (c.1500-c.1610), written in Malayalam, by Jyesthadeva, and also in a commentary on *Tantrasangraha*. Their discovery of these three important series expansions of calculus several centuries before calculus was developed in Europe by Leibniz and Newton was a landmark achievement in mathematics. However, the Kerala School cannot be said to have invented calculus, because, while they were able to develop Taylor series expansions for the important trigonometric functions, they developed neither a comprehensive theory of differentiation or integration, nor the fundamental theorem of calculus.

Prominent mathematicians

Madhavan of Sangamagrama

Madhava of Sangamagrama (c. 1340-1425) was the founder of the Kerala School. Although it is possible that he wrote *Karana Paddhati* a work written sometime between 1375 and 1475, all we really know of his work comes from works of later scholars. Little is known about Madhava, who lived near Kochi between the years 1340 and 1425. Nilkantha attributes the series for sine to Madhava. It is not known if Madhava discovered the other series as well, or whether they were discovered later by others in the Kerala School. Madhava's discoveries include the Taylor series for the sine, cosine, tangent and arctangent functions, the second-order Taylor series approximations of the sine and cosine functions and the third-order Taylor series approximation of the sine function, the power series of p (usually attributed to Leibniz), the solution of transcendental equations by iteration, and the approximation of transcendental numbers by continued fractions. Madhava correctly computed the value of p to 9 decimal places and 13 decimal places, and produced sine and cosine tables to 9 decimal places of accuracy. He also extended some results found in earlier works, including those of Bhaskara.

Narayanan Pandit

Narayana Pandit (1340-1400), one among the notable Kerala mathematicians, had written two works, an arithmetical treatise called *Ganita Kaumudi* and an algebraic treatise called *Bijganita Vatamsa*. Narayanan is also thought to be the author of an elaborate commentary of Bhaskara II's *Lilavathi*, titled *Karmapradipika* (or *Karma-Paddhati*). Although the *Karmapradipika* contains little original work, it contains seven different methods for squaring numbers, a contribution that is wholly original to the author, as well as contributions to algebra and magic squares. Narayanan's other major works contain a variety of mathematical developments, including a rule to calculate approximate values of square roots, investigations into the second order indeterminate equation $nx^2 + 1 = p^2$ (Pell's equation), solutions of indeterminate higher-order equations, mathematical operations with zero, several geometrical rules, and a discussion of magic squares and similar figures. Evidence also exists that Narayana made minor contributions to the ideas of differential calculus found in Bhaskara II's work. Narayana has also made contributions to the topic of cyclic quadrilaterals.

Parameshvaran

Parameshvara (1370-1460), the founder of the *Drigganita* system of Astronomy, was a prolific author of several important works. He belonged to the Alathur village situated on the bank of Bharathappuzha. He is stated to have made direct astronomical

observations for fifty-five years before writing his famous work, *Drigganita*. He also wrote commentaries on the works of Bhaskara I, Aryabhata and Bhaskara II. His *Lilavathi Bhasya*, a commentary on Bhaskara II's *Lilavathi*, contains one of his most important discoveries: an early version of the mean value theorem. This is considered one of the most important results in differential calculus and one of the most important theorems in mathematical analysis, and was later essential in proving the fundamental theorem of calculus. The *Siddhanta-Deepika* by Paramesvara is a commentary on the commentary of Govindsvamin on Bhaskara I's *Maha-bhaskareeya*. This work contains some of his eclipse observations, including one made at Navakshethra in 1422 and two made at Gokarna in 1425 and 1430. It also presents a mean value type formula for inverse interpolation of the sine function, a one-point iterative technique for calculating the sine of a given angle, and a more efficient approximation that works using a two-point iterative algorithm, which is essentially the same as the modern secant method. Parameshvaran was also the first mathematician to give the radius of a circle with an inscribed cyclic quadrilateral, an expression that is normally attributed to L'Huilier (1782).

Nilakanthan Somayaji

Nilakantha (1444-1544) was a disciple of Govinda, son of Parameshvara. He was a Brahmin from Trkkantiyur in Ponnani taluk. His younger brother Sankara was also a scholar in astronomy. Nilakantha's most notable work *Tantra Samgraha* (which 'spawned' a later anonymous commentary *Tantrasangraha-vyakhya* and a further commentary by the name *Yukthideepika*, written in 1501) he elaborates and extends the contributions of Madhava. Nilakantha was also the author of *Aryabhatiya-bhashya*, a commentary of the *Aryabhatiya*. Of great significance in Nilakantha's work includes the presence of inductive mathematical proofs, a derivation and proof of the Madhava-Gregory series of the arctangent trigonometric function, improvements and proofs of other infinite series expansions by Madhava, an improved series expansion of p that converges more rapidly, and the relationship between the power series of p and arctangent. He also gave sophisticated explanations of the irrationality of p , the correct formulation for the equation of the center of the planets, and a heliocentric model of the solar system.

Chitrabhanu

Chitrabhanu (c. 1530) was a 16th century mathematician from Kerala who gave integer solutions to 21 types of systems of two simultaneous Diophantine equations in two unknowns. These types are all the possible pairs of equations of the following seven forms: $x + y = a$, $x - y = b$, $xy = c$, $x^2 + y^2 = d$, $x^2 - y^2 = e$, $x^3 + y^3 = f$, $x^3 - y^3 = g$. For each case, Chitrabhanu gave an explanation and justification of his rule as well as an example. Some of his explanations are algebraic, while others are geometric.

Jyesthadevan

Jyesthadeva (c. 1500-1600) was another member of the Kerala School. His key work was the *Yuktibhasa* (written in Malayalam, a regional language of the Indian state of Kerala), the world's first Calculus text. It contained most of the developments of earlier Kerala School mathematicians, particularly from Madhava. Similar to the work of Nilakantha, it is unique in the history of Indian mathematics, in that it contains proofs of theorems, derivations of rules and series, a derivation and proof of the Madhava-Gregory series of the arctangent function, proofs of most mathematical theorems and infinite series earlier discovered by Madhava and other mathematicians of the Kerala School. It also contains a proof of the series expansion of the arctangent function (equivalent to Gregory's proof), and the sine and cosine functions. He also studied various topics found in many previous Indian works, including integer solutions of systems of first degree equations solved using *kuttaka* method, and rules of finding the sines and the cosines of the sum and difference of two angles. Jyesthadevan also gave the earliest statement of Wallis' theorem, and geometrical derivations of infinite series.

Sankaran Varma

There remains a final Kerala work worthy of a brief mention, *Sadratnamala* an astronomical treatise written by Sankara Varma (1800-1838) that serves as a summary of most of the results of the Kerala School. What is of most interest is that it was composed in the early 19th century and the author stands out as the last notable name in Kerala mathematics. A remarkable contribution was his computation of π correct to 17 decimal places.

DEVELOPMENT OF MALAYALAM

The growth of an indigenous form of literature is attributed to the medieval period. Malayalam, as a distinct form of language began to develop. *Ramakatha*, a poem composed during the Perumal period is regarded as the beginning of Malayalam literature. However the text is more or less in Tamil. Most of the indigenous literature belonged to the *Pattu* form, orally communicated. Local usages and syntax got in to all these compositions. The script used is *Vattezhuthu* adapted from Tamil and Brahmi. *Grnatha* characters were used for writing Sanskrit compositions. Malayalam began to have its own script during this period. The temple inscriptions have used Tamil. However, a number of local usages and syntax got in to these compositions composed in Tamil.

Manipravalam

Manipravalam is the name given to that form of literature in Malayalam, which came in to existence during the 9th – 14th Century. It is a curious mixture of Malayalam, Tamil and Sanskrit. From the 11th Century onwards, a number of literary works appeared in Manipravalam pattern. Tolan was one of the earliest poet in Malayalam who composed works in Manipravalam style. However the first full-fledged work in Manipravalam was Vaisika Tantram of the 11th Century. Most of the manipravalam works have Devadasis as their heroine. Of the works in this category may be mentioned Unniaticharitam, Unniachi Charitam and Unnichirutevi Charitam. They depict the life of ease and indolence of the leisured class in society. They reflect the social conditions of the age such as the Devadasi system, Sambandham system of a decadent society. However they are valuable for the social historian of Kerala.

PHILOSOPHICAL AND DEVOTIONAL WORKS

The feudal age produced a series of philosophical and devotional works in Malayalam. The Gathas and Champus come under this category. Krishnagatha of Cherusseri was the typical Gatha. Its theme is the story of Krishna. It was written under the patronage of Udaya Varman of Kolathunad. The Ramayanam Champu of Punam Namputiri and Bhasha Naishedham Champu of Mahishamangalam were produced during this age. If the early Champus depicted the Devadasis of the day, the later Champus drew their themes from the Puranas and depicted contemporary social life. Other great savants of the period are Punthanam and Melputhur. Puntanam belonged to the school of Bhakti and composed such works as Jnanappana, Sri Krishna Karnamrutam and Santana Gopalam. Melputhur composed learned works such as Narayaneeyam and Prakriya Sarvaswam. Chennos Namputiri wrote Tantra Samucchaya, a treatise on temple architecture and sculpture. Other literary figures include Madhava who translated Gita in to Malayalam and Sankara who wrote Bharatmala. There was also works relating to scientific literature. Ashtanga hrudaya, an encyclopaedia of Ayurvedic system of medicine was composed during this period. Parameswara founded the Digganita system of astronomy based on the observation with the naked eye.

A number of pure Malayalam songs in praise of Gods and heroes appeared; symbolizing the dawn of Kilipattu literature. The Kannassa Ramayanam revived the tradition of religious poetry. Kannassa Panikkar, the most outstanding of the Niranam poets wrote Ramayana, Bharatam, Bhagavatam and Sivaratri Mahatmyam. Though adapted from Sanskrit, they are remarkable for their originality of treatment. The Ramayana works of Niranam poets and the Ramakathapattu revived the tradition of religious poetry. Their works culminated in the epoch making translations of epics and Puranas by Tunjath Ezhuthachan.

Cherusseri

Cherusseri Namputiri is famous as the author of Krishnagatha. He enjoyed the patronage of Udaya varma, the king of Kolathunad. He composed Krishnagatha in accordance with the wishes of his patron. Krishnagatha is remarkable for its simplicity and felicity of expression. However it contains several verses, which come under the class of erotic poetry. While Ezhuttacchan tried to rejuvenate society by introducing spirituality, Cherusseri treated Gods, Goddesses as human beings with flesh and blood, with feelings and emotion, love and hatred.

Ezhuttacchan

Ezhuttacchan was one of the most outstanding figures in the history of Malayalam literature. He liberated Malayalam from the clutches of Tamil and Sanskrit and made it popular. He is rightly regarded as the Father of modern Malayalam language. He was a pioneer in the socio-religious movement of the time. Ezhuttacchan appeared at a time when there was anarchy and degradation in the political and cultural fields. In a period of gloom, anarchy and violence, Ezhuttacchan appeared as a man of destiny.

Tunchatt Ramanujan Ezhuttacchan was born in a Nair family at Thrikkandiyur. He left Kerala to the Tamil country for higher studies. Returning to the native land, he established an Ezhuthupally (school) to teach children. He devoted his time to literary pursuits and composed devotional works. During his last days, Ezhuttacchan left Thrikkandiyur (Tirur) for Chittur where he established a Mutt and a temple on the banks of the river. Ezhuttacchan's contributions to Malayalam are everlasting. He inaugurated the 'Kilippattu' form of literary expression in Malayalam. He rendered into Malayalam the great epics Ramayana and Mahabharata. His adaptation of Ramayana is unique as it had a spiritual and religious connotation. He was also credited with the authorship of Harinamakirtanam and Irupathinaluvrutham. These works show his genius for synthesis. In fact, the history of Malayalam poetry begins with this savant.

In the devotional and religious sphere, Ezhuttacchan revived the Bhakti cult in Kerala. His 'Adhyatma-Ramayana' is the finest literary expression of the Bhakti Cult which became popular in Kerala during the medieval period. He composed his work with supreme emphasis on Bhakti or devotion to God in the form of Rama in a style and language that appeals to the heart rather than brain. The devotional songs in this work are considered to be the best in Malayalam poetry even today.

In the social sphere too, Ezhuttacchan made his mark. Though a non-Brahmin, he studied the Vedas and the Sastras and exposed the Aryan myth that they alone could master the sacred knowledge. Ezhuttacchan also began the system of imparting primary education through Ezhuthupalli. In the words of Dr. Ayyappa Panikkar, "With his absolute sincerity, skill and total dedication to poetry and religion, Ezhuttacchan was able to create and establish, once and for all, a language, a culture and a people. He is thus a magnificent symbol of our great cultural movement".

FORMATION OF NADUS AND SWARUPAMS

The Age of Swarupams and Naduvazhis comprising the middle ages in Kerala (1100 – 1800) began with the disintegration of the second Chera kingdom. The age witnesses the emergence of localised rulers of different Nadus and their original families known as Swarupams. The Chera inscriptions mention a few such Naduvazhis. The political scene of Kerala was dominated by these local chieftains. The most important of such Nadus were Venad, Kochi, Kozhikode and Kolathunad. These chieftains had an important position in the newly introduced system of government.

Swarupams.

They were ruling houses that control the Nadus. They were large joint families. Their political authority was organised on the basis of Kuru (Sincerity). The Chera inscriptions allude to the existence of Kuruvazhcha. As big landlords, the swarupams received dues from their land, and tolls from trading centres. The Swarupams ruled the Nadus. In course of time new Swarupams developed and they brought in to being new Nadus (Eg Desinganadu, Vettathunad). The important Swarupams, however were Thrippappur (Venad), Perumpadappu (Kochi), Nediyruppu (Kozhikode), Kolam (Kolathunad) and Arangoth (Valluvanad).

The rule of the Naduvazhis marked the end of Kerala as a politically unified state. The Naduvazhis and Swarupams exerted a powerful influence in the newly emerged polity. The Age also witnessed the emergence of the Janmi system the ascendancy of the priestly class. Politically sterile and culturally unfruitful, the Naduvazhi era witnessed the swansong of the old order, pushing Kerala to the lime light of modern history.

Kolathunad

Kolathunad was an extensive kingdom in the northern part of Kerala. It extended from River Nethravathi in the North to Korapuzha in the South and from Kudak hills in the east to Arabian Sea in the west. The territories included in Kolathunadu were Kumbala, Nileswaram, Kottayam and Kadathanadu. We get information about the kingdom chiefly from the Mushaka Vamsa Kavya of Atula; we also get information from Keralaolpathi and Keralamahatmyam. The accounts of foreign travellers like Marco Polo, Ibn Batuta, and Alberuni corroborate indigenous evidence. A few inscriptions-Eramom records-throw light on Kolathunad.

The origin of Kolathunad is attributed to Cheraman Perumal by Logan. The Ezhimala kingdom of the Sangam period may be considered as the base of Kolathunad. The Kolathiri dynasty is known to Mushaka Vamsa Kavya. Prof. Elamkulam

doubts whether the Kolathunad was a part of the second Chera kingdom as they had accepted the supremacy of the Perumals. Kolathiris were the rulers of Kolathunad. They were the descendants of the Mushaka kings. They became powerful in the 13th Century. When Thiruvitamkur proposed an adoption from that family, Kolathiris had the audacity to refuse it. This refusal denotes their growing influence in Malabar politics. Macro Polo records: "Kolathunad was tributary to nobody. The king is very rich in treasure, but not very strong in arms. The approach to his kingdom is so strong by nature that no one can attack him. So he is afraid of nobody". The Venetian traveller refers in particular to the custom of seizure of goods from foreign ships that entered the kingdom.

Raghava who patronised Raghavananda and Divakara. **Rama Varma** who composed Bharata Sangraha and Chandrika Kalpa. **Udayavarma**, the patron of Cherusseri the author of Krishnagatha. And **Ravi Varma**. The capital of the kingdom is at Ezhimala. Alberuni called it as Hili; Macro Polo described it as 'Eli'. Ibn Batuta has stated that Kolathunad amassed much wealth through trade at the harbour city of Ezhimala. Other important ports in the kingdom were Matayi, Valapattanam and Dharmadam. Kolathunad had accepted the suzerainty of the Zamorins and when the Portuguese landed in Kerala Kolathunad was under the spheres of influence of the Zamorins.

Rise of Kozhikode

The kingdom of Calicut was an important principality of Kerala in the Middle Ages. It became independent after the fall of Perumal kingdom. The ruler of Calicut is known as Samudiri or the Zamorin. He was the central figure in Kerala history in the middle Ages. His rise and fall synchronises with the beginning and end of the Middle Ages. But for the arrival of foreigners like the Portuguese and the Dutch the Zamorins could have been able to unit the whole of Kerala under one sceptre.

The Jewish copperplate refers to Zamorin as Eralnad Utayavan. Ibn Batuta was the earliest writer to call the ruler as Samutiri. The word Samudiri is a truncated form of Swami Tirumulpad. As he was the chief of Eralnad, he was called Erlathiri. The ruling house of Samutiri is known by the name **Nediyirippu Swarupam** after the original house of the Eratis at Nediyirippu in Eralnad. Therefore he is referred to as Nediyirippu Muppan. He was called Punturakkon after Calicut, which became a puntura, a great port of trade. As the Zamorin's authority extended over both hill and sea, he is called as Kunnalakonathiri, the lord of hills and waves in Malayalam and Shailabhadhiswaran and Samudragiriraja in Sanskrit. Barbosa refers to him as Samudiri, lord of the Ocean. As he belonged to Eralnad, the Zamorin is also known as Erati.

The origin and early history of the Zamorins are enveloped in mystery. Keralolpathi ascribe their origin to Manikkan and Vikkiran, the two Erati brothers, who received from the Perumal a small Desam where the cock crows, a thorny jungle and an injunction to 'die, kill and annex'. They also received the broken sword (Otinja Val), the broken Conch (utanja Sankh) and the land that was still left after partition (Ullanad) and a faithful (Panikkar) commendant. Barbosa, Shaik zain-Ud-dhin and the Mamankom Kilippattu repeat the legend with minor variations.

The Jewish Copper plate of Bhaskera Ravi and the Kottayam copper plate of Viraraghava (Syrian Christian copper plates) mention the Zamorin. Keralamahathmyam refers to him as a feudatory prince. The Dutch writer Visschier and Muens and the Cochin Grantha Vari also mention the Zamorin. The ancestors of the Zamorins came and settled in Eralnad with headquarters at Nediyruppu in the 3rd Century AD says Krishna Aiyar, the historian of the Zamorins.

The rise of Calicut may be assigned to the period after the 13th Century. By the 11th Century, the Eranad Utaivar came to be known as Nediyruppu Muppan. It remained as a regional Nadu throughout under the Perumals. When Perumal's authority disintegrated, Nediyruppu Swarupam declared its independence. It became a necessity to North Swarupam to extend its boundaries for economic existence. The Netriyruppu ruler was in daring need of a port city for over-sea trade. Hence he tried to acquire Calicut, which was under the domain of Porlathiri. The Eratis were landlocked in their domain and they wanted to get an outlet to the sea through Polanad. The Polanad chief turned down their request for the Chullikkad at the mouth of the Kallayi River and the adjoining Kozhikode hill. There upon the Eratis attacked Polanad and through treachery and bribery acquired Kozhikode and made it their capital. The city around the Siva temple came to be known as Koil Kotta (fortified palace) which in course of time became as Calicut. The exact date for its foundation is not known. Calicut is unknown to writers before Batuta. Calicut had become a busy city by the time of Batuta. The city was founded in 1042 AD, says a Sanskrit chronogram. Ma Huan and Abdul Razack suggest a date around 1050 AD. In course of time Calicut became the greatest and the most famous port on the Kerala Coast. Its rise and prosperity were due to its position as the capital city of an expanding empire and as the waterway that gave access to the upper country. It was also due to the character and policy of the Zamorins, which induced the Arab and Chinese merchants to flock to this port of trade. Calicut soon became the Chief emporium of trade. It was the brisk trade carried through Calicut port that filled the coffers of the Zamorin and fired him with the political ambition to be the overlord of the whole of Kerala.

Zamorin's Conquests.

After defeating Porlathiri and acquiring Calicut, the Zamorin embarked on a series of conquests. The Rajas of Beypore, Parappanad and Vellat and the chieftains of Kurumbranad and Payyurmala were forced to acknowledge his supremacy. The ruler of Valluvanad was the most powerful adversary whom the Zamorin had to face. The Zamorin wanted to acquire Tirunavaya, for political reasons and to preside over the Mamankam festival. Besides he wanted to have control over the agrarian tract around Bharatapuzha and the port of Ponnani. The river Nila was the main artery of communication with the interior. Kurumatsaram, an internal feud between two Brahmin settlements of Sukapuram and Panniyur gave an opportunity to the Zamorin to intervene. When the domain of Tirumanasseri Namputiri, the leader of the Panniyur faction was attacked by Valluva Konathiri, the former appealed to the Zamorin for help. There upon Zamorin moved his army in to action and drove the Valluvanad Raja from Ponnani. After a bitter and prolonged campaign, the Zamorin captured Tirunavaya and assumed the unique position of Rakshapura (protector) of Mamankom. The Arab merchants offered all help to the Zamorin in this conquest. The conquest however ushered in an era of bitter rivalry between the two kingdoms.

The Zamorin continued his success. Before long he brought Nilambur, Manjeri and Vankata Kotta (Kottakkal) under his control. Nedunganad acknowledged his authority. Talapilly Raja too submitted to his authority. The Punnathur chief became a strong supporter of the Zamorin. The Perumpadappu Swarupam was forced to vacate its headquarters at Chitrakutam and move in to Thiru Vanchikkulam. In the course of the 14th Century, the Zamorin further extended his conquests over central Kerala. He brought Thrikkanarmathilakam under his possession and the Cochin Raja was forced to shift his head quarters from Vanchi to Kochi (1405 AD).

The conflict with Kochi began in the 11th Century. It was the growing ambition of the Zamorin that forced the Cochin ruler to abandon his headquarters at Vanneri and later at Vanchi and move to Kochi. The dissensions in the Cochin royal family necessitated the intervention of the Zamorin. When the Raja bequeathed the newly formed port of Kochi to his mistress, the Raja's relatives pleaded to the Zamorin to intervene. There upon the Zamorin marched in to the Cochin territory, occupied the Raja's palace at Thrissure, defeated the Raja and installed his nominee as the new ruler of Kochi. The new ruler acknowledged Zamorin's over lordship and agreed to sell his pepper through Calicut Port. The Chieftains of Edappalli and Kodungallur and the Arab merchants helped the Zamorin in this venture.

The Zamorin's encounter with Kochi brought him to the borders of the fertile Kuttanad and Palakkad. His authority was recognized by the chiefs of Ambalapuzha, Vadakkumkur and odanad. Although there was a cloud of Conflict with Venad, it was brought to an honourable settlement. The Palakkad Raja was also brought under control by conquering Naduvattom. The powerful Kolathunad in the North also submitted to the Zamorin's authority. Thus, by the end of the 15th Century, the Zamorin had become the overlord of almost two-thirds Kerala. His prestige and position increased immensely. Visions of a united Kerala have already been floating when the arrival of a few Portuguese ships under Vasco Da Gama changed the course of events and involved the Zamorin in a life and death struggle with European imperialism.

Administration.

The administrative set up of the kingdom was based on sound and liberal principles. The king was all in all. But his unlimited power was tempered on the one hand by the vassal chieftains and on the other by the Brahmins. The administration was carried on under the direct orders of the Zamorin and his ministers. The four important ministers are called Sarvadhikaryakkars and minor ministers are called Karyakkar. The important ministers were (i) Mangat Achan, the seniormost minister who held a unique position in government (ii) Dharmoth Panikkar who was the instructor in arms to the Zamorin and the officer in charge of the Kalari; (iii) Tinyancheri Elayayath and (iv) Varakkal Para Nampi. The last two were Brahmin ministers and enjoyed special privileges.

There was an elaborate civil service to attend to the day to day work of administration. The taxes due in the government were collected by Karyakkars. Their accounts were kept by the Menokkis (clerks). Barbosa observed that the Zamorin kept many accountants in his palace. They are all in one room separate and far from the king, sitting on benches and there they write all the affairs of the king's revenue. The kingdom consisted of different Nadus, each under a Naduvazhi. The Naduvazhi had to pay Purushantaram (succession Fee) to the Zamorin. He had to sent presents on such occasions as Mamankam, Ariyittu Vazhcha. The capital city of Calicut had a governor and customs office of its own.

The Zamorin had a well-equipped and efficient army. Each Desam had a Kalari where Nair youths were given training in arms. The city of Calicut had a standing army. The Zamorin maintained a cavalry force and an ordinance depot. The navy of the Zamorin was manned by the moplabs and the Kunjalis were the admirals of the Calicut fleet. The king was the fountain of justice. Justice was administered free to all. Property disputes were settled by Panchayats. Caste tribunals tried cases involving offences against morally and religion. Whipping, flogging, mutilation were the punishments awarded. Death penalty was inflicted for serious crimes. However Brahmins were exempted from punishments.

Cultural Achievements.

Calicut made significant contributions to our cultural heritage under the Zamorins. Their patronage of culture overshadowed their political achievements. The Zamorins were great scholars and patronised scholars and men of letters. Calicut became a great centre of art and letters during the time of the Zamorins. Manavikrama, the most celebrated of the early Zamorins, was the author of *Vikramiya*. The Zamorins' court was adorned by the famous Eighteen and a Half (Patinettara Kavikal) poets. The most celebrated ones of the Zamorin's court were Uddanada Sastrikal, Payyur and Kakkasseri Bhattas. Chennos Namputiri and Punam, the last being the half poet. Uddanda was the author of *Kokila Sandesam* and *Mallikamarutam*. Kakkasseri was the author of *Vasumitra-Manavikrama* while Chennos Namputiri composed *Tantra Samuchayam*.

Rise of Kochi (Perumpadappu Swarupam)

Kochi was another important Nadu that became independent after the disintegration of the perumal kingdom. The Cochin royal house is known as Perumpadappu Swarupam as they had their original headquarters at Chithrakutam in the Perumpadappu village in Vanneri. When the Zamorin invaded Valluvanad in the 13th Century, the Perumpadappu family abandoned the Vanneri Palace and migrated to Kodungallur from where in 1405 AD they shifted to Kochi. The aggressive raids of the Zamorin and the Periyar floods might have prompted them to shift the capital. The transfer of the trading activities from Mahodayapuram to the newly formed (Kochazhi) Kochi also promoted this shifting.

Kochi came to political limelight only by the 13th Century. According to tradition, Kochi was given to the nephew of the last Perumal when he partitioned the kingdom. However they were subordinate to the Perumal's authority. The territorial boundary of the kingdom extended from Ponnani in the North to Shertallai in the south and from Chittur in the east to Kochi in the West. Kochi rulers are being mentioned in inscriptions and in early literary works. Viraraghava associated with the Syrian Copper plates is a Cochin ruler. Rama Varma, another ruler of Cochin is mentioned in *Siva Vilasam*. *Sukasandesam* and *Unniati Charitam* allude to the unique position held by the ruler of Kochi among the Naduvazhis of Kerala. The Brahmins recognised them as Kshatriyas, an honour granted not even to the Zamorins. The Perumpadappu Muppil (chief) exercised jurisdiction over a large number of temples in Kerala. This moral and religious authority exercised by him had given him place of pride among the Naduvazhis of Kerala.

Veeraraghava was the most important ruler of Kochi – before the advent of the Portuguese. He is associated with Veeraraghava Pattayam, or Syrian Christians copper plates of 1225 AD. This inscription is about the granting of the Manigramam rights and

certain other privileges to Iravi Kortanan, leader of the Syrian Christians. It grants 72 proprietary rights to Iravi Kortanan, to have elephants, Silk umbrella, slaves, palanquins etc. The inscription is important as it suggests the position of the Cochin royal family as the successors of the Perumal. The local chieftains of Sukapuram, Panniyur and Eranad and Valluvanad were present as signatories and witnesses of this grant.

The prolonged conflict between Cochin and Kozhikode for the political supremacy of central Kerala brought new dimensions to Kochi. It was the Cochin Raja who gave facilities for trade to the Portuguese when they landed in Kerala. The Dutch palace was presented as a present to the Cochin ruler by the Portuguese. The Kochi ruler also welcomed the Jews and the Konkani's to the Malabar Coast. When the Dutch came, the Kochi Raja's became subservient to them. Their intervention in the prolonged conflict with Kozhikode ended in 1717 and the Raja got back all his ancestral territories. The period witnessed the rebellions of Paliath Achan, Anchikaimal and Chazhur Tampan. It also saw the formation of the northern confederacy, Zamorin's invasions and Cochin's alliance with Travancore. When Mysorean intervention had taken place, Kochi became a tributary to that power and later made an alliance with the English.

Rise of Venad

Venad was one of the most powerful kingdoms that arose following the disintegration of the Chera kingdom of Makotai. Venad means the land of Vel Chieftains. They controlled the agrarian tracts from Kollam to Nanchinadu. During the early Sangam age, Venad was part of the Ay kingdom. In the Perumal age, Venad had the status of a feudatory power. It got an independent status only after the 12th Century. During this period, they shifted their power from Kiliperur to Thripparappu. They shifted that centre with the object of controlling the resources of Thripparappu which was already a mercantile town. They have also acquired control over the economically important temple of Padmanabha at Thiruanantapuram.

Ayyan Atikal Tiruvatikal was the first prominent ruler of Venad. The Teresappally copper plate (849 AD) had immortalised his name in History. Sri Vallabhakotha, another Venad ruler is associated with the Mampalli copper plate (974 AD). The Thrikkodithanam temple inscription and the Jewish copper plate (1000 AD) mention Govardhana Marthanda as the third ruler of Venad. Venad passed through a period of stress and strain during the Chera-Chola conflict.

Rama Varma Kulasekhara, the last of the Perumals of Mahodayapuram was the first ruler of the Venad royal house. He shifted his headquarters from Kudangallur to Kollam. His successors Vira Kerala Varma and Kotharavi conquered Kottar and Nanjinad

from the Pandyas and established the supremacy of Venad. Their successors Vira Ravi Varma and Aditya Varma introduced a good system of government. The inscriptions of the time – Kilimanur, Manalikkara and Vellayani – mention the name of the successors. By their time the Pandyas established their supremacy over Venad. It was left to Ravi Varma Kulasekhara to set his house in order and to assert his authority over adversaries.

Ravi Varma Kulasekhara (1299 – 1314)

Ravi Varma Kulasekhara is the most outstanding king of Venad. His reign is remarkable for innumerable conquests, settled administration, economic prosperity, religious development and cultural ethos. The inscriptions of his reign found scattered in such places as Trivandrum, Kanchi, Poonamalle and Srirangam give us information about his achievements. Ravi Varma ascended the throne at a time when the Pandyas were dominating South Indian politics and Malik Kafur was attempting the first Muslim inroads into South India. Ravi Varma began his conquests by attacking the Pandyas and ascending as the emperor of South India at Kanchi (1312). Ravi Varma undertook the South Indian conquests mainly to prevent a repetition of the Muslim invasions of South India. In effecting his conquests, he played the role of Defender of the Hindu Faith against Islam, a role that the Hoysala Ballalas and Vijayanagar Rayas played later. He was not only firm in battle (Sangramadhira), but also a patron of scholars and poets. He patronized the authors of *Unnunilandesam* and *Lilathilakam*. He is called “Dakshina Bhoja”, *Samudrabandhu* and *Kavibhushana* attended his court. A devout Hindu, he patronized temples. Venad attained economic prosperity under him and also social progress. Kollam became the premier port of trade on the West Coast. In short, both in war and peace, Ravi Varma proved his metal. He shoots across the political horizon of South India like a flashing meteor and he had a lasting place among the most illustrious rulers of Venad.

We get a glimpse of the political, social and religious conditions of Venad from the accounts of foreign travelers and also from inscriptions. The king had vast powers, but restricted by local assemblies and customs. He had a cavalry force and minted coins as is testified to by Ma Huan. Venad rulers held a vast area from Tovala to Kallada and beyond, to Tamil areas. Marco Polo (13th C) had testified to the economic prosperity of the land. Sulaiman the merchant describes Kollam as the most preferred port in South India as it traded in spices like pepper and ginger. It was an age of Brahmin domination and temples and Salais speak of the religious atmosphere in the kingdom. Thus Venad enjoyed benefits of liberal administration, social progress, material prosperity and religious harmony.

Formation of Regional Culture: Localisation: Village Communities

SANKETHAM

Sanketham was an important institution that existed in Kerala during the medieval period. It is an independent institution governed by its own members, but presided over by an elected member. All important temples in Kerala used to have their own Sanketams. The Sanketams possessed independent sovereign authority in their domains. To guard against encroachment, the Sanketams chose a secular leader. But they never gave up their right of ownership. With the help of the ruler, they managed the temple lands and tracts.

The Sanketam was almost a state within a state with its own organs of government. The ruling sovereign (Naduvazhi) had no effective control over them. In fact they provided the ruler with a safe place for asylum in times of invasion, war or internal disorder. The Sanketam enjoyed protection from the enemies' attack. In view of the importance of Sanketams there was a regular scramble among the rulers to acquire Melkoyma rights over them. Thus the rulers of Kochi, Palakkad and Kozhikode acquired control over Tiruvilavamala Devaswam; the Cochin Raja over the temples of Haripad and Tiruvalla; the Raja's of Vadakkumkur and Parur over Thrissur and Peruvanam and the king of Venad over Vaikkam temple. In course of time, due to political uprisings in the country, the Sanketams lost their significance with the rise of secular power, they declined. In its hey day the Sanketam possessed almost sovereign powers. They had the right to punish even the sovereign. It possessed the right to collect taxes. It is a self-governing unit, self-working and self-contained community recognising no sovereign.

CENTRES OF LEARNING

Medieval temples of Kerala were centres of education and culture. Vedic schools were established within the temple. These Temple Vedic Schools were called as **Salais**. Although established by temple trustees, these institutions were patronised by the rulers. The practice of establishing schools along with the temple might have drawn inspiration from the Buddhist tradition of schools along with the Viharas. Several Kerala inscriptions allude to the existence of Salais in medieval Kerala. The most important of such Salais that existed in Kerala during the 9th and 10th centuries were those at Kantalur, Parthivapuram, Tiruvalla, Muzhikkalam, Sukapuram and Tirunelli. The Salais were mostly residential institutions. Their expenses were met by the Salais themselves. But they received encouragement and financial assistance from the local rulers. The students were given free boarding and lodging by the Salais. Instructions were given in such subjects as grammar, Philosophy, law and the Vedas. Admission was restricted to Brahmins alone. The teachers of the Salais were called **Bhattas** and the students **Chattirar**. The Salais had contributed much for the spread of Aryan culture. A few of the temples had separate Salais for giving instruction and training in arms. Most of the Salais, however, had given both Vedic education and armed training at the same time.

There are references in the inscriptions to the Chattas and Bhattas. The Brahmin youth well versed in Vedic knowledge and military training were known as Chattirar, Chattas or Chattanmar. The Chattirar acted as a Para-military force in medieval Kerala as they had been entrusted to protect the properties of the temples and the Salais. The Chattirar, in fact acted as the link between the rulers and the Brahmins. As there are references to the existence of Chattas and Bhattas in North India in the inscriptions of the Gupta period it may be assumed that they were a common factor all over India during the early medieval period. The Chattas were also referred to in Mani-pravalam works like 'Chandrotsavam' as attending functions carrying sword and arm.

Social education was given to the common man in temple premises. Such education was centred around the reading of the Puranas and epics. The Bhattas, specialists in Sanskrit recited and interpreted the epic to the common man at the temple premises. Singing of Kirtans was very common in temples. Competitions in the recital of the Vedas were also conducted. The most famous of such competitions was the Kadavallur Anyonyam conducted in that temple. A scholar who succeeded in 'Kadannirikkal' in this Anyonyam is regarded with high acclaim in society.

The Salais were patronised by Naduvazhis and other rulers. They had donated vast areas of land/paddy fields for the maintenance of Salais, Vikramaditya Varaguna, the Ay king had made provisions for the Parthivapuram Salai. Tiruvalla and Muzhikkulam Salais received large areas of paddy fields from the respective Naduvazhis. These Salais were attached to the temples.

MARUMAKKATHAYAM OR MATRILINEAL SYSTEM

The Marumakkathayam system of inheritance is peculiar to Kerala. It is a system in which succession and inheritance are traced through woman in the family. In this system the property ownership exists through woman only. Inheritance is through the sister's sons. However the eldest male member of the family—the Karanaver as he is called, looks after the property on behalf of female members of the family. The Karanaver's wife or children had no right over the Taravad property. In fact proprietorship is traced through the mother. Regarding the origin and antiquity of Marumakkathayam, historians and anthropologists differ. L.A. Krishna Iyer and other anthropologists opine that matrilineal system had existed among the tribals of Kerala. Morgan and Engels had showed that humanity had matriarchal system first and later moved to patriarchy. However there is no mention of this system in the Sangam literature. From the 9th century onwards we get inscriptional references of this system. Friar Jordanus was the first foreign writer to mention this system. A number of theories have been put forward to explain the origin of Marumakkathayam in Kerala. The most prominent of these theories are Brahmanical theory, property theory, military theory, etc.

The Brahmanical Theory: The traditional theory ascribes the origin of Marumakkathayam to Parasurama. According to this theory, the Sudra woman put of their chastity to satisfy the desires of the Bhramins as ordained by Parasurama. This view has no historical basis and rests mainly on tradition. The Brahmins might have formulated such a theory to establish their superior position in the community. According to **the Property theory** Marumakkathayam has been introduced mainly to keep the property of the Nair tarawads in tact. Marumakkathayam system was introduced in order to prevent the possibility of partition and destruction of family property under Makkathayam. **The Military Theory** ascribes the origin of the system to the peculiar military organisation of Kerala. The continuous wars in the medieval period kept away the Nair soldiers from their traditional homes. The medieval military system was incompatible with regular married life. It resulted in the origin of Marumakkathayam.

T.K. Gopala Pannikkar (Malabar and its folk) traces the origin of Marumakkathayam in the system of polyandry or promiscuity prevailed among the Nairs of Kerala. Prof. Elamkulam ascribes the origin of the system to the wars of 11th Century. It was the compelling circumstances created by the Chera-Chola war in the 11th Century led to the origin of Marumakkathayam. The socio-economic forces let loose by the war resulted in the evolution of the system. The political and religious dominance of the Namputiris, then rise to economic ascendancy as Janmis and the introduction of compulsory military training and the formation of suicide squads were the compelling circumstances created by the Chola-Chera War. The anxiety to preserve their property undivided prompted the Namputiris to encourage the Sambandham system, which in turn led to the matrilineal system.

Development:

Whatever be its origin, the system came to be developed and strengthened by certain features. There are epigraphic and literary evidences to show the existence of the system from the 9th Century. In their anxiety to preserve undivided the Brahmaswam lands, the Brahmin settlers permitted only their eldest sons to marry within the community. The senior members could not neither marry from their community nor maintain their wives and children. Still they were coveted husbands among the humbler folks on account of their social status and religious influence. This new form of alliance might have given matriliney a new base of life. As matrilineal tracts are traced among the southern groups in the West Coast, but not prominently displayed in the Sangam Age, it was later strengthened.

The Marumakkathayam system centres on the Taravad, the family unit. It consisted of all the descendants of a common ancestress in the female line. A man's children had no right within his Taravad as they belonged to his wife's family. The family property was administered by the Karanavar, the eldest male member of the Taravad. He had absolute

power with regard to the management of the estate. But he could not alienate any portion of the family property without the consent of its members. This system suited well for a soldier class as the junior member of the Tarawad had nothing to do, but fight. The women had a considerable voice in the affairs of the Tarawad and enjoyed freedom and security.

The Marumakkathayam system of inheritance is observed by the Kshatriyas, Antaralas and the Sudras in Kerala. The succession in the royal families of Kochi and Thiruvitamkur are in the matrilineal system. The Namputiris of Payyannur village, the Arakkal royal house of Kannur and the Keyees of Thalasseri subscribes to the matrilineal system.

TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

The medieval Hindu temples of the 'feudal age' are the standing monuments of the regional styles in architecture and sculpture. Several structural temples with a simple Garbhagriha, mandapa and Prakara now began to incorporate many separate shrines of minor deities. The mandapas and Prakaras were multiplied and several storeys were added with more ornamental sculpture. Gopurams came to be constructed. There was doubling in each section such as Petal, vessel and even the ornamental banana Sprout. There was ornamentation in the sculpture of images. There was the abundance of garlands and crown jewels, elaboration of Kankena and stylized variations of folds. Animation gave way to passion for decoration and style as in the Huysala and Chola styles. Panniyur, chokiram, Irinjalakuda, Vaikam and Chellur are a few centers where the typical structures of the post – Chera period could be seen. The products of this period were characterized by the porous headgear, beaded garlands, grim faces with wide open eyes and nostrils. Stone was replaced by timber and elaborate wood works were carried out in place of stone. The simple, real and natural grace of the early period was replaced by vulgarity, complexity and exuberance as is exemplified in Kuttampalams.

KALARI SYSTEM.

The Kalari was one of the most important institutions of the medieval period in the history of Kerala. In ancient Kerala, the Kalari was a school, which gave instructions both in arms and letters. With domination of the Namputiris who were expert learners. Kalari activities were reduced to giving military training. In the middle ages, Kalaris lost their status as educated centres. They became military gymnasiums or fencing schools imparting training in arms. Kalaris were usually attached to temples. The Asan (Fencing master) who presided over the Kalari master supervised the training of the youths and imparted instructions in martial arts. Fencing, Boxing and Wrestling were some of the arts in which training were given. The training in gymnastics and arms is known as Kalaripayattu. Northern ballads are replete with references to the martial art.

Ankam

Ankam is a fight between two professionally Kalari trained warriors at a fixed place and at an appointed time. Ankams were common in medieval Kerala, and usually stopped with the death of one of the warriors. When a dispute arises between two groups of nobles, each side in a dispute would engage warriors to fight for them.

- *Organised single combat between two Ankachekavars (Thiyyas). Centuries ago in Kerala, south India, and quarrels between local rulers were resolved by fixing an Ankam, or duel, between two Ankachekavars, each ruler being represented by one Ankachekavar. The ruler represented by the surviving Ankachekavar was considered the winner.*
- *A war in which the Ankachekavars fought for their country.*

Revathi Pattathanam.

Calicut under the Zamorins attained fame as the venue of the famous Revathi Pattathanam, a seven day assembly held annually at Tali Temple, Calicut. It attracted scholars from far and near. This annual assembly, held under the Zamorin's patronage honoured scholars and men of letters. The origin of Pattathanam is traced back to the 14th Century. Tradition ascribes its origin to the Zamorin who, on the advice of the Tirunavaya yogam instituted it to expiate the sins committed by his family. It is an act of atonement for causing the death of the Brahmins (Brahmahatya). The Revathi Pattathanam was a seven day affair beginning on the day of Revathi asterism in the month of Tulam and ending on the Tiruvathira day.

The word Pattathanam is derived from the Sanskrit word Bhattar Sthanam. It had been the practice to confer the title Bhatta on the learned Brahmins. Later the title came to be conferred on those who distinguished themselves in Pattathanam deliberations. It was customary to hold competitions in each accepted branch of learning. In this seven-day assembly, representatives of all the Sabha Mutts in Kerala participated. The Payyur Bhattathiri acted as the chief judge of Pattathanam. In selecting the meritorious candidates, strict standards were maintained. At the end of the deliberations of seven days, the Zamorin presented the title of Bhatta to the winners.

The defeat of Uddanda Sastrikal by Kakkasseri was one of the famous episodes in the history of Pattathanam. Kakkasseri, Meputhur and Uddanda Sastrikal were some of the scholars who were honoured by Pattathanam by the Zamorin. The institution of Pattathanam enabled the Zamorin to win a high place among the rulers of the land. The Pattathanam, which thus came in to vogue in the 14th century, continued uninterrupted till the Mysorean invasion (18th Century). It was later renewed and continued till 1934. In recent times, it was again revived and many a Pathanam was held in the Tali temple in the post independent era.

Mamankam.

Mamankam was a unique festival of all Kerala importance. It was held once in 12 years at Tirunavaya on the banks of Bharatapuzha. It secured to the Zamorin a unique place and status in the political arena. There are several views regarding the origin of Mamankam. K.V. Krishna Aiyar relates it to the Marga-festival of the Buddhists. The date of its origin is unknown. References to Mamankam occur only from the 15th Century. It has been suggested that Mamankam was the continuation of the Kuttams that was conducted every twelve years at Tirunavaya. Before monarchy was introduced. The festival was conducted by the Rakshapurushas of the four Kazhakams in to which Kerala was divided. The Perumals began to conduct it later. When the Chera kingdom declined, the ruler of Valluvanad used to conduct the festival, receiving honours which the Perumal enjoyed. The Zamorin acquired this right from Valluvanad after defeating its ruler at Tirunavaya. Ever since the conquest of Tirunavaya (1743) the Zamorin functioned as the protector of Mamankam.

The festival is called Mamankam as it was held in the year of Mahamagha; one of the 12 years in the lesser Brahaspathi circle. It was so called because it began in the Makara asterism in the month of Makara (Magha). It is also called Maha magham, the great sacrifice to indicate the self-immolation of the ruler. The festival lasted for 29 days. The first 25 days are set apart for processions and other ceremonies. On the last day of the festival, the Zamorin used to come in procession, ascend the Manithera facing the Tirunavaya Tevar and stood with a drawn sword. It was during this time that the Chavers, the followers of Valluvanad Raja, attempts to seize the throne to avenge the death of the princes in the Tirunavaya battle. These soldiers were called Chavers because they were sworn either to do a way with the Zamorin or to perish in the attempt. At the close of the celebrations, the Zamorin received the various Raja's and chieftains at Manithara. The Mamankam helped the Zamorin to win a unique status in the political field.

Locating Power Centres: Desom and Thara:

Household as Unit

Along with the growth of swarupam and Nadus in the medieval period, there occurred a shift of power centres from the earlier royal courts to the regional and local areas in Kerala. During this period, a wide variety of political structures and power units came up in the various parts of the state. These local power centres had different organisational forms and nomenclatures. The names of these local centres are often confusing as their powers are usually over-lapping. However the predominant local power centres were the 'Desom' and 'Thara' and 'Taravad' as the family unit.

The local power centres had an agrarian base as the resources derived from the agricultural base was the significant factor for the growth of the local centres. In fact the strength of the local power centres depended upon the ability of these centres in mobilizing wealth from the agricultural field and other resources. In the process of the mobilization of wealth an alliance was formed between the Naduvazhis, the Brahmin and the intermediary class, usually the Nairs.

More land was brought under cultivation in medieval Kerala and better techniques were used in the process of agricultural production, both in cash crops and food crops. As a result of the growth of the production capacity the production also increased. In the absence of a central authority, developing regional powers granted landed areas to military leaders, by way of service tenure. The military leaders in the local areas were mainly Nair with their sub caste like Nambiars, Panikkar, Kurup, Nayanar, Menokki, Achan etc. These military leaders were given the power to exercise military administrative and judicial functions, in their respective areas. These Nair military had control and command over the peasants belonging to lower castes, who had worked in the former's land. So it was the expansion of agriculture, both in terms of extent and productivity that helped for the growth of local power centres. Since the consolidation of the agricultural village system without any fundamental changes, except the proliferations of sub caste caused by the developing divisions of labour, the caste mechanism functioned as a political structure.

The household unit known as the 'Taravad' was the basic local power centre in medieval Kerala. Taravad was a joint family in which the members of the blood relations lived together. Most of the Nair Taravad had vast areas of both Parambu and paddy fields. The Taravad property was held collectively and no individual member had any right to claim his or her share in it. The head of the Taravad was called 'Karanavar' who being the eldest male member of the joint family. The eldest female member of the joint family or the Taravad was known as the 'Karanavthi'. Though Karanavar was the power centre in the Taravad, the Karanavthi had her own part in the affairs of the Taravad.

The Karanavar kept the entire agricultural product and other wealth of the Taravad under his custody and it was he who decided the ratio of food grains, oil, cloth and other amenities of life to the members of the Taravad according to their position in the family hierarchy and grade. In fact the picture of the Karanavar in the Taravad in the traditional set up was absolute. He was legally responsible for all the junior members of the joint family. In extreme cases he had the power to inflict corporal punishment on the members of the Taravad. He was the authority to decide on all 'Sambandham' partners who came to the Taravad. No marriage took place between the members of the Taravad as they were considered as related by blood.

Some of the bigger Taravad had their own temples or 'Kavu' attached to their own household units. The deities of the kavu included not only the tribal gods and local heroes but the ancestors of the concerned Taravad also. The kavu was the sacred place for the members of the Taravad and also for the people of the locality. Each Taravad was linked to other similar Taravads having same status for purpose of social intercourse. In reality Taravads existed as isolated economic and political entities within the society. Taravads as the local power centres began to decline by the 18th century.

The Village settlements in Kerala unlike the other parts of India were in a scattered form instead of the clustered nucleated villages. All castes of high and low status found in these villages, including various occupational groups. The non-brahmin localities had an assembly called 'Thara', which was another local power centre in medieval Kerala. Thara was not organised on the basis of any geographical extent of the village. It was local

organization of various Nair family units. Nair warriors who had fought for the maintenance of the security of the people in the earlier period had been regarded as the masters.

The Nair military leaders received vast areas of land attached to their Taravad. As the property rights developed each Thara had a 'Yajamana' who naturally was a Karalar Nair. Being the Karalar were Nairs their dominance was visible in the Thara. In fact, the Thara functioned as a civil and municipal body in the respective locality and acted as the local power centre above the Taravads. The Assembly of the Thara was called the 'Tharakuttam' dominated by the Nairs. The Tharakuttam was represented by the elder members of the Nair Taravads within the locality. The Tharakuttam managed the affairs of the Thara.

The Tharakuttam usually met on a high platform or under the banyan tree near the local temple. Almost all the Taravads of the locality had a place in the organization and function in the Tharakuttam. The Thara functioned as a specific community; co-ordinating and serving different interests of the people related with the Thara. Hereditary functionaries like carpenter, washerman, barber, blacksmith, astrologer, and physician rendered their services to the people of the Thara, under the direction and supervision of the Tharakuttam. Kalari's were organised as a part of the Thara, where younger Nair boys were provided armed training. In due course, separate Kalaries were formed for some of the lower castes also.

The affairs of the Thara and its members were conducted on the basis of customs and traditions' 'Ambasamudram Inscription' of Adityavarman belonging to the 15th century records that different local issues were decided in the joint meeting of the local assemblies' in the presence of 'Karyasthan' of the Naduvazhi. In southern Kerala 'Kara' is the name for Thara. 'Uru' was the assembly of the Nambutiris. 'Ara' was the temple centre and 'Thara' was the port centre.

'Desom' was yet another local power centre existed in medieval Kerala. 'Desathalavan' was the head of the Desom and usually he was a Nair chief. He showed nominal loyalty to the Naduvazhi. Desom was based on the geographical extent normally ranging upto 10sq.kms. Logan says there had 126 Desoms and 72 Tharas in Malabar. It could be assumed that the Desom was a part of the village. Many Desoms formed a Nadu and several such Nadus formed a swarupam or regional kingdom. John P Mencher considers desom as a unit of military organisation and its area was determined by the number of soldiers, it was required to provide to the Naduvazhi. In fact the geographical extent of the Desom varied according to the density of population in the respective localities. The Desathalavan was assisted by 'Pramanis' in the administration of the Desom. He collected the dues for the Naduvazhis and he had the power to impose fines. He decided petty suits and was responsible for the establishment of law and order in the respective Desom.

Feudal Institutions and Legal Practices

Crime and Punishment

JANMI SYSTEM.

The Janmi System is one of the most dominant features of Kerala society during the medieval period. The medieval Kerala society was dominated by the land owning Brahmin class who worked as an imperium in imperio. The origin of the word Janmi, There is no such word in Sanskrit having the connotation of land owner. According to Sankarasmruti, the word 'Janmam' is derived from the word Jalman which in turn is derived from the root Jal. This view is not accepted by modern historians. According to Prof. Elamkulam the word Janmi is derived from the word Janmam right meaning life time. Before the trusteeship of temples became hereditary, there was an interim period when that position was held by a person during his Janmam or life time. It was from that Janmam right that the term Janmi was derived. The right of trustees over the property under their control was limited to their Janmam or life time.

The origin of the Janmi system can be traced back to the Sangam Age. The Sangam works allude to the existence of private property but not to the complex Janmi System of later days. The traditional view says that the system was created by Parasurama who bestowed all the land on the Brahmins. This view is not accepted by modern historians. Elamkulam ascribes the origin of landlordism to the Chola Chera war of the 11th Century. The war led to a situation in which the Brahmins came to acquire a dominant position in the socio-economic life. As the people were preoccupied with war, the Namputiris as Uralars of the temple began to manage temple affairs. In the meantime the land owning tenants transferred their land to the Brahmins and the temple. Such lands enjoyed freedom from devastation by the enemy forces in times of war. In the above circumstances the Namputiri Brahmins acquired overlordship over both Brahmaswam and Devaswam lands. They came to acquire the status of wealthy and powerful landlords or Janmis. The origin of the Janmi system is attributed to the above development.

Such owners of land were known as Uralars and those who took up land for cultivation were known as the Karalar. The Uralar and the Karalar formed the feudal society of Kerala during the medieval period. The Uralar-Karalar dominance became strengthened during the age of anarchy that followed the decline of the Perumal kingdom. With the feudal social formation, a hierarchical social structure of Uralar Karalar, middlemen, the actual cultivator and craftsmen emerged in the society. When the material status was joined with the customary social status, the feudal relations achieved a new dimension. The centres of worship were centralised in to agrarian economy. Thus the term feudal is being used to characterise the medieval Kerala society.

The production relation that developed with land as the chief productive force paved the way for the formation of the feudal society. However the term feudalism as applied in the European or Indian context cannot be applied to Kerala. In the absence of a better term, historians (D.D Kosambi, R.S. Sharma) still uses the term even to denote social formations in Kerala. There were no land grants in Kerala as elsewhere. There was the Namputiri-Nair alliance here. Prof. Elamkulam has characterised the medieval Kerala society dominated by these two castes as Janmi system.

Trial by ordeal (Satyapareekshakal)

Trial by ordeal is an archaic practice of submitting an individual accused of a crime to a painful or dangerous situation with an outcome used to decide guilt or innocence. The practice was popular in Kerala during the Middle Ages, and was said to be a trial before God. Many ordeals exposed the accused to tests involving fire, boiling water, or oil, and even drinking poisoned liquids. The basic concept behind trial by ordeal is that the accused is being judged by God. If he or she makes it through the test or challenge unscathed, God has declared innocence. When the individual was harmed, it was viewed as God declaring guilt and executing a punishment.

At first glance, this seems like a barbaric and unfair way to determine guilt or innocence, but some individuals have suggested that the method worked. In some cases, an individual's own guilt would manifest in a failure to pass the test; some ordeals involved eating or drinking something without choking, and guilt would make this task difficult. Another theory suggests that guilt or innocence was really decided by those giving the test; if a person was thought to be innocent, the water in the pot would be hot but not boiling, allowing him or her to pass through the ordeal relatively unscathed. Trial by ordeal was in some ways the precursor to the modern idea of criminal psychology, and of reading guilt or innocence in a person's actions and words.

Chithravadham

Chithravadham is a kind of death punishment which was prevalent in medieval Kerala. It was given only to the members of lower castes. The body of the person to be executed is pierced with a sharp iron rod which is stabbed into his/her anus. The iron rod is thrust in until it comes out through the other side, i.e., either neck or shoulder. Then both the ends of the iron rod are fastened to a tree keeping a vertical position to the rod. The executed person dies due to severe injury to internal organs as well as bleeding. After fastening to the tree, the executed person's body hangs without any support. The punishment of Chithravadham was given only to the lower classes. 1. Plucking out the eyes 2. Trampling by elephant 3. Mutilation of limbs 4. Enslavement 5. Whipping and then applying chilli powder in the wounds and making him stand in the sun. 6. Excommunication 7. Fine (Of these, Brahmins were given only the last two punishments.) In modern Malayalam, the term Chithravadham is used in colloquial usage to denote "torturing".

SMARTHA VICHARAM

The Namboothiri women are kept in the strictest seclusion of all virtues, chastity is accounted the highest and any violation of this, in man or women, enacts loss of caste, social status and total separation from the family enquires in the cases of conjugal infidelity are conducted by the Smarthan (judge), and hence the name “Smarthavichram” by which the caste trail is known to the members of the family. They do not generally keep the secret to themselves, but senior or some other male member divulges it to the prominent members among the caste men group. The letter or living the information, proceed to family and make a careful enquiry into the truth of matter. If they are satisfied as to her guilt, they direct suspected women to lodge separately for they consider her to be impure. The husband or the other member of the family then informs the ruler of the state, who there upon at the request of her husband or parents appoints a panchayath to conduct vicharam (trial) and issue summons (Tittu) to them. The panchayath consist of the smartha or the president; two or more Mimamskar Namboothiri versed in caste laws the Agakoyma or local head of the community, and the Purakoyma a representative of the Raja whose duty it is to stand with a drawn sword during the trail and to keep the order.

KACCHAMS

Kacchams were a series of administrative and cultural regulations formulated by the landed classes to ensure the mobilisation and redistribution of the produce of the land to different layers of the society. In temple centres, these regulations had an orderly structure based on the unanimous decisions of the temple authorities. Kancham prescribes the nature of procurement of Pattam, expenses to be incurred out of the produce, type of judicial control to be exercised and fines to be realised, duties and obligations of temple functionaries and such other related matters. Several such Vyavastai existed.

Muzhikkalam Kaccham was the model Kaccham that was used all over Kerala. Muzhikkalam was one of the major Gramam (village) in Kerala. It was the Methali, one of the major of the 4 Talis or Brahmin advisory bodies to the Perumal. Muzhikkalam was also one of the Divyadesams praised by the Bhakti saints. Hence it was natural that the regulations prepared at Muzhikkalam was accepted by the Brahmin villages and came to be accepted as the basic document all over Kerala.

The Muzhikkalam Kaccham was widely referred to in inscriptions. The Chokur inscription (898) makes the earliest reference to this Kaccham. The Kaviyur and Tripayar inscriptions provide details of the regulations on the basis of this Kaccham. Temple inscription of Thiruvalla, Kaviyur Thrukkakkara, Tirunandikkara and Tirunelli contain references to Muzhikkalam regulations. It was also mentioned in the inscriptions of Alanallur, Kumaranallur and Thirumittakode. The Thirumittakode document provides the last mention of this Kaccham.

However information is lacking as regards the details of Muzhikkalam Kaccham and also as to why this Kaccham attained such prominence. The available information shows that it was issued at the end of the 9th Century. It was prepared at the place of Muzhikkalam. It was attended by the Koyil Adhikarikal, the king's representatives and besides various Naduvazhis and Uralars. It was prepared to regulate both the temple and village administration. In course of time, it was accepted as the basic and authentic document for such regulations all over Kerala.

Although the original full text of Muzhikkalam Kaccham could not be traced out, a few details are available. The Kaccham declares punishments to uralars for the misappropriation of temple funds. It declares punishments to those tenants who fails to remit rent to the temple. The punishments included eviction from temple property, loss of membership from the Ur fines, ex communication and loss of property and other forms of wealth. The Kaccham was prepared at a time when the temples had amassed large extent of landed property and its main aim was to prevent the misappropriation of the temple resources by the Uralar and to extract rent from the tenants regularly.

There were four other Kaccham-Kadangattu, Thavanur, Sankaramangalam and Kaithavaram. They did not have the widespread significance of Muzhikkalam. Kadangattu Kacham involves the regulations introduced while transferring a Cherikkal land to Avittattur temple during the time of Kotaravi (903 AD). The Tavanur Kacham prescribes that the Uralar should not prevent the cultivation and sale of paddy, should not rob wealth. This Kacham is being mentioned in the Tripangode and Sukapuram. Temple inscriptions Sankaramangalathu Kaccham appears in Tiruvalla copper plates. The Uralar was suppose to receive Rakshabhogam and protect the land. Kaithavaram Kaccham is mentioned in connection with the merger of Ayranikkulam and Tiruvalla villages. It describes the regulations to be followed by the Ur and Potuval of the merged village.

The introduction of Kaccams shows the existence of effective legal procedures with regard to temple lands and expenses. Most of these regulations appear with transfer of lands. Violations of such decisions incurred strict and severe punishment. It included excommunication, deprivation of the means of livelihood, confiscation of property etc.

TEMPLES AND RELIGION

Temple and its Significance.

A Temple is a centre of worship for the Hindus. It is the nerve centre of Hindu religious life. The temple has played a very crucial role in the every day life of the Hindus. Kerala is a land of temples, but when compared to other parts of India. Kerala has no gigantic structures or paraphernalia. Kerala temples are noted for their simplicity and unadulterated forms of worship. In medieval times the temple played a constructive role in society.

Rise of Temples.

The temple is a unique institution in Kerala. They began to emerge in Kerala around 8th Century AD. The earliest temples were cave temples, cut in to single rock. Such cave temples could be seen in places like Irunilamkod, Thrikkur, Kallil, Kaviyur, Thirunandikkara, Vizhinjam and Chitral. In these temples, images are made on the walls of small chambers, cut into a single rock. The sculpture in the rock cut temples of Kerala resembles those of the Pallavas and the Pandyas.

The structural temples came to be erected by the 10th Century. These temples were built of laterite or granite and have elaborate structures. They began to emerge by 9th-10th centuries. The major temples of this category were Thrichambaram, Tirumittakod, Tirunelli, Thirunavaya, Ayranikulam, Thiruvanchikulam, Thrikkakara, Thiruvalla, Thrikkodithanam, Perunna. These temples have a common architecture style. They consist of a Grabha-Griha, Mukhamandapam, Thidappilly, Chuttampalam Vatilmadam and Kuthampalam. These temples emerged to serve as the ritualistic and social centres of the emerging agrarian society.

FUNCTIONS.

Medieval Kerala Temples have manifold functions to perform and activities to engage. **Ritualistic Functions:** The temple has to perform ritualistic function. The ritual offering and ceremonies were made to fulfil the primary needs of an agrarian society like the control of climate and seasons. These ritualistic functions are monopolised by the Brahmins who alone are permitted to enter into the Sanctum Sanctorum where such rituals were performed. Another function of the temple was normal worship through chanting of hymns and prayers. The function of preparing Nivedyam is performed in the Thidapilli (Temple Kitchen). Mulayara prepared the items of the various festivals inside the temple. The Kuthampalam provided space for various performing arts. Thus temple became an assembly of social relations, a system in which the agricultural production and distribution was ensured through ritual means: **Redistribution** of the surplus products was made among the Brahmins. Ideological function was ensured through devotional forms, festivals and performances which are the means of self expression of the society. Thus the main functions of the temples were ritual and redistribution of the surplus.

Temples also functioned as educational centres. This function of the temple is mentioned in the inscriptions of Parthivapuram, Kanthalur, Thiruvalla and Muzhikkalam. Temples also functioned as money lending centres and nodal agencies of trade. They also functioned as dispensaries or Athura Salais. In short medieval Kerala temples had manifold functions such as ritual, worship, feeding centre, educational and cultural centre, money lending and trading centre and also as redistribution centre.

TEMPLE AS A LANDLORD. Medieval Kerala temple has an important role as the biggest landowner. The temple has vast property. The ownership of vast agricultural cultivable land is vested in temples. Such lands are known as Devaswam lands.

URALAR AND KARALAR.

The term Uralar is used to describe the land owning class while the word Karalar is used to describe the temple tenants. Uralar is the head of the Ur. Families of large land owners are also called Uralar. Uralars are mostly Brahmins. The villages in which they live and assemble are called Ur. A person becomes Uralar by membership of this body. Uralar also functioned as the managing body of the temple centre in the Ur. Uralar gave land on rent (pattam) to Karalar. Karalar is expected to give a fixed sum of the produce of the land to Uralar. Karanmma right cannot be transferred. It naturally could go to the descendant.

The land of temple functionaries other than Uralars called viruti would also be held as Karanma. The Karalar had under him a number of labouring groups such as Izhavar and Thachar. However they have no rights over the land. Land lord-tenant relations were complete with Uralar and Karalar. Temples are vested with the ownership of lands. They earned huge income as Pattam. Such incomes were redistributed among temple functionaries for expenses connected with offerings, feedings etc. The Karalar had to bear the burden of all these expenses.

TEMPLE AS AN EMPLOYER.

Many a medieval Kerala temple acted as an employer. The hierarchy of authority in temples and the ownership of vast areas of land and other forms of wealth enabled the temple to offer employment to many. The Karalar were actually workers under the temple. While the Uralars functioned as controllers of temples. Such persons as the Perumal, Koyil Adhikarikal and Nadu Vazhis were associated with temples. There were various kinds of temple servants. They are Bhattas, officials, artists and menial servants. Bhattars were learned teachers proficient in the Puranas. The officers performed rituals and conducted the management of the temple. The performance of rituals is the duty of Tantri. Melsathi and Kilsant. The managerial functions were performed by such officials as Putuval and Variyar. They appear in all major decisions of the temple. The temple also employed dancers, drummers and their artists. Women dancers too were mentioned. The Chokur and Nedumpuram Tali inscription give information about them. The Chakkiyars and Nangiarys performed Kuthu and Kudiyattam while the drummers performed in five instruments (Chenda, Timila, Chengala, Kaithalam and Kahalam (Kuzhal)). Menial servants are also employed. They include guards, sweepers, leave gatherers, dish washers.

CENTRE OF REDISTRIBUTION.

However, the main function of the temples was the redistribution of the surplus. They served as the distributive centre of the emerging agrarian society. The primary need of an agrarian community was fulfilled by the rituals and ceremonies in the temple. The temples received huge income from land. The surplus was redistributed to the needy in the form of feeding centres. The temple thus became an agency, which ensured the agricultural production and redistribution. Redistribution of the surplus product was made among the Brahmins. "Thus the temple became an assembly of social relations, a system in which the agricultural production and distribution was ensured, ideological function was ensured through devotional forms; festivals and performances provided means of self expression of the society".

TEMPLE ARTS.

The temples were also centres of cultural activities. Koothampalam was designed to be the centre of performing arts. They are theatres in temples where Koothu is performed. They are specially constructed in the temple premises. The members of the Chakiyar family alone have the right to perform Koothu in temples. It is a performing art peculiar to Kerala. It is performed in temples. Drawing his themes from the Puranas, the Chakiyar assumes the role of all the characters and impress the audience with appropriate actions movements and gestures. The Koothu is marked throughout by humour, satire and Sarcasm. In the course of exposition of Puranic stories the Chakiyar draws parallels from contemporary life. The Chakiyar has the privilege of immunity from interruptions and prerogative of criticising even high dignitaries.

There are three forms of Koothu-Prabandham Koothu, Nangiyar Koothu and Kudiyattom. Prabandham Koothu is pure narration with explanation while Nangiyar Koothu is pure acting. Koodiyattom is a theatrical representation. Its peculiarity is that both Chakiyar and Nangiyar act together.

KOODIYATTAM.

Kutiyattam was also performed in temples. It is the earliest form of dramatic art in Kerala. Koodiyattam Literally means acting together. It has two or more actors appearing on the stage. The role of the male characters are performed by the Chakiyars and those of the female characters by the Nangiyar. The Nangiyars also help the Chakiyar by sounding cymbals and reciting the Sanskrit verses. Besides these, there were the Nambiar to perform the Mizhavu and the Vidushaka, the clown. The Chakiyars uses about twenty plays for staging Kudiyattom and the verses used are in Sanskrit. The plays of Bhasu, Kalidasa, Sakthibhadra, Sri Harsha and Kulasekhara are used by the Chakiyar. The detailed

guidelines for its performance are provided by Tolan in his Attaprakaram and Kramadipika. In Koodiyattom too, actors enjoy freedom of speech. The Malayalam work Unnunili Sandesam contains the earliest reference to Koodiyattam performance. Koodiyattam influenced Kathakali in every detail and Manipravalam owes its origin to this art form of Kerala.

PADHAKOM.

Padhakom is a simple form of Koothu. It is performed in temples. Here also the performer is a single individual and he adopts and expounds Puranic stories. A modern version of this art form is Hari Katha and Katha Prasangam.

Theyyam.

Theyyam is an important art of North Malabar. It is connected with hero worship. The word Theyyam is derived from the word Theyyattam, the dance of God. Theyyam is the corrupted Dravidised form of Daivam, literally God. Though Theyyam came under the influence of the Brahmins in later days, it survived without much change. The Theyyam ritual is a combination of the worship of heroes, mother Goddess, serpent and trees. As a dance – form Theyyam uses artificial hair colourful face paints and accompanied by Tottam Pattu and supported by musical instruments, the dancer transforms himself in to the particular God or hero. The Theyyams are usually conducted in Kavus or Bhagavathy temples. A variety of Theyyams are found in North Malabar such as Kathirur Veeran, Vishnu Murthy, Gulikan, Bhagothy, Patakali and Chamundi. In course of time Theyyam had become an essential part of the religious life of the people. Theyyattam, literally meaning the dance of God arose out of the ancient cult of hero worship.

TIRA.

TIRA is an independent variety of Theyyam prevalent in N. Kerala. It is also known as Tirayattom or Kaliyattom. As it is the dance of God on earth. It is known as Thirayattom. Thottam pattu is the song of Thirayattam. The famous Thirayattom are those of Chathan, Bhadra Kali, Bhairavan and Gulikan.

MUTIYETTU.

Mutiyettu is an art form of North Kerala. It is performed only in Bhadrakali temples. It is the most primitive form of drama that existed in Kerala. Mutiyettu is sometimes called 'Kalinatakam' (Kali's drama). The theme of Mudiyaattu is the duel between Kali and Daruka, between the Goddess and the Asura. The main characters in Mudiyaattu are Shiva, Kali, Narada, Darikan and Danavan. Kathakali is indebted to Mudiyaattu in its dressing pattern. It stands unique among the ritual dances of Kerala.

DEVADASI SYSTEM

The development of the devadasi system in medieval Kerala was logical corollary of the growth of the caste and Janmi system. The devadasies were the dancing girls attached to temples. This institution seen to have had its origin else were in the south India in the 8th century AD and it came to Kerala in the 9th century in the wake of the Bhakthi movement and the rise of the temple . Hence this played a prominent role in the social and cultural life of the people. The post of the devadasi is a respectable one and women from the aristocratic family came forward to take up the assignment on an honorary basis even with out accepting any remuneration or enjoying perquisites that went with the post. Kulasekhara Alwar (A.D.820-822) the fonder of second Chera Empire is seen to have dedicated his own daughter Neela as devadasi to the temple at SreeRangom. According to Trichur inscription a large number of dancing girl were attached to the Vadakkum Nathan temple in 12th century.

End of the devadasi system

The devadasi system lingered on in south Travancore till the early part of the century. The system was known till recent times as Kudikari system as the evils of system was self-evident. The Travancore Govt abolished this system in 1930 by royal proclamation. The erstwhile devadasi families having merged with the Nair community, devadasi as a caste or a class do not exist any longer in Kerala.

UNIT-III

COLONIAL EXPERIENCE

Advent of Western Monopolistic Mercantile Groups

We have seen the dominance of the Naduvazhis consequent on the decline of the Perumal kingdom. Here we shall see how these Naduvazhis succumbed to the inroads of naval powers from Europe such as the Portuguese, Dutch, French and the English. The history of Kerala during this period was determined to a great extent by these naval powers.

The advent of the Europeans marked the beginning of a new epoch in the history of Kerala. It put Kerala firmly on the political map of India. The arrival of Vasco da Gama at Kappad near Calicut in May 1498 inaugurated the Da Gama Epoch in the history of Asia. It was an epoch of European domination over Asiatic countries. It lasted for more than five centuries (1498 – 1947). No event during the middle Ages had such a far-reaching repercussion on the civilised world as the opening of a sea route to India, says the Cambridge History.

Kerala on the eve of the Advent of the Europeans presented the tragic picture of a feudal polity with its evils and weaknesses. There was no central power in the country. Kerala was divided into a number of petty principalities: Each of them under a Naduvazhi but owing allegiance to none. There was the total absence of a unifying central power. Only three rulers possessed somewhat independent authority. They were the rulers of Kolathunad (Kolathiri), Kozhikode (Zamorin) and Venad (Tiruvadi). Of them Kozhikode and Venad were the major powers. Kolathunad and Kochi had already come under the influence of the Zamorin. There were minor chieftains like the Rajas of Tanur, Mangat, Kodungallur, Edappalli, Vadakkumkur and Kollam. The authorities of the Naduvazhis were controlled by the Nair nobles and Namputiri chieftains. The Nair chieftains exercised effective authority in their domains. They provided the rulers with fighting forces. The Namputiris were dominating the land with their religious and spiritual authority. Thus at the time of European advent; Kerala was in a distracted political condition with a number of petty feudal chieftains engaged in endless feuds.

PORTUGUESE

Portugal, though a small and insignificant country in the middle ages, played a significant role in the medieval history of Kerala. Their landing/anchoring at Kozhikode symbolised the beginning of a new dawn in the commercial history of the land. The Portuguese advent to Kerala was motivated by several factors. Their main aim was to find out a new route to India. The desire for Malabar spices in general and Pepper in particular attracted the Portuguese to Kerala. Pepper, the black gold was the cheapest and most useful

of spices and Malabar as the land of pepper brought them to the Malabar Coast. With this was added the desire of maritime exploration. However their immediate objective was the extension of trade. Later they had the imperialistic aim of building a Portuguese empire in India. The political condition of Kerala suited their desire. There was no central authority in the land. Kerala was fragmented by a number of chieftains who were fighting with one another for supremacy.

Vasco da Gama was sent by Dom Manuel the Portuguese king on July 8, 1496 at the head of an expedition. He reached Calicut on May 20, 1498 and was well received by the Zamorin and his subjects with traditional hospitality. Gama met the Zamorin as the representative of the king of Portugal, 'the most powerful of the Christian sovereigns in the West'. He expressed the king's desire to enter into a commercial treaty with the Zamorin to procure spices. However the Zamorin turned down the request as he insisted payment of customs duty. Thereupon Gama left Calicut and reaching Kannur entered into a commercial treaty with the Kolathiri. He returned to Lisbon in 1499 where he was given a hero's welcome.

Now Cabral was sent by the Portuguese king to establish permanent relations with India. Reaching India, Cabral succeeded in building a factory at Calicut. However the Arab attitude resulted in the destruction of the factory and Cabral had to withdraw. However Cabral entered into trade agreements with the Raja of Kochi, Kollam and Kolathunad. Cabral's expedition won them an ally in the Cochin Raja and a fine harbour as base to protect their political and commercial interest.

Vasco da Gama came for a second time to Kerala, this time to avenge the Zamorin. The Zamorin although agreed to pay compensation for the Portuguese loss, refused to expel the Arabs from Calicut. Thereupon Gama bombarded Calicut port and destroyed the Arab merchant fleet. Returning to Kochi where his demands were met. Gama sailed back to Portugal in 1502. Da Gama's departure was followed by a bitter conflict between Kochi and Calicut. The Zamorin emerged as the leader of the resistance to Portuguese. In this struggle, the Portuguese sided with the Cochin Raja and the Zamorin was forced to withdraw. When Albuquerque came, he patched up the differences with the Zamorin by the treaty of 1513. The Portuguese were granted permission to erect a fort at Calicut.

In the meanwhile, the Portuguese headquarters in India was shifted from Kochi to Goa. This was the beginning of the end of Portuguese imperialism in Kerala. Albuquerque's successors were weak and corrupt. Although Vasco da Gama came for a third time as Portuguese viceroy, and scored a victory over Kolathiri and the Zamorin, he passed away at Kochi. His successors Manes and Sampaygo were not able to make any mark, paving the way for Portuguese enterprise to decline.

Decline of Portuguese Power in Kerala.

The Portuguese lost their commercial and political supremacy in Kerala by the end of the 16th Century. The Dutch conquered their strongholds such as Kollam, Kodungallur, Purakkad, Kochi and Kannur and the Portuguese flag ceased to fly over Kerala by 1658. The decline of the Portuguese was due to troubles within and outside. Their administration was corrupt and weak and they failed to administer the conquered territories. The officers were greedy and unscrupulous. Their government became bankrupt. Their fortresses ill equipped, the soldiers in disciplined. They had no scope of expansion. They were cut off with the interior due to the narrow Malabar Coast and the impregnable Western Ghats. Their frontier was irregular and serpentine and not easy to maintain. The arrival of the more powerful Dutch, English and the French and the exploits Kunjalis, the consequent loss of command of the sea hastened their downfall. Their religious policy of forcible conversion and persecution alienated the goodwill of the natives. The decline of Vijayanagar kingdom and the absorption of Portugal by Spain are the outside factors of decline.

Religious Policy.

The Portuguese followed a narrow, intolerant and fanatical religious policy in Kerala. As ardent followers of the Catholic Church, their mission in Kerala was to spread Catholic faith and establish the supremacy of the Pope. The Papal bull gave them the legal and moral right to undertake conversion in Africa and India. In Goa they established the inquisition and indulged in forcible conversion. To escape from persecution, the G.S. Brahmins (Konkanis) came to Kerala in the 16th Century. The Jews also were persecuted by the Portuguese. In their relation with the native Muslim also the Portuguese adopted the same policy. Zain ud din mentions the large scale conversion of the Muslim to Christianity. As for the Hindus, the Portuguese respected the religious sentiments of the Hindu chieftains in their own interest. They attempted in vain to convert the local Rajas of Kochi, Purakkad and Vettat to Christianity. A few Portuguese administrators attempted plunder and looting of Hindu temples. As for the native St. Thomas Christians, the Portuguese followed a policy of Latinisation of the Kerala Church. For this, a Jesuit College was established at Cochin, a seminary was founded at Vaipin another at Kodungallur. Finally they convened the Udayamperur Synod.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER AND MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES

St. Francis Xavier was a great Jesuit missionary who had made valuable contributions for the spread of Christianity in Kerala. Xavier arrived in Travancore in 1544 and started the work of evangelisation among the fishermen and other low castes in the coastal area and converted many to Christianity. Legend has it that the Marava army was defeated and sent back by the divine power of this saint, when they had attacked Travancore. After his missionary work in this area, he went to the eastern countries and to Japan where he carried out missionary work. Xavier was one of the first associated with Ignatius Loyola and the Jesuit order. He is credited with the starting of an organised system of conversion. He founded a college at Goa for the instruction of children from all over India. He is also credited with the work of translating catechism into Malayalam. A sincere, pious and barefooted mendicant he may be called as the 'First Missionary'.

SYNOD OF DIAMPER (1599).

The synod of Diamper was the most important event in the history of Christianity in Kerala during the Portuguese period. It was convened as a major attempt to latinise the Kerala Church. It was held at Udayam Perur in 1599. The President of the synod was Alexis de Menezes, the Archbishop of Goa. The council was attended by 133 priests, 20 deacons, 660 laymen, totaling 813 in all. The purpose of the Synod was to remove 'Nestorian heresy' and bring Kerala Church under the Church of Rome. The Synod settled many important issues of the day. It scrutinised the Syrian books, corrected, modified, altered and deleted impugned passages. A modified form of Liturgy conforming to the Latin mass was adopted. The Supreme position of the Roman Church over Kerala was proclaimed in clear terms by the Synod. The Kerala Church was forced to sever its age-old connection with the Patriarch of Babylon. The decisions of the Synod resulted in the divisions of the Kerala Church into two - Puthan Kuttu and Pazhaya Kuttukar, the former following the Syrian and the latter following the Latin.

OATH OF COONAN CROSS (1653).

The response of the Syrian Christians to the challenge of the synod of Diamper came as the Oath of the Coonan cross. The appointment of a Latin Bishop to the Ankamali dioceses by the Portuguese king was resented by the Syrian Christians who badly felt the need of a Bishop of their own. In the meanwhile rumour spread that the Portuguese had detained Ahatullah, a bishop sent by the Patriarch of Babylon. The infuriated Syrians gathered a mass at Kochi demanding the release of the Bishop who was brought to Kochi en route to Goa. The Syrians were excited as the rumour spread that Ahatullah was drowned by the Portuguese. Thereupon they assembled in front of the ancient cross at Mattancherry on 3rd January 1653, tied a rope on the cross and took the Oath that they would no longer obey the Latin Archbishop. This is known in History as the Coonan cross Oath. The Syrians then proceeded to Alangad and proclaimed Archdeacon Thomas as their metropolitan.

In the history of Christianity, the Coonan cross oath was a turning point. It marked the end of the unity of the Kerala Church. The old Church faced a split, which has not ended even today. Those who owed allegiance to the Roman Church were known as Roman Syrians and those who opposed Rome as Jacobite Syrians. (Pazhayakuru and Puthan Kuru). The bifurcation of the Kerala Church thus became a reality.

Impact of Portuguese contact.

The hundred and fifty years of Portuguese contact were fruitful from the political, economic and social points of view. Politically, the contact confirmed the political disunity of Kerala. The attempt of the Zamorin to unify Kerala was foiled by Gama's arrival. The Portuguese in fact accelerated the process of the Balkanisation of Kerala. It created a political vacuum and paved the way for the Mysorean and English conquest.

In the economic field, the Portuguese put an end to the Arab trade with the Middle East. The contact with Europe fostered ornamental architecture in Malabar, European techniques and weapons of warfare and emergence of new towns like Calicut and Cochin. Portuguese brought new agricultural products such as cashew nut, tobacco, custard apple, guava, pineapple and papaya to Kerala. The popularised Kerala spices like pepper and ginger in European markets. They promoted scientific cultivation of pepper and ginger and coconut on a large scale.

In the educational and cultural fields, the Portuguese established Seminaries and colleges. The study of Latin and Portuguese were popularised. Indological studies were undertaken. Garcia de Orta had written one of the earliest works on medicinal plants. Francis Xavier translated Catechism into Malayalam. Barbosa and Correa left their valuable accounts of Kerala. Printing was introduced into India by the Portuguese and printing presses were set up in Kochi and Vaipin under Gonsalves. The Portuguese patronised Chavittunatakam and developed it as an art.

KUNHALI MARAKKARS

The Kunhali Marakkars were the Admirals of the Zamorin's fleet. They dominated the waves for almost the century and helped the Zamorin in his epic fight against the Portuguese. The Marakkar family had some of the most remarkable naval captains whose prowess makes the name of 'Malabar Pirates' resound still in history.

The origin and ancestry of the Marikkars is a subject of controversy. They were regarded as the descendants of Mohammed, a Moplah merchant of Kochi who settled at Ponnani. The Marakkars were descendants of the Arab merchants. It seems the Kunhalis hailed from Pantalayini Kollam, moved first to Thikkodi and then to Kottakkal and

Puthupathanam. The term Kunhali is an honourific title conferred on the admirals by the Zamorin. The word Marakkar is an adaptation of the Tamil word Marakkalam (-Captain of a ship). The sea going folk of Malabar is called Marakkar. Altogether there were four Kunhalis who figures in the history of Kerala, besides Kutti Ali and Pattu Marakkar.

Kunhali I was the Admiral of Calicut fleet from 1507. He organized naval defences against the Portugues on a sound basis. A brilliant strategist, he avoided pitched battles and inflicted heavy casualties on the Portuguese possession in Ceylon. He chose Kutty Ali as his successors. Using light and fast moving armed vessels, Kutty Ali used to attack the Portugues ship by his 'hit and run' tactics. He was captured as prisoner by the Portugues governor Sampayo. Thereupon the fleet was re-organised under Pacchachi Marakkar, Kunhali II and Ali Abraham. After Kunhali I and II, Kunhali III directed the naval operations against the Portugues. He modernised the navy, manufactured arms and ammunitions locally, erected observations posts to watch the movement of the enemy ships throughout the coast. His name became almost the terror to the Portuguese as he began to control the Indian Ocean from Persian Gulf to Ceylon. This forced the Portuguese to compromise with the Zamorin by surrendering Chaliyam. The fall of Chaliyam sealed the fate of the Portuguese in Kerala. In recognition of these services, the Zamorin conferred upon Kunhali III several rights and honours including the right to erect a fort at Puthuppattanam which became famous as Marakkar Kotta (1572).

Kunhali IV became the Zamorin's Admiral after the death of Kunhali III. His relation with the Zamorin was not however cordial. The Zamorin's action of permitting the Portuguese to build a fort at Ponnani was not liked by the Admiral. Kunhali infuriated the Zamorin by strengthening the fortifications at Kottakkal and by styling himself as 'King of othe Moors' and 'Lord of the Seas'. He showed discourtesy to his master by cutting the tail of the state elephant and ill-treating a Nair noble. The overbearing attitude of the admiral forced the Zamorin to ally with the Portuguese to crush him. A joint expedition was organized against Kunhali, his Marakkar Kotta was sieged (1800) and finally Kunhali was forced to surrender. He was captured by the Portuguese who took him to Goa and after the mockery of trial put him to death. It is an Irony of history that Kunhali who had always been a pillar of strength of the Zamorin in his fight against the Portuguese had to be crushed by an unholy opportunistic alliance between his master and traditional enemy. The tragic end of Kunhali invested his name with halo of martyrdom glory and honour to Kerala. The history of the Kunhalis thus occupy an important phase in the history of resistance movements of the natives against foreigners.

THE DUTCH IN KERALA

The Dutch were the first Protestant nation of Europe to establish trade contacts with Kerala. Established in 1592, the Dutch E.I. Company dispatched missions to the local rulers to secure trade privileges. Van Hagen the Dutch Admiral had concluded a treaty with the Zamorin (November, 1604) to expel the Portuguese from India. It also secured them trade facilities at Calicut. The treaty is important as the first political agreement entered into between the Dutch and an Indian power. The treaty was renewed in 1608 and the Dutch were given freedom of trade in the Zamorin's domain. The treaty of 1610 stipulated to pay customs duty to the Zamorin. The 1625 agreement gave the Dutch permission to build a factory in the Zamorin's domain. Similar treaties were signed with Purakkad (1642), Kayamkulam and Venad (1662) to have warehouses in the respective domains and monopoly of pepper trade. Thus by the early decades of the 17th Century the Dutch had emerged as a serious rival to the Portuguese.

Dutch Hegemony at Kochi.

The crowning achievement of the Dutch was the capture of Kochi in 1663. The Dutch period of Kerala History actually begins with this event. The Dutch were able to intervene successfully in the dispute between the Mutha Tavazhi and Elaya Tavazhi, two factions in the Cochin royal family. They succeeded in installing the prince of their choice on the Cochin gaddi. In the course of conflict between the Dutch and the Portuguese to capture Kochi, the Dutch leader Van Goen laid siege to the Mattancherry Palace. In the fierce battle that was fought in front of the 'Dutch Palace', the Raja with two princes and ministers were killed. Rani Gangadhara Lakshmi who was watching the battle from the palace was captured prisoner by Van Rhee de and she was forced to recognise the Mutha Thavazhi prince as the ruler of Kochi. The capture of Kochi inaugurated the era of Dutch supremacy on the Kerala Coast.

The Dutch success at Kochi was followed by the capture of Fort St. Angelo, Kannur from the Portuguese and by treaties with the rulers of Kayamkulam, Purakkad, Martha and Kollam. The Dutch entered into agreement with other powers like Tekkumkur, Vatakkumkur, Karappuram and Kannur. By 1728, they became dominant in Kerala. However they were forced to give up their claims in the face of opposition from the rulers of Thiruvitamkur, Mysore and the English E.I. Company. The Dutch defeat at Kulachal (1741), the Mysorian occupation of Chettuvay (1776) and the English capture of Kochi (1795) sealed their fate in Kerala.

Battle of Kolachal.

The Dutch dream of the Conquest of Kerala was shattered when Marthanda Varma, the ruler of Travancore inflicted a severe defeat on them in the famous battle of Kolachal (1741). He annexed almost all the states with whom the Dutch had established relations. The Dutch establishments of Kollam, Marta Kayamkulam and Purakkad were absorbed in the kingdom of Thiruvitamkur. By the **treaty of Mavelikkara (1753)**, the Dutch agreed to be neutral in wars to be fought by Travancore with native powers. This treaty marked the complete humiliation of the Dutch and their eclipse as a political power in Kerala.

The Dutch failed to establish an enduring dominion in Kerala because of unforeseen political developments. (a) The rise of Travancore under Marthanda Varma in the South and the Mysorean invasions in the North upset the balance of power in Kerala. (b) The rise of other European powers like the English and the French who were superior in the seas upset the plans of the Dutch. The fall of the Cochin fort and Tankesseri to the English in 1795 gave the coup de grace to Dutch domination over Kerala.

Effects of the Dutch Rule.

Like the Portuguese, the Dutch contact produced results beneficial to Kerala. They revived Kerala trade. New products and scientific techniques of cultivation were introduced. They gave encouragement to coconut cultivation on commercial basis. They promoted indigo and paddy cultivation. New industries like salt farming and dyeing were introduced. Although they never built seminaries or colleges, the memoirs, letters and accounts left by the Dutch men like Visschier, Nieuhoff and Van Rheedee are of inestimable value for the reconstruction of Kerala history.

The greatest achievement of the Dutch in the cultural field was the compilation of **HORTUS MALABARICUS**, a monumental botanical work on the medicinal plants of Kerala. It was compiled under the patronage of the Dutch governor Van Rheedee. With this project were associated such stalwarts like Mathaeus the Carmelite monk; Appu Bhat, Ranga Bhat and Vinayak Bhatt, the three G.S. Brahmins and Ithi Achan (Itti Achutan), an Ezhava physician. It took many years to complete the work and it was finally published from Amsterdam between 1678 and 1703 in 12 volumes.

ENGLISH AND THE FRENCH SETTLEMENTS

Following the footsteps of the Portuguese and the Dutch, the English and the French came to Kerala mainly for commercial purposes, but later had political ambitions. They built up and consolidated their rule in the land and began to rule over an empire vaster than the American colonies.

Ralph Fetch was the first Englishman to reach the shores of Kerala (1583). Capt. Keeling who followed him concluded a treaty with the Zamorin in 1615 in order to expel the Portuguese from Malabar. During the last days of Portuguese rule (1635-35), the English secured access to all Portuguese Ports in Kerala and they began to export pepper to England from 1636. In 1644, the English obtained permission from the king of Venad to build a factory at Vizhinjam. In 1664, the Zamorin granted them permission to erect a factory at Calicut. In 1684 the Rani of Attingal gave them permission to build a factory at Anjengo substantially increased English influence. Fort Anjengo soon became the most important English possessions on the West Coast, next only to Mumbai.

Revolt of Anjengo.

The grant of concessions to the English at Anjengo provoked a revolt of the local people in 1697. The overbearing conduct and corrupt practices of the English were the reasons for the outbreak. The local people revolted, attacked the factors and massacred all Englishmen. They attempted to capture the fort, but failed. Following its failure, the Rani of Attingal granted the monopoly of pepper trade and the right to erect factories to the English. The Revolt of Anjengo is remarkable as it is the first organized revolt of the natives against the British authority in Kerala.

Treaty of Travancore (1723).

In the meanwhile the English entered in to a treaty with Thiruvitamkur. It permitted the English to erect a fort at Kulachal (Colachal). It was signed by Prince Marthanda Varma and Alexander Orme. This is the first treaty negotiated by the English Company with an Indian state. This treaty laid the foundation of friendship between Travancore and the English E.I. Company, a friendship that lasted for several decades.

ENGLISH IN MALABAR

Along with building their influence in South Kerala, the English took steps to safeguard their interests in North Kerala. With the permission of the Kolathiri, they set up a factory at Thalassery (1694). When the English companies were united in 1702, Thalassery along with Karwar, Calicut and Anjengo became the affiliated factories of Bombay. When English had to face opposition from the natives who raided the company's warehouses and inflicted heavy damages (1704-05), the English built a fort at Thalasseri in 1708 and secured monopoly of trade in pepper from Kolathiri.

Advent of the French in Kerala

The French too entered Kerala with the purpose of trade. They arrived near Thalassery in 1725 and occupied Mahe. They had already established their superiority over Pondicherry, and Mahe was captured as per the directions of Pandy Governor. With this a new European power also came to the Kerala Coast to take part in the struggle for power – The French East India Company.

Anglo- French Conflict.

Before long, the English had to face the rivalry of the French. In 1725, the French captured Mahe from Kadathanad. The French possession of Mahe was a potential danger to the English at Thalassery. The English also had to face threat from the Dutch and also from the Ali Rajas of Kannur. However, the English rose to the occasion, ousted the Ali Raja from Dharmadam and obtained that island. When the French at Mahe provoked the English during the Canarese Wars (1732-36), they captured Mahe, but had to return Mahe soon after the close of the Anglo- French conflict.

MYSOREAN INROADS:

The Mysorean interlude was a period of stress and strain for the English in Malabar. During this period, the Thalasseri factory faced many a crisis. In 1764, Haider secured the neutrality of the English in the event of a Mysore-Kerala conflict. However Haider Ali came in to open clash with the English in 1773 and attempted to capture Thalasseri. The Anglo-Mysore hostilities were renewed under Tippu Sultan. The English actively aided the Zamorin and other local powers to throw off the Mysorean yoke and Thalasseri factory offered an asylum to many of them. When Tippu attacked Thiruvitamkur in 1789, the English supported their protected ally. The fall of Seringapattam (1790) and the consequent withdrawal of Mysorean forces from Kerala opened the doors of British entry in to Malabar. The treaty of Seringapatam (1792) secured to the British the whole of Malabar except Wyanad and Coorg. They also secured South Canara after the last Mysore War. In course of time, the English brought Malabar under their direct rule while Thiruvitamkur and Kochi became Vassal states.

Malabar Settlements:

The change were effected by what came to be known as the Malabar settlement. After the expulsion of Tippu, instead of restoring territories to the exiled Rajas, the British themselves took charge of the administration of Malabar. They appointed two commissioners (Farmer and Dow) to effect a political settlement in Malabar. Settlements were reached with the native powers for the collection of revenue. A new system of administration was evolved for Malabar. The whole of Malabar was divided in to two

administrative divisions of Northern and Southern with respective headquarters at Thalasseri and Cherpilassery, each under a superintendent. A supervisor and chief Magistrate were appointed to supervise them with headquarters at Kozhikode. Later the commissionerates were abolished and Malabar was formed into a separate district with the collector as its head, under Madras Presidency (1st October, 1801).

Fresh treaties were made with Kochi and Thiruvitamkur. The Travancore ruler accepted British supremacy by the treaty of 1795. Under the treaty of 1805, Travancore accepted British protection and became a subsidiary of the E.I. Company. The treaty gave the British specific powers to interfere in the internal affairs of the state. Travancore lost political freedom. Similar treaties were entered into with Kochi also. Thus, post Mysorean interregnum witnessed the English company as holding political control of the whole of Kerala.

MYSOREAN INVASIONS

The Mysorean invasion of Kerala by Haider Ali and his son Tippu Sultan represents a brief interlude, a watershed in our long and chequered history. It put an end to the Middle Ages in Kerala and inaugurated the modern period of our History.

Political Condition of Malabar.

The Mysoreans were tempted to invade Malabar mainly because of the political atmosphere that prevailed in the country in the first half of the 18th Century. Kerala presented the picture of the 'house divided against itself'. In the words of N.K. Sinha "North Malabar was in a state of anarchy, a sea of intrigue, conflicting interests and mutual jealousies". The expansionist policies of the Zamorins sparked off a series of conflicts, which created favourable conditions to Haider Ali. The mutual jealousies of the local chieftains like the Kolathiri, Ali Raja, Kadathanad, Iruvazhinad and Kottayam Rajas prevented them from offering a united front to the 'foreign' enemy. Ali Raja in fact offered help to Mysore in the event of an invasion. The European powers tried to fish in the troubled waters for their trading interests. Since the Kunjali episode, the Muslims were not in good terms with the Zamorin and they preferred a Muslim invasion. Haider's desire to have an access to French Mahe through Malabar also was there.

HAIDER ALI'S CONQUEST.

First Invasion:

Haider Ali intervened in Malabar affairs thrice, first as Faujdar of Mysore, then as ruler of Mysore twice. His first intervention took place in the Palakkad region. When Zamorin annexed Naduvattam belonging to the Palakkad Raja in 1756, the Raja appealed to Haider who was then the Faujdar of Dindigal for help. Haider intervened and the

Zamorin was forced to withdraw and to pay an indemnity to Haider. When Haider became the ruler of Mysore, he turned to Malabar in order to get the promised indemnity from the Zamorin and to have an access to Mahe. Haider also had the intention to teach a lesson to the Raja of Thiruvithamkur who declined his support earlier. He invaded Malabar from the North in 1761, conquered the Bednore Kingdom (1763), Nileswaram and other northern principalities. He defeated the Kolathiri, the Kottayam Raja, Kadathanad chieftain and the ruler of Kurumbranad. Advancing further South, Haider reached the borders of Calicut. The attempt of the Zamorin to avert the crisis by offering all his treasure and property failed. The Mysoreans army humiliated Zamorin committed suicide by setting fire to the palace. The extinction of the Zamorin left Haider master of Calicut. Appointing Madanna as the civil governor of the conquered provinces, Haider returned to Mysore.

Haider's second invasion (1763) was necessitated by the revolt of the local chieftains and Nairs of Kadathanad, Kottayam and Calicut. Haider suppressed these rebellions with an iron hand. In his second invasion of Kerala in 1773, the Mysoreans forces under Srinivasa Rao and Syed Khan descended on Malabar. The Kerala chiefs offered no serious resistance. The reigning Zamorin who expected French and Dutch help was forced to fly first to Kodungallur and later to Thiruvithamkur. As his ultimate aim was the conquest of Thiruvithamkur, Haider began with the invasion of Kochi. Sirdar Khan captured Chavakkad and Thrissur and he returned when the Cochin Raja offered him a big sum as bribe. The refusal of the Dutch to open a passage to Haider through their territories to invade Thiruvithamkur resulted in a conflict, which ended with the surrender of Pappinivattam and Chettarvai to Sirdar Khan.

EFFECTS.

By this time, Haider's policy in Malabar underwent a profound change. Instead of sending military governors from Mysore to rule over the conquered territories, Haider tried to utilise the services of friendly chieftains for the purpose. Thus Kolathiri became Haider's representative in Malabar. The experiment was extended to other parts of Malabar as well. In the mean while, the Carnatic War had broken out between the English and Haider. In the course of the war Sirdar Khan had besieged Thalassery of the English. The English forces, supported by the Kottayam Raja, defeated Sirdar Khan, advanced to Palakkad, the last Mysorean stronghold in Malabar. The local Rajas seized the opportunity to recover their dominions. These reverses prompted Haider to send his son Tippu to restore Mysorean authority in Kerala. Though Tippu came and attacked the English, but before he could achieve any decisive result, Haider passed away (December, 1782) and Tippu was obliged to leave for Mysore to secure his succession to the throne.

TIPPU'S CONQUEST.

Tippu Sultan continued the expansionist policies of his father. After becoming ruler of Mysore, he came to Kerala and re-conquered the whole of Malabar up to Kotta river. He could not advance further because of the opposition of the English. However by the treaty of Mangalore, which concluded the 2nd Anglo-Mysore War, the company gave up its claims on Malabar tacitly recognising Tippu's suzerainty over the region. When there was opposition to Tippu's reform, Tippu himself descended on Malabar, marched towards Kozhikode, drove the Zamorin out of the city and established a reign of terror. Visiting Kannur, he celebrated the betrothal ceremony of his son with the daughter of Arakkal Bibi.

Attack on Thiruvithamkur, Tippu's target of attack was Thiruvithamkur. The Raja's policy of giving asylum to the rebel chieftains of Malabar, the construction of the Travancore lines, the purchase of the forts of Pallippuram and Kodungallur from the Dutch-all antagonized the Sultan who demanded the surrender of Kodungallur and Pallippuram forts, the demolition of the Travancore lines and expulsion of Malabar Chieftains from his kingdom. His attempt for peace with the Raja was foiled when the latter came closer to the English, the traditional enemy of the Sultan. Hence as he was left with no alternative, Tippu invaded Kochi, camped at Thrissur and began attacking the Travancore Lines. He captured Kodungallur, Kuriappilly and Pallippuram forts, subdued Alangad and Parur and encamped at Aluva. It seemed as if the way was opened for the total subjugation of Thiruvithamkur. However the conquest was averted by the outbreak of monsoon and the English declaration of war on Tippu and their march to Srirangapattanam. Realising the gravity of the situation, Tippu abandoned his campaign and rushed back to Mysore, Mysorean invasion of Kerala virtually ended.

However a series of progressive steps were undertaken by Tippu in his administration of Malabar. He established a new capital at Farukabad (Feroke) and built the first road system in Malabar. He introduced a new variety of coinage in Malabar. As a social reformer, he issued the proclamation of 1788 severely condemning the system of polyandry. He investigated the conditions of the farmer and remitted one third of their tax.

IMPACTS OF MYSOREAN OCCUPATION.

The Mysorean conquest of Malabar produced political, economic and social results.

Political.

The feudal system of administration of Malabar was replaced by a centralised system of government. The Nairs and Naduvazhis of feudal Kerala lost their position of pre-eminence.

Administrative.

The Mysoreans introduced an administration based on modern and progressive ideas. Tipu introduced a system of land revenue based on the actual produce of the land. Land tax was collected directly from the tenant. It was based on the actual produce of the land. Assessment was made after a proper survey. This raised the dignity of the tenant.

Tipu opened a **net work of roads** connecting different parts of Malabar “Tipu projected, and in a great part, finished an extensive chain of roads that connected all the principal places in Malabar”. Tipu is often regarded as the pioneer of roads in Malabar. From the **social point of view**, the Mysorean invasion sounded the death knell of the old social order in Malabar. It ushered in a new era of social change. The privileged status enjoyed by the upper castes earlier was lost. Haider and Tipu showed scant respect to old customs and time honoured privileges. They broke the myth of the racial superiority of the upper classes and instilled a consciousness of dignity and status among the lower classes. In fact the Mysorean invasion administered a shock treatment to the traditional Kerala society. It also saw the emergence of a new middle class.

In the **economic sphere**, the Mysorean rule was not a blessing. The continuous raids resulted in the economic ruin of the country. Agriculture was destroyed. Peasant took refuge in jungles. Trade was hampered. The decline of trade and agriculture crippled the economy. The old ports became centers of desolation. It was a period of economic depression. In the **cultural field**; it was a period of stagnation. The flight of Kshatriyas and Nambutiris who were the traditional patrons of culture, retarded cultural activities. The Mysorean invasion gave a death blow to communal harmony. It brought a cleavage between the Hindus and the Muslims. The local Muslims often sided with the Mysoreans in temple looting and destruction. The privileged status enjoyed by the local Muslims was not recognised by the British which resulted in the Moplah riots of the 19th and Mallabar Rebellion of the early 20th Centuries.

The Mysorean interlude is important as a link between the ancient regime and the new era. It has wiped out the middle ages in Kerala. The old regime has ended and it was a new society based on sound principles that replaced it.

TRANSFORMATION IN MATRILINY

The introduction of modern education system in Kerala by colonial government paved the way for the growth of a new social awakening among the people of the state. Apart from Christians and non- Keralaites, Nairs were the first to take the advantage of English education. The fast moving changes affected the traditional Nair Tharavads and their marriage system. The younger generation among the Nairs went for western education

and many of them got employed in the government service. As they were salaried people and were able to make income individually, it was not essential for them to rely any more on the taravad Karnavar for livelihood.

The salaried Nairs did not contribute their income to the common fund of Taravads; instead they began to spend it to their children and wife. This affected fundamental changes in the traditional Taravad system, or joint family system. The educated Nairs insisted on monogamy and turned against the general practice of "Sambandam". When the younger ones found it difficult to get necessary fund for their English education, from the Taravad Karnavar, they naturally turn to their fathers for financial assistance. When they received money from their fathers for their necessities their loyalty turned towards their fathers from Karnavars. Gradually there took place a transaction from the matriliney to patriliney.

The educated Nair youth began to file private petitions in the judicial courts against their Karnavars for the partition of the Taravad property. The economic severities of the youths forced them to turn against their uncles. When English courts issued orders favouring the demands of the youths, the very foundation of the matrilineal system and Taravad based joint family system began to crumble down. The Madras High Court judgement of 1869 declared that the 'Sambandham' marriage is not legal. The Malabar marriage Association formed in 1879, requested the government of Madras to declare Sambandham marriage as legal. But the government gave no favourable reply, as it was not prepared to defy the Court order.

When the issue regarding the marriage system among the Nair community was taken up in the Madras Legislative Assembly, but was of no result. However, consequent to this government appointed the 'Malabar Marriage Commission' to enquire into the problems related with the Nair marriages and to suggest recommendations whether the Sambandham marriages should be declared illegal or not. The report of the Commission was accepted by the government accordingly the "Malabar Marriage Act" was passed in 1896. The Act stated that Children born of registered Sambandham marriage would be eligible for half of the property of their father. This was the first act which paved way for the decline of the matrilineal system in Kerala.

The Marumakkathayam Act of 1933 declared that the Taravad property of the joint family was to be divided, whether the Karnavar agrees it or not and individual shares were to be given to each and every member of the family. This was final blow to the matriliney in Malabar, and inaugurated the Makkathayam system. The changes in the matriliney that was taking place in Malabar encouraged the people of the princely states also. As a result of the popular demand, the Tiruvitamkur government passed the 'First Nair Act' in 1912.

Although this Act did not permit the partition of Taravad as a whole, it stated that half of the property of the father should be given to his children and the other half to his nephews. The second Nair Act of 1925 in Tiruvutankur nullified the claim of the nephews to the property of their uncles and made provisions sharing of property among the children. It further prohibited polygamy in the state.

The 'Kochi Nair Regulation Act' of 1920 cut short the rights of the Karnavar in the Taravad property and allowed partition of Taravad property. This Act entrusted the responsibility of protecting the wife and children upon husband. Polygamy was also declared illegal. The 'Kochi Nair Act' of 1938 completely put an end to matriliney in the state. The wife and children became the legal heirs of the husband's property. Each and every member of the joint family was given the right to the Taravad property.

DEGENERATION OF SWARUPAMS

The degeneration of Swarupams in Kerala during and prior to colonial occupation basically was due to the inherent contradiction within the complicated power structure and the traditional gradation system existed among them. The formation of the power structure within the Swarupam was so complex that each and every Thavazhi or Kuru could claim for more power and demand acceptance from others of the same grade. Kuruvazhcha and Kovilakams were the two important factors that constituted the power structure of the swarupams.

Kuruvazhcha was the right to rule based on the gradation systems, in which seniority was the main criterion for becoming the ruler. This was called Muppu or eldership. The Muthakuru was the head of the Swarupam and so was the titular ruler of the territory. The order of the seniority or the muppumura was the significant factor within the Swarupam for becoming the ruler. The Illayakurs or the junior members had separate Kovilakams or residential houses and they also enjoyed special privileges and rights within the territory. After the death of Muthukur the next senior most member of the Illayakuru was to become the next ruler.

The order of seniority was become more complex by the emergence of Thavazhis or mother lineages. All Swarupams in Kerala followed matrilineal system. Thavazhis had developed within the Swarupams as separate segments within, where the children of the sisters of the ruler developed into separate segments within, where the children of the sisters of the ruler developed into separate lineages. The Trippapur Swarupam had the Mutha Thavazhi and Illaya Thavazhi. The Perumpadappu Swarupam of Kochi had five Thavazhis- Mutha thavazhi, Illaya thavazhi, Palluruthi Thavazhi, Muringur Thavazhi and Chazhur Thavazhi. These Thavazhis with the Kuru system made order of seniority more complicated. There were a number of persons of the same age and rank in the seniority list, But belonging to different Thavazhis.

There are several instances in the history of Kerala where Thavazhis were fighting each other for power. The most notable one is the conflict between the Mutha Thavazhi and the Illaya Thavazhi of Kochi in the second half of the 17th century. The European powers found this uncertainty of the power structure in the Swarupams as an advantage to making interventions. In the struggle between the Thavazhis of Kochi, opposite sides supported by the Portuguese and the Dutch. In fact the Dutch could expand their dominance in Kerala after their intervention in this struggle between the Kochi Thavazhis.

In certain cases some of the Thavazhis branched off themselves from the original Swarupams and had established separate Swarupams with territorial control. The Nedumangad Swarupam was thus a branched off one. Venad had a separate form of family organization. Attingal was considered as Ammaveedu whose princess was the ruler of a small region and progenitor of the ruler of Venad. The original Venad Swarupam was fragmented into several Swarupams like that of Desinganad, Elayadath, Trippappur, etc. However, all these fragmented Swarupams had accepted Attingal as the root family.

Several new Swarupams were created. Some of them came as a result of segmentation. In some other cases, land lords and chieftains of certain areas had developed to separate swarupams, like Chembakassery (Ambalapuzha), Kadathanad, Palakkad, Vettathunadu etc. Quarrels within the branches or Thavazhis or Kurus within these Swarupams arose normally on the death of the ruler. These quarrels were manipulatively utilized by the colonial power, by siding one source of power against the other. When European support was offered the segments turned against their fraternal rulers or claimants of power. All these segments were thriving for power and for that they were prepared to invite assistance and help from any outside power in their fight against their relatives within the Swarupams.

UNIT-IV

RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS

In this unit, we have seen how the Mysorean invasion paved way for the British annexation of Malabar and the subjugation of Thiruvithamkur and Kochi. Consequent on the establishment of foreign domination, there was an equal response of the natives against the British. Now we shall deal with such resistance movements against the British as the revolt of Patinjare Kovilakam Rajas, Pazhassi Raja, Velu Thampi Dalawa Paliath Achan and the Kurichiyas.

Early Struggles – Nature.

Establishment of British supremacy witnessed the beginning of a new epoch in our history. It was an epoch of challenge and response, an epoch of domination and resistance. The native chieftains and people responded to the British challenge with a firm resolve to throw the foreign yoke, but in vain. But the attempt itself is remarkable. The resistance movements organised and led by such stalwarts as Kerala Varma in Malabar, Velu Thampi in Thiruvithamkur, Paliath Achan in Kochi, the Kurichiyas in Wayanad and the Mappilas in Eralnad and Valluvanad. The early risings were led by such diverse elements as dispossessed local princes, feudal chieftains, aggrieved peasants and tribal communities. Kathleen Gough, the anthropologist has classified these early uprisings into five types: restorative, religious, social banditry, terrorist vengeance and armed insurrection.

British Occupation of Malabar.

The retreat of Tipu was the signal for the collapse of Mysorean authority over Kerala. The Zamorin and the Raja of Kochi declared themselves to be in favour of the company. The company's forces entered Malabar and captured the strategically important Palakkad fort (1790). The Mysoreans were cleared off from the region from Chavakkad to Kannur. The remnant of the Mysorean forces under Mahabat Khan was put to flight. The Kannur fort was besieged and Arakkal Bibi was forced to surrender. By the beginning of 1791 the British became the masters of the whole of Malabar. Thus the Mysorean attempt to establish hegemony over Kerala ended in the establishment of British supremacy.

The withdrawal of the Mysore troops from Kerala opened the doors to British entry into the whole of Malabar. By the treaty of Sriranga Pattanam (1792) the whole of Malabar except Wayanad and Coorg were ceded to the British. As a result of the last Mysore wars, South Canara (Kasargod-Hosdurg) area too passed to the British. Gradually the British brought Malabar under their direct control. The District of Malabar, as part of Madras Presidency was formed on May 21, 1800. Mr. Macleod became the first collector of the District of Malabar (1st October, 1800) in the newly formed district administrative and

social reforms were undertaken, though not as spectacular as those of the Princely states. The British administrators introduced the Cornwallis code in 1802 to evolve a judicial system for Malabar. Under this system, judicial and executive functions were separated. It was followed by the establishment of district and provincial courts.

British Administrative Settlement in Malabar.

The British never kept their word that the exiled Chieftains would be restored to their territories after Tippu's expulsion. The British directly took charge of the administration of Malabar. An interim arrangement was provided by appointing two commissioners—Mr Farmer and Major Dow—to effect the political and administrative settlement of Malabar. The commissioners negotiated settlements for the collection of revenue with the local powers and evolved a new system of administration for Malabar. Accordingly Malabar was divided into two administrative divisions each under the control of a superintendent. They were supervised by a chief magistrate with headquarters at Calicut. The commission was abolished and Malabar was formed as a district with the collector as its head (1st October, 1801).

The company entered into fresh treaties with Kochi and Thiruvitamkur. By the treaty of 1791, the Kochi Raja became a vassal of the English and in 1800 Kochi was placed under the control of the Madras government. By the treaty of 1795, the Travancore Raja accepted British hegemony. By the treaty of 1805, the state became a subsidiary ally of the British and accepted British protection. The treaties specified the appointment of a Resident and Col. Macaulay became the British resident of Tiruvitamkur and Kochi. It further granted to the Company to interfere in the internal affairs of the two states.

PAZHASSI REVOLTS

The Pazhassi Revolt was the most serious outbreak against the British in South India. The prime mover of this rebellion was Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja and hence the name Pazhassi revolt. Kerala Varma belonged to the Western branch of the Kottayam royam family (Puraikizhnad), which had its headquarters at Pazhassi. Kerala Varma was one of the few princes of Malabar who withstood the Mysorean invasion. In fact Kerala Varma helped the English to capture Mahe in 1761 and assisted them at Thalasseri against Tippu. But when the British failed to honour his services to the company after the expulsion of Tippu, Pazhassi revolted against them. An opponent of foreign domination, Pazhassi persistently opposed the Mysoreans. He spearheaded a bitter struggle against the British with the prime object of liquidating foreign rule from the land. The Kerala Varma struggle marks an important stage in the history of resistance movements against the British.

First Pazhassi Revolt (1793-97)

Kerala Varma came in to Conflict with the company for personal as well as national reasons. He had the personal grievance that his services to the company earlier were not taken in to consideration by them. The British failed to honour the prior agreement that the territories will be restored back to the former Rajas soon after the expulsion of Tippu. Pazhassi had additional causes of complaint. Instead of authorizing him, the company made permanent arrangements of revenue collection for Kottayam with the Kurmbranad Raja. To add insult to injury, the company renewed Kurmbranad Rajas lease for five more years. The British had adopted a revenue policy that went detrimental to the interests of the tenants. While the Mysoreans had collected their revenue direct from the tenants. The British reversed this policy and authorized the local Rajas to collect the same. Their harsh assessment and forcible collection was resisted by the tenants. Pazhassi championed the cause of the tenants

Pazhassi unfurled the banner of revolt against the mistaken revenue policy of the British. He stopped all collection of revenue in Kottayam. The company found it difficult to meet the situation. They looked upon the Raja as the “moist intractable and unreasonable of all the Rajas” and tried to subjugate him. Lt. Gordon attempted to seize the Raja in his palace at Pazhassi. But, to his dismay the bird has flown away and the cage was empty. Therefore he plundered the palace and looted the valuables. The Raja took refuge in the jungles of Wayanad and adopted the guerrilla system of warfare. His supporters assembled in small groups, erected barriers and cut off British communications. The Rajas of Kurumbranad, parappanad, eastern branches of the Zamorin’s family, the Moplahs led by Chempan Pokker and the Gounders of Coimbatore – all allied with Pazhassi. The Raja also sought the help of Mysore in driving the English out of Wayanad, the hilly nature of the country and the strong support he received from the hill tribes like the Kurichiyars forced the company to have a truce with the Raja as a matter of political expediency.

To work out a compromise with the Raja, Duncan the Bombay governor himself came to Malabar. The chirakkal Raja acted as the mediator. By the agreement, the Company agreed to withdraw all the troops from Wayanad, to restore the treasure taken from the Pazhassi palace, to cancel the agreement with the Kurumbranad Raja and to pay a pension of Rs.800/- to the Raja. The rebellion was a great success and peace was restored for the time being.

Second Pazhassi Revolt (1800-1805).

The peace agreed between the English and the Pazhassi Raja was only a truce, which did not last long. Pazhassi was provoked by the British move to take possession of Wayanad which had been ceded to him by the treaty of Srirangapatnam. Pazhassi had a further claim to the district as it had been granted to him by Tippu. Therefore he insisted in possessing it. The Raja's correspondence with the enemies of the British worsened the situation. To subjugate the Raja; the British brought Arthur Wellesley to Malabar. The Wellesley devised minute plans of operations. Net works of roads were constructed; Military outposts were set up at strategic places to counter the guerrilla tactics. These plans devised to bring an early end to the rebellion yielded results in the long run.

Pazhassi Raja began his epic resistance in 1800. His troops came down the ghats and attacked British outposts and spice plantations. Attacks and counter attacks followed. The British troops under Col. Stevenson achieved a great deal of success. Ultimately Wayanad fell in to their hands. Pazhassi Raja became a homeless wanderer in the jungles. His followers were hunted down. A few of them were captured and hanged. Kannavath Nambiar, the most trusted lieutenant of the Raja was one among them. The resistance movement lost its spirit, but not died out. Thalakkal Chandu and Edachana Kunjan pushed forward, captured the Panamaram fort and before long controlled all the passes in Wayanad. When there was a peasant uprising in Malabar against the enhancement of land revenue, the Pazhassi troops made common cause with the peasants. They attacked the spice plantations at Anjarakkandi, a climax to their success.

Early in 1804, Thomas Harvey Baber came as sub collector of Thalassery. This turned the tide of war in favour of the British. Baber took a series of measures to crush the Pazhassi revolt. The local people were made responsible for co-operation with the rebels. Rewards were announced to those who would supply timely information of the rebel movements. Baber also started a systematic hunt to capture the Raja and his associates. Baber chased the Raja to the jungles. On 30th November, 1805 the British troops surrounded the Raja and his men on the banks of Mavilaythodu (Kangarapuzha). After a severe battle of 15 hours, the Pazhassi forces were routed and the Raja was shot dead. Local tradition tells that the Raja committed suicide by swallowing the diamond in his ring. It has also been said that Pazhassi emptied his pistol to his own chest in order to escape capture by the British.

Baber was so touched by the gallantry of the Raja that he carried the Raja's dead body in his own palanquin to Mananthavady and cremated it with customary honour. Baber wrote "thus terminated the career of a man who has been enabled to persevere in hostilities against the company for nine years".... Although a rebel, he was one of the national chieftains of the country and might be considered on that account as a fallen enemy.

The revolt of Pazhassi marks an important stage in the history of resistance movements against the foreigner's domination in Kerala. Pazhassi fought in defence of freedom and his object was the liquidation of foreign rule. Though not a nationalist in the modern sense, he was a patriot with indomitable courage and heroism. Though began as an isolated outbreak and centred primarily on personal grievances, the Pazhassi revolt assumed the character of a popular movement. As the conflict dragged on Pazhassi identified his interests with other disaffected groups of Malabar. The revolt of Pazhassi Raja was a people's revolt in every sense. All classes of people were involved in it. The active involvement of the tribal communities of the Kurichiyas and Kurumbar has lent it the dimensions of an agrarian upheaval. It is true that the Raja became a rebel on account of the British disregard to his personal rights. But as a patriot, he rose above communal and regional considerations, organized the diverse sections of the Malabar population in to a confederacy against the British and gained the support of the rebel powers in other regions. In fact Pazhassi symbolised the resolve of the people to be free and sacrificed his life in defence of it. "In spite of his failure, Pazhassi Raja's martyrdom has invested his life with a unique halo and won for him an abiding place in the hearts of his fellow countrymen". However, Woodcock (*Kerala – A Portrait of the Malabar Coast*) remarks: "These feudal noblemen had no conception for an Indian nation: they were fighting not for the future, but for the past; one may admire their bravery and spirit; one may sympathise with their desire to live as they had always lived; But when all is said, they looked back to a feudal order, to a rigid caste system, to a restrictive society dominated by the Brahmins and the Nairs; for the submerged half of the society, they had little feeling. Far from representing India of 1789, they stood for it of 1745".

KURICHIYA REVOLT

The Kurichiya uprising of 1812 is one of the distinctive resistance movements against the British in Malabar. It had been a typical peasant uprising that broke out in Wayanad during 1810's. The Kurichiyas were a tribal folk who lived in the mountainous regions of Wayanad. They clinged to ancestral customs and loyalties. They lived a peaceful isolated life in the jungles. The Kurichiyas under their leader Thalakkal Chandu had played a leading role in the Pazhassi revolt. Many of Pazhassi victories were attributed to the Kurichiyas.

The British acquisition of Wayanad rudely disturbed their otherwise peaceful life. After the suppression of Pazhassi revolt, the British subjected the Kurichiyas to untold miseries. The British captured many of them and reduced some of them to slavery. However it was the new revenue settlement made by the new collector Thomas Warden that led the Kurichiyas to raise the banner of revolt. It was rather the arbitrary

mode of collection than the enhanced rate of revenue that was resented by the Kurichiya peasantry. They were forced to pay the revenue in cash rather than in the traditional mode of kind. The defaulters were treated cruelly; their property seized; they were evicted from the land; their privacy of houses broken; It was indeed the arbitrariness and harshness of revenue collection that drove the tribals to rebel.

Unable to bear up with the British any longer, the Kurichiyas rose in revolt in March 1812 under the leadership of their chief Rama Namby. They made elaborate preparations for a final fight with the British. The Kurumbar aided their fellow tribals in the fight. T.H. Baber has noted that the aim of the rebels was to expel the “Watta Thoppikkar” (Round Heads or Europeans) from the country. The rebellion spread to all parts of Wayanad; their priests accelerated the rebellion by declaring it to be sanctified by the blessings of the tribal Gods. The Kurichiya Kolkars left the service and joined the rebels. The rebellion assumed the characteristic of a mass upheaval.

Within a short span of time, the rebellion spread to the whole of Wayanad. The key passes came under their control. They attacked police stations persecuted English persons. They cut reinforcements to the British troops in the valley. They besieged British military posts at Sulthan Bathery and Mananthavady. For a few days at least, the British flag ceased to fly in Wayanad. However the rebellion was crushed: “Tribal heroism with tribal weapons became powerless before the sophisticated military machine of the English”. The British brought reinforcement from Mysore and South Canara. They moved in to the jungles from different directions, surrounded them and suppressed them. By May 1812, the revolt was completely crushed. The Kurichiya revolt is significant as it was basically a peasant’s revolt. It had none of the features of a feudal uprising. It did not throw up any cult figure. It was the last of the early revolts that broke out in Malabar against the British.

MAPILA RIOTS

There were a series of violent disturbances against the British during the 19th Century. These disturbances are known as Mappila riots. These upsurges occurred throughout Malabar, but the main centers of revolt were in Eranad and Valluvanad taluks of South Malabar. As the majority of the population were the peasants and were Mappilas, the company officials characterised these struggles as the outrages of the fanatical Mappilas. Hence the name Moplah riots.

Twenty-two such rebellions occurred during the period from 1835-1853. A common feature of these riots was the murder of Hindu Janmis and desecration of Hindu temples. According to one school of thought, the Mappila outbreaks were nothing more

than premeditated acts of religious fanaticism, a view strongly held by Mr. T.L. Strange who enquired into the causes of the disturbances. As the victims of the outrages were invariably the Hindu Landlords, Communal fanaticism could not be ruled out at least in the beginning. But as the unrest continued, it assumed the character of an agrarian revolt. Logan held the view that these outbreaks had their origin in agrarian depression and poverty. The real cause of the Moplah outbreak, according to him, was the mistaken revenue policy of the British government, which considered the Hindu Janmi as the overlord of the soil and the Moplah ryots having no right over the land. In fact all the three elements – agrarian grievance, religious bigotry, general economic backwardness – led the Moplahs to indulge in violent outbreaks.

As the violence continued to occur, in spite of reconciliatory measures it created a law and order problem. The Government created a new police force (Malabar Special Police) in 1845 to crush the riots. But riots continued to occur culminating in the murder of the district magistrate Conolly by four Moplah convicts. The riots began to slow down later due to the repressive policy of the government on the one hand and the implementation of ameliorative and welfare measures like tenancy reforms on the other. The Hindu-Muslim relations were greatly affected by these riots. Modern historians see the genesis of the Malabar Rebellion of 1921 in the Moplah riots of the 19th Century.

Resistance Movements of Veluthampi Dalawa

The revolt of Velu Thampi, the Dalawa of Travancore, is a significant episode in the annals of Indian resistance movements against the British. Velu Thampi came into the limelight of history in 1800 as the leader of a popular revolt against the notorious triumvirate (trio) of Travancore under the reigning sovereign Bala Rama Varma. It was a critical time for Thiruvithankur. The state's administration was controlled by the trio consisting of Sankaran Namputiri, Sankaranarayana Chetty and Mathu Tharakan. Discontent was raging against these corrupt men. Velu Thampi, as the champion of the oppressed, organised a large force of Nairs, marched to the capital and persuaded the Raja to dismiss the unpopular ministers. Velu Thampi was elevated to the high office of Dalawa (1801) on the advice of Macaulay.

The new Dalawa started far-reaching reforms to strengthen the government and to improve the finances of the state. Expenditure was curtailed down and income was augmented. Velu Thampi toned up the administration of the state by a judicious use of support to the Resident and firm dealings with corrupt officers. Government business was conducted firmly and strictly without fear or favour. This alarmed his enemies who plotted

to dismiss the Dalawa. But fortunately for Velu Thampi, the Resident intervened and reinstated Velu Thampi as Dalawa. There was also a mutiny was suppressed, with the help of the company's forces. The price of this help was a new treaty with the British. Velu Thampi took the initiative to have a new treaty with the company. The revised treaty of perpetual friendship and Alliance (12th January, 1805) gave the British specific power to keep a subsidiary force in Travancore and to interfere in its internal affairs. The treaty virtually sounded the death knell of Travancore as an independent kingdom.

Velu Thampi who was in best of terms with the resident had reasons for estrangement of relation with Macaulay. He found that the Resident was interfering in the internal affairs of the state using the treaty as a pretext. The Resident further turned down his request for a reduction of tribute. To make matters worse, the Resident cancelled the order of the Dalawa attaching the property of Mathu Tharakan who was a defaulter. The overbearing conduct of the Resident exasperated the Dalawa who prevailed upon the king to demand the recall of Macaulay. The Resident retaliated by demanding the dismissal of the Velu Thampi.

Velu Thampi now took the crucial decision to organise a revolt against the English. He made preparations for an armed insurrection with the help of anti British forces in India and abroad. He entered into a secret deal with Paliath Achan, the chief minister of Kochi who too had similar grievances. The two chief ministers drew up a common plan of action. They collected men and arms on a large scale. Velu Thampi envisaged an anti British alliance consisting of the French, the Mahrattas, the Poligars of Madurai, the Nairs and Moplahs of Malabar. He also sought French help from Mauritius. The Dalawa also expected Russian help. He also made some move to seek help from the Americans. His plans for a grant anti British alliance as envisaged, however, failed to take off. He had finally to depend upon his own people and resources.

Velu Thampi chalked out a common plan of action. A simultaneous attack on the British forces stationed at Kollam and Kochi was planned to be executed. Paliath Achan attacked the Residency at Kochi to capture Macaulay. Macaulay had already sent a detachment of his bodyguard to escort Velu Thampi who gave the impression of his resignation and retirement. Velu Thampi's move was to deplete the residency of its defenders. The attack on the Bolghatty palace had taken place on 18 December, 1807, when a force of 600 commanded by Paliath Achan attacked the Residency. The rebel looted the residency, broke open the jail in Kochi and set all prisoners free. Macaulay narrowly escaped in a British ship anchored in the harbour.

In Travancore, the rebellion took a serious turn. At Alapuzha, 36 English men were killed by the natives. Velu Thampi moved from Allapuzha to Kollam. As the encounter at Kollam yielded disappointing results, Velu Thampi made a strategic retreat to Kundara where he established his head quarters. Having reached Kundara, Velu Thampi issued his famous proclamation on (1.6.984) Makaram 1, 984 Kollam era (January 11, 1809) exhorting the people to rally, under his banner for a patriotic struggle against the British. The proclamation called up on the people to rise en masse in defence of the king, their country and religion. The Kundara proclamation reads: "It is the nature of the English nation to get possession of countries by treacherous means". If they obtain ascendancy in Travancore, the following may happen:

They will put their own guards in the palace, Sarkar buildings, forts. They will destroy the royal seal, do away with palanquins and other distinguishing marks. They will suppress the Brahmins and prohibit worship in temples. They will make the manufacture of salt a state monopoly. They will be the absolute owners of wastelands. They may impose heavy taxes on paddy lands, coconut etc. They will inflict heavy punishment on low caste people for minor offences. They will put up crosses and Christian flags in temples. They may compel inter marriages of Brahmin women without caste or creed and practice all unjust and unlawful things which characterise Kaliyuga. "Let us therefore exert ourselves to keep off the impending calamities and endeavour that no disparagement may be imputed to us in guarding our homes, the charitable institutions and the manners and customs of the people".

The Kundara proclamation is an interesting document. It is a feudal document and reveals the traditional background of the rebellion. It shows concern for the maintenance of social forms in general and the caste system in particular. "There are very few documents in history which can match the Kundara Proclamation in the force of its language, rhetorical flavour and emotional appeal". The Proclamation had its magic effect. It motivated the masses for an unprecedented upsurge against the British.

The masses rose against the English. With 3000 men and 18 guns. Velu Thampi renewed the war. He sent part of his forces to Kochi to help Paliath Achan and with the rest proceeded against the English. But at Kollam, the Travancore forces met with defeat. Velu Thampi had also the news that the Cochin forces too were defeated by the British and Paliath Achan withdrew from the struggle, leaving Velu Thampi alone.

The tide of revolt had decisively turned against Velu Thampi. But Thampi resolved to fight rather than to surrender. In the meanwhile the British forces entered Thiruvitamkur, thrust in to the interior, captured Udayagiri fort and the old capital Padmanabhapuram and advanced towards the new capital. The Raja there up on sued for peace. Velu Thampi was

removed as Dalawa and a new Dalawa was appointed. The new Dalawa and the British pursued the fallen foe. Velu Thampi proceeding to the north took refuge in the house of the Potti of the Mannati temple. The gallant leader was betrayed. But before the enemies could capture him, Velu Thampi committed suicide. His dead body was brought to Kannanmoola (TVM) where it was exposed on a gibbet. His house was razed to the ground. His relatives were exiled to Maldives. A few of them were put to death. The revolt failed because of several factors like (i) the defection of Paliath Achan (ii) the military superiority of the British forces (iii) the non materialisation of an all India front against the British.

The revolt of Velu Thampi produced immediate and far reaching results. The immediate result was the increased control of the Company over native states. The native militia was disbanded and the defence of the state was entrusted to the British. The king came under more and more control of the Company.

“The martyrdom of Velu Thampi drew the curtain on one of the most heroic struggles waged in the country against foreign domination”. Velu Thampi had every claim to be regarded as a patriot and a martyr. He was one of the earliest who organised a mass revolt against the foreign domination. He has been accused of opportunism, for having sought British help against his opponents. He has been criticised for having betrayed the interests of the state by signing the treaty of 1805. It is alleged that the Kundara Proclamation betrays religious bias and caste prejudice. It may be pointed out that Velu Thampi’s foremost aim was to remind the people the manifold dangers of Western colonial rule. When all is said, Velu Thampi has a rightful place in the forefront of the great patriots and freedom fighters of India.

Paliath Achan

Paliath Achan was the chief minister of the Cochin State. Like Velu Thampi, he too had grievances against the E.I. Company and its resident Macaulay. Hence he made a joint cause with Thampi to expel the British. It was at his initiative that the attack on the Bolghatty residency was planned. It was Paliath Achan who executed the night attack on the Residency. However it miscarried as Co. Macaulay escaped in a British ship stationed in the harbour. After the failure of the attack, Paliath Achan could not continue the struggle. He was forced to make an agreement with the British by which he was to leave Kochi forever and live at Madras, never to return. This action of Paliath Achan is treated as defection and it weakened the cause of Velu Thampi.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The 19th and 20th centuries witnessed the emergence of a new social order in Kerala. The traditional social structure began crumbling. The political shake up by Marthanda Varma, Sakthan Thampuran and the Mysoreans gave the coup de grace to the old order in Kerala, yielding place to the new. Vestiges of grand past had been wiped out or modified, ushering in to a new social order.

Background.

Kerala society, even after the assumption of direct administration of Malabar by the British and centralization of administration in Travancore and Kochi continued to be dominated by the upper castes. They became more powerful than before as the British wanted their active support in sustaining their own authority. There was deep chasm between the high and low caste people. The existing system of laws, which was not at all equalitarian, did not favour the lower castes. The judicial system was caste ridden and iniquitous. The worst sort of Janmi system prevailed. Slavery in the most primitive form existed. Women of lower castes; Sudras etc were denied certain social privileges and amenities. There were a series of taxes and cesses, which imposed a heavy burden on the lower castes. The spread of Western education and liberal ideas made them restive and eager for reforms. The mounting agrarian unrest among the tenants produced everywhere a feeling of unrest.

The British and Indian administration had already introduced a series of administrative and social reforms to redress the grievances. The abolition of slavery was one among them. There was overhauling of the entire administrative system of the three units in Kerala in accordance with the modern principles of governance. But they were not enough to fulfil the needs of the hour.

SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENTS: REFORMERS

The late 19th and the early 20th centuries witnessed the emergence of powerful social reform movements in Kerala. The traditional feudal society began to disappear and in its place a new socio-economic order evolved in Kerala. The all India organisations like the Arya Samaj, Theosophical society and Rama Krishna mission had their activities in Kerala, but their influence was limited and influence marginal. The social reform movements, which made an impact on Kerala, were indigenous in origin and led by individual reformers.

SRI NARAYANA GURU (1856-1928)

Sri Narayana Guru was an Ezhava Saint who made a solid contribution to the social change in Kerala. He was born in the village of Chempazhanthy near Trivandrum and showed keen interests in Sanskrit and Hindu philosophy. He took to the life of a Sanyasi and led the life of a wandering mendicant. Like Chattampi Swamikal, he too revolted against Brahmin ascendancy and worked for a new social order. He consecrated shrines in several parts of Kerala for the worship of the lower castes. The most famous of such shrines are those of Aruvippuram, Ochira, Varkala and Thalassery. As a religious reformer, he advocated the abolition of animal sacrifices. As a social reformer he campaigned against the observances of Talikettu Kalyanam and other customary rituals and rites. He simplified the procedures and ceremonies for Ezhava marriages. He appealed to the Ezhavas to give up toddy tapping and to take to learned professions and industrial pursuits. The Guru had a highly eclectic outlook in religious matters as is shown in the saying 'one caste, one Religion and one God'. He died at Varkala in 1928.

Sri Narayana Guru was the founder of the SNDP yogam (1903). He personally guided its activities. He became the rallying point for the Tiyyas and the Ezhavas to organise and unite. The Sangham developed a brilliant band of dedicated workers like Dr. Palpu and Kumaran Asan. Their activities helped the lower castes a consciousness of their own dignity and strength. It also prevented the rising tide of conversion to Christianity.

Narayana Guru was no sectarian philosopher and leader. His philosophy was the Advitha and he saw all humanity as one. As a literary luminary, Narayana Guru penned Darsanamala in Sanskrit, Jatimimamsa in Sanskrit and Malayalam and Siva Sathakom in Malayalam. In short, the work of Narayana Guru for the cause of social reform resulted in a silent, but far reaching social revolution in modern Kerala.

VAGBHATANANDA (1885-1939)

Vagbhatananda was a great social reformer and philosopher of Kerala. He founded the Atma Vidya Sangham, a major force of social change in Kerala. Kunjikkannan Gurukkal, as vagbhatananda was known in early life, was born at Patyam village of Kannur district in an Ezhava family in 1885. He was educated in the traditional Gurukula system. After studying philosophy, logic and Hindu scriptures, he travelled extensively and propagated the teaching of Universal non duality. He took active interests in the Brahma Samaj and founded a Sanskrit school at Calicut. As a great orator of the time, he was conferred the title Vagbhatananda by Sivananda Yogi of Alathur.

Vagbhatananda was an erudite scholar, Reformer, organiser, journalist, writer, philosopher and nationalist. The Orthodox Hindus found in him a rebel fighting against established religion and caste hierarchy. Vagbhatananda based his argument in the ancient wisdom of Hinduism, not on its dogmatism. He composed an Advaita treatise 'Atmavidya' which became the manifesto of the Sangham. A great admirer of Ram Mohan Roy, Vagbhatananda rejected idol worship, propagated Nigunopasana, rejected all rituals and formalities. He criticised the Arya Samaj for its policy of conversion to Hinduism. Like Sri Narayanagu, he rejected caste system. He was a humanist and a liberal and started a journal Abhinava Keralam in 1921.

Vagbhatananda was a great social reformer, who advocated reforms among the untouchables. He was a champion of inter caste marriage and inter caste dining. He was a great nationalist. He supported the civil disobedience movement of Gandhiji. His journal 'Atma Vidya Kahalam' stood with the nationalist cause. He also supported the constructive programme of Gandhiji. He favoured temple entry for the Avarnas. He was also associated with the peasant movements in the country. In the words of E.M.S. Nambudiripad, "Though he could not obtain a universal name or fame like Narayana Guru, Vagbhatananda was one who had greatly contributed to the growth of society. He was even superior to Narayana Guru in his scholarship and eloquence. He initiated programmes against casteism and played a significant role in the growth of society of North Malabar".

MANNATH PADMANABHAN (1878 - 1970).

Mannathu Padmanabhan was a social reformer and a freedom fighter from the State of Kerala, India. *He is recognised as the founder of the Nair Service Society, which claims to represent the Nair community that constitutes almost 14.5% of the population of the state. Padmanabhan is considered as a visionary reformer who organised the Nair community under the NSS.*

Mannathu Padmanathan was born in *Perunna village in Changanacherry, Travancore, British India* on 2 January 1878 to Eswaran Namboothiri of Nilavana Illam and Mannathu Parvathy Amma. He began his career as a teacher in 1893 in a Government primary school. After a few years, from 1905 he changed his profession and started practising law, in the Magistrates Courts.

Nair Service Society

On 31 October 1914 with the help of a few others, he established the *Nair Service Society*. His main ambition was to uplift the status of the Nair community. From 1915 onwards, he gave up law practice and became full-time secretary of the Nair Service Society. Mannam revived and reshaped the old concept of village societies, the

Karayogams, which practically set the tenor of family and village life. In 1924-25 the NSS persuaded the Travancore Government to enact the Nair Regulation which broke up the materiarchal joint family providing for paternal and maternal property to be divided among all the children.

He fought for social equality, the first phase of being the *Vaikom Satyagraha*, demanding the public roads near the temple at Vaikom be opened to low caste Hindus. In 1924 he took part in the Vaikom and Guruvayoor temple-entry and anti-untouchability agitation. He opened his family temple for everyone; irrespective of caste distinction. He became a member of the Indian National Congress in 1947 and took part in the agitation against Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer's administration in Travancore. As the first president of Travancore Devaswom Board he revitalised many temples which had almost ceased to function.

In 1949 Padmanabhan became a member of the Travancore Legislative Assembly. In 1959 he along with Christian Churches led a united opposition against the State Communist Ministry, which became known as the *Vimochana Samaram* (liberation struggle). The cause of the *Vimochana Samaram* was the introduction of an Education Bill by the Minister of Education, Joseph Mundassery, and the movement caused the dismissal of the Communist government under E. M. S. Namboodiripad on 31 July 1959. The consequence of this was the beginning of President's rule in the state under Article 356 of the Indian Constitution.

Padmanabhan was involved with the *Nair Service Society* as its Secretary for 31 years and as its President for three years. He was honoured with the title *Bharata Kesari* by the President of India. He also received *Padma Bhushan* in 1966. He died on February 25, 1970 at the age of 93. Mannam memorial (or *Sam dhi*) is located at NSS Headquarters Changanacherry.

CHATTAMPI SWAMIKAL (1854 -1924).

Chattampi Swamikal was one of the most outstanding reformists who revolted against the existing social order in Kerala. Even as a young man, he made a deep study of the religious literature of the Hindus and won a high reputation for his scholarship. He wanted the major communities of the land like the Nairs and the Ezhavas to play their legitimate role in society. However he concentrated mainly on the uplift of Nair community. He believed that a social awakening among the Nairs would inspire the Non Brahmin for greater social change. He worked in close co-operation with Narayanaguru in the cause of Hindu religious regeneration. He undertook social and religious activities that aimed at the eradication of untouchability and other social evils. He advocated that Sanyasam should not be mistaken for asceticism and proved by his personal example that

Sanyasis could do great help to the people. His learned discourses and works on religion, philosophy and history had won for him wide acclaim. His speeches, writings and social activities gave the reform movement in Kerala an intellectual appeal, a social bias and a practical turn.

A great scholar and man of letters, Chattampi Swamikal came to be called Vidyadhiraja. He wrote poems, devotional songs, essays, reviews, commentaries, letters and research papers on a variety of subjects. Though not an academic historian, Chattampi Swamikal had his own original perspective of History. In his work '*Prachina Malayalam*', he has challenged some of the traditional theories of Kerala History. He rejected the Parasurama legend and projected the picture of a casteless society in ancient Kerala. As a contributor to the literary heritage, Swamikal authored *Adi Bhasha* a research work on linguistics. He also contributed much to the religious literature of the age. Thus both as a social reformer and literary luminary, Chattampi Swamikal had a great place among the reformers of Kerala.

AYYANKALI (1866 -1914)

Ayyankali was a noted social reformer of modern times. A contemporary of Sri Narayana Guru, he devoted his life for the upliftment of the depressed classes. A Pulaya by birth, he gave leadership to the movement for social advancement of the oppressed classes in general and the Pulayas in particular. They were considered as untouchables by the upper classes. They were agricultural labourers who were deprived of the minimum basic necessities of life. Ayyankali emerged as the saviour of the Pulayas. His main aim was to make them self-respected and self-confident.

As the Pulayas were not permitted to travel through the public roads and to get admission in government schools, Ayyankali directed his early struggles to achieve these objectives. In 1893, he traveled through the public roads using a bullock cart. Though illiterate, Ayyankali struggled to get admission to the Pulayas in government schools. He even founded a school at Vengannur for the lower castes in 1904.

Drawing inspiration from Narayana Guru, Ayyankali founded **the Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangham in 1906**. The society gave importance to the uplift of the depressed classes. It submitted representation to the government for giving admission to the lower castes in government schools. Ayyankali also organised the landless agricultural labourers of Travancore. Under his leadership the Pulayas refused to work in the fields until their children were given the right to education in schools, freedom to travel in public roads and increases in their wages. Finally the land lords had to bow down to accept their demands. It is remarkable as the first organised strike of the agricultural labourers in Kerala.

As a member of the Sree Mulam Assembly, Ayyan Kali continued this mission of uplifting the downtrodden. He was nominated as a representative of lower castes in the Sree Mulam Sabha in 1911. Ayyan Kali used the assembly to present the conditions of these lower castes.

Ayyan Kali was the leader of the '**Kallu Mala Agitation**'. The Pulaya women used to wear ornaments made of stone and iron glass pieces. Ayyan Kali urged them to throw away such ornaments as they were considered to be symbols of slavery. In the public meetings convened at Perinad and Kollam in 1915 the Pulaya women threw away their ornaments in public. This was known as the Kallumala agitation. Thus within a short span of time, Ayyankali has initiated a process for the upliftment of the Pulaya community. The struggle he launched was later taken up by the freedom fighters of Kerala.

VAKKAM ABDUL KHADAR MAULAVI (1873-1932).

Vakkam Abdul Khadar Maulavi was one of the great social reformers who championed the cause of the Muslims in Kerala. Born and brought up in South Kerala, Maulavi became a scholar in Sanskrit, Hindi, Arabic, Tamil and Malayalam. He was the founder, printer and publisher of Swadeshbhimani. The newspaper under its editor Ramakrishna Pillai raised a banner of revolt against the government. Maulavi also started an Islamic journal 'The Muslim'. He also formed the Islam Dharna Paripalana Sangham. He also published an Arabic Malayalam magazine Al Islam in 1906. He founded a printing press at Anchutengu in 1904.

Maulavi was an important social reformer of the Muslims. He realised the deplorable conditions of the Muslims in Kerala and tried to eradicate the evil customs among them. To educate them, a number of schools were started at his initiative. The greatest contribution of Vakkam Maulavi was the starting of the newspaper Swadeshbhimani. He was fortunate to get the services of no less a person than Rama Krishna Pillai as its editor. Under their leadership, Swadeshbhimani fought against the corruption prevailed in the Travancore administration. As the editorials severely criticised the Diwan Raja Gopalachari, the wrath of the authorities fell on the editor who was arrested on a charge of sedition and was deported from the state; the press was confiscated. Thereafter Maulavi started the 'Muslim'. In 1931 he founded the Islamic publishing House and a journal Deepika.

Vakkam Maulavi is remembered as a great social reformer, a staunch fighter against injustice, a great journalist and an up lifter of the community to which he belonged. The progress of the Muslim community of Kerala in the educational and social field is largely due to the pioneering work done by Vakkam Maulavi.

V.T. BHATTATHIRIPAD.

The Nambuthiri caste produced some of the outstanding social reformers in Kerala. V.T. Bhattathiripad was one among them. His main sphere of activity centred around the Namputhiris. He wanted to eradicate the evil customs and practices of the Namputhiris. His motto was “make the Namputhiri a human being”. He was co-founder of the Yogakshema Sabha and its youth wing Namputhiri Yuvajana samajam. He wanted to uplift the Namputhiri women folk. He worked for widow remarriage and education of Namputhiri women. For this purpose he wrote a famous literary work-Atukkalayil Ninum Arangathaykku. (From kitchen to the stage). This play helped the growth of awareness about the evil customs prevailed among the Namputhiris.

SAHODARAN AYYAPPAN (1889-1968).

Sahodaran Ayyappan was another social reformer of modern Kerala. He started what is known as Sahodara Prasthanam. K. Ayyappan started the movement against the social inequalities propounded by the caste system. For this purpose, he adopted a new method known as ‘Misrabhojanam’ (Mixed feast). The Cherayi convention of 1917 conducted inter dining for the lower and upper castes together. Ayyappan was not against religion as such, but against the evils of the religion, no God,’ thus modifying the doctrine of Narayanaguru.

Ayyappan organised a literary association called Vidyaposhini. A newspaper called ‘Sahodaran’ was also started. Ayyappan wrote a series of articles against the caste system. He worked with the Atma Vidya Sangham also. His programmes were resisted by the upper caste who ridiculed him as ‘Pulayan Ayyappan’. In 1928, he became the editor of the magazine ‘Yuktivadi’. Ayyappan also plunged in to politics. He became the leader of the Socialist Party in Kochi. He was also associated with the trade union movement. He became a member of the Cochin legislative Assembly. Later he became a minister in the congress government in Kochi.

MITAVADI. C. KRISHNAN.

As the editor of the Mitavadi, C. Krishnan worked for the abolition of the caste system. He campaigned in great vigor for the eradication of untouchability. In November, 1917 he defied the order of the Malabar Collector denying freedom to the Ezhavas and other backward castes to walk along the approach roads to Tali temple at Calicut. This incident symbolised the awakening of a new vision among the depressed classes. It focused public attention on the need for early removal of untouchability.

SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS

The social reforms movements resulted in the emergence of a number of social organisations in Kerala during the 20th century. The 'Yogam' (committee) formed in 1899 for the administration of the Aruvippuram Temple founded by Narayana developed into a big organization called **S.N.D.P. Yogam**. (Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam). It was formed at the initiative of Dr Palpu and Kumaran Asan to spread the preaching of Narayana guru. Later it became a representative organisation of the Ezhavas. Its annual conference held at Aruvippuram in 1904 was blessed by Narayana guru himself. The SNDP made substantial contribution to the all round progress of the Ezhavas.

The Social reform movement initiated by Chattampi Swamikal and others among the Nairs paved the way for the formation of the Nair Service Society (**N.S.S**). It was founded by Mannath Padmanabhan on 31st October, 1914. It was organised on the pattern of the Servants of India society of Gokhale. Its motto was service to the community in general and Nairs in particular. It worked for the abolition of social evils of the day. It became the representative organisation of the Nairs under the leadership of Mannath Padmanabhan and a powerful force to be reckoned with in Kerala politics after independence.

The Sadhu Jana Paripalana Yogam (S.J.P.Y.) started by Ayyankali for the uplift of the Pulaya community was transformed itself in Sahodara Sangham in 1917 and the Pulayar Sabha in 1938. For the upper caste Nambudiris, there was the **Yogakshema Sabha** founded in 1908. It agitated for the freedom of junior male members of the Nambuthiri community to marry from their own community, to popularise the study of English and to abolish the Purdah system among the Nambuthiri women. Their ultimate aim was to make Nambutiri a human being. They published a journal called 'Unni Nambutiri' to achieve the goal of social revolution. These organisations formed as social organisations later became communal and began to control the political development of Kerala, a negative and reactionary development.

ORGANISED AGITATIONS AGAINST UNTOUCHABILITY

A number of agitations were started in the 1930's against untouchability. The movement drew inspiration from the message of social reformers like Narayana guru and Chattampi Swamikal, and social organisations like the N.S.S. and the S.N.D.P. and also from the Congress under Gandhiji.

VAIKKAM SATYAGRAHA (1924-25).

The Vaikkam Satyagraha was the first major struggle for the eradication of untouchability. The main leaders of the Satyagraha were T.K. Madhavan, K.P. Kesava Menon, Mannath Padmanabhan, C.V. Kunhiraman and K. Kelappan. The Satyagraha was part of a movement, which demanded temple entry for the untouchables. The Savarna Jatha organized under Mannath Padmanabhan was one of the highlights of Vaikom Satyagraha. It was organised by the Savarna Hindus. The jatha came to the capital and submitted a memorandum pleading for temple entry rights to the Avarnas. The struggle lasted for about 20 months during which the Satyagrahis were arrested and harassed in many ways. The Satyagrahis demanded only for granting the right of passage to the Avarnas along the approach roads to the temple. At last the Satyagraha yielded results thanks to the intervention of Gandhiji. The approach roads to the temple were opened to all Hindus, irrespective of caste. Although the declared objective of the Satyagraha was not granted, the movement helped to influence public opinion in the state in favour of temple entry. By 1928, approach roads to all temples were thrown open to all Hindus in the whole of Thiruvitamkur.

GURUVAYUR SATYAGRAHA (1931-32)

The Guruvayur Satyagraha was a memorable episode in the history of organised agitations against untouchability. It was organised under the auspices of the Congress. The Vatakara conference has decided to launch a campaign for eradication of untouchability on an all Kerala basis. Guruvayur Temple became the venue of this Satyagraha. The Satyagraha was aimed at opening the Guruvayur temple to all Hindus including the Avarnas. The Satyagraha began on 1st November, 1931 with the blessings of Gandhi. Kelappan was the leader of the movement. The prominent leaders of the Satyagraha were A.K. Gopalan, Mannath Padmanabhan and N.P. Damodaran. The uncompromising attitude of the trustees of the temple. Viz. Zamorin led to the closure of the temple for a short while, Guruvayur captured all India attention and the Zamorin was requested to concede the demands of the Satyagrahis, but of no avail.

The Satyagraha entered a crucial stage when Kelappan began an indefinite fast unto death in front of the temple on 21st September, 1932. It lingered on up to 2nd October, 1932 when he was persuaded by Gandhiji to end up the fast and withdraw the movement. A high light of the G. Satyagraha was the Guruvayur Referendum. A limited referendum was held in the Ponnani Taluk to ascertain the views of the Hindus as to whether they favoured temple entry for the Avarnas. The majority of the people approved the proposal for temple entry. The Guruvayur Satyagraha failed to achieve its immediate objective, namely temple entry for the Avarnas. However it created an atmosphere in favour of the eradication of untouchability. Taking note of the sentiment in favour of temple entry. P. Subharayan gave notice of a Bill on temple entry to be moved on the Madras Legislature.

TEMPLE ENTRY PROCLAMATION (1936).

The Temple Entry Proclamation issued by the Maharaja of Thiruvithamkur on 12th November 1936 was the crowning achievement of the movement for temple entry to the Avarnas. Sri Chithira Thirunal issued this historic proclamation, opening the holy shrines in the state of Thiruvithamkur to all Hindus irrespective of caste and creed. It is a sacred document of History. It declared that there should henceforth be no restriction placed on any Hindu by birth or religion on entering and worshipping at the temples controlled by 'us and our government'.

The Proclamation is important as the first of its kind in India. Gandhiji hailed it as a 'miracle of modern times' and as a Smrithi which is the people's charter of spiritual emancipation. It brought about a silent and bloodless revolution in Hindu society. However it took more than one year to introduce the reforms in Kochi and Malabar. The Temple Entry Authorisation Proclamation II of 1947 opened the temples of Kochi to Hindus of all castes. This reform was further extended to the Malabar area by the Madras Temple Act 1947. With the dawn of independence untouchability has been abolished by legislation throughout Kerala. Thus the historic movement for the eradication of untouchability and temple entry for the Avarnas in Kerala succeeded.

NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN KERALA

Kerala's role in Indian freedom struggle was never crucial or decisive, but important and significant. She failed to play a great role because the struggle for freedom in the princely states of Thiruvithamkur and Kochi were never as intensive as in British Malabar. The princely states had to witness a parallel struggle against autocracy of the Rajas and Diwans. Further, Kerala "The mad house of India" had to concentrate more on struggles to secure social justice than on political rights. The educated people of Kerala who were supposed to lead the struggle turned away from politics to professions. In the socio-economic sphere there was the paradigm of the modernisation of society without the modernisation of the economy.

However Kerala was the first to realise the peril of foreign domination and the first to respond to the challenge of imperialism. There were instances of revolt against the Portuguese at Kochi and Calicut, against the British at Anjengo, Thalassery, Kottayam and Wayanad. The real attempts for freedom came only later. It came through contact with the west, through the socio-reform movements in the country and through the enlightened and progressive rule of the three units of Kerala. As Malabar was directly under the British, the struggle for independence was quicker and stronger and intense there than in the princely states of Kochi and Thiruvithamkur.

Movements for Representation in Government: Cochin and Travancore

Struggle in Cochi

The struggle for independence and responsible government in Cochi had its second phase during the two decades of 1930 -1950. The state people's conference held at Ernakulam in 1928 had put forward the demand for responsible government in the state. The Congress workers from Kochi had already taken part in the civil disobedience movement in Malabar. The Congress workers in the state organised boycott of foreign goods and conducted volunteer camps. It was a period of economic unrest in Kochi.

The electricity agitation was the most sensational event of the decade. It was the policy of the Diwan Shanmukham Chetty to entrust the work of distribution of electricity in Trichur town to a private agency that led to the agitation. The people of Cochi wanted the government to entrust the work to Trichur Electricity corporation, a company of their own. The agitation was led by such leaders as Dr. A.R. Menon, E. Ikkanda Warriar and C.R. Iyyunni. The government tried to suppress the agitations. Ultimately the agitation fizzled out. The electricity agitation is important as a people's revolt, although it was confined to a limited area. It brought the Christians of Cochin in to the national movement.

Cochin Praja Mandal.

The Cochin Praja Mandal is the embodiment of the struggle for responsible government in the princely state of Kochi. Formed on January 26, 1941 under the leadership of V.R. Krishnan Ezhuttacchan, it has as its objective the establishment of responsible government in Kochi. Its proposal to hold the maiden session at Irinjalakuda in Jan. 1942 was withheld by the Dewan. In spite of this about 3000 delegates attended the session, but its President and a few others were arrested.

When Quit India movement was launched by Gandhiji, the Praja Mandal organised several meetings and demonstrations. The leaders of the movement like Panampilly and Ikkanda Warriar were arrested. The youth wing of the Praja Mandal set fire to the military camps in Ernakulam. They published a secret bulletin named Samara Kahalam. As the Praja Mandal associated itself with the Quit India movement, its image was boosted. In Kochi, the legislative assembly was constituted in May 1948. In the elections held, the Praja Mandal won a thumping victory and assumed office with Ikkanda Warriar as Prime Minister on 20th September, 1948. When the Cochin Praja Mandal merged with the Congress in November, 1948, the new ministry became the first Congress ministry in the state of Kochi. Thus the struggle for responsible government in Kochi reached its successful culmination.

Movements for Representation in Government: Travancore

The struggle for independence and responsible government in the princely state of Thiruvithamkur had serious dimension when compared to the same in Kochi. The Travancore Government adopted a policy of uncompromising hostility to the demand for responsible government. The early agitations aimed at the establishment of good government while those of the later period has had as their aim the achievement of responsible government. Among the early struggles, the one led by Velu Thampi in 1799 deonstrated the organised strength of the people. During the last decades of the 19th century, the educated middle class of Thiruvithamkur resented the appointments of Tamil Brahmins in government services. The desire for political participation in governance was fulfilled by the formation of Sri Moolam Praja Sabha in 1888, their resentment increased. It found its concrete expression in the Malayali Memorial.

MALAYALI MEMORIAL.

The Malayali Memorial was a petition submitted too the Maharaja of Travancore on The New Years Day in 1891. It was signed by 10028 persons belonging to all classes and creeds. It drew the attention of the Maharaja to the exclusion of the educated natives from the higher grades of public service. It pleaded for the natives a fair quota of government appointments. It was drafted on the basis of a popular cry Travancore for Travancoreans'. It was really a fair plea for privileges and positions. Its formulators were G.P. Pillai and K.P. Sankara Menon. The Government have taken no immediate action. Its attitude was unhelpful and reactionary. Outsiders continued to be appointed. Nevertheless the agitation served its purpose namely to arouse political consciousness of the people. It symbolised the emergence of the new educated middle class as a force to be reckoned with.

EZHAVA MEMORIAL.

Ezhava Memorial is a memorandum submitted to the Maharaja of Travancore on 3rd Sept 1896. The Travancore Ezhava Sabha took the initiative in preparing and presenting the memorial. It was signed by 13176 members of the Ezhava community. It pleaded for among other things, the extension of civil rights and government jobs to members of the lower castes and the Ezhavas in particular. It also pleaded for the opening of public schools to the Ezhavas. It demanded that the Ezhavas be made beneficiaries of these rights and privileges enjoyed by the converts to Christianity. The response of the government was disappointing. Hence a second memorial was presented to the viceroy Curzon in 1900. It enumerated the grievances of the Ezhavas and requested the viceroy's initiative in getting them redressed. The viceroy refused to intervene. Hence both the memorials failed to achieve their immediate objectives.

These memorials followed the ancient Hindu customs of direct petition to the king, yet they challenged the Maharaja's way of governance. The agitations based on the memorials marked the rise of the new educated middle class as a force to be reckoned with. They symbolised the beginning of the modern political movements to be waged by the lower classes for securing social equality and justice in Thiruvithamkur.

NIVARTHANA MOVEMENT.

This movement was one of the stormiest agitations in the history of modern Thiruvithamkur. It is called the Nivarthana or Abstention agitation because the agitators have decided to abstain from participating in the elections to the legislature. The genesis of the Abstention movement can be traced back to the policy of discrimination followed by the Government of Travancore in providing representation to various castes and communities in the legislature and public services. Since the formation of the legislature in 1888, it was represented by the Savarnas while the bulk of the population comprising the lower castes had no adequate representation in that body. As the main qualification for voting was payment of property tax, the Avarnas got practically no representation in the legislature. The legislative reforms of 1932 made permanent the property qualification. The Ezhavas, the Muslims and the Christians apprehended that the new reforms, would secure for them far less number of seats in the legislature than they were entitled to on a strict population basis. They feared that the Nairs would get more seats than what they really deserved. Therefore these communities demanded that they should be given representation in the legislature in proportion to their numerical strength.

The passing of the legislative Reforms Act, 1932 was the signal for the beginning of a state wide agitation. The agitationists demanded reservation of seats to different communities in proportion to their numerical strength. As the Government's attitude was not favourable the Abstentionists formed an organisation of their own to achieve their demands. They called it Joint Political Congress or Samyuktha Rashtriya Samithi. In a meeting held on Jan 25, 1933, the Samithi took the momentous decision to abstain from voting in the elections to the legislature. Thus was born the Abstention agitation. As those communities – Ezhavas, Christians and Muslims – formed about more than 2/3rds of the population, the agitation had the characteristic of a mass struggle. The Abstentionists carried on a vigorous agitation all over the state against the new constitutional reforms. It was in connection with the Abstention movement that C. Kesavan delivered his famous speech at Kozhencherry (11 May, 1935) for which he was arrested and punished.

Although the government adopted a policy of repression, it conceded the demands of the agitationists. It appointed a public service commissioner to ensure fair representation to the backward communities in public services. It reduced the property qualification by

widening the franchise. The Government also agreed to allot a specific number of seats in the legislature for the three communities. The final outcome of this agitation was to break up the monopoly of political power enjoyed by the upper caste Hindus. It also marked the end of constitutional agitation and the beginning of direct action in politics. It also paved the way for the formation of Travancore State Congress and the Cochin State Praja Mandal. The agitation thus fulfilled its objectives.

TRAVANCORE STATE CONGRESS.

The struggle for responsible government in Thiruvitamkur assumed a new turn with the formation of the Travancore state Congress. It was felt that the Joint Political Congress had fulfilled its objectives and a more broad based organization embracing all classes of people should be formed to carry forward the struggle for responsible government. The Haripura Session (1938) of the Congress endorsed the view that though congress should abstain from active intervention in the political movements in the princely states, independent organisations may be encouraged to carry on internal struggles. In accordance with this resolve, a meeting held in Thiruvananthapuram in February, 1938 resolved to form the Travancore State Congress with Pattam Thanu Pillai as its president. The new organisation aimed at launching a movement for the achievement of responsible government in Thiruvitamkur.

NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN MALABAR

CONGRESS IN MALABAR.

It was British Malabar that played a leading role in the freedom movement of the country. The Indian National Congress had its adherents in Malabar since its formation in 1885. A few Keralites like G.P. Pillai, Chettur Sankaran Nair and Kayyur Nampiyar were active participants of the congress movement. Chettur Shankaran Nair was the President of the Amaravathi session of the Congress in 1897, the only Malayali to achieve that rare honour. However these Malayalis worked in their individual capacity and they never represented Kerala as they lived and worked outside Kerala. The Congress convened a conference in 1904 at Calicut and a D.C.C. was formed in 1908 in Malabar. Therefore till 1914, there was no remarkable activity of a political nature in Malabar.

HOME RULE MOVEMENT.

With the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, national movement received a new impetus in Malabar. Home Rule Leagues were established in different regions in Malabar. The DCC held annual meetings in 1916 and 1917. Malabar was visited by leaders like Annie Beasant. Representatives from Kerala found a berth in the deputation of the Home Rule League which visited Montague to submit their proposals for constitutions reforms. Thus by 1919, there was considerable political activity in Malabar. However

organised work of a political nature was still in the offing. Political activity of a serious nature existed only among a few and it did not penetrate into or from the common man. Political views and campaigns were localised in Kerala until 1920's.

NON-CO-OPERATION AND KHILAFAT MOVEMENTS.

However winds of change began to blow in Malabar when Gandhiji assumed the leadership of the Congress in the 1920's. The non co-operation movement made considerable headway in Malabar. There was widespread boycott of foreign goods, courts of law and educational institutions in the district. The non co-operation movement synchronised itself with the Khilafat movement and thereby acquired new dimensions. To accelerate the tempo of the movement, Gandhiji and Shoukat Ali visited Malabar. The Moplahs of Malabar showed their willingness to join the freedom struggle. The Ottappalam conference of 1921 gave full support to the non co-operation movement. It was in the course of these developments that Malabar witnessed a Moplah outburst.

MALABAR REBELLION (1921)

The Malabar Rebellion was an important episode in the history of freedom movement in our country. It may be considered as a turning point in the history of Kerala as all further developments in the national movement in Kerala bore the marks of the Rebellion. As it seriously disturbed the relationship between the Hindus and Muslims in Kerala and cast a shadow of gloom over the whole freedom movement, it has been viewed as the most tragic episode in our freedom struggle. It is so-called as the Malabar rebellion because the chief area of the disturbance was in Malabar. It is called as the Moplah rebellion because most of the participants belonged to the Mappila community. As it was an outburst against British imperialism it has been invested with the halo of a revolt or rebellion. As it aimed at the expulsion of the British rule at least in some areas. It becomes part of the freedom struggle.

The nature and character of the Malabar upheaval is a point of controversy among historians. There are broadly three views about the origin and character of the Rebellion. According to the nationalist school of historians; it was an anti-imperialist struggle, a political uprising of the Mappilas against police repression. According to the Marxist school of thought, it was an agrarian outbreak, purely economic in nature. As the Mappila tenants were oppressed by the Hindu Janmis and the British officials, the tenants rose in revolt. The third school of thought regards the upsurge as a communal flare up or rather an outburst of religious fanaticism. The atrocities were committed by the Muslims and the victims were the Hindus. In fact the Rebellion was the result of the combined operation of political, economic and communal factors. It was at once anti British, agrarian and communal.

The underlying causes of the outbreak were political, social and ideological. The policy of repression adopted by the British government against the non co-operators including the Khilafatists was an important reason. The Moplahs reacted violently against the police oppression. The social cohesion of the Moplahs as the community, their militant tradition and organisational skill also caused the upheaval. The Hindu Muslim misunderstanding and the ideological factors and political aspirations of the rebels also resulted in the outburst.

The events that paved the way for the rebellion are mainly political. When the Turkish Sultan was deprived of his authority as Caliph, Gandhiji started the Khilafat movement in India in order to bring the Indian Muslims to the nationalist cause. In Malabar, the Khilafatists had their stronger adherents in the Eranad and Valluvanad Taluk. When the movement progressed to such an extent as to create alarm in official circles, the Government brought these Taluks under Sec. 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Meetings were banned and the police began to arrest Congress and Khilafat workers.

The police attempt to arrest one Vatakkeveetil Muhammad on a charge of having stolen a pistol from the Nilampur palace was the immediate provocation of the uprising. Muhammad happened to be the local Khilafat secretary. The attempt to arrest him by the police was foiled by a crowd of 2000 Moplahs who came out with spears and swords, killing several policemen and driving the survivors away. The police who came in search of the Khilafat rebels entered the Mumbaram Mosque at Tirurangadi as the rebels had taken refuge there. In the meanwhile the news spread that the mosque was desecrated. There upon the Moplahs converged on Tirurangadi and attacked the police station, looted government treasuries and burnt government records. For a few weeks at least, the writ of the British government did not run in the area. The original leaders of the Khilafat movement whether Hindu or Muslim faded away from the scene.

In the meanwhile the nature of the rebellion changed from political to communal. Communal terrorist leaders took up the leadership. Varian Kunnath Kunjahammad Haji became the defacto authority in Eranad and Valluvanad Taluks. Styling himself as the Amir of the Muslims, Raja of the Hindus and Colonel of the Khilafat army he became virtually the king and began to levy taxes and issue pass ports. Seethikoya Thangal another leader maintained law and order and issued circulars as governor. However Ali Musaliyar the priest of the mosque although assumed the title king, instructed his followers not to molest the Hindus or loot their property. Khilafat Raj had become a reality. The British rule was eliminated and a rebel autocracy dominated the region. The rebels achieved a large measure of success in extinguishing British rule. In the later stages however the Hindus were persecuted on the ground that they allied with the

British. However, the Rebellion was crushed by the British with an iron hand. The Government rushed British troops and Gurkha regiments. Martial law was declared. A series of encounters had taken place, resulting in the loss of lives. By November 1921, the Rebellion was almost crushed. The rebels were captured and shot; many were imprisoned or deported.

A corollary to the Malabar Rebellion was **the Wagon Tragedy**. The arrested rebels were dumped in to a closed railway wagon and deported to from Tirur to Bellary. On the way from Tirur to Coimbatore (10th Nov, 1921) 61 out of 90 inmates suffered from heat and hunger died of suffocation. This incident came to be known as the Wagon tragedy highlighted the inhuman methods adopted by the British to suppress the Rebellion.

The Malabar Rebellion produced far reaching consequences. It gave a set back to the freedom struggle in Malabar. After the Rebellion, the Congress lost much of its popular appeal. For a long time after the Rebellion, no public activity was possible in Malabar. The Hindus and the Muslims began to suspect each other lost their cordiality. It paved the way for the growth of communalism. It also reflected in North Indian politics.

Civil Disobedience Movement and Quit India Struggle

Salt Satyagraha.

In the background of the Lahore session of the Congress Gandhiji conducted the Dandi March which was attended among others, by four volunteers from Kerala. The day when Gandhiji broke the salt laws (6th April, 1930) was observed in Kerala as a national day. The K.P.C.C. took the decision to organise Salt Satyagraha in Malabar and Payyannur was chosen as the main venue. Under the leadership of Kelappan 32 volunteers from Kozhikode moved to Payyannur on foot and broke the salt law on the beach on 21st April, 1930. Another batch came from Palakkad under TR Krishnaswamy Aiyar, Moidu Maulavi and M. Abdul Rehman participated in the event. Satyagrahis from all directions thronged the Payyannur beach and the Malabar village drew all India attention. Initially the British ignored the agitation. But with the arrest of Gandhiji (5th May) the Government resorted to suppress the movement. Kelappan was arrested and the camp was raided. Govt adopted repressive measures. But people including students began to participate in the campaign. The movement came to an end with the Gandhi Irwin Pact of 4th March, 1931.

Quit India Movement.

The Quit India movement though vehement in North India, was relatively low in Malabar. It never developed in to a mass uprising in Kerala. However some important developments had taken place in the course of the movement in Kerala. The formation of a

new socialist group under G.B. Menon was one such event. This group organised meeting and procession in several parts of Malabar. Schools, colleges and courts of law were picketed. When government adopted repressive measures, the movement went underground. This led to the **Keezhariyur Bomb case**. A secret journal called *Swatantra Bharatam* was published from underground.

The Quit India agitation in Kerala did not develop into a mass movement because (a) the change in the policy of the Communist Party. Earlier the party advocated mass struggle against the British. But when USSR entered the World War, it became a people's war to them and they advocated collaboration with the British. They opposed Quit India movement. (b) the Muslims stayed away from the Quit India movement. So the Quit India movement had no mass basis in Kerala.

Women in the Public Field

Shanar Agitation in Travancore

The Shanars were fisher folk who lived in the coastal areas of South Travancore. They fought a struggle to secure social justice. Their women folk were not permitted to wear upper garments, a right enjoyed by the upper caste Hindus. Col. Munroe had already issued an order permitting the Shanar women who became converts to Christianity to wear upper jackets. The Shanars were not satisfied with this. They wanted this privilege to all their women folk. They began to appear in public wearing an additional scarf like the Hindus. This action of the Shanars provoked the upper caste Hindus who resorted to penalized the Shanars. As it became a law and order problem, police and military forces had to be rushed to the area. The Shanar agitation eventually led to the Royal Proclamation of 26th July 1859, abolishing all restrictions in the matter of dress by Shanar women. The Shanar agitation is a typical instance that illustrates how the social changes of a far-reaching character could be introduced partly on the initiative of the administration and partly under the pressure of circumstances.

Accamma Cherian - Jhansi Rani of Travancore

Accamma Cherian is one of the iron ladies of Kerala. She studied well and joined in a middle school, as teacher. Her hard work promoted her as a headmistress, in which school she worked as teacher. At one stage, activities of Portuguese and British became malicious. They crossed their boundary levels and started to torture the people without pity. This event created fire inside her. Immediately, she resigned her job and participated in freedom struggle events. On 1938, National congress party was banned in Kerala. To convey the opposition for this act, she collected the people and directed a rally from Thampanoor to the Kowdiar Palace of Kerala. British government announced the firing

order for this doings. She requested them to kill her first. This made the British police to put off the shooting order. For this activity, she was named as the Jhansi Rani of Travancore by Mahatma Gandhi. This is just a simple sample to tell about her affection towards nation. Until her death she fought against the people, who worked opposite to the Indian nation.

Before Independence, Pakistan is also part of India. Kerala is one of the cutest states in India during ancient time, now and forever. People from this area actively took part in the freedom struggle. Despite of gender both female and male participated in various events in opposite to the Portuguese, who ruled the Kerala state. They are not only fought against the Portuguese, but also against the cruel acts of the British people.

Ammu Swaminadhan

Ammu Swaminadhan is one of the eminent freedom fighter of Kerala. She followed principles of Mahatma Gandhi and participated in freedom struggle without violence. This made her to occupy good place in hearts of people of Kerala. She is an active member of Constituent Assembly of India and Rajya Sabha. It is responsibility of each and every citizen to preserve the freedom of our country, which was given to us by our ancestors. Let us remember the selfless sacrifice of freedom strugglers' atleast on the Independence Day.

A. V. Kuttimalu Amma

A V Kuttimalu Amma was born in Anakkara Vadakkathu family of Ponnani Taluq in Malabar, in 1905. She was a courageous freedom fighter and a prominent leader. Her husband was the former KPCC President and Minister in Madras state, K. Madhava Menon.

Entering public life as a swadeshi and Khadi worker in 1930, Kuttimalu Amma soon became a popular figure. She led groups of women in the picketing of foreign cloth-shops in *Kozhikode* in the year 1931. During the Civil-Disobedience Movement; she was arrested and convicted for two years. When she was restricted from taking her two month old baby with her to prison, she argued effectively quoting the law, and succeeded in carrying the child with her. She was again locked up in the Presidency jail during the Quit India Movement.

In 1944 she became the president of KPCC and took up the task of organizing Congress in Malabar. She served as a member of AICC and congress working committee. She also worked as the Director of Mathrubhumi for some time. She passed away in 1986.

DEVELOPMENT OF LEFTIST IDEOLOGY

An important feature of the freedom movement in Kerala was the development of leftist ideology leading to the formation of the Communist Party and the peasant and workers struggles initiated by it from Kayyur to Punnapra Vayalar.

Congress Socialist Party.

During the 1930's following the withdrawal of the civil Disobedience movement, the Congress in Kerala split itself into the Rightists and the Leftists. The leftists constituted themselves into the Congress Socialist Party. Organisationally they were congress men. But they preferred to call themselves as socialists. They functioned as a separate group, but within the Congress. They dominated the Congress but disliked the Gandhian techniques-as weapons in the fight for Swaraj. The left wing dominated by the socialists led the agitations of workers and peasants in the 1930's and strengthened their mass base by building a chain of well knit organisation of peasants, workers, teachers and students in Malabar. They passed resolutions, organised hunger march and came to the political lime light.

Formation of Communist Party.

The leftist elements represented by the Congress Socialist group emerged as the Communist Party of Malabar in 1939. When the World War broke out in 1939, the K.P.C.C. under the control of the communists opted for a mass struggle against the British. When the Forward Block was formed by Subash Bose, the left wing left the Congress and joined the new organization. They continued their anti imperialist struggle at Morazha, Kayyur, Mattannur, Thalassery and other places. The leftists under the leadership of A.K. Gopalan, E.M.S. Nambuthiripad and P. Krishna Pillai met in secret conclave at Pinarayi and formed the Communist Party of Malabar in December, 1939.

PEASANT AND WORKING CLASS MOVEMENTS

The increasing involvement of the peasants was an important feature of the national movement in Kerala. The earliest peasant organisation was formed at Chirakkal in Malabar in 1935. Their activities soon spread to other areas in Malabar. They protested against the illegal levies and oppressive measures of the Janmis. Finally the Malabar Karshaka Sangham was formed in 1937. The peasants revolted against the landlords at Morazha, Thalassery Mattannur and finally at Kayyur.

Peasant Movements.

The main stream of national movement was supported by the peasants and workers. They gave a new momentum and social content to the freedom struggle. The decline of landlordism in Kerala enabled the peasants to participate in the freedom struggle. The rise of the peasantry was symbolised in the Kochi convention of 1928 presided over by Lala Lajpat Rai. This led to the formation of the All Kerala Tenants Association. The enactment of the Malabar Tenancy Act (1930) reflected the rising strength of the peasantry. The earliest Kisan Sangham was formed at Kalliassery in Malabar to resist feudal oppression.

Kayyur Riot (1941).

The anti imperialist struggle waged by the leftists had its climax in the Kayyur Riot of 1941. Kayyur is a small village in Kasargode Taluk. The Karshaka Sangham of the locality was very active in organizing the peasants to fight against landlordism and imperialism. When the police at Kayyur resorted to suppress the peasants at Kayyur, there was strong resentment. The peasants protested against the partisan role of the police in the landlord-tenant disputes. They organised a protest march and forced a police constable to join the Jatha. When the procession came near the river, the constable jumped in to the river in order to escape, but pelted down by the mob and was drowned in the river. In a sensational trial, four of the accused were sentenced to death on a charge of murder. They were hanged on March 29, 1943. The Kayyur riot is variously described as a mere criminal offence; a landlord-tenant dispute or an isolated act of terrorist violence. Any how the Kayyur riot has an important place in the history of freedom struggle in Kerala.

Working Class Movements

The working class in industries and factories did not lag behind the peasants and farm labourers in the struggle for freedom. The coir workers of Alapuzha had organised themselves in to a union in 1921 and demanded responsible government. By 1930, several trade unions were formed in the coastal areas. The rail workers of Kerala organised a successful rail strike in 1928. The year 1934-35 witnesses a number of industrial strikes all over Kerala, particularly in Alapuzha, Trissur, Kozhikode and Kannur. These movements finally resulted in the formation of the All India Trade Union Congress (A.I.T.U.C.) in 1935. However the slow pace of industrialisation did not enable the industrial and factory workers to emerge as an active force in politics.

Agitation against Sir C.P Rama Swamy Aiyar

The reign of Sri Chitra Thirunal, when Sir. C.P. Rama Swamy Aiyar was the Diwan, was a period of unprecedented political unrest. Though Sir C.P. was a great administrator and far sighted statesman, some of his actions resulted in a series of protests and agitations in Thiruvitamkur. His proposal for constitutional reforms provided for an irremovable executive on the American model. The Congress rejected the scheme as unacceptable and the communists organised a violent struggle in Alapuzha to put an end to the outocratic rule of the Diwan.

Punnapra – Vayalar Upheaval.

The Punnapra – Vayalar upheaval of 1946 was a violent political uprising in Kerala under the auspices of the communist. It was a reaction to the constitutional scheme proposed by Sir. C.P. Ramaswamy Aiyar, the Diwan of Thiruvitamkur. C.P.'s scheme announced in Jan. 1946 provided for adult franchise but retained the Diwanship and an executive on the American model. The communists launched a violent struggle to throw the American model in to the Arabian Sea and to end the oppressive rule of the Diwan in the state.

The peasants and workers were already dissatisfied with the existing system of low wages, eviction from land, oppression and exploitation. They organized themselves under the leadership of the communist party in to a powerful trade union and resorted to collective bargaining to achieve their ends. There was mounting tension between the organized labourers and the peasants on the one side and the employers and the land lords on the other. In the meanwhile the Communist party had been building up its strength among the coir workers, fishermen, toddy tappers and beedi workers. The rising prices, unemployment and famine in the wake of the Second World War afforded it a favourable climate in spreading its activities. The coastal Taluks of Alapuzha and Shertala were the strong holds of the party with its numerous trade unions. This area with its heavy concentration of industrial and agricultural workers turned out to be the cradles of the communist movement in Thiruvithamkur.

When the working classes resorted to collective action and when there was clashes and conflicts between the landlord and the tenant, the Government intervened. Police and military forces were deployed. The Communist Party and labour union were declared unlawful. The trade unions struck work. The Government declared martial law in the area. Sir, C.P. directly assumed the command of the operations. The great communist uprising of Punnapra and Vayalar took place in October, 1946. The village of Punnapra was one of the earliest centres of the upheaval. The police force which came to Punnapra were

forced to retreat. The workers held demonstrations and struck work. Water transport in the area came to a standstill. The oil, coir, handloom industries were closed down. A number of Jathas from different directions moved to Punnapra. In the encounter that followed about 200 demonstrators fell victims to the police bullets. The demonstrators confronted the police with bamboo spikes, areca spears, swords and stones. The Punnapra episode sparked off a series of violent clashes.

The major scene of activity was now shifted from Punnapra to Vayalar. A number of volunteer camps imparting paramilitary training to the workers were located. Attempts made to wind up the volunteer camps and avoid a direct confrontation with the government failed. In the mean while the armed police force moved to Vayalar, a place surrounded by water on three sides. The workers resisted the police move to land in Vayalar. In the encounter that followed about 150 persons were killed on the spot and many died. For months to come, Vayalar had the appearance of a ghostly grave of men as well as aspirations. Thus the insurrection was put down with an iron hand. The revolt misfired and failed miserably. Though the communist movement was put down, the Punnapra-Vayalar episode hastened the beginning of the end of the autocratic rule of the Diwan.

The Punnapra Vayalar episode helped in the early establishment of responsible government in Thiruvithamkur. SIR C.P. resigned the office of the Diwan on August 19, 1947. The Maharaja issued the Proclamation of Responsible government on Sept. 4, 1947. A legislative assembly was constituted. The first popular ministry of Thiruvithamkur under Pattom Thanu Pillai assumed office on 24th March 1948. It was the 'grand finale' of the epic struggle for the achievement of responsible government in Thiruvithamkur.

Aikya Kerala Movement

The Aikya Kerala Movement was the concrete expression of the Malayalam speaking people to have a state of their own. It aimed at the integration of Malabar, Kochi and Thiruvithamkur into one territory. The Keralites who spoke the same language, shared the common cultural tradition, unified by the same history, rituals and customs were politically separated for a long period.

The Indian national movement instilled the people of Kerala the necessity of unification and integration. It taught the people that political unification was to be done on a linguistic basis. It was the peculiar political and historical realities that had existed in the state that paved the way for the integration of Kerala into a single political unit. The Malayalam language with its rich literary heritage served as an important factor in the cultural integration of the people of the three areas of Malabar, Kochi and Thiruvithamkur.

Attempts have been made to unify Kerala politically first by the Zamorin and then by Marthanda Varna. But these attempts did not bear fruit. The idea of Kerala unity remained in the womb of time. However, it was in the 1920's in modern times that the Aikya Kerala movement acquired the dimensions of a people's movement. In the 1920's the demand for a separate state of the Malayalis gathered strength. The political conferences held at Ernakulam (1928), Payyannur (1928), Badagara (1931) and Calicut (1935) passed resolutions in favour of the formation of a state for the Keralites. The Maharaja of Kochi in a message to the legislative council had expressed himself in favour of the early formation of the state. The Cochin Praja Mandalam had endorsed the demand. The K P C C set up a committee under the chairmanship of K.P. Kesava Menon to convene the Aikya Kerala Conference in Thrissur in 1947. It stood in favour of the creation of a United Kerala comprising the three units. Similar conventions were held at Aluva and Palakkad.

When the British announced their intention to have India, the Travancore Diwan declared that his state would remain an independent state. This created a political crisis at the end of which the Diwan had to make an exit from the state. With his exit vanished the dream of an independent Thiruvitamkur. When India became independent; Thiruvitamkur became part of the Indian Union.

The merger and integration of princely states was a major step for the formation of the Kerala State. On 1st July, 1949, the two states of Travancore and Kochi were integrated heralding the birth of the Travancore-Cochin State. It was a positive step taken in the right direction, leading to the formation of the Kerala State.

When steps were taken to reorganize the Indian States on a linguistic basis, the state Reorganisation Commission appointed for the purpose recommended the creation of the state of Kerala. The Commission under Syed Fazi Ali recommended the inclusion of the district of Malabar and the taluk of Kasargode to the Malayalam speaking people's state. It also recommended the exclusion of the four Southern taluks of Travancore viz Tovala, Agastheswaram, Kalkulam and Vilayankode together with some parts of Shenkotta. The new state of Kerala, the long cherished dream of the Malayalis came in to being on November 1st, 1956 with a Governor at its head. The last vestige of princely rule in Kerala disappeared and Kerala regained its identity to become an integral part of the Indian Union.

Syllabus

HY6B11 FORMATION OF KERALA SOCIETY AND CULTURE

No. of Credits: 4

No. of Contact Hours per week: 5

Aim of the Course: To enable the students to understand the major aspects of the evolution of Kerala history and culture in the light of new researches and findings.

UNIT I - Introduction

- Kerala as a Geographical Entity
- Distribution of Archaeological sites - Distribution of inscriptions - locating megalithic sites - Literary texts.
- Historiographical trends

UNIT II - Experiencing State

- Perumals of Mahodayapuram – land relations – medieval trade.
- Creation and Assimilation of new Knowledge
- Formation of *Nadus* and *Swarupams* – Formation of regional culture -Localisation - Village communities.
- Locating Power Centres – *Desam* – *Thara* – Household as a unit.
- Feudal Institutions and Legal practices - crime and punishment.
- Temples and religion.

UNIT III – Colonial Experience

- Advent of Western monopolistic mercantile groups - the Portuguese, Dutch, French and the English and their intervention in Kerala society.
- Establishment of British colonialism - hegemony - forms of bondage.
- Re-ordering of agrarian relations
- State apparatus under colonialism - The Travancore, Cochin and Malabarian experience.
- Social Change – reordering caste and family.
- Transformation in matriliney
- Degeneration of *Swarupams*

UNIT IV - Resistance Movements

- Social movements - Malabar rebellion - quit-India movement.
- Movements for representation in government – in Cochin and Travancore.
- National Movement in Malabar
- Women in the public field.
- Peasant and working class movements.
- Aikya Kerala Movement.

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